

BORN LIKE THIS (OR THAT)

Efraim Bridges

Halleluyah. Halleluyah. Blessed be his set-apart name. Shabbat shalom, everyone. Today's message is titled:

Born Like This (Or That).

I know that people have some preconceptions about where Efraim is going with this, and it is like:

“Well...”

When Arthur was talking earlier today, he mentioned some things that I felt like were the Father's way of sort of starting to plow the ground a little bit and breaking it up so that some of these seeds might have a better chance of bringing forth fruit in due season.

It's not a light thing to stand up here and proclaim the word of Elohim. I just want to throw that out there. This is one of the – maybe the toughest jobs. I don't know. Parenting and being a husband are sometimes tough, but one of the toughest jobs that I love. I love it because it always causes me to look at myself honestly. It always causes me to check myself.

This is what Arthur was talking about a little bit earlier. I want to lay that out there for everyone else as well because the benefit of me teaching is that the Father does something in me. He deals with me and wrestles through my issues. Then he gives me an opportunity to step outside of all of my prejudices and all of my things that I think and to invite other people into that blessing.

I got blessed with this word. I got blessed with these words, and as usual, we don't have time to go through everything that encompasses it. But we are going to do a

good and thorough job of walking through the subject and what the Scriptures say about it and how the Scriptures help us to address the concept of: “I was born like that.”

It is a tagline for certain elements of people, right? Some of you have heard it. You know:

“Why do you do what you do?”

“I was born like that.”

Right? Haven’t we all heard that before? We have heard it in certain areas. We have heard it in certain other areas. The fact of the matter is that we have all heard it before. We may have even said it in a different way. We may say:

“This is how we always did it.”

Have you ever talked to someone about the Sabbath and they said:

“Well, my grandmother was a Baptist and my grandfather was a Baptist and we are all Baptists. We have our names on the chairs.”

Right? Their reason for throwing this out there is to say to you:

“Are you kidding me? We are not going to go and do something different.”

I didn’t expect this, but here we go. I was talking to a brother last night. We were talking about the whole idea of how do you understand how Elohim does a thing over here, when the thing is clearly not right? For instance, how does

he show up in a Sunday church when they don't know how to honor the Sabbath?

Has anybody ever thought about that? There are two ways to look at this. One way is to say:

“That ain't him.”

Right?

“It's the devil.”

But some of you out there are wise enough to know that that it wasn't the devil. If it was the devil, then that same devil wandered you into the Sabbath. Can anybody understand what I am saying? Right?

At the same time, the Spirit of Elohim has encouraged us to walk out of that into this. It is kind of perplexing if you try to get your head around it. I gave them this example.

In my natural mind, suppose I had a bunch of food to feed people. People were starving. They were hungry and I say:

“You need to meet me at 123 Anywhere St., USA, and I will give you the food. I'll have it there for you.”

But one of my trucks crashed up the street from 123. The food spilled out and people started eating it over there. They thought:

“Well, this is the place.”

They sort of changed the place and started eating it over there. But me in my natural mind would be thinking that when that runs out, I'm not starting a new thing over there.

I am not sure if you can understand the analogy here, but what I was trying to say to him is why doesn't Elohim say:

“If you all don't come to the Sabbath, you're none of mine and I'm giving you my Spirit.”

And I said to him:

“Do you realize that his mercy does endureth forever and that nobody is counseling him?”

We are not able to say to him:

“This is how you should do it, Father.”

Oh, sometimes I feel like saying that, but it usually doesn't work out until I submit myself. There are a couple of times in the Scriptures where it might have appeared to have worked out. Do you remember when the Israelites wanted some quails? They wanted meat. They didn't want quails. The Father finally gave them some, but it didn't work out so well.

The whole point of this pre-message is that we must begin to agree wholeheartedly with his will, even though we don't know all of the time what it is. This is a strange thing for you – operating in the natural only. That is because it is like:

“Well, I don't know what I am agreeing to.”

I was taught:

“Don’t you sign that document until you read it thoroughly.”

They even told me:

“You have three days or seventy-two hours to check it out and you can come back.”

I am standing in front of somebody for a house or a car or whatever it was. Right? They tell me I have seventy-two hours. Just sign it. In my brain, this is all natural. My brain is like:

“Unh uh. I’m not just signing it. So, what? I’ve got seventy-two hours to go and study it and let my lawyer look at it. I am not signing it until I look it over.”

But we have no idea where he is leading us and yet he has asked us to agree with him. Just in case anybody is wondering, **he is worthy of that kind of trust**. That is because over and over in the Scriptures and probably over and over in our lives, we have found that we did some measure of that and we saw the benefit of it. That is why when someone says to me, such as an atheist:

“That’s just blind faith. You don’t know.”

I say:

“Well, you weren’t there when the primordial soup started either, so *that’s* blind faith. Were you there at the ‘Big Bang’? So don’t give me the ‘blind faith’ deal.”

At the end of your trail and at the end of my trail, we both have to decide whether we believe something. I choose to believe that Yahuah (YeHoVaH), the Elohim of Israel has created all things. What measures and mechanisms he used to do that, I don't know. I don't know them all. I see what is in the Scriptures.

The whole point is that we have to get used to agreeing with him, even though we don't know all of what comes out of it. Halleluyah.

Yom Teruah. Shelach, Apostle Arthur already talked about that. I have a legend. It is not complete. Sometimes I slip.

Slide:

<p>Yom Teruah Estimated 2-3 October 2016. Monday off Coming sooner than you think! Ahavat!</p>
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The word “Shelach/Shlach” means “the sent one.” It is referred to as an apostle in English. Sometimes I call Arthur “Shelach.” That is just so that everybody knows. Really quickly, here is my legend as somebody told me that it was a blessing. Let's go through it really quickly.

Legend

Yahuah = YeHoVaH = = LORD = Our Father

Yahu'sha = Yeshua = Yehoshuah = = Jesus

Mashiach = Anointed One = = Christ

Elohim = = GOD

Ruach = = Spirit (Set Apart usually)

Kodosh = Set Apart = = Holy

Adon = Master = = Lord

This is *King James* stuff. On the other side of the two equal signs are the likely translations in the English Bibles or in the *King James*. I missed some for the Father, but you get the idea. Sometimes I flow between these. I usually prefer the ones that are on the left side of the equation. Just so that anybody who is out there and who isn't used to me doing that, maybe it will help if I forget to translate once or twice, where I'm coming from.

Born like this...

Proverbs 18:21 – “Death and life are in the power of the tongue, and those loving it eat its fruit.”

(*The Scriptures* 1998). What made me think about that passage? It was everyone that I ever hear who are saying:

“This is the way that we always did it. I was born like that.”

Or any measure of this kind of a lack of flexibility. They don't want to learn. They don't want to go forth. They are in that spot. Anytime that I have seen that, it comes out of their mouth. *Proverbs* says it really clearly. I want to go further to say that. Remember what Mashiach says:

“It is out of the abundance of your heart that you speak.”

Although the tongue is the thing that presents it, it is coming from inside of you. It is not enough to just say:

“Well, I won't say that anymore.”

For instance:

“I’m always broke.”

You can say:

“Don’t say it.”

But if it is in your heart, if it is in your leaven, if it is in your inward part of you and your perception of things is that, then all you are doing is muzzling yourself. You are still saying:

“I’m always broke.”

If there was a way to communicate with you without this (Efraïm points to his mouth), suppose you used sign language or something like that. According to *Proverbs*, it’s in the power of the tongue, but you’re saying that it was sign language, so I guess you’re good.

No, you are not good because it’s coming from within you. As much as we want to honor the commandments as an external manifestation of our devotion to the Mighty One of Israel, you want them to come from within. You want to change from within. You don’t want some robotic kind of move going on. You want to *want* to do it. Have you ever had to do something that you didn’t want?

“Clean that up!”

It’s like:

“Man, I don’t want to clean that up.”

How good of a job will you do?

“I can still do a good job, but I hate it.”

All of the time that you are “hating” it, you are sending stress hormones throughout your body; but you are doing it. That’s not the kind of life that the commandments were meant to bring.

I usually like to give you some nuggets. I have a real interesting one. Has anybody ever heard of the word “brouhaha”? It means: great excitement or clamor, right? Okay, I wasn’t even looking for this. That’s why I put this up here. I stumbled onto this one trying to find something else. What it says is that there is a great brouhaha about this word brouhaha, and it’s original. I was like:

“Wow.”

It caught my interest, so I went and read it. Some people think that the word “brouhaha” is the morph of the word *Baruch Haba Ba*; which is what it says in *Psalm 118*. It says:

“Blessed is he who comes in the name of
Yahuah.”

Well, that’s *Baruch Haba Ba*. What they think is that over time when people were out of the land and didn’t practice Hebrew as much, it morphed a little bit and morphed a little bit and that it became this word “brouhaha.” I thought:

“Boy, that’s really interesting.”

If you really think about it, when Mashiach comes, there is going to be great excitement and clamor. That’s

just a little one. This next one, I think is really important. This is the “free money” story. Somebody said:

“Hey, I’m down with that.”

It was free money. I was reading a book. It’s a secular book. In the book, the guy was talking about how he was downtown Chicago on Michigan Avenue; which is one of the ritzy places in Chicago. They call it “the Magnificent Mile.”

There was a guy on the sidewalk. He had a sign over his chest. On the front and on the back it said: “Free Money.” He was telling everybody:

“Free money! Free money! Free money here!”

He had dollar bills in his hands, right? He was just standing there proclaiming:

“Free money! Free money!”

And guess what? No one would take it! So he walked up to a guy who was walking past him and he says:

“Free money.”

He tries to hand it to him and the guy is like:

“No, No!”

(He puts up his arms in a defensive posture.) I thought:

“Wow! That will preach.”

The truth of the matter is that the Father is trying to hand us something that we're not willing to take. Now, with those people in the natural with that money thing, they probably thought it was a trick. They probably thought:

“He’s going to pull a fast one on us or something, or I’m going to be embarrassed.”

If you think about it, you can translate all of that into the Spirit. We can see why sometimes it is difficult to believe that the Father is actually for you and that he’s actually willing to bless you with all of those things that you need.

We think of him like we think of that guy with the “free money” sign. We don’t trust that he is genuine and that he means nothing but good for us. Halleluyah.

While I’m on the “free” deal, the next free nugget was “Freedom.” I think that freedom is a misnomer. Here is why. We all know what “free” means, and I’ll have a definition in a minute.

But the word “dom,” does that strike anybody? Remember that one? “Dom.” Dom, as in dominion or domicile or dominate. It is the same root word. We want to be free. Who doesn’t want to be free? Nobody is raising their hands. I don’t even have to wait.

You don’t want to be free? Ah! That sister might have it already (points to audience member). She might be prophetic! Halleluyah.

Most of us want to be free, but the truth of the matter is this. I put down here [on the slide] “whose ‘dom’?” In other words, that second part of the word “freedom,” whose “dom”? Whose “dom” do you want to be free from? Whose dominion do you want to escape?

You don't want people telling you what to do. You don't want Yahuah telling you what to do. There is only one somebody – well, a couple of somebody's left. There is the devil or you telling you what to do.

You are going to obey somebody. There is no such thing as the way that we usually think of it; as freedom. But what would you do?

Every day I would drive this way instead of that way because I did it yesterday and because I want to be free of all of my habits and other things. I don't have to go that way. I can drive into the parking lot backwards because I'm just doing it my way. I mean, it sounds crazy, but I need you to understand that *freedom is an illusion*.

The issue is really:

- Who do I bind myself to?
- Who will I obey?
- Who is trustworthy enough that I will bow myself to them and hook myself to them?

“Yoke” is what Mashiach said.

- Who will I yoke myself to them and learn of them?

I have the passage of *Debarim* (Deuteronomy) 6:17 up. It says:

“Diligently guard the commands of Yahuah your Elohim, and His witnesses, and His laws which He has commanded you.”

I asked the question:

“Who was this spoken to?”

We all know that it was to Israel. There are two things that I want to say here. One is that it was spoken to Israel. But one person? Community-wide? It was really both, right? The next part is this question, to whoever you are out there:

“Does that mean that you don’t have to do it?”

Some people say:

“That’s what he told Israel.”

They don’t usually say it like that. They say:

“That’s what he told the Jews.”

I guess only the tribe of Yahudah (Judah). I don’t know. That’s a whole other lesson. Who was he speaking to? He was speaking to *all* of Israel.

When you look at *Deuteronomy* 28 and the blessings and curses of *Leviticus* – I want to say (chapter) 19, then you need to realize that while you can do things to govern yourself and your house, the Father was always speaking to a community. He is speaking to the bigger deal. It is not that he just wanted one person to be saved.

Arthur said it earlier. It is his desire that everyone be saved. But if I do good and somebody in my house does bad, does my doing good keep the police from my door? No! We all have to be diligent and to keep the commands. That means the little ones and the big ones. How do they find out? We’ll get there.

The gold standard is:

Proverbs 19:16 – “He who guards the command guards his life. He who despises His ways, dies.”

This didn't “go away” either. In fact, *Revelation 14* says to follow the Mashiach and the commands of Elohim. This has never gone away. Following his Messiah is a command.

So, how are we born? Let's get down to it. In psychology they have this concept of nurture versus nature. Has anybody heard of that stuff? The whole idea, if you don't remember that from college or have never heard it, is this. You physically have a part and then you are influenced down the line.

While there may be some truth to that, does it completely agree with Elohim? No. The reason is because if I go down the nature path – actually we need to keep moving because you will see some of this.

How were we born? *Most with a solid frame.* In other words, most people got what they needed, to make it through life. Some of us were born with challenges. It is a matter of fact, but we are designated to worship him. Yet we are somehow prone to idolatry.

What does that mean? It means that we decide to put something else in the place of worship, other than him. Whether that is ourselves or the people around us or our parents, we are somehow prone to it. If I can call it that, I think that “the fall” played a part in that. That is because all of a sudden, their eyes were opened. It seems like ever since then, people are walking by sight instead of by faith.

We have this tendency toward idolatry. If you have a tendency, the question is:

“How do I deal with that?”

There is a way. If you know that you have a tendency to do something, you have to purposely counter it. That's not always easy, but we'll see some of that later as well.

How were we born? Most with solid frame!

Designated to worship Him yet...

— Prone to idolatry (*faulty worship*)

— Encouraged in what

- It matters (Torah or Brouhaha)
- Read from *Debarim* 6:1-10 live it too

We are to be encouraged in what? It matters what we're encouraged in. This is sort of the "nurture" perspective. Are we encouraged in Torah or just all kinds of clamor?

I am going to read from *Debarim* or *Deuteronomy* chapter 6:1-10. This is something that we all are probably familiar with, but I want to read it out loud this morning. If you have a Bible and you want to turn to it with me, then Halleluyah. If you just want to listen, that's all good too. I'm going to read from *Deuteronomy* chapter 6, verses 1-10. I am reading it out of the *Scriptures* version.

¹"And this is the command, the laws and right-rulings which יהוה (Yahuah) your Elohim has commanded, to teach you to do in the land which you are passing over to possess,"

That word "teach" is important. You don't need teaching if you already know.

²"...so that you fear יהוה (Yahuah) your Elohim, to guard [shamar, watch over] all His laws and His commands which I command you, you and your son and your

grandson, all the days of your life, and that your days be prolonged. ³“And you shall hear, O Yisra’el, ♦ and shall guard to do, that it might be well with you, and that you increase greatly as יהוה (Yahuah) Elohim of your fathers has spoken to you, in a land flowing with milk and honey. ⁴“Hear, O Yisra’el: יהוה (Yahuah) our Elohim, יהוה (Yahuah) is one! ⁵“And you shall love יהוה (Yahuah) your Elohim with all your heart, and with all your being, and with all your might. ⁶“And these Words which I am commanding you today shall be in your heart, ⁷and you shall impress them upon [press them down into] your children, and shall speak of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise up, ⁸and shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. ⁹And you shall write them on the door posts of your house and on your gates.”

(Efraim did not read verse 10 aloud, but here it is):

¹⁰“And it shall be, when יהוה (Yahuah) your Elohim brings you into the land of which He swore to your fathers, to Abraham, to Yitshaq (Isaac), and to Ya'aqob (Jacob), to give you great and good cities which you did not build,”

♦ The well-known phrase that is the Shema.

Amein. Imagine really doing that. Imagine sort of meditating on that in a way. This is why certain people read that every day and they say it before they start the services. That is because there is some power in what was just said. It is worthy of meditation because it is saying that basically we are to be sold out (for real) to the Most High.

You see, if I meditate on his laws, his commandments, his statutes, his judgments and all of the precepts; if I press them down into my children, what I notice is this. When I do that, my children say to me:

“Well, doesn’t the word say such and such?”

I don’t know if anybody ever had that happen to them. They ask me. I am like:

“Whoa, are you checking me? Halleluyah!
That’s awesome!”

I have to either righteously make sense out of it, or I have to repent, or I have to lie. The last one is not an option! Now I am building in a safety mechanism inside of my camp. That is because I am teaching them what it says. Now they are going to check me and I’m going to check them. My wife is going to check me and I’m going to check her. Then I’m going to come here and you all are going to check me and I’m going to check you all. Look at what’s happening now.

Again, it is never about an individual. It is always about community. But what if I go the other way around? What if I say:

“But I wasn’t born keeping the commandments. I wasn’t born keeping

those Shabbats. My people never kept Shabbat.”

Even though this beautiful set of passages in *Deuteronomy* are there, I’m going to quote something from an Apocryphal book, *Ecclesiasticus*. Please don’t be offended.

Ecclesiasticus 17:16 – “Every man from his youth is given to evil; neither could they make to themselves fleshy hearts for stony.” (KJVA)

This is the “how we were born.” You have to understand that even if you have a little propensity toward righteousness; some people are born and they just seem to love the Father. Do you know Esau and Jacob? It seems like Jacob was kind of leaning toward the things of righteousness, even though his name meant “trickster.” He seemed to prefer that kind of angle. Esau was a man of the world or the field (it says).

He was a natural guy. He liked doing that kind of stuff. He wanted to marry Canaanite women, right? He didn’t have that same “bent,” if I can put it that way, but a bent is not an excuse. I just need to get that out there.

Every man from his youth is given to evil. In other words, there is something about us in this age that bends us a little toward what the Scriptures call “an evil.” It is almost like you bought a new shirt and it has a spot on it. That happened to me. We don’t like that, do we? I was thinking:

“Well, I could get a discount. Maybe I can get it out.”

That's that negotiator in me. Pray for me. You are right to a point, but you are right (to audience member comment). So we all come out and we are set up.

How were we born?

- Needy – Then why is it so hard to ask for help?
- Ignorant – How did we become know-it-alls?
- Self-Centered – Hence difficulty giving (loss)
- Manipulative – Still wanting *our* way
- Defenseless – Who was and is our defense now?
- Lacking WISDOM – let us ask!

We were born. These are some of the things that we are. We are needy. We can't take care of ourselves, right? I ask the question:

“Why is it so hard to ask for help now?”

We come out. We don't know much about how things work. We are ignorant. That is what that is called. How do we become “know-it-alls now”? We were self-centered then. That is why we have this difficulty of giving; especially of ourselves. Most of the time, giving is about “quid pro quo” or something like that.

“I give, you give.”

It is about scratching our backs. That's not the same as really giving. If I am giving, Mashiach says this:

“Invite people to your house to eat that can't pay you back.”

They are not going to call you and say:

“Well, next Shabbat you can come by my house.”

Does that mean that we shouldn't do that with each other? No, but it means that he was pointing at the essence of not being self-centered. He was pointing at spreading it out. I think that the world even has a name for it.

“Pass it on.”

Or something like that. You have all heard of that.

“Pay it forward.”

All right, thank you. I was out Uptown this weekend. I was telling my wife about some of the stuff that I saw. She said:

“You don't get out much, and you see, that's the evidence.”

Some of the stuff that is going on out there is like:

“Oh my goodness! Wow!”

Then we have “manipulative.” Children come out like that and we still want our way. We are defenseless. In other words, when you are a little baby, you can't protect yourself. Who was and is our defense now? That is what I say. In other words, why do we feel that we have to protect ourselves now?

There is a balance here in everything that I am saying, so don't go off the deep end. Somebody may be thinking:

“Well, if somebody is coming my way and they are threatening me, then I should just

say: 'Hit me some more. Beat me down. Take my money. Take my teeth.'"

That's not what I am saying. You could have run! Well, maybe. I'm just joking.

We come out lacking wisdom. The Father says (putting it through *James* 1:5) that if we are lacking wisdom, to ask and he will give it to us. But we find ourselves thinking that we are dependent upon ourselves and our meager means to do the things that have to happen. This is how we were born and this is how we kind of learn.

I think about when I was a youngster. Has anybody ever watched cowboy movies? I know it always tells my age, right? That's because they don't make them as often nowadays. But cowboy and Indian movies (or whatever an Indian was to them); these things we watched when we were young. They showed these robust characters who took care of business. They were fast with the six-gun (revolver). Oozies weren't invented yet, so they were fast with the six-gun.

They do this to a mountain lion. They do that to a snake. I just have to tell you that some of that stuff probably influences us. One of the reasons maybe that I had to struggle against the flavor of independence that I had become normally accustomed to was because I watched that stuff. I had my eyes like this (wide opened and unblinking) while watching it. I was like:

"Aw, he's going to get him!"

You know? Billy the Kid. We had cap guns that we put on our hips and stuff like that. That's not politically correct any more because "guns are evil." Right? No, people who are using them may be evil. My point is that we had cap guns back in those days and we'd (makes shooting action

with his hands and shooting sounds). We would play with each other. We had BB guns.

I remember getting shot in the head with a BB gun at close range! It kind of dented my head a little bit. [Please do not try this under any circumstances.] No, that's not what happened to me, for all who may be thinking that. (Laughter)

My point is that all of these things have an influence over us. The whole world is speaking to you all of the time. They are trying to do that. I will use the term "psychological model." They are trying to do that nurturing to teach you and to mold you and to make you into what they want you to be. Even though you don't know what *their* end is, oftentimes we agree with it.

Remember. That is exactly what I said that we have to do with Yahuah. Even though we don't know the end of it, we need to agree with him. That is because that is the nature of faith. That is the nature of training. You cannot be trained without sort of trusting your trainer, Amein?

Now, it's subtle, because sometimes you don't realize that that is what you are doing. But that is exactly what you are doing. That is because it doesn't work any other way. This is why we have to check our teachers out and see who is influencing us.

I have identified a few things that you already know.

How were we born?

- Children lie
- Children steal
- Babies manipulate
 - All without training
 - Call it survival or whatever you want

They do it all without training! How does that work? What's going on? Remember that this message is titled: "I

was born this way.” So, okay, they were born that way, but which one of us would say to our children:

“You stay a liar. You stay a manipulator. You stay...”

(Whatever the case is)? Right? None of us. Why would we expect Elohim to do that? Why would we expect him to not only take us like we are, but to leave us like we are? Shaul (Saul/Paul) said it in *Corinthians*. He said something about being a new creature and old things passed away and all things became new.

Now, just in case you don't like Shaul or Paul and you think that he might have made it up, let's fast forward or (it's the past) rewind back to the coming out of Egypt. The Israelites had been slaves for a long time. They were indentured servants or slaves or whatever you want to call it.

When they came out, the Most High was calling them to be something else. That was the struggle that they were having. I really appreciate that because I remember when I used to read passages in the Scripture and [they were] doing stuff and saying things like:

“We had leeks and onions when we were in Egypt and now we are out here in the desert to die.”

I am thinking:

“Are they stupid?”

That's the way I looked at it. But after walking this walk out for a long time now or for a season (I should say

not a long time, for whatever a long time is), I realize that they might not be much different than me. They might not be much different than all of you.

If you don't intend to embrace change, it's very difficult for you to be changed. I can say that the other way around. If you do embrace change or the idea of change, then it is easier for you to get there. But if you are just stuck and you are saying:

"This is how it's going to be."

If you want leeks and onions when you are going into a land flowing with milk and honey, you may never get there. Isn't that exactly what happened? Yeah. So you can naturally justify all of these tendencies by saying that this is a part of some survival programming. The baby cries out and the mama comes and feeds them. They figure out that when they cry, she's coming to feed them. They want to get fed, so they work it. They work it.

People don't know when to stop. Have you ever noticed that? There are some things that people do, but they don't know when to stop. It's like:

"Well, yeah. That was a good idea, but it's enough already."

You know? This is especially true with children. I've got one. They sing a song that they have learned. They sing it and then it's like:

"Aw, that was nice."

Then they want to keep singing it. Right? They want to keep singing it. They keep singing it. It is like:

“Okay. Enough already! I’ve heard it fifteen times.”

They want to keep going and going. They watch this movie over and over. Sometimes we just don’t know when to stop.

Whether it is survival programming from the Most High or not, it needs to be – how do you put it? Trained. It needs to be disciplined.

Do we grow out of any of this stuff that we are born into? Now, lying and stealing fall into the category of sin. I have never really noticed people growing out of sin. What I’ve noticed is that it morphs a little bit. They learn how to cover it and control it, to some extent. You don’t really grow out of sin. What you grow out of is stuff like when people have asthma or something. Then they say:

“I don’t have it any more.”

“I was allergic to dust and now I’m not any more.”

That stuff, you grow past. But with sin, you don’t just seem to grow out of it. Somebody has to rebuke you. Somebody has to correct you. Somebody has to say:

“That’s not the way that you get a long life.”

Then you have to hear them.

Are we bound to this nature thing? The answer of course is no, absolutely not. Were we born this way or did we learn it? Now, that’s a tricky one because the nature of a person is that things merge together. You can’t find that line between what I was born as and what I learned how to do.

I don't know if I ever told anybody this, but my father wasn't in my home when I grew up. No tears or anything like that, but I grew up in a home where my father wasn't there. I didn't know him. The strange thing was that I didn't even think about it. It didn't seem to be an issue for me. That's because I never knew anything about having a father at home. It wasn't like he was there and then he left. He was never there.

I was about twelve. One summer my brother went to visit our relatives. I didn't want to go, so I stayed at home. My mom said to me:

“I'm going to take you somewhere.”

Where she took me was to meet my father. He owned a gas station. I went to his gas station. I worked there all summer. I got to meet him. Up until then, I hadn't known him. It turns out that my father was a “tinkerer.” It turns out that my father was an electronics technician.

By twelve, I had already installed extension phones in the house. I had already rewired the house for this. I had fixed lamps. I broke tens of watches trying to put them back together. My mom said that she wouldn't buy me any more.

Why am I telling this story? I am telling it because that doesn't seem like a coincidence. It seems like something from him was operating in me. It's the natural part. Now, I know that we have talked about the generational curses and I'm not trying to open up that door right now. There may be another time.

The truth of the matter is that physiologically, a person is made from two parts – their father and their mother. If we expect none of that to affect how our natural makeup is, then we are kidding ourselves. We are all sort of products of that and products of what goes on around us. Then those

of us who are here and who are born again, we have some greater influence. We are going to talk about that in a minute.

I asked the question: Can there be any real or lasting change? I bet you all are wondering the same things with things that you struggle with.

“Can this ever get fixed?”

“Can I stop doing this?”

Or:

“Can that stop happening?”

Or maybe it’s more like:

“Can *they* stop doing this?”

(Laughter)

“Yah, can you stop them from doing that?”

“You need deliverance boy!”

Right? But the truth is that old thing. If you point your finger like this (points at the audience), you have three more pointing back at you. We need to judge not that we be not judged, because with the same judgment that we meet out, it is what we get judged with as well. That is not ammunition against judgment. It is just saying:

“Don’t dish out what you can’t take. Don’t be a hypocrite.”

Don’t call somebody else and tell them:

“Hey, the Sabbath is starting. What are you still doing at work?”

Then you slurp. They say:

“What are you doing?”

You say:

“Man, I’m eating a pork chop sandwich.”

(Efraim shakes his head “no.”) That’s not right judgment. If you can’t handle it, don’t dish it out.

There are some easy things and then there are some not so easy paths. Let’s talk about this easy path, the one that is slippery. The one that people tend to try to get on, or tend to get on, is this. They don’t even have to try. They say:

“Well, I’m free. I can do anything I want to do. I can do anything I want to do.”

People say that, but I don’t see that many people consciously and purposely going down the up ramp onto the highway at high speed. I don’t see them doing that.

“Do you mean that nobody wants to do that?”

You see, the modern media and the voices of the world are telling us that:

“Everything is acceptable.”

But is it acceptable? If I did that and it didn’t kill my foolish self and a bunch of other people, what would happen? I’d get arrested. That’s because there has to be

some kind of order; but people want to be “free.” Remember from the beginning?

“Free! I want to be free! I don’t want to be under anybody’s rule or dominion. I want to just do what I want.”

I remember those stickers that used to say:

“Fear not!”

Do you all remember those? Then the Christians made one that said:

“Fear God!”

I like that one better. Well, it isn’t perfect yet, but I like that one better. People want to be free.

In *Yeshayah* (Isaiah) chapter 5, there is a statement that is being made. It says:

“Therefore, as a tongue of the fire devours the stubble, and the flame consumes the chaff, their root is as rottenness, and their blossom goes up like dust – **because** they have rejected the Torah of יהוה (Yahuah) of hosts, and despised the Word of the Set-apart One of Yisra’ël.”

The seemingly easy path

I’m free indeed?

I guess this is my setup. Out of every one of those things that we need to change, not being this person is our

best help. But if you want to do your own thing, I don't care what it is; we are going to talk about some of them.

I know that with a message like "I was born like this," everybody's thinking "homosexual." All right, I've said it. You all have been waiting for me to do it. (Efraim notes a woman in the audience.) A sister says:

"I wasn't thinking about that."

Halleluyah, but a great majority of people probably were. Hey, the truth is that they are in here. They are in here. We'll get there.

I said that we are prone to idolatry. Is this the reason why there are "blah" [inset your choice of words] pride parades? Is this why criminals seem to boast in what they do? Is this why men, when they do things that are unseemly with women, tell each other about it?

"Man, I did this and I did that."

I don't know if women do that, because I've never been in a women's locker room, but with men, they boast about stuff that is nobody's business. Even if it was right, it doesn't seem like you'd want to do that. But people do that. They have to boast.

They have to put it out there and of course that is an element of pride. I know that a lot of criminals have been caught because they just "had" to tell somebody. It's not because they just got caught, but they had to tell somebody that they did it. I am not talking about confession. It is like:

"Man, do you remember that robbery over on Fifth Street? Oh, that was me and my boys."

Then that person – whether they go and report them or they tell somebody else:

“Did you know what June bug did that robbery over on Fifth Street may-an?”

(Laughter) Then he tells someone. You know, loose lips sink ships! It’s just a matter of fact. If he had kept his mouth shut and waited a few years, he could have kept the money. You know, after the seventh year – be careful you all¹ – after the seventh year, he could have said it. Now, check your statutes of limitations in your municipality. (Laughter)

The truth is that there is a statute of limitations on most crimes – not on murder. But he could have written a blog about it and they couldn’t have done anything. I don’t know about anything, but you get my point.

People boast because they can’t help themselves. They’ve got to tell somebody about it. This proneness to idolatry, this lifting up of self, this self-centeredness and this pride are basically at the root of each and every sin. If we can somehow squelch that, man. It would be a lot better deal.

That’s why the Most High spoke to Arthur and told him about not owing himself anything. That is because if you can get out of yourself, you really have a good deal coming.

So here comes the hard part. I looked up this word. “Pervert” (the verb). Let that one sink in. It’s an English word if you haven’t heard it. The word has a meaning. Now, I didn’t think that I was “country” or anything, but I made the mistake of trying to look up “prevert” instead of

¹ Of course Efraim is not advocating crime on any level. He is just using this example for illustrative purposes.

“pervert.” It turns out that “prevert” is a word too. Do you know what it means? Let me try to explain what the definition said.

It said that “prevert” is to get in front of the pervert. I’m trying to break it down here. I know it’s not the Scripture, but I’m going to try. If the pervert had meant to put a bag of poop in a paper bag and light it on fire and put it in front of your house – do you all know that one?² No? Okay.

When I was a kid – all right, let’s go there. People would – people; not Efraim. People would take some [usually dog] poop and put it in a paper bag. They would put some lighter fluid on it and light it [and leave it] in front of your house or in front of your door. They would ring your [door] bell and run.

You would come out. You see this fire in the front of your house and you go to stomp on it and guess what? Right? (Laughter) I’m surprised that you all have never heard of that! Aw, man! All right, all right. Some of you all are with me.

That would be a perverted thing to do. But the pervert – watch this. The pervert would give him the bag and point him to the poop. (Laughter) He actually assists or gets in front of, or assists or gives power or helps the pervert out. (Efraim speaks to an audience member.) Thank you brother, facilitates.

Think about the laws in the United States of America. Many of the laws that have been passing lately have been *preverted*. That is because they give room for perversion. So I thought that it was just one word “pervert,” but it turns out that there were two. We are going to talk about pervert right now.

It’s a verb. In the English dictionary it says: to cause to turn away from what is right, proper or good; corrupt. Now,

² An unkind practical joke that was popular during the 1970s.

in order to have a definition like this, there has to be a standard for what is good, what is right and what is proper.

Most of you all have heard me say that I have an engineering background. When an engineer builds something, he builds it for a purpose. You don't build a bridge so that people can do anything other than cross over the river. You might make it beautiful too. Don't get me wrong, but its function is the primary motivation. You don't see this river and say:

"You know, it would really be pretty if there was a bridge there."

You'd say:

"Well, we have to go around. We have to get on ferries. We have to get in a boat. If I build this bridge, then it will facilitate..."

I'm using your word again, brother.

"...getting over to the other side."

That's the primary function that motivates you. But if you don't have any idea of what a thing was made for, then how can you *not* pervert it?

Men and women were made for certain functions. Pieces and parcels and parts of our anatomy were made for certain reasons. Their reasons are obvious. It is not as if you need to pray for five hours to figure out some of this!

There have always been perversions. The next definition [of the word] is: to bring to a bad or worse condition; to debase.

I was looking at these definitions and I realized afresh, the beauty of language. What I mean by that is that there is

a place and a way to use language that is pure. It doesn't have an "umph" on it. Do you follow me?

The truth is that people are always sort of changing stuff. People are always changing stuff. I just talked about a bridge, but a road – if the road wasn't there – if you are ever in an airplane and you look down over what you are flying over, you see the areas that are forested and the lakes and the rivers. You might say:

"Man, that looks beautiful."

Then when you get toward the city, you see these gray patches. One day I was on a flight and I was thinking:

"Man, that looks like eczema on the land!"

It looks like a scar. People want to dwell together. They want to come near water, so they grow, but remember what I said earlier. They tend to go too far with almost everything they do. In some way, we can see this as a bit of perversion. We pervert nature because we make it do what we want it to do.

They changed the course of the Illinois River in Chicago. It was going this way [points arm] but they changed it and now it goes that way [moves arm across chest]. They dug and they dug and they dug and they dug until the water had to fall in the other direction. It caused it to go in a different direction in order to "solve" their pollution problem they were having in the early 1900s or late 1800s.

We change stuff all of the time. We ought to be careful with that because mankind is short-sighted. Let's just put it that way. If I build a road over a path that I just walked over normally, I'm not saying that it is an acceptable perversion, but at least it makes a little more sense. But to

just mow something down and change its course, that's a little bit harder. There are some gray areas in there.

Today I want to talk about some clear areas. We'll have to sort out the gray areas another time. The last definition from the dictionary for the word "pervert" is to put to a wrong or improper use; to misuse. That word means any sort of misappropriation of a thing would be a perversion. A synonym of that is "corrupt."

In Hebrew, there were three words that were mentioned. One is "sâlah"; a primitive root; properly to wrench, that is, (figuratively) to subvert; overthrow, pervert.

Then there is "nâlah." (naw-taw). There is a little longer definition, but ultimately it says to "cause to yield."

Definition: A primitive root; to stretch or spread out; by implication to bend away (including moral deflection); used in a great variety of applications: +afternoon, apply, bow (down, -ing), carry aside, decline, deliver, extend, go down, be gone, incline, intend, lay, let down, offer, outstretched, overthrown, pervert, pitch, prolong, put away, shew, spread (out), stretch (forth, out), take (aside), turn (aside, away), wrest, cause to yield.

In other words, something was for this but you made it for that. It is the same kind of idea. This last one is: 'âvath (aw-vath'). It is one I want to focus on. It means: to wrest, to bow oneself, to make crooked, falsifying, overthrow, deal perversely, pervert, subvert, turn upside down.

In other words, you decided that you can clearly see what the deal is, what it was meant for, what it was all about; but you are just going to turn it (upside down). What makes a person do that? It is like:

"You know this is for that, why would you do that with it?"

Usually the answer to that is stemmed in a flavor of pride again.

“You know this is what that’s for. Why would you do that?”

“Because I wanted to.”

That is the end result of it. In *Yeshayah* (Isaiah) chapter 5, it says in verse 20:

“Woe to those who call evil good, and good evil; who put darkness for light, and light for darkness; who put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter! Woe to those who are wise in their own eyes,”

We all have to struggle with this one. At least I have to struggle with it sometimes.

“...and clever in their own sight! Woe to the mighty to drink wine, and brave men to mix strong drink, who declare right the wrong for a bribe,”

In other words, I’m going to get something out of it.

“...and the righteousness of the righteous they turn aside from him!”

When I read this passage, I’m impressed with the state of the world, with the state of this country that we are in. That is because there are lots of things that have been declared as “good” but clearly they are not.

We pervert by making laws that enable every flavor of perversion. When you think about the homosexuality movement, that's one thing. But think about this. They give companies tax breaks. They give them tax breaks and they make us pay more taxes.

I remember reading. If I don't have this exactly right, well, it is a big company. I won't say the name. That way I won't have anybody send me a letter. They made billions and billions and billions of dollars. Do you know what their tax bill was? Efraim makes a "zero" sign with his hand. Zero. Zero. Zero! Zero. How do you do that? You do that because the laws that are in place are perverted. If you say that tax collection is there in order to build the infrastructure of the country and so forth, then you tell the ones who are making billions:

"You don't have to pay in."

Look at any structure in a big corporation. There is the CEO, CFO, CIO, CTO, and all these "O" guys. Do a ratio comparison. In other words, divide the average person's salary into their salary. We're talking not five times, not ten times. Sometimes it's one hundred times (greater). Something is wrong with that picture. You know?

Perversion is not isolated to sexual identity. Perversions abound. It is all over the place. We have to be very careful that we don't get caught up in our own version of it. Remember that the key to this is that it usually has a bribe in it. It usually has some perceived benefit to "me" in it.

How were we born again? It is time to talk about some of the remedies. We were born one way, but we were born again by the Spirit of Elohim. There's no shadow in his turning. There's nothing wrong. There's nothing about that that is impure or perverted. There's no way to say:

“Well, you know, he just keeps making me give. He just keeps pouring me out to bless people.”

Or:

“He causes me to see how my flesh needs to be put into submission.”

Some of you all have been in this walk for years and years and years. It’s been a good walk. I don’t mean a pleasant one on a day to day basis, but if it’s been a good walk, you are not like you were when you started it. That word comes from *Ha Ruach*. That word comes from the Spirit of Elohim that has been imparted into you.

Whether we can articulate the mechanisms for all of the pieces or not; you know, like I said, I have that engineer brain. But whether we can say all of that accurately or not, I know that I can’t and yet the effect, you can clearly see, is that we change.

How were we born again? I say with a heart to rightly worship and to bow to him. It isn’t even interested in “free.”

In *Deuteronomy 15* — you know, I almost got an earring. I almost did. I don’t have anything against people who have them. It’s no big deal. But I almost got an earring. Let me tell you why.

It was because in *Deuteronomy 15*, it says that if you have a Hebrew servant; the *King James* says “slave” I think, but the word is “ebed.” It means “a servant.” It means somebody who works for you who can ultimately be apart from you. He might be indentured because he owes you money or whatever, but he is not a “slave” by definition.

But it says that if you have one [servant] and he doesn't want to leave when his time is up, he says:

"No, I like your house. I want to hang out with you. I don't want to go out there."

It says to take him and to put his ear to the door and take an awl and press it through his ear and put an earring on him. It says that he can never leave your house. I thought:

"That's how I feel about Yahuah."
[YeHoVaH] I need to get an earring just to show."

Sometimes I'm into showing.

"Just to show that I'm a servant. I'm a slave."

Paul said:

"I'm a bond servant."

Right? It doesn't mean that I'm perfected yet. It just means that:

"Oh yeah. I'm way, way, way committed.
This hurt. I did it because I'm committed."

Right? So we get this heart from the Father. He gives it to us so that we can rightly worship him. That worship is about bowing down. It's about saying:

"You're high and we're low."

It's about saying:

"Your will and not my will."

It would be foolish for me to say to you all that there is no struggle in that. Just say it and do it. Name it and claim it (Efraim snaps his fingers) boom, boom, boom. There is an enemy. There is stuff going on. The enemy sometimes is us and the fact that we were born a certain way and the fact that we were set up, so to speak. The fact is that we can't see past our circumstances and situations. We think:

"Well, it's going to always be like this."

The fact is that sometimes we see people live and then die and they don't change. We think:

"What hope do I have?"

Remember the "free" money? Do you see how it works? Now the Father is saying:

"I've got all of this for you."

We're not even willing to chase after him to get it because we have just convinced ourselves:

"This is how I am. This is my lot."

I see this tension in my life between prospering according to his will, and I mean not just money. I mean in the Spirit; learning to walk in the Spirit, to discern properly. To be better and better and better and to be able to execute that authority that he is giving us, better and better and better and all of that. At the same time, if you remember what I said earlier and not knowing all of what his plan is.

My wife and I went to Chicago a month or so ago or two months ago. We went out to the lake and hung out. I told her a story. I said:

“This place right here, this is where I got my call.”

You see, one day I was – I told you all before that I was a coke-head, a whoremonger, whatever you want to think of. If you want the list, catch me later. I’ll tell you all about it. I was delivered! I was walking in a freedom that I had never known, from those things. I found freedom; freedom from that stuff.

I was sitting out on the lakefront. I had a little green paper Bible. I was just reading it and I was going to read it. I remember saying to the Father in the language that I knew then:

“Lord, you know, I don’t know why you blessed me so to be free from all of that stuff.”

I said to him:

“What can I do for you? What can I do for you because you’ve done all of this for me?”

It’s almost like I don’t know, maybe that I wasn’t pulling my weight. I don’t know what it was, but I just wanted to somehow bless him. And he literally spoke to me, you all! He told me all of these things about the ministry that he had called me to and how he was going to use me to do this, that and the other. And I was like:

“No! No!”

You see, I knew that I was a dope head. I knew I was a thief. I knew I was a – I said that I would give you the list later, but here it is. I knew that I had been all of those things, and I was like:

“How could that be? I’ve never been to Seminary school or any such thing. That’s not possible.”

He said to me:

“I will use your life as Seminary school.”

I’m having this conversation with the living Elohim and I started to weep. I was thinking:

“I know I’m hearing him. I know I’m talking.”

I was like:

“This is crazy! That’s impossible Father. How could you do that?”

The Spirit spoke to me again and said:

“Read *Exodus* chapter...”

I think it was either four or three. I don’t remember the exact one. Just to show you how “green” I was, I didn’t know where *Exodus* was in the Bible. I went to the Table of Contents. The second book in the Bible; I didn’t know where it was. This is how early in my walk he was hitting me with this.

I opened the Table of Contents and I found *Exodus*. I went there and I read what it said. I burst out in tears because it was when Moses was called and he says:

“I can’t do this.”

I said:

“Okay. Okay Father. I’ve got no clue how you are going to work that out.”

Remember what I said earlier?

We’ve got to *agree* with him, even though we don’t see the end of it.

We don’t know how that is going to happen and how it is going to look when it happens. Here we are umpteen³ – can I use that? Here it is umpteen years later and I’m standing before his people, delivering his word. I am teaching with some measure of confidence, that he can use me to do it. So I want to encourage you that this whole idea of:

“This is how we did it. This is how we always have been. This is how I was born.”

This is in some ways, a flat-out excuse and a lie. None of us are bound to that stuff, in Messiah.

How are we born again? I said it was with an unbreakable frame. Earlier I said – I don’t know what I said, but something like an adequate frame⁴. This is an

³ Umpteen is a slang term that means “however many” and refers to an indefinite period of time.

⁴ Efraim said that we are born with a *solid* frame.

unbreakable frame. In other words, there is not anything that has been created that can crush the Spirit of Elohim in you, except that you hinder it, except that you quench it, except that you disagree with it. It comes down to us.

Efraim prays:

I pray Father that you would trouble the water in all of our hearts, Halleluyah, that we begin Halleluyah, to witness your power and authority in our life like never before.

How were we born again?

With unbreakable frame!

- Heart to rightly worship (bow to Him) not free!

To rightly worship and to be filled with and led by his Spirit, to renew our fleshy mind. That is where the discipline comes in. That's because we see a thing; even then we say:

"I saw what I saw."

Or:

"I heard what you said. I believe you, but I'm going to have to hide some of this in my heart because I can't just go out preaching yet. I don't even know where *Exodus* is at!"

You know how it is.

"What are you talking about, brother?"

“Well, Father told me I’m going to be a preacher-man!”

That’s not what he said, but:

“He told me that!”

So now I just start – I get at it. That’s not the path either.

I said renewing your fleshy mind. That is working on that discipline. The subtopic bullet here is that:

- A homosexual is a Torah breaker (*Romans* 1:18-22, 24-27)

Let that sink in for a minute. We have to let the Ruach sort of twirl that around in our beings. A homosexual is a Torah breaker. What’s the definition of a homosexual? Anybody have any idea? I know you don’t have a microphone. I just want to know if anybody has an idea. (Audience member speaks up.) That’s the word I was looking for. So does that include masturbation?

Every one of us, who have ever done that, has been guilty of a homosexual act. That is every last one of us who has ever done that. Now, some of you all never did. I know we all want to go there. This is Shabbat, but here is the deal. It’s so easy to look out there and say:

“What about them?”

But your own definition just said:

“What about me?”

What about you? So that whole “judging that you judge not” thing just came home to roost. I want to give us an

opportunity to be so real with each other and with ourselves and then with the Most High. Most important is that we give room to open up ourselves so that he can deal with us. That is because “religion time” is over!

We can play. We can play house in *this* house, just like we might have played house in the first play house. We can play house all our lives if we want to; dabbling a little bit at truth and putting on this mask. In Greek that word for hypocrisy (hupokrités) means a mask-wearer; like an actor in a play.

I was talking about cowboy movies – Clint Eastwood. Do you think he really is a cowboy? I don’t know, but he’s not. He’s acting! We must not be actors. We must be “be-ers.” [Doers]

Do you remember my last message? The Father just gave a nugget that I don’t think I will ever forget. It was that **being was our state**. We need to be. We need to “I AM” in the sense that He “AM” [is]. It’s hard to say those words because of the conjugation of that verb, but you get my point.

Again, I want to read that last bullet. I’m going to read it. Then I’m supposed to go to *Romans*. You all thought you were going to get away without seeing any *Romans* today, didn’t you? It’s not going to happen.

- A homosexual is a Torah breaker.

Let’s read *Romans* 1:18-22. Then we’re going to bounce a little bit through there. It says:

Romans 1:18-21 – “For the wrath of Elohim is revealed from heaven against all wickedness and unrighteousness of men, who suppress the truth in unrighteousness, ¹⁹because that which is known of Elohim is manifest among them, for Elohim has

manifested it to them. ²⁰For since the creation of the world His invisible qualities have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, both His everlasting power and Mightiness, for them to be without excuse, ²¹because, although they knew Elohim, they did not esteem Him as Elohim,”

That’s the trick right there. You see, even though we’ve been born again, even though we are walking in the Torah, you have to lift him up as Elohim all of the time! In the *Psalms*, David says this thing that always blesses me:

“Come and magnify Yahuah with me.”

It’s like lift him up. And you think:

“Yeah!”

We let you get your praise on. That’s fine, but the question is, is he really the head of our life? I can praise him for twenty minutes and go back to my junk. That’s not the path he really wanted. Verse 21 continues.

²¹“because, although they knew Elohim, they did not esteem Him as Elohim, nor gave thanks, but became vain in their reasonings, and their undiscerning heart was darkened. ²²Claiming to be wise, they became fools,”

²³“...and changed the esteem of the incorruptible Elohim into the likeness of an

image of corruptible man, and of birds and of four-footed beasts and of reptiles.”

This is the part that we all know. These are the “anti-homosexual” passages, so hang on here.

²⁴“Therefore Elohim gave them up to uncleanness in the lust of their hearts, to disrespect their bodies among themselves, ²⁵who changed the truth of Elohim into the falsehood, and worshipped and served what was created rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever. Amen. ²⁶Because of this Elohim gave them over to degrading passions.”

Do you see the perversion coming in right now? He gave them over to degrading passions.

“For even their women exchanged...”

Changed, perverted, turned over.

“...natural relations for what is against nature, ²⁷and likewise, the men also, having left natural relations with woman, burned in their lust for one another, men with men committing indecency, and receiving back the reward which was due for their straying. ²⁸And even as they did not think it worthwhile to possess the knowledge of Elohim,”

In other words, they didn’t want to hold onto him.

“Elohim gave them over to a worthless mind,”

I think it says “reprobate” in the *King James Bible*.

“...to do what is improper, ²⁹having been filled with all unrighteousness,”

But hold on. Hold on. When we read these passages, there is usually some flavor of gay-bashing, right? In the passages we read so far, they have had their turn and it's not good. They need to repent!

But watch this because Shaul (Paul) is not finished writing. All of that stuff about forgetting Elohim and not holding him in your mind and high up and lifted, etcetera that they were guilty of; caused them to do the things that they were doing. Those same things are going to address a whole other set of people. Now watch:

²⁹“...having been filled with all unrighteousness, whoring, wickedness, greed, evil; filled with envy, murder, fighting, deceit, evil habits; whisperers, ³⁰slanderers, haters of Elohim, insolent, proud, boasters, devisers of evils, disobedient to parents, ³¹without discernment, covenant breakers, unloving, unforgiving, ruthless;”

That list was longer than homosexuality and if I read that right, those things are because they have left off Elohim. In other words, if I remember the Most High, I'm not going to be disobedient to my parents, children. If I remember the Most High, I'm not going to steal your stuff.

I don't have to go down the list again. Actually, I will, a little bit later.

The point is that the effect of leaving off Elohim is not just homosexuality. It is perversion. Perversion includes much more than just men with men and women with women. This whole world is guilty of it and complicit with it. We say and do things that promote the stuff; which makes us (if we are not perverted), *perverts*. You all heard my definition.

I see what the Father meant when he said:

“I'll make your life a Seminary school.”

I was on a plane one day. I was reading my little Bible. It's my “derringer.” I guess that's what I do. This guy sat next to me and said:

“What are you reading?”

I said:

“I'm reading the Bible.”

He started up a conversation with me. Long story short, it turned out that this guy was saying that he “loves” the Lord, but he's gay. I know, I know. He's like:

“Well, you know, the reason that the Father rained fire and brimstone down on Sodom and Gomorrah wasn't because they were gay.”

This was the first time that I heard this. It was many years ago. I said:

“Really? I thought it was.

He said:

“No, it was because they were proud.”

I said:

“Ah, okay.”

I thought:

“Where did he get that from? Ah, okay.”

I started to search the Scriptures. I realized kind of where he got that from. In *Ezekiel* chapter 16, there is this discussion that the Most High is having about Yahudah [Judah]. He is saying this. I’ll read it. I’ll read one passage. The whole chapter is really good. It will kind of give you the right framework for this. I’m not going to go through the whole chapter, but it says:

“See, this was the crookedness of your sister Sedom: [Sodom] She and her daughter had pride, sufficiency of bread, and unconcerned ease. And she did not help the poor and needy.”

This is where he was coming from. I always love when people justify their aberrant behavior with the Scriptures. It’s awesome. So I’m looking at this passage and surely they had pride because you don’t go “up the down ramp” unless you have a lot of pride or are high on PCP or something. You just don’t do that.

There is an element of pride there, but that doesn’t take away the fact that *Wayyiqra* (*Leviticus*) says that with a

man laying with a man like a woman, it is an **abomination!** In the Kingdom, death was the answer to that.

So we go back and forth and back and forth and he tells me:

“Well, you make some good points.”

He wants to give me his card. What does the card say? It says that he is the head of the Gay Catholic Association of America, right? How did Efraim get in front of him? (Laughter)

You see, the Most High has his way of using us, if we are not afraid to open our mouth and say what we need to say. We, all of us here, probably know the word far more than we use personally and that we put out personally. We need to use some of that ammunition, Halleluyah. We need to consider his words like bullets in the chamber. Here I go with my cowboys and Indian stuff, right?

The only thing I am trying to say is that we really need to war against the world; whether it is impacting us directly, or whether it is those that are around us. We need to give the Father a hand up and say:

“Send me. I’ll go. I’ll do it.”

I know that that guy was convicted. I don’t know what he did after that, but he was convicted that maybe this line of thinking that he had was not quite right. That’s the best I can do. It’s not a debate like that.

“I won.”

It is just that I want to bear witness to the truth.

Pride is always an issue. I mentioned that earlier. I asked the question when I looked at this passage, it says:

“and she did not help the poor and the needy”

I thought, well, if there is a charitable foundation inside the lesbian/gay community, then I guess that it would be “okay.” I mean, if I use their logic – I say their logic because his card said that he was the leader of this group.

If I use their logic, then these passages say that the real problem was that they had sufficiency of bread and unconcerned ease. So if they give some of their stuff to the poor and the needy, then they can keep on doing these things. Then you can just jump right over *Leviticus*. You can jump right over *Romans* chapter one. Do you see that kind of perverted logic? Let us not be a victim of it ourselves.

You know, you go to court and you have your lawyer with you. His intention is not necessarily to get down to the bottom of the truth. His intention is to get you off. He uses the tricks and the techniques of the law to do that. He wants to show the judge and the jury why they should let you go. You are still innocent until presumed – however that goes. So he will stand up there and legally lie, in order to get you acquitted.

There is something wrong with that picture, but they do it in the natural. The scribes and the Pharisees have done it with the word. Maybe we’ve even done some of that. Let us not be like that. Let the word be true in every man, including ourselves. We lie, if that’s the case.

On the next slide I talk about the Great Deceiver.

The Great Deceiver!

- Does that mean that if sinners give to the cause that they will be ok?
- Is there any fix except to agree with Elohim?
- Don’t sign up for the Devil’s resurrection

If you want to bend or pervert the truth, you've got some help. And while he's not Almighty, he's mighty to help you. He can "hook" you up.

But if you begin to ask the Father to help you to love righteousness, then you will find that something strange happens. Here's another quick Efraim story.

I was struggling with some stuff that I knew was wrong. I'll tell it like it is. I had a girlfriend back in the day. This is in the green Bible days after the Father told me what he did. We were doing things we shouldn't be doing. I'll just leave it there. I was like:

"I'm tired of doing this. I don't want to do it any more."

But I kept finding myself in it, so I cried out to the Father:

"Help me, Abba. I don't know how to solve this. I don't want to hurt peoples' feelings."

One day, I got a phone call. It was her. She said:

"I left my umbrella at your house. Can I come by and get it?"

And I'm thinking:

"Aw, no. She left her umbrella at the house. She is going to come over here and one thing's going to lead to another."

I'm trying not to be too explicit here. I'm like:

“I can’t. Not again.”

I was weak. I was weak! So I said:

“Father, would you please help me? I don’t know how to deal with this properly.”

She rang the bell. I was going to take the umbrella down there and give it to her. You know:

“Here!”

[She would be] gone! That was my best deal with it, right? The people in the building knew her because she came by a lot. She just came. They let her in. She came in. I opened the door and there she was, right there. I’m like:

“Oh.”

Now she is going to come in, right? I tell you, man. If you all have ever seen a force field in [the show] Star Trek, the Most High put a force field there! She didn’t step through the threshold. I was confused because the door was open! She had been over there enough times, so walking in was a “no brainer.” She stood outside the door. It was like something was holding her. I said:

“Wait a minute. Let me get your umbrella.”

I reached around and got the umbrella and gave it to her and she left! Why am I telling this story? It is because I knew that what I was doing was not pleasing in his sight and I asked him to help me to break this thing, to get me out of it. That’s because I just still – you could say:

“Well, just be a man and do the right thing.”

Well, I couldn't! I didn't feel like I could. In the process, he was teaching me to trust him to fight my battles and to take care of the stuff that I couldn't take care of and to do the unseen where he blessed me.

I'm telling you all because no doubt, every one of us either will today or someday need a blessing from the Father like that. This great deceiver says:

“Handle your business. You're the man. Either do it because the Father 'knows your heart' so just keep doing it.”

Or:

“Just tell her this, that or the other. Work it out on your own!”

Well, you see, when you are really bought with a price, you don't really have a “your own” any more to work it out in. I'm not saying that we don't have any responsibility. Don't get me wrong. But you don't have to fight your own battles. You don't have to say:

“Well, you know, if I don't do it, it won't get done.”

That is in the sense of those things that the Father is concerned about. Sure, I had to put my own turban on this morning, so there is no confusion about that. But, you know, do I think that he could put a turban on? I do, but you know. All jokes aside.

My point is that the Father will fight your battles. He will deal with this great deceiver that is causing you to get trapped or to feel trapped and locked in and stumbling with things that you are stumbling in.

Does that mean that if sinners give to the cause, that they will be okay? Oh, I said that already. It goes back to the whole idea of “do I give” and that somehow outweighs my actions? You have seen people who go to the church or to the assembly and who say:

“We want to make an offering.”

But they are gangsters and you are like:

“I’m not taking that money. I don’t even need that money like that.”

Some people do, but righteously, you should not.

Is there any fix except to agree with Elohim? We talked about that already. Don’t sign up for the devil’s resurrection. In our flesh, Shaul says:

“There’s no good thing.”

But I’m here to tell you that the enemy is willing to raise your flesh back up, every day if you want – every day! If you do good one day and you decide:

“Well, you know, just a little bit of...”

He’s willing to help you out! He is! If you’ve lived “it’s not about me” for awhile, it doesn’t seem like it matters how long you have been in this. He’s still willing to help you out. He’s like:

“Aw Efraim, do you want to go down that path? I’m going to help you out.”

We don't want to sign up for his resurrection because his resurrection; although it seems like life, is really unto death.

Flee the works of the flesh. Are you reckoning yourself dead to sin? In other words, in your accounting of thought, do you believe that you are dead to sin?

Earlier we talked about what's in your mouth or what's on your tongue and I said:

“Let's go even deeper. Let's get before the tongue.”

Let's get before the tongue on this one too and consider myself. Meditate that.

“I'm dead to sin.”

Caterpillars don't hang out with butterflies. Who are you hanging out with? There is nothing wrong with a caterpillar or a butterfly, but if you are always with people who sin and if you are always reading stuff about sin and if you are always watching movies about sin and if your life is glorifying sin while you are a secret believer, then how do you expect anything to manifest other than sin?

The last question I ask is “are you born again?” We don't talk about that a lot in the Hebrew Roots or the Messianic faith, but there is a beauty to the Spirit of Elohim coming into you and birthing you in the spirit. If anybody thinks that I'm just taking the old “churchy” view on it, then look at your little ones that haven't had that experience yet!

You see, we are expecting them and sometimes we even expect the world to abide by Elohim's rules. How can they when they don't know them? It's a crazy expectation on my part to think that people are going to be kind and

gentle and the fruit of the Spirit will be operating in them when they don't have the Spirit! I mean, I had to catch myself.

“Well, hold it.”

I'm at work or wherever I'm at and it's like:

“What are you thinking, Efraiyim? This isn't Yisrael with all of the people loving Yahu'sha! This is the world you are in and out of.”

So it seems like we are all born “like this or that.” We can't rebrand sin like the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender (LGBT) community. We can't rebrand it. We can't go around saying:

“Well, I was just talking or just saying...”

And it would really be gossip. Stop it!

“I need these extra pencils.”

We were “Robin hood-ing” from work. In other words:

“They don't need it. We're taking from the rich and giving to the poor. The wealth of the wicked is stored up for the righteous.”

Really you are stealing from work. Stop it! The “just one more sip.” These are just some examples.

“I really do like him”

This is for the younger ones especially, but grown folks fall into this too.

“I really do *like* him, so I guess it’s okay?”

You know, you don’t want to give in to sin and to intimate relations on that “I guess it’s okay.” **Save yourself until you are married, folks, young people, those who aren’t married but who desire it.** Save yourself!

I always say that when you marry and you look at your wife or you look at your husband across from yourself, you don’t think:

“Well, I really wish that they had had sex with more people before they met me.”

Nobody says that! Nobody says that! It is like:

“It would be nice if this package was brand new – on both sides.”

That’s not just the women, but the men too. In other words, “virgin” is not a gendered word. It is for both. This is not conviction over the folks who have done it and repented, because there is no “un-ringing” that bell. But you don’t have to find yourself on the slippery slope of doing that thing over and over and over. That’s the encouragement to get from that.

Okay. How about that “it’s the latest style.” That’s that whole covetousness thing.

“You know, it’s the latest style. I have to get those clothes, that music (etcetera).”

Be careful! Let's read *1 Corinthians* chapter 6 and then we are going to get close to winding down. *1 Corinthians* chapter 6. You all have been very patient with me, and I appreciate it. I think I'm going to read from verse 7 or so. I love these passages because Shaul says some things that are really powerful. He says in verse 7 – it's hard to start there, but we'll start there anyway.

⁷“Already, then, there is a failure with you, that you have lawsuits among you. Why not rather be wronged?”

You see, selfishness doesn't let you be wronged.

“Oh, I'm going to get them. Vengeance is *mine* says Efraiyim!”

You all can fill in the gaps, but we know this is not true. That's not what the word says.

“Why not rather be cheated? ⁸But you yourselves do wrong and cheat,”

In other words, he's calling out hypocrisy.

“...and that to your brothers! ⁹Do you not know that the unrighteous shall not inherit the reign of Elohim?”

I think I might have put that in here. Huh.

⁹“Do you not know that the unrighteous shall not inherit the reign of Elohim? Do not be deceived. Neither those who whore,”

Shelach, Arthur talked a little bit about whoredom and adultery over the last few weeks. I'm not sure if he said this, but did you all know that in the ancient days and strangely enough even now, sex was used as an initiation into cults? When you went to the temple of "blah blah," there would be a cult prostitute that you could lie with. Her job was to become one with you because she was devoted to this thing. Now you've become one with her, so you've been initiated. That is because the devil clearly understands how these soul ties work. He understands better than we do.

When we see the word "whore" or "fornication," or the word behind it, (Greek: "pornea"), that is not just lying with somebody who is not your wife. Many times it is about co-prostitution.

I say that happened in the ancient days, but even now if somebody doesn't believe what you believe and you bind yourself to them, you have an influence that is stronger than you would ever want, toward something that you shouldn't be a part of.

"Do not be deceived. Neither those who whore, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor homosexuals,¹⁰ nor thieves, nor greedy of gain, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers shall inherit the reign of Elohim."

You see, I stumbled at "greedy of gain." I have a business that I'm working on. My wife will tell you that one of the challenges with my business is that it has this trap or potential trap of making people not know when to stop gaining. I know that that sounds wonderful. It's like:

"You mean I can have all the money in the world?"

Yeah, but it is like, do you want to get all the money in the world and lose your soul? Remember that passage: gain the world and lose your soul? (*Matthew 16:26*) I paused there because I am always warring against that. I'm always trying to make sure I stay on the right side of it. Sometimes I get too far on the left side of it and I think:

“Oh, you know. Alls I needs is just a food and a clothing.”

Right?

“I don't a need nothin' else because I'm just a humble servant of...”

You know what I'm saying, right? That's one extreme. Then the other side of me is saying:

“Efraiym. You know, the people you owe, you could pay them all off – today!”

The balance is this.

“Father, you show me because if you tell me that the time right now is to harvest and to take everything that I can because this is the moment to do that...”

I can't make a statement like that without the Spirit dealing with me. Do you see? Otherwise what I am doing is being left to my own devices once again; which is a recipe for disaster. So I paused at that because I got that check in my spirit, just because it's my thing to stay on top of. What's your thing? Stay on top of your thing. Get delivered from your thing!

Swindlers – I’m not calling anybody out there a swindler.

“nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers
shall inherit the reign of Elohim.”

Shaul says:

“And such were some of you.”

As much as I despise the activity of any flavor of sin, this message is not a bashing against the homosexual community as much as it is a bashing against the nature of perversion. Everything that falls in that category gets the same bashing to me. If somebody came up to me and said:

“Man, we’re going to rob a bank.”

I’m going to tell them that that is sin, just like anything else is sin.

“Well, Efraiym, it says that this is an abomination.”

“Yeah, I get it. It *is* an abomination. I get it.”

Shaul put it in the list he had in *1 Corinthians*. Then he says:

“And such were some of you.”

What that means is that there is somebody out there right now who is doing that flavor of perversion, but they are going to be one of us. There are some of us in this room that may have found themselves doing that sort of behavior, but now they are here and set apart. So let me read it:

“And such were some of you. But you were...”

What?

“...washed, but you were set apart, but you were declared right in the Name of the Master יהושה [Yahu’sha] and by the Spirit of our Elohim.”

You see, some people couldn’t have talked to that fellow on the plane like I did. I’m not boasting of myself. I am encouraging us all to be able to talk to the people. Some people can’t talk to others. You can go to a prison and talk to the gangsters and stuff.

Steve and his wife go to prisons all the time. Some of that is the nature of their call; what they have been through in life. But sometimes it is just that sin is sin! The remedy for sin is the remedy for sin! Don’t get the “ickies”! It might be icky, but don’t get the ickies and miss the opportunity to bless them with their opportunity to repent.

There is going to be more and more of this foolishness as time goes on. So we, the set-apart ones of the Most High; we are the light. We are the salt. Halleluyah! But we have to clean ourselves up first.

We saw who else was on the list. That list was a lot longer than sexual perversion. (*Romans 1:28-32*) Have you ever heard of this?

“Living in a state of horror?”

If anybody here is still reading their horoscopes, STOP! People do it. Then they come to assembly on Shabbat or some of them go to church on Sunday. Then they say:

“Give me that fortune cookie.”

That’s because they have to see what the inside of the fortune cookie says. Then they say:

“Man, it says such and such and such.”

We’re not supposed to go to soothsayers and fortune tellers and that manner of thing. It doesn’t say that it is because they won’t tell you the truth! It doesn’t say that! In *Deuteronomy* 18 it says (my paraphrase) because **it’s illegal**. We’re not supposed to! It is not like he said that they are automatically going to lie to you. Some people say:

“We don’t go to them because witchcraft is that they are just lying.”

Not all the time! Sometimes they might tell you something that’s true! But the thing is, did they tell you when you didn’t need to know? I don’t know. All I know is that **it’s illegal**. If I’m going to get something about things that I can’t see, I want them to come from Elohim. I don’t need any occult practices.

So how were we born again? Look who else is on the list. What about haters, jealous, covetous, Sabbath breakers? I don’t know why some people think like this. I was talking to a Jehovah’s Witness. He came to the house. He was telling me this, that and the other and about how homosexuals are going to hell. They are going to hell. I was like:

“Yeah, they are going to hell if they don’t repent, but I’m not going to be the one to judge them. They are going to hell.”

I let him talk and let him talk and let him talk. Then I said:

“Where do you get that from?”

And he said:

“Well, it’s right in *Leviticus*.”

He showed me where it was. Right? And I’m thinking:

“Oh, that’s the law!”

I said:

“That’s the Torah.”

And he said:

“But that’s still for today.”

Then he goes through this long story and I’m thinking:

“Hold it now. I have a Jehovah’s Witness following the law?”

And I said:

“What day do you worship on, bro?”

He said:

“No no, the Sabbath, it changed...”

And I said:

“Well, hold it. How is it that the same Torah you just went to, to run up and down these people, doesn’t apply to you?”

That’s what we must never be. We must never be those people. We are without excuse. We need that child-like faith versus being *childish*. Do you remember my list of what childish was like? We need to meditate and immerse ourselves in his laws and his commandments. We need to reject and renounce all of our agreements with death. Those ones who say:

“We’re always like that.”

Or:

“I don’t know what would happen if I don’t...”

“You know, I keep lying about this because if I don’t, then that’s going to happen.”

You don’t know what is going to happen if you trust the Most High. He’s likely to leave you a blessing. You are not going to get it as long as you are bound in a lie, so **we need to cry out for deliverance!** I think that this is understated. **We need to be begging and pleading that he would set us free!**

It’s like that story that I just told about that woman back in the day. Watch him show up! That is because according to Messiah – watch me now – if we ask for any things according to his will, he’s going to give it to us! You can stand on that, you all!

Now I have this stuff that is happening in my life that I know is sin. Does he want me to stay in it? Yes or no? No!

Now I'm crying out in agreement with him and I'm expecting him to deal with it. I'm saying:

"I'm trying to comply with you!"

And he is saying:

"Oh. I can help you with that! I'm going to work on you. It may not come this second, but I'm going to dismantle that stuff."

You know, when they disconnect Siamese twins, they have to be careful because they share this part and that part. He might have to do a little "surgery" on you. He might have to burn in your desire to get away from it. There are certain things that I don't go back to. It's not because I just know they are sin and I'm not going back to them. It is because I have developed a distaste for them. It is because I remember what it was like being bound to them. I was like:

"That's not happening again!"

We don't know why sometimes his timing is not exactly what we want it to be, but we need to cry out for deliverance. We need to keep believing him and being believable.

What does that mean? It means that you have to sow seeds of righteousness, even while you are struggling. That is so difficult for some people, but if we reap what we sow, think about it. You have planted all of this wicked seed. You start harvesting it. You don't like it one bit. You get so upset that you sow some more unrighteous seed. You are still going to reap that and you aren't going to like that one bit.

At some point you have to start doing good. You have to start sowing some righteous seed so that when the bumper crop of evil is over, you have some righteous fruit. Halleluyah. Don't let your issue keep you from doing right where you could do right. It's like:

“Well, you know Efraim, I've got this problem...”

Yeah, you might, but if the Father was waiting for us to be completely perfect before he used any of us, there would be a very short line. Let's just put it like that.

When I was born in the natural, I didn't know how to walk. I couldn't talk. I didn't know how to clean myself when I went to the bathroom. I didn't know how to read or write. I didn't know any of these things and yet I was disciplined to learn them. In the Kingdom, it is the same way. You have to take the yoke on, you all. We have to take the yoke on.

Even in a fallen world, we can put on the newness of life. If the Spirit of Messiah be in us, then we are a child of Elohim. Every day, you have a chance to experience what Yahu'sha did. In other words, he put on flesh. That's all that we are doing. He mastered it when he put it on. We have him in us. We can do the exact same thing. What a privilege that is to do what he did! I mean, to basically show the world in sin that you are not mightier than the Most High.

That's the end of the message other than my last slide, which says that repentance is the turning and not the arrival. “Shub” (Hebrew) is to turn. So don't get discouraged if you aren't quite there yet. Do the turning. Start walking the walk and let the Most High bless. Halleluyah!

I am going to end in prayer.

Father, in the name of Messiah, Yahu'sha, bless you for your word. And what was your word, let it stick to your people and what was not, let it fall to the ground, Abba.

And I ask that you would stir up in us, Abba, even your Spirit that we might see and be able to do what you desire for us in this very moment.

Would you break the covenants with death that we made? Would you tear down the strongholds that are in our life and cause us to agree with you where before today we had not agreed with you?

May you make yourself more manifest in our lives, in the name of Messiah. Halleuyah and Amein.