The Seven Churches of Revelation - Ephesus

CLEAN TRANSCRIPT | ALL NINE ORIGINAL CHAPTERS

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Chapter 1: Introduction to the series

Amen. Thank you, Alan from Alabama. Okay, here we are. The seven churches of Revelation, messages to the lampstands, a journey through time and prophecy. Why am I doing this lesson? Well, it just was one of those things that this wasn't even on my list. I keep a running list of things that I want to teach, things that I think would be good to teach. And uh this wasn't on it. And it just over the weekend, last weekend, it was fell on my heart. I don't know why. I don't know how. I just kind of just kind of landed in my lap. And I thought, yeah, this is something that we should probably teach sooner rather than later

because there's a lot to it. and um and I think it's going to help a lot of people understand a lot of things. Now, that last part of that little section there that says a journey through time and prophecy, um we're going to learn, we're going to see that the the teaching of the seven churches is both literal and allegorical at the same time. I I believe literal in the sense that they were actual churches. uh allegorical in the sense that they are prophetic and that's not really a good choice of words, allegorical. They are prophetic in that many people believe that the um the seven churches represent seven eras of the ekklesia through time. And so we'll look at that not today. We're not going to look at that part today, but we will look at the first church in Ephesus.

In the opening chapters of the book of Revelation, Yeshua dictates seven distinct messages to seven assemblies located in Asia Minor, Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamum, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia, and Laodicea. Though these were real first century congregations, the mystery of the seven churches stretches far beyond geography and history. The number seven itself signifies completeness in biblical thought suggesting that these letters collectively represent the full spiritual condition of the body of Messiah across all ages. Scholars have posited multiple layers of interpretation and they are historical. Each church describes the actual condition of a specific congregation in the first century. Prophetic. The sequence reflects successive periods in church history from the apost apostolic age to the end times. Congregational, each letter speaks to types of congregations found in any era.

And personal, each letter addresses heart conditions and challenges faced by individual believers. I would like to add a fifth one that I I didn't think of putting here until this very moment, but I have I have said in my book and elsewhere and in other lessons that I believe that what Yeshua did for the seven churches is a microcosm of broader evangelicalism today. And what do I mean by that? Well, as we know and we're going to see that Yeshua comes to each church, speaks to each church, and he does what? He does two things. He praises them for the things that they're doing right, and then he rebukes them for things that they're doing wrong. Some churches are worse off than others. It's my opinion that that

is a microcosm of evangelicalism today in the sense that if he were to do the same thing to say the Baptists, he would praise them for the things that they've got going on and then rebuke them for their

false doctrine who do the same thing to the say the Catholic Church or the Presbyterian church or the non-denominational church or the Messianic church. each each one of them are teaching some version of the truth whereas they have glaring weaknesses and other uh bad doctrines that they have adopted over time and would need to repent of. And it's it's funny to me because you and I uh all of us have come out of these churches, if we sat and and had an open forum discussion with each other and just shared where we come from and what our

background is, we'd be surprised that we're probably all over the map as it pertains to the religions we've been a part of and the the denominations that we've been affected by and and and when we bring all those all that baggage with us, when we're called out of the church system and into this new understanding that we've all adopted, we bring the baggage with us. And I think it was just Angela this morning in our fellowship who talked about how much unlearning she's had to do. And that's true for all of us. We've all had to unlearn things, unlearn the baggage that we carry with us. And what's happening in that is the wrestling process of becoming Israel.

The the father is chiseling away those parts of your understanding, those parts of your religion that are still hanging on like luggage until you're more rounded. And you know, we're never going to be perfectly rounded until Yeshua comes back. But I think the seven churches also represents that. And I should have articulated that in the lesson. For some reason, I didn't. But there you are. Now you have it. Each letter follows a divine pattern, a unique revelation of Christ, a commendation, a rebuke, a warning, a call to repentance, and a promise to the overcomer. What begins as a message to a small assembly becomes a timeless exhortation to those who have ears to hear. And that's a phrase that

you hear, no pun intended, uh over and over again throughout the throughout the seven churches.

Chapter 2: Debunking romantic notions

Did you want to say something, David? No, I just wanted to say also this is uh in general when we we when we look at Revelations and then specifically about this section talking about the different churches. Uh I think like as I mentioned, we've all gone through different struggles and challenges uh within our our previous fellowships. Uh but I think it's it's also a a good reminder that at least on this side of of heaven, there is not going to be a perfect congregation, right? Every congregation has its strengths and it has its weaknesses, right? So then at whatever stage you're at in your walk with God, you know, throughout your life, uh, you just have to keep that in mind that there will never be the perfect church, uh, and you have to prioritize, I guess,

what is important and what is, you know, things that you could, uh, you know, have grace for, if you will, right? Question of doctrine that we talked a lot about is that a question that you, you know, that's a question you need to say, okay, is that more important than quote unquote fellowship, right? Uh so I think it's important to to keep that in mind and it's it's a it's a good depiction of any group you know uh that that uh is trying to follow God that there will never be a group that that's perfect uh on all accounts going to the Bible. Amen. Amen. Thank you for that. Yes, that's very true and I agree wholeheartedly. When most people hear the phrase the seven churches of

revelation, they imagine sanctuaries lined with pews court choir singing from polished stages and believers gathered in ornate buildings that carry the name church. That's we think that that's because what's Christianity has become today, right? But the churches in of Ephesus, Serena, Pergamus, The

Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia, and Laodicea or Laodicea, I I can never know how to say that were were nothing of the sort. They were not denominations. They had no cathedrals. There were no budgets for lighting systems or coffee bars. What they did have was pressure. Pressure from Rome, pressure from pagan neighbors, from Jewish opposition, and most of all from the spirit of Yeshua who walked among them with eyes like fire. Here's the scriptures say. These believers met in homes under threat, in simplicity, and

with a reverent fear of God. They were not lawless. They honored the commandments of Yehovah while bearing testimony to Yeshua. Revelation 14. They understood the cost of disciplehip. Today's churches, in contrast, are too often defined by comfort, consumerism, and compromise. Many have traded obedience for emotionalism. In other words, it's all about what they feel rather than what they do in obedience. Traded the Torah for tradition and prefer applause over repentance. Seven churches were not praised for their size, their music, their programs. They were measured by their faithfulness, their endurance, and their loyalty to the truth. Before we study these seven assemblies, we need to lay aside our romantic notions. These were not perfect communities, but they were real, raw, challenged, tested,

and called to overcome. And Yeshua's words to them are not mere history. They are judgment, warning, and hope to all who would call themselves his church, his ekklesia today. They were indeed real bodies of believers. But the questions that we're going to answer the course of this small series is, were they more than that? And I think just from our discussion thus far, I think we know the answer already.

Chapter 3: John's vision of Messiah

So we need to start with John's vision in understanding uh this message. Revelation two, we see in verses 9-20, I John, your brother and companion in the tribulation and kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ was on the island that is called Patmos for the word of God and for the testimony of Jesus Christ. I was in the spirit on the Lord's day. Why did I highlight that, Glenn? Number two, I high I don't know why you I highlighted I highlighted that because this is a little freebie I thought I'd toss in there. A lot of churches use this verse to prove that the Sabbath was moved to Sunday. And I don't know why in the world they how do they get that from this?

There's two things that you need to understand about this phrase. One, there's nothing here that says that this was a Sunday. Two, we have this word, the Lord's day. In the Bible, the Lord's day is little different than the day of the Lord, right? The Lord's day is always Shabbat from cover to cover. It never changes. What's the day of the Lord? Glenn number two, that's his return, right? the fearful day of the Lord when he returns and that's different than the Lord's day. So, it's important for us to understand that. But I just thought that would toss that in. And I behi I heard behind me a loud voice as of a trumpet saying, "I am

the Alpha and the Omega." In Hebrew, that is, I am the olive and the Tav, right? The first and the last. and what you see, write in a book, and send it to the seven churches, which are in Asia, to Ephesus, to Smyrna, and the rest. Then I turned to see the voice that spoke with me. And having turned, I saw seven golden lampstands. And in the midst of the seven lampstands, one like the Son of Man, clothed with a garment down to the feet and girded about, the chest with a golden band. His head and hair

were like white wool, as white as snow. And his eyes were like a flame of fire. His feet were like fine brass, as if refined in a furnace.

And his voice is the sound of many waters. He had in his right hand seven stars. Out of his mouth went a sharp two-edged sword, and his countenance was like the sun shining in its strength. And when I saw him, I fell at his feet as dead. But he laid his right hand on me. Now, we're going to look at the importance of the right hand in a moment. But once you know the importance of the right hand, then you know how meaningful this moment is that Yeshua laid his right hand on John, saying to me, "Do not be afraid. I am the first and the last. I am he who lives and was dead.

And behold, I'm alive forever more. We looked at that verse very closely, didn't we, when we were talking about the Trinity. Because throughout the scriptures, those titles, first and the last, Alpha and the Omega, olive and the Tav have always been used for Yehovah. And here it's being used for Yeshua who are they are one and the same who was dead and is alive. So some of you people who have a hard time understanding the oneness of the father have to wrestle with that verse. But that's another lesson. I have the keys of Hades and of death. Write the things which you have seen and the things which are and the things which will take place after this. The

mystery of the seven stars which you saw in my right hand are the seven golden lampstands. Those are the seven churches. The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches. And the seven lampstands which you saw are the seven churches. So, I'm reading this section of scripture before we start looking at the letters to the churches to give us kind of an understanding and definition of words that are going to be used uh moving forward. Here's something that I wrote in my book as I taught a bit on the seven churches. I wrote that one might think that a church formed within 50 years of the death and resurrection of its Messiah would be one of strength and resolve.

A church built free of the tradition and idolatry that Yeshua spent so much energy rebuking during his ministry. Our Lord's letters to the churches prove otherwise. And that was something that really did stand out to me as I was writing that section of the book. cuz cuz you know we're we're 2,000 years removed and in our pride we think we've got it all figured out right in the whichever decision religion that we happen to live in or or or exist in. And here within 50 years of Yeshua the churches are already going astray.

Chapter 4: Analyzing the Ephesian letter

So we're going to start looking at Ephesus. Let's look at Ephesus. What do we know about Ephesus? That was the church who had left their first love. So, here we are. Revelation 2 1-7. Where do we start in this verse? Well, let's read it first. To the angel of the church in Ephesus, right? These things, says he who holds the seven stars in his right hand, who walks in the midst of the seven golden lampstands. I know your works, your labor, your patience, that you cannot bear those who are evil. And you have tested those who say they are apostles and are not, and have found them to be liars. And you have preserved and have patience, and have labored for my name's sake, and have not become weary. Nevertheless, I have this against you, you've left

your first love. Remember, therefore, from where you have fallen, repent, and do the first works, or else I will come to you quickly, and remove your lampstand from its place, unless you repent. But this you have, that you hate the deeds of the Nicolaitans, which I also hate. He who has an ear, let him hear

what the spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes, I will give to eat from the tree of life which is in the midst of the paradise of God. So, we're going to spend time this morning breaking down these thoughts that Yeshua gave to the church in Ephesus. But where do we start? Well, let's start right here. To the angel church of Ephesus. Right?

What does this mean? To the messenger. To the messenger. I always Well, speak up, Glenn. Number two, that's what it means to to the messenger. Okay, but what does it what does it mean? Who's he talking to? Is he talking to an angel? Is he talking to a messenger? They're really the same thing. Are they the same thing? Okay. Well, let's look at that. Let's look at that. The phrase, this phrase has led to multiple interpretations, but biblically and linguistically, there are two primary views that we have to look at. And you can tell just by our brief comments here a second ago that we have to look at these. Are they actual angels? Well, Daniel 10, Daniel 20, Daniel 12, or Daniel 10 13:es 20 and 21 and Daniel

12 talk about specific angels like Michael shown to have territorial oversight over certain nations. Michael's territorial oversight was Israel. But we see phrases like the prince of Persia or Michael your prince. So, we have biblical reference to angels having territories that they watch over. In Matthew 18, Yeshua says in heaven, speaking of children, their angels always see my face or the face of my father, referring to children. But at the same time, it kind of establishes a precedent for angelic guardianship. When he says in heaven there are angels, it begs the question, well, do we all have angels or just the children have angels? Okay. But but there's a possibility children and we are all children. Yeah. Even Glenn who's 90 years old. Um

old brother, he's not 90. uh Hebrews 11 on Hebrews 1, I'm sorry. Speaking of angels, are they not all ministering spirits sent forth to minister for those who will inherit salvation? So again, over and over again, we are seeing this Psalm 34:7, the angel of the Lord encamps around all those who fear him. Now, in this particular case, I think Psalm 34 isn't a reference to an angel. I think it's a it's a reference to Yeshua himself, but that's just my two cents. So, are they actual angels or are they human messengers? Luke 7 and Luke 9, John the Baptist disciples and Yeshua's emissaries are both called angeloy, which in the Greek is messengers. In Malachi 2, the priest

is called the messenger of the Lord of hosts, which matches the idea of a spiritual leader bearing divine instruction. The rebukes and exhortations in Revelations 2 through3 are mostly concerning the congregation's conduct and would logically be addressed to the human leadership responsible for guiding the church. Now, this is just that's just me. It's my opinion when I think about the to the angel of the church of Ephesus and then remembering that he's talking about their conduct. What good is it to me telling these things to an angel if the angel can't communicate these things to the church? Because we have no record of an angel communicating these things to churches or people like this. We do

have record of their involvement, but to me it makes more sense that he's talking about a human messenger in this case. So

Chapter 5: The posture of the believer

David, I I also subscribe to that opinion that he's talking to uh leaders of the church who according to the Bible both in the Old Testament and the New Testament, the spiritual leaders of the church, may they be primarily the elders who are responsible for managing the affairs of the church, but also

evangelists who are responsible for spreading the good news. But interestingly in that scripture that you referenced there in in Malachi 2, I was looking at that and specifically the focus there is and and by the way this pattern of talking uh to leaders of the church and condemning them for not following God's ways is not the first it's not the only place in the Bible, right? We see that in many other places.

uh the the the importance of the responsibility that God bestows on leaders to oversee the flock to protect the flock and most importantly and this is the comment I was going to make about Malachi uh 2 is the important in instructing them in God's way and in specifically in Malachi 2 the word Torah is referenced multiple times and and yes people use the word Torah as the general term is is to say instruction or divide instruction ractions. But in this particular case, it also is talking specifically about training them in the Torah, right? And in follow and and as a representation of these are God's ways, right? And so, uh, I just wanted to, uh, add that extra layer of of the responsibility in God's eyes of the

spiritual leaders of these congregations to teach people the Torah. Amen. Amen. So, we're in agreement. Are you are you in agreement, Glenn? Number two, that we're talking about human messenger here. Yeah. I Well, I just wanted to point out that that the word in, you know, if you go to Young's literal, he doesn't ever use the word angel. He always uses for for Malik, he uses messenger or for Angelos, he uses messenger because it's only context in which you can tell whether it's physical or whether it's spiritual. Amen. All right. Well, if this interpretation is correct, then Yeshua is holding each leader accountable for the spiritual health of his congregation. Which reminds me of Ezekiel 3 where we learn about the watchman. Right now, the

watchman isn't necessarily a pastor, but it it carries some pretty significant meaning here. Son of man, I have made you a watchman for the house of Israel. Therefore, hear a word from my mouth, and give them warning from me when I say to the wicked, "You shall surely die," and you give him no warning, nor speak to warn the wicked from his wicked way to save his life, that same wicked man shall die in his iniquity, but his blood I will require at your hand." So, if this interpretation is correct and Yeshua is dealing with the the leadership, if you will, uh the messenger of these congregations, then it's pretty weighty. It's pretty heavy. And it's also heavy for us

because you and I throughout the course of our days and weeks and months have opportunity to talk to people. We're in conversation with people all the time and something comes up where now you're talking about spiritual matters. And the question is, do we have a responsibility when we hear something that somebody says or somebody does to comment on it? Is it our business within the church? Yes. Paul says it is. Yes. Because if you if you know he puts a special blessing on people that bring an Aaron brother back into line. Yes. Now let me pose a a more a more contradicial question to you. We know that in the scriptures as you just referred to Paul talks about the difference between rebuking those inside

the church and rebuking those outside the church. Right? We know that the Old Testament says the to rebuke the wicked is folly is is not is yes don't rebuke a mocker. However, there are many people in the world who call themselves church. Now, they may not be in our eyes because they're, you know, they're doing all kinds of worldly ungodly things. They don't they don't observe the Torah. They have bacon for breakfast. They're, you know, they're cussing. They're, you know, that person that we all know and yet they still consider themselves a part of the church. Do we have a responsibility to that kind of person? Yes. Explain. Well, scripture says to him who has an ear and is willing to hear. Okay. And I would agree. I would agree.

If someone is is is taking themselves or calling themselves a member of the church at any level, then they're fair game in my opinion to where we should say something in love. I'm not talking about rebuking them. David, did you want to say something? No, I just wanted to say that that just that little extra caveat that you put at the at the end is communicating these things in love, right? And and you've had a whole lesson about the quoteunquote Torah terrorists. And I think that it's in many times it's a natural tendency of people especially those who are discovering new things and they're maybe kind of reconciling the way of their life before in their beliefs and now this new uh revelation that God has has brought to their attention and then we're eager and excited to share it with other people.

Uh so I I think that the key is just to rem to remember to do this in love. Yes. One more thing, Glenn. One more comment, Paul. I I think it's follow It may It may have been in the general epistles where it says to always have an answer for the hope that lies within you. That means somebody has to ask. Yes. And they do all the time, right? Uh okay. Uh Revelation 2:1. These things says he who hold the seven stars in his right hand and walks in the midst of the seven golden lampstands. I told you we were going to take a brief look at this. The importance of the right hand. The right hand through scripture represents power and authority. We see it in verses

like Exodus 15. Your right hand, O Lord, has become glorious in power. Your right hand, O Lord, has dashed the enemy in pieces. The right hand is the place of security and preservation. And by the way, I chose one verse for each of these categories. There are dozens. Yes, sir. There are dozens. And I just didn't have the time to go through all of them. But the right hand is the place of security and preservation. Psalm 139. Even there your hand shall lead me. Your right hand shall hold me. The right hand as a place of honor and intimacy. Mark 16. He was received up into heaven and sat down at the right hand of God. So many of you probably know this. For those that you don't, the right hand in

Hebraic thought or even in scripture is dominant, is special, um is powerful, is secure, is intimate. And so when Yeshua places his right hand on John's shoulder, it means something. All these little details that you would otherwise read right past in your regular Bible study actually have depth and it's up to us as the student to dig that up as treasure so to speak. And then it says here that he walks in the midst of the seven golden lampstands. Another thing that I think many of us forget, Leviticus 26, I will set my tabernacle among you. My soul shall not uphore you. I will walk among you and be your God, and you shall be my people." Now, when this was going on in real life, could they see

a a physical figure walking among them? Maybe I don't know. Do we see that other than in certain places? We see the fire by night and the smoke by day. Uh but nonetheless, he still walks among them. And do you think he's walking among us today? I think so. I I really do. And we're going to see here in a moment how important that is. Deuteronomy 23 is an interesting verse when you read it in context. The Lord your God walks in the midst of your camp to deliver you and give your enemies over to you. When you read that in context, you know what he's talking about? Feces. Yes. He He's saying, "If I'm walking through your camp, I don't want to see that nastiness.

Put it away. Dig dig a hole outside the camp because I am holy. I don't want to see that stuff." Right? And and that's important because if you're alive during the second exodus and you're encamped out in the hills somewhere, he's going to be walking amongst your camp. I really believe that. And he doesn't want to be walking across your trash. So Yehovah walking in our midst means that he is not distant or removed. And quite honestly, I would share that through the course of my life as a believer, this has

been something that I've had to overcome in my own heart is as I'm praying, spending time with him in prayer, I I feel I have to overcome that feeling

of my voice is just bouncing off the the walls here as I'm praying. praying or if I'm outside not he's not really hearing me. I've had to I have had to tell myself over and over and over again that when I pray my voice is bouncing off the walls of heaven and he's listening to me. But it's something that I have to overcome. It's this feeling that he's not that he's distant or removed. And I was just having this conversation with my wife just yesterday talking about our prayer life and how in the course of my life I've had Arizona where I was converted had the mountains that surround the valley. had the the forest just 2 hours away where I could

disappear to a lake somewhere and just sit on a mountain, Peak or Camelback Mountain and climb it for 13 15 minutes and and be looking over the city and and getting that quote unquote feeling that I'm I'm near him. I go out to Washington where David lives and there's a lake nearby uh my sister's house where I go and sit by myself and I feel like I'm in the presence of God even when it's completely silent. You know, I've had to overcome that battle that he's distant or removed, but he's not. The scripture says he's walking in our midst. He's here even now present inspecting, dwelling, and engaging with his people. His presence is not passive and it demands holiness.

It reflects his relationship to us and assures accountability and protection. And I I I I put this here for for fun. Do you remember this bumper sticker? I used to see this bumper sticker all the time. Jesus is coming. Look busy. Well, I used to laugh at that. But the truth is when you when you think about the fact that he is present then it does make you feel more accountable. It does make you think twice about the things that come out of your mouth or the things that your eyes see, the things that your eyes watch. He walks in our midst. He did then and he does now.

Chapter 6: The warning of the first love

I know your works, your labor, your patience, that you cannot bear those who are evil. And you have tested those who say they are apostles and are not found them to be liars. You have persevered and of patience and have labored for my name's sake and have not become weary. David, which one of us would not love to hear these words spoken about us? Right. These are very encouraging words from Yeshua. All of them. I mean, let's break them down. Works. I know your works. That's obedience. In the New Testament, the word works is usually it's replaces the idea of obedience. But they're working. They're being obedient. They're hardworking. They're patient. They're intolerant of evil. They're testing people. They're testing things. They're they persevere.

They labored in the name. No weariness. I mean, if I had brothers and sisters in my life that matched that, or if I had a congregation of believers that matched that, I would feel pretty darn good about where I'm at. And yet, nevertheless, nevertheless, I have this against you that you have left your first love. How would you define what what does that mean? I I'm going to share with you what I think it means, but I'd like to hear from the two of you. What does that mean? Yes, Gordon, jump right in there. But whenever you first begin to uh when God's calling you, he opens your mind and you begin to come to a knowledge of the truth, it is a very very exciting time.

And you you begin to give up bad habits, you begin to embrace the good habits, you begin to follow the the Torah, and you receive some immediate uh uh blessings. uh you know you're you're on a spiritual

emotional high. Complete that thought. You you start off high but well you know then then you get into the grind. Okay. And and you know it it's not new anymore. The new wears off. It's not not shiny anymore. Then then all of a sudden um you realize your calling brought a big target on your back and now Satan's got his his uh you know his guns aimed at you and you begin to experience trials and then you you begin to understand

that that we achieve salvation through much tribulation and then then it's oh what did I sign up for? Yes. Great. David the what he said this concept of leaving your first love and and that like like you both mentioned a minute ago that initial excitement commitment conviction to follow God's word uh and then it quote unquote tapers off or it weakens is a common theme in the Bible. It's not only con you know only specific to Ephesus. I think we all go through that. The Bible talks a lot about this whole concept of persevering, of running the race, right? Recognizing that this is a quote unquote marathon. This is a journey uh that has trials of which also we've talked about before, how they strengthen us and they help us

grow, right? So, it this is a natural condition, you know, human condition, if you will, that we all experience in our in our spiritual life. And it's something that is good to kind of evaluate from time to time. Where am I at? Right? Am I really as excited as I was before? And and it's scriptures like this that kind of remind us, oh, we need to wake up here. We need to go back to our our first love and in the way that we were forgetting. Amen. So, a congregation or a single person can be doctrally sound, morally discerning, and even endure hardship for Yeshua's name and still fall under his rebuke for having abandoned the very

love that gave these works their meaning, which is, I think, what Glenn and and David just said. What does this look like? And we're going to walk through this and talk about what this looks like. But first, we have to answer some questions. What is first love? Right? That's that's how my brain works. When I look at that that phrase, you've left your first love. The first thing I ask myself, what does it mean? What does that first love mean? We all have definitions of love. But biblically, what does it mean? How did they attain it? How did Ephesus attain that first love? And how did they lose it? So, let's look at it. First love, there it is in the Greek. I'm not going to try to say it. Refers to the initial devotion. This is what Glenn number two

was just talking about. The initial devotion, the intense loyalty, loyalty, and passionate affection a people or a person shows toward God when first entering into a relationship with him. Right? And we can all attest to that. We can all attest to that moment for us. Where where did it happen for Ephesus? Well, as luck would have it, the Bible records it in Acts 19. The man in whom the evil spirit was leaped on them and overpowered them and prevailed against them. So they fled out of that house naked and wounded. This became known both to all Jews and Greeks dwelling in Ephesus. and fear fell on them all, and the name of the Lord Jesus was magnified.

And many who had believed in Ephesus came confessing, telling their deeds. Also, many of those who had practiced magic brought their books together and burned them in the sight of all. They counted up the value of them and totaled 50,000 pieces of silver. So the word of the Lord grew grew mightily. So these people that we read about in Acts 19 from which the church began were the first Ephesian believers. And what do we see about their initial response? We see that it was one of immediate confession and repentance even to the point of financial sacrifice. They were confessing. They're telling

their deeds, bringing their idols, burning them, counting. I mean, 50,000 pieces of silver, that's a lot of money in those days, right? So, this was a a cost

to their commitment to Yeshua. But what happened as a result? As a result of that immediate, passionate, loyal devotion to Yeshua, the word of the Lord grew mightily and prevailed. Now, I I don't like to do this very often, but I do like to look at patterns in scripture. And when I look at verses like this, I see a pattern. I almost see a recipe. a recipe for if you want the word of the Lord to grow mightily and to prevail in your area. Well, look at the Ephesians and how they did it and does that need to happen in your life? That's a great question. And again, I I mentioned this a moment ago. How many of us could say that this type of activity, this type of response also defined our beginning with Yehovah?

There was an excitement. There was a refreshing felt like a new lease on life, a new beginning. We loved him and were so grateful for the gift that we had received. And we also believe at that moment his name was being magnified in our lives. I can certainly recall the day it was for me 1988, June 30th, 1988. We were in the rented 7th Day Adventist building where we rented because they worship on Saturdays and we rented it on Sundays. And I was 20 years old, 21 years old, something like that. And and um and I remember having confessed my sins. When I say confess my sins, I don't mean, yeah, I've lied and yes, I've cheated and yes, I've, you know, stole this or that. No, I confessed the

darkest deeds of my life, which to any normal person would make them blush. And you know what? You have those deeds in your life as well. We all do. The the stuff that I confessed was the stuff that I thought no man would ever know. I would never bring this to light ever think and yet I confessed it. And that there was some freeing to that. You know, if I was to go back and talk to those men, I still know him by name and face and I was to ask them, "Hey, brother Mike, do do you remember the things I confessed?" He's not going to know. He's not going to remember because he's heard so many other people confess their sins and he's got the same sins.

We get so prideful about confessing our sin, don't we? As if we're the only one doing these dark deeds. No, we're not. But I remembered that feeling that that sense of weightlessness that I had at that moment. And as Glenn number two said, something always comes along. Life, right? Life comes along. And this we have to look at how they lost it because we struggle with the loss ourselves.

Chapter 7: Causes of spiritual decline

Scriptures don't directly tell us how they lost their first love. But it doesn't really need to, does it? We know what this looks like. Many of us have experienced it or are experiencing it right now. Routine without relationship. They like us can drift into externalism or mechanical religion. What is externalism? It's having an excessive regard for your outward appearance. You you're more concerned about how you look, about how spiritual you appear. You love to play the part without having to live the part. And isn't that the world's greatest accusation against the church? It's so true. They preach it, but they don't live it. But it's not new. Jesus tells Jesus accusation. Exactly. Back then as well.

Goes all the way back then. So yes, routine without relationship, law without love. And this really um nails the messianic group or the Torah observant, Torah pursuant group more than anybody. You value truth over relationship with him and others. Think about that for a sense. You have a rigid obedience without intimacy. We keep the Torah and the New Testament instruction, but the joy and relational aspect is absent. The heart is disengaged even as the hands continue to serve. That defined

me before I ever discovered the ways of the Lord. My heart was already disengaged in so many ways. But I still served. Yeah. I was still there to give to people. Isaiah 29, this people draw near me with their mouths but have removed their hearts from me.

And again, just as David said, this is not new. It's happened then. It's happening today. Doctrinal accuracy without compassion. Torah terrorism. We talked about this, didn't we? Constantly correcting others or exposing error, but you lack gentleness, grace, and love for people. Taking pride in being right. You may win arguments, but you damage relationships and misrepresent Messiah's character. This This is how one loses their love, their first love. These are really titles. There really could be many subtitles underneath them. I just didn't have time to go through it all. But in my life, yeah, I get busy. I forget. And um I have to be reminded over and over and over again of what I've been saved from and what my life could have been.

One of the things that my wife and I have done together many times is to sit and consider where our lives would be. Had Yeshua not pulled us out of the world, who we'd be married to, where we be living, how many divorces we may have had, how many broken families we may have had, what career we may have been in if not for him. Scary. It is scary. And then finally, duty over worship. I made this its own category. Of all the churches in Revelation, Ephesus had the most damaging issues and perhaps the most damning. They were commended as a church of labor and good works that stood on a pedestal of truth. Unafraid of standing toe-to-toe against heretics, all of which sound pretty good until you see the rebuke that they had lost their first love. What does it mean

to lose your first love as it pertains to worship? It means that you've descended into mechanical worship. You do what you do out of duty and a sense of obligation instead of gratitude for the salvation of your souls. Religion in its ugly sense is ultimately the result. You end up with a congregation of churchgoers who legalistically show up from service to service in the spirit of loyalty, but have no real depth of conviction and usually disappear when life's troubles come upon them. The spiritual anchor in their lives is more about the benefits that come from the church than it is about loving and holding to the truth. Sadly, the Ephesian church did not repent. Today in modern day Turkey, the population is 99% Muslim.

Their lampstand was removed. So it affects us all and it's important that we learn these lessons. Hence Yeshua's words, he who has an ear, let him hear. So what's the solution? What's the solution? David. David number one. We lost David number two, didn't we? Did he I'm not sure he's still with us. Maybe he comes back and forth, but yeah. What's the solution? Well, the scriptures tell us what the solution is, right? Remember remember. And that's what we were just talking about. We have to be reminded. Yeah. Of the things that he did for us and where we used to be. And he says, "Remember therefore from where you have fallen. Repent and do the first works, or else I will come to you quickly and remove your lampstand.

Remember from the height from which you have fallen, which means where you were before Christ saved you and the joy you had when he saved you. Repent and do the first works. What does that mean? It simply means return to your obedience. Because that's funny. It's funny how that works when you start drifting. And a very wise pastor once told me he w I correction he wasn't a pastor. He was a friend of mine in the church. He's a big fisherman and we used to go out fishing and we were on his little boat in Lake Pleasant in Arizona and we were 2 feet from the shore and we were fishing the

shoreline and before you knew it we looked up and our boat had drifted 100 feet from the shoreline. We didn't even realize it.

And he made that point to me at that day on that day. He goes, "That's like our faith. We're on this boat and we're close to the shore when we don't ever realize that we look up and we're a mile away." And and that's how it happens with our obedience. We get so caught up in discovering truth that sometimes we forget how to continue to obey that truth. You start loosening. So his result, his his answer was repent and go back to that immediate that immediate response of repentance. And that's a lesson for us all. And then he goes into this Nikico stuff, this nickel stuff which I also hate. There's a lot of opinions on what this means.

He hates the deeds of the Nicolaitans. Uh which you also hate or which I also hate. That word nika nicicoatans comes from two Greek words nikos which means to conquest and leos which means leoty or people. So really the word nicicolein means to con to to conquer the people. That's what the word nicicoatan comes from. Well how does that manifest itself in the church system? It started even back in these days. How does it manifest itself? Literal meaning conqueror of the people or one who subdues the leyordium. Yes, this etmology supports the interpretation that the nicels represented a group of a group promoting hierarchal hierarchial control, moral compromise and abuse of the spiritual authority. What's he talking about here?

Well, in our church system today, we see this. We see the practice of the nicicoatans in almost every congregation. You have this topdown tree of authority. The Catholic church, it ends at the pope. In my old church, it used to end at one man as well. Even though that's not the case today. Now, it ends at the person leading the church. And we had these sub layers of leadership until you got down to the nobodies, the ley, the rank and file we used to call them. Just thinking about it blows my mind, you know. And this is the kind of thing that Yeshua hates. Remember, he even said it was the Gentiles who lorded over them. This shall not be with you. And so we are equal in his eyes.

Do I have the a talent or a gift to teach? Yes. But that doesn't make my gift any greater than your gift of service or your gift of whatever it is. We're using it to, you know, balance out the body of Christ. Um, and that's what he's telling the church here. So let's finish up here.

Chapter 8: The promise of the tree

I think this is my last slide. Revelation 2:7, he who has an ear, let him hear what the spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes, I will give to eat from the tree of life which is in the midst of the paradise of God. Glenn, number two, do you have opinions about the tree of life? Do I have an opinion about it? Yeah, opinions period. You don't have to share it. Just have my concept. Absolutely. Yeah, I think we all do. Let's explore this for a moment. Uh the Bible, we say the tree of life was in the garden, right? We know this. Genesis 2. This is going to this this this this might check your brain a little bit because as as I was going through this,

it checked mine. In Genesis 3, we see the Lord God said, "Behold, the man has become like one of us to know good and evil." This is after he sinned, after Adam sinned. And now, lest he put out his hand and take also the tree of life and eat and live forever. So he, we know the story, he had to remove the tree of life from the garden so that in Adam's fallen state, he would not eat of it and live forever. Now the question is, up until that point, had Adam already eaten of it? We don't know. We don't know. But he

didn't remove the tree from the garden. He removed the people. I I apologize. Yes. Correct. He did. He He didn't remove the tree from the garden. He removed the people. So, I'm sorry. Yes, that's correct. But the the

question I had to have asked is up until the fall had he and and Eve partaken of the tree of life. And the Bible doesn't tell us yes or no, but it does tell us he lived to be 900 years. And the reason I'm asking this question is going to become clearer at the end of the section. So just keep that in mind. Okay. The verb structure in this sentence implies that eating from the tree would sustain life indefinitely. This is why Yehovah drives Adam and Eve out and blocks asex access to the cherubam with cherubam. The implication is not that the fruit grants instant immortality, in other words, one bite and it's done, but that continued access ensures continued life.

And that's where I land on this personally. Let's read that again. The implication is not that the fruit grants instant immortality, meaning Adam bites once and he has eternal life, but that his continued eating ensures continued life. Now, is that right? Let's continue. Revelation 22:2. The tree of life which bore 12 fruits. This is this is Revelation now. The tree of life which bore 12 fruits with each yielding its fruit every month. What did we learn in that one verse right there, guys? He's talking about the afterlife. He's talking about the millennium. He's talking about life after Yeshua comes and and even time after that. But there's months. Time still ticks. The leaves of the tree were for what?

For healing of the nations. Okay. So here we learn that the tree of life is bearing 12 different fruits. Right? Does that mean that each fruit has its own purpose? This fruit does this. This fruit does that. Doesn't that make sense today when you think about the herbs and the plants that grow? Herbalists will tell you, you want heart health, have these fruits and vegetables. You want better eyesight, eat these fruits and vegetables. So, it makes sense to me, right, that these 12 fruits have 12 different purposes. And their purpose was for the healing of the nations. That's those aren't believers. This is healing of the Gentiles on the outside of the gate of the new Jerusalem, right? Revelation 22:14,

blessed are those who do his commandments that they may have the right to the tree of life and may enter through the gates into the city. So the tree is present in the eternal state indicating ongoing provision. The monthly yielding suggests a cyclical sustaining provision, not a one-time event. The Greek verb escua or the right to the tree of life implies entitlement to partake, affirming that it plays an actual role in the life of the righteous. Okay. Now with that as our foundation, here's what I want to put before you guys and get your thoughts. The concept that lifespans will be longer during the millennium is found in scripture, particularly in the context of the reign of the Messiah. Isaiah 65,

the child shall die 100 years old, but the sinner being 100 years old shall be accursed. This verse suggests that during the millennium, a person who dies at 100 will be considered young. A child shall die. One, what does that verse mean? That means at a hundred years old, he's still a child. Right. And couldn't that have been said about say Adam's children who also lived into the several hundreds of years, right? So a person who dies at 100 would be considered young implying a dramatic increase in lifespan compared to its current conditions. And I ask, how does this happen? Well, Ezekiel 47, we see along the bank, this is another verse about the millennium.

Along the bank of the river on this side and that will grow all kinds of trees used for food. Their leaves will not wither and their fruit will not fail. They will bear fruit every month because their water flows from the sanctuary. Their fruit will be used for food and their leaves for medicine. And again, we see

that verse in 22:2 that this tree of life will be used for the healing of the nation. So I guess why am I showing you all this? It just dawned on me that the source, if what I'm seeing is true, the source of our continued life is the partaking of this tree. That's why they were removed from it in Genesis. That's why it gives healing and longevity, long long life during the

millennium. And for us, a continual partaking of this tree gives us continual life. The big question is, what if one of us stops eating that tree? I'll share my thoughts. Paul, please. This is one of those times where we go, okay, let's let's open it up. Go ahead, Glenn. Just share your thoughts. Yeah. Um, a counterpoint to kind of what what you're saying is that uh we know that death entered into existence through Yep. And that was Adam. Yep. So when Adam was born and created, he was told that if you eat from that other tree, you will surely die. Well, death wasn't instantaneous, but before they took of that tree, death wasn't in the picture. M and so then he said lest they also take of the tree of life which combines

taking the knowledge of good and evil which is nothing but self-determination. I'm going to decide what's right. I'm going to decide what's wrong. I don't need, you know, self-determination. Unless they become self-determined and live forever, let's get rid of that. Interesting. Amen.

Chapter 9: Community discussion

Okay. Well guys, that's my lesson on Ephesus. Thank you so much for being with us here. Uh we got some hands up already. We'll start with uh brother Luke. Jump in there, Luke. Hey, Shabbat shalom, man. Yeah, awesome. Awesome teaching. I really appreciate it. Shabbat shalom, everybody. Um I remember I'm I'm brand new to this. I I came to the foot of the cross in October of 2020. I was baptized November 1st and I like you said, I remember it clearly like I was rolled over by a wave that left me sobbing for the rest of the day. And this was early in the morning when I was reading Ephesians 2:1. And that's that's the

verse that that just clenched me. And I found myself following guys like John MacArthur and RC Sprouls and you know all the Protestants of the day and you know I was lapping up all their teachings yet I was still

[Applause]

being led to the Torah. And the day I came to Torah was a year later. Actually w within like 3 months of coming to the foot of the cross. Um I said to my pastor, I said, "How come we're not keeping the Sabbath?" and I had actually moved in with them temporarily uh because of my current living circumstances at the time. I was living with someone who I was not married to. And I came out of my room and I I said, "How come we're not keeping the Sabbath?" And I'll never forget he he was a he was an ex- biker hardcore guy. And I'll never forget the look on his face. He's just like,

"What?" I said, "How come we're not keeping the Sabbath?" said the it it's mentioned likeund and something plus times in the Bible that we're supposed to keep the Sabbath and he got up out of his recliner and he crossed the room and I thought I thought he was going to hit me like I had said something like sacriiggious and I like literally braced myself and he grabbed me and he hugged me and he called out to his wife Gina and he's like Gina we just got confirmation we're supposed to start keeping the Sabbath. He would apparently, according to them, they were waiting for somebody in their uh that was close to them to to bring it up. That's what they were praying for.

So, I was that person. And he turned his congregation into a Sabbathkeeping congregation. But that's where they stopped. And through all of my studies and where Yah has led me, um, all of his law is important. Every every jot and tit is important. And I I never found myself being a Torah terrorist, but engaging people and the reaction that they have, the visceral uh reaction that they have that I I explained to them. And I said, you know, our Bibles were translated with bias against God's law, and they have a very hard time with that. I currently attend Church of God, Seventh Day, and I go there every Sabbath to keep the holy convocation. That was the first church I walked into. Uh that was a Sabbathkeeping church.

And I've been sharing ever since then how his Torah is still viable. And I've discovered that there are about maybe seven or eight other people there that that have the same feelings that I have uh or beliefs that I have are led to Torah. And you know, my my church was gracious enough to me to to allow me to host a Passover seder this year. It was my first Passover seder. uh attended others when I was very young through friends who were Jewish, but it was the first messianic Passover that I had ever attended. And I hosted it and like 50 people showed up and my church was gracious enough to allow me to use their facilities to to to do that. And I've been back and forth

with my my the pastor of the church explaining to him how his Torah still stands. And he gave me a bunch of books to read on how uh the the covenants are no longer in effect that yada yada yada. And I tore those books apart like just like cliffnotes and highlighting and postit and verses and and we have yet to sit down to discuss his position and I don't know I don't go to to church to be fed. I come here to be fed, you know. I come to We're happy to have you. For sure, man. Thank you so much. So, I appreciate it. Thank you. Oh, of course. It's awesome to hear you. Okay, brother Samuel.

Shabbat shalom everyone. Shabbat shalom. Elder Doss. Um, I want Yep. I called you Elder. You can't shake it. You You are You are Even without the hearing, I'm bald, too. You're still hurryhead. So, I give you honor and the respect that you deserve. You're you're an excellent teacher. Um, I I ask you to to show me some grace. I haven't shared. I didn't share last time because I had just came out of surgery and I was recuperating in the hospital room, but I made certain to at least attend the the last gathering. So, bear with me um as I share my understanding and um revel in in in this subject matter that you share with us.

Um, when you ask the question whether or not Adam and Hava, if they if we know whether or not they ate of the tree of life and it being uncertain, my understanding is yes, they did because the tree of life is Torah and you you see reference to that if you go into the book of Proverbs. I think it starts with Proverbs 3:18, but there are other references to um the fruit from the tree of life um and how it connects with following the instructions. So yeah, I would my understanding is yes, they did eat of the tree of life. And when they went to the tree of the knowledge of of good and evil, um I concur with with

Glenn too that it was about being self-willed and doing things of their own direction. But the but I think what people fail to understand is that the tree of knowledge is still knowledge. It's not like it's devoid of wisdom. There's plenty of wisdom within the the tree of knowledge of of good and evil. But the difference is that you're creating your own philosophies. You're creating your own path and your own direction and not following the word of the most high, not following Yeshua Hamashiach. And that's what leads us off. You asked you asked a a um a very probing question, a very interesting question and I'm going to touch on something that you you um you

broached with respect to the assembly of Ephesus. I don't like using the word church. I know that there there's some there's some debate whether or not it just means something belonging to to Adoni or whether or not there's, you know, other things that are attached to it. So, I prefer to use assembly, but I don't judge one way or the other. But when you when you look at what Yeshua chastised the assembly of Ephesus for, and again, I think you pointed it out quite aptly that it wasn't about them doing the works. It wasn't about the obedience. It was more or less falling along the lines of what this what the Pharisees the the religious authority around that time did which is becoming more fascinated with

their taken note and not really focusing on the wittier matters of the law. Yes, obedience is important, but as you noted, the love, the um humility and gentle rebuke as opposed to just being ready to go ham on someone, and I use ham purposely because we're not supposed to eat pork, is is a problem. And there there is a direct tie with what Yeshua said to the assembly of Ephesus to what's in the Torah and in the prophets. So I will point you to well mo most most most well yes in the Torah and the prophets um Exodus 21:10 and I won't touch on that too much because I don't want this to veer off into something else but also if you look in the book of Proverbs um I

believe it is I'll tell you in a moment I'm sorry bear with me but I know it's Malachi 21:14 And I'm going to give you the Proverbs, too. So, I'm just going to read these two scriptures and then I'm going to close it out. Yet you say, "For what reason? Because Jehovah has been a witness between you and the wife of your youth, against whom you have dealt treacherously, though she is your companion and your wife by covenant." So when it talks about your first love, it's talking about the wife of your youth, which is, as I think you touched upon, the the love, the ardor, and the true commitment to following Yeshua Hamashiach and walking out Torah in spirit and in truth and not just mechanically.

And then when you want to talk about um Proverbs, Proverbs also talks about behaving properly towards the wife of your youth, which is your first love. And so that would be Proverbs 5:18. And with Proverbs 5:18, essentially it says, "Let thy fountain be blessed and rejoice with the wife of your youth, your first love." And when you talk about the nickelatans, there's been some scholarship that suggests there's a connection between the what happened with the nic Nicolaitans and what happened to the children of Israel under the deception of Balum in terms of how they behaved and what they've done. But I I thank you for allowing me to share. Thank you for this blessing and shabbaka shalom again to you and to everyone who's a part of this assembly.

Amen, Samuel. Thank you for your insights. I appreciate it. Okay. Um, MNA Mina, thank you so much and Shabbat shalom. Um, at the council of Laodicea, 336 AD is where the Catholic Church I believe is at that time the church changed the Sabbath to Sunday. And it is my belief that it was done uh because it was a matter of they can say whatever they want of power and control and they changed it and the church all the churches kind of fell into place and even when the Protestant protested that is something that carried over and very few kept the Sabbath they just followed the church and I do believe it was the Catholics and we all can invent whatever whatever reason we want to as far as we want to define and and make it good for

us and accepting for us. Oh yeah, it's because it's Sunday now. No, it was changed. People were brainwashed and they now make up stories in order to accept Sunday when it's not Sunday. The Sabbath is the Sabbath. It never changed. And that's all I wanted to say. And thank you. Um Ed, you're awesome. I love you. Oh, thank you, sister. I appreciate you. You got a fan. Um, thank you so much. Okay. Uh, Alanu, Shabbat shalom. Shabbat shalom. Shabbat shalom. Um, I'm really blessed from

today's message. um you know it's kind of um difficult sometimes and um very narrow to differentiate between legalism and um disobedience and um the environment in which I live, people tend to when you try to make it

clear that scriptures demand that we obey the instructions of the most high that that the laws of the most high have not changed and that um being someone that grew in a Christian environment and um all around me is Christianity church and um it kind of make you off and um people always like fast to point out you're being legalistic you're being legalistic but I like I said it's always the between being legal and living in disobedience you know he said we cannot use our liberty as license to sin. Yeah. Oh, are you still there? We are not called to use our liberty for license to see that the people of Ephesus, the church of at Ephesus, that their error was that they left their first love. They Yes. Yes, I am here.

Can you hear me? Can you hear me? Okay. Go ahead. My network shalom network is bad. It's like very bad. Shabbat shalom. Yeah, we we can hear you off and on. Elanu, where are you? Where are you? Uh where you at? So, yeah. Um I'm in my house in Paca Court in Nigeria and so Nigeria the network is coming in and out. Yeah, it's well I'm just trying to cope with it. So, um I'm trusting that the Rua Kakodesh will help us to understand and to walk in it. It's not common place in my area where I live. In fact, the thing that turned it for me is I I always read the Shabbat as

part of the ten commandments and I've been trying to I said I would start observing it as required by scripture. But then I have my husband who does not obey it. But the Almighty in his own special way used his mouth to confirm it for me. The day he told me why are you doing this church? This church don't you know that you're supposed church is supposed to be on Saturday Shabbat. I said wow what a wonderful way that the most high has confirmed it. And I told him wow the almighty have just used your mouth to confirm that I need to observe the Shabbat. I might not be doing it very perfectly. That's why I've joined

the fellowship and I'm learning and I'm trusting the royal kakodesh to guide me to help me to get better. Shabbat shalom everyone. Amen. Thank you, Elellanu. Appreciate you. Uh Leslie Shepherd shalom. Make sure you're unmuted, Leslie. Okay. Can you hear me now? Yes, we can. Okay. So, I have some questions and I want to know um if you guys can send me what it is regarding pork. Is it is uh I asked about bacon. I obviously know that Cornelius uh the pe you know Peter's vision was about people not food but I would probably need somebody to help me to understand in the scriptures about this keep this reference that you keep making about bacon. So that's the first one. And then the other thing about the first love, I really appreciated the man's heart that was sharing about, you know, your first love for your woman.

And I really love his heart for that. Even though what that would do is that would erase a lot of women from being excluded in that scripture. So that that's where I would probably say that I would probably disagree with him, but I really appreciated his kindness in his heart toward the way he viewed that you should be loving your your love. I really appreciated that. But um the other thing was I agreed with the lady that spoke about that I do believe that the um it was I believe believe when the Catholic Church was formed making people forcing them to be part of so-called Christianity. Um and I say that only because when you're forced to it then you're not doing it. You're not that's not that's not Christianity being forced. But I agree with her that,

you know, when it says that they were changing the times and the dates, you know, it goes back into the Old Testament predicting what was going to happen. I believe there's one of the first steps that was changing the date, changing the time, you know, even how many months or in a year. They used to have 13 months in a year. And so, so many things have been changed, I think, so that we lose track of who we are. I believe even the lost tribes today which I believe many of us make up those tribes is that we got lost because they changed enough things or we lose our identity and who we are and the foundational things. But I really would like to have this study on the pork that you're talking about cuz I have not

understood that to be something that should be an issue in today's world or should I say in today's time frame. I get it back in the day but if somebody could send that to me and then there was somebody who mentioned about the tree of life. If I said to him, "Hey, put it in the chat." So about where it references in Proverbs, they said, "Always if you could when you reference those things, if you could put it in there cuz I like to study stuff." And so anyhow, that's all I wanted to say. Thank you so much. And the sister from Nigeria, you are very encouraging. And the brother that got up there and shared his testimony was really impactful to hear that those

people walked toward him and he wasn't sure the reaction and he was their confirmation because he was just sharing out of honesty. He was sharing out of over the overflow of his insight that the Holy Spirit gave him. So that's all I wanted to say. Thank you. Amen, Leslie. It's great to have you. And yes, I'll I'll send you some stuff over on um on the food loss. So I'll be looking for that. Uh okay. Brother Asip all the way from Pakistan. Shalom brothers and sisters. Shabbat shalom. I have uh brother I have one question. Uh first of all I appreciated your teaching yourself what you are doing. That's great work. That's really great work. Applicated brother. I have only one and simple question. What is

difference between churches and ministries? Because here we saw lot of churches and ministries actually want to know what is difference between churches and ministries. That's thank you. Thank you Asf. I'm going to ask one of you to tell me what you think ASF just asked. The difference between what and what? Anybody catch that? Asf maybe you can put it in the in the chat so I can read it because I'm not understanding I'm going I'm going to repeat my question. What is difference between church and monistries? That's it. Church and ministry between church. What's the difference between church and ministries? Oh, yes. Yes. Yes. Yes. Gotcha. Oh, well, it depends on who you're talking to, brother.

Um, church is the word that has been used to replace the the biblical word ekklesia in scripture, which is a word that we see in the septuagent that defines the congregation or as Samuel said, the assembly. um in in some of our new understanding because what we understand about that word church, many of us don't like using the word because of its origins. Um but to answer your question, church in our current contemporary understanding is evangelicalism. It's the steeple, the building with the steeple and the members. Um, but biblically, it's different. Biblically, it's it's the congregation of those who follow the ways of the Lord. We see that Stephen in the book of Acts referenced Israel in the desert as a congregation, as the ekklesia.

And so that doesn't fit in today's um world because if you ask the average Christian, the word church is completely separate from Israel. It's a whole different entity. And yet biblically they're one and the same um with the the the Israel of God and ekklesia. Um, Asaf, we did a lesson some months back that I would encourage you to go back and watch. Um, I think I titled it the ekklesia. I can't remember. I'll

send you a link to it as well. Yes. Yes, I remember. Yes. Okay. Okay. Understood. Now, ministry is just another word for service in how you serve. So some people have a like Sushil in India his ministry is serving the the the children who are orphaned in the streets. That's where he spends his time. That's where his your

ministry would be teaching the children the Torah in the Torah center. But it's not your church. My ministry is teaching. That's where my gifts lie. And so that's what I do. So I hope that answers your question. Okay guys, thank you very much. I understand. You're very welcome, brother. Always guys, that was that's it. No more questions. Um, it's great to have all of you here. Um, thank you so much for being a part of this. Um, I can send out information to everybody that's been asked for today, whether it's Leslie's questions or ASIF's questions or I can just send it directly to them. You guys have my email. there's anything I can send you, by all means, um, let me know.

But we're all done, guys. Have a great Shabbat. Have a great rest of your weekend. And we'll see you next time. Shabbat shalom. Shabbat shalom. Shabbat shalom. Shabbat shalom. Shabbat everyone. Shalom. Great study today. Shalom. Thank you. Thank you all. Shabbat shalom. And now it's time to say goodbye to all our family.