

Transcript – Offenses Will Come

All right ... Shabbat Shalom. And Shabbat Shalom to those who are with us today. The message I am giving today is one I mentioned I was working on and now I have it ready. It's called, *Offenses Will Come ... Offenses Will Come*. So, I'm going to start in Matthew 24 in verse 9 ... Matthew 24 in verse 9, it says:

Matthew 24:9-13 *Then they will deliver you up to affliction, and will kill you, and you will be hated by all nations because of My name. And then many will be offended, and they will deliver up one another and will hate one another. And many false prophets will be raised and will deceive many. And because lawlessness shall have been multiplied, the love of the many will grow cold. But the one who endures to the end, that one will have eternal life.*

So here it is ... of course, Matthew 24 is the Olivet Prophecy. It's all the end time things. And one of the things that is prophesied in the end time is the love of many to wax cold and also many people being offended. And we see it today. You see it in society. You see it out there. You see it with everything. No matter what happens, there seems to be people offended, it's part of the day and age that we're living in.

And like I said, with the callousness of society, many also, as we're going to read here, will also fall away. That's one of the big things. And I think offense is a big part of the great falling away. But we're told here to endure to the end. So that's the big thing. If we go to Matthew 18, a couple of pages over Matthew 18 starting in verse 1. It says:

Matthew 18:1-3 *In that hour the disciples came to Yahshua, saying, Who then is greater in the kingdom of Heaven? And having called forward a little child, Yahshua set him in their midst. And He said, Truly I say to you, Unless you are converted and become as the little children, not at all can you enter into the kingdom of Heaven.*

Comment: And we know the little children forget things. One minute you see them fighting with each other and two minutes later you see them hugging and playing. So I think that's what He's talking about, **the humbleness of a child and the forgiveness of a child.**

Matthew 18:4-6 *Then whoever will humble himself as this little child, this one will be the greater in the kingdom of Heaven. And whoever will receive one such little child in My name receives Me ... So now He's kind of comparing a little child to a new believer ... But whoever causes one of these little ones believing in Me to offend, it is better for him that a millstone of a donkey be hung on his neck, and he be sunk in the depth of the sea.*

Comment: Meaning he's lost. Like that's exactly what happens to Babylon, right? So meaning once he's thrown into the sea with that millstone you're not coming up.

Matthew 18:7 *Woe to the world from its offenses! It is a necessity for the offenses to come, yet woe to that man through whom the offense comes!*

So wow, we see this, I think we've all read this before, and we see offending someone, particularly a new believer, is about the worst thing in the world you could do. So I say sometimes, I think it's really just a lack of wisdom sometimes because I see at times where we have meetings and there'll be a new person there and someone will be telling them all about Babylon or something like that. And it's like, wow, you really have to think to yourself somebody that is brand new.

Think of us, right? And we see how little faith sometimes we really have. And that's after being in the faith 20 years, 30 years, sometimes even 40 years in the faith and something big will come up or sickness or something we see, my faith is really little. Think of a brand new person, somebody that has been brainwashed in the world system and there's never been a system like this in the world *ever* where most people's lives their whole life is dependent on the world and they

don't even know it; their job, their money, paying their rent, their health insurance, everything is dependent on the system. That's what satan has set up.

So think about it, and here it is somebody that's reading their Bible and they see whether it's the Sabbath or something else. And they don't have any faith yet. They're not baptized, they're brand new. They know virtually nothing. And here it is though, they're trying to build up the faith just to go to their Sunday pastor and let them know, "Look, I'm reading this and Sunday really is a day rest." And here we are coming up and telling them things like, you have to leave Babylon, you have to do this, and boom, that person you never see him again. So it's important to understand when we offend somebody, particularly a little one, it could be our eternal life. We have to use more wisdom when we're dealing with people. So we want to make sure that we're understanding this. New people need to be nurtured.

One of the big things I've been doing at the Bible school the last year, or two years, is starting a mentoring program. And I'm really encouraging the elders and the brethren to be mentoring other people. I think it's a great thing, particularly new people in the faith, but it doesn't have to be new people. We need to nurture people and help them. Because we're living in a complicated world, it's not easy.

I think now, if I was ever called as a young kid as I was, teenager, 18, 19 years old today, I can't imagine how I would have ever come to the truth, the way the world is. So we have to think about this. So offense is really, really serious of offending somebody. I think a lot of times we don't really think about it as much as we should. So let's continue with verse eight now.

Matthew 18:8 *And if your hand or your foot cause to stumble, cut it off and cast it away from you. For it is better to enter into life lame, or while you are maimed, than while you have two hands or two feet to fall into the fire that is everlasting.*

Comment: And I think sometimes we read these scriptures looking at sin and looking at things that can cause us the sin, and that's true, anything that can cause you to sin, you need to get out of your life. But right here, this is directly connected with offending somebody. And sometimes there's things in our life, like pride or self-righteousness or whatever it is, that we're not dealing with, and we're causing offense to somebody else and causing other people to fall away.

Matthew 18:9-10 *And if your eye causes you to stumble, pluck it out and cast it away from you, for it is better for you that with one eye you enter into life than while you have two eyes to fall into the fire of Gehenna. See that you do not despise one of these little ones, for I tell you that their cherubs in Heaven continually look on the face of My Father in Heaven.*

So again, this can be the Laodicean spirit, where we're thinking we're doing good and we're thinking, maybe we come out of Babylon or come out of the system, and whatnot, and we're not looking at sometimes though how are we affecting other people?

And when somebody is offended, we look at it as well, that's their problem, they're offended at this or they're offended at that. Not realizing if we cause that offense, it can mean our eternal life. So right here, it's very, very clear. Whatever causes you to offend other people, you've got to get rid of it. Whether it's a self-righteous spirit, whether it's pride, and like I said, some of these things are very hard to see because we're blinded by them. We're blinded by our own pride, we're blinded by our own self-righteousness, but if we're seeing that we've offended or hurt somebody, we have to think of it. Ecclesiastes 5 in verse 6 says:

Ecclesiastes 5:6 *Do not allow your mouth to cause your flesh to sin. Do not say before the messenger of Yahweh, it was an error. Why should the Elohim be angry over your voice and destroy the work of your hands?*

So I really love the scripture, *Do not allow your mouth to cause your flesh to sin*. Right? We know that the spirit is willing and the flesh is weak, and a lot of times our flesh causes us to sin for different things, right? It could be a hundred different ways, but here it's saying, **don't allow your mouth to cause your flesh to sin**.

And a lot of times, **offenses come by simply talking too much**. It's simply talking too much, gossip, saying things that we shouldn't say, and it's causing offense. So this is one of the things that really should be a big scripture for every believer. *Do not allow your mouth to cause your flesh to sin*. Like I always say, there's a reason why we have two ears and one mouth, we should be listening twice as much as we're speaking, and we should be thinking about the things that we're saying.

Proverbs 10 in verse 19, scripture I used in many sermons:

Proverbs 10:19 *In the abundance of words, sin does not cease, but one restraining his lips is prudent, ... right? ... In the abundance of words, sin does not cease.*

So we want to make sure that our mouth is not motorized. We don't want a 747 mouth that's always moving, moving, moving, moving because *in the abundance of words, sin does not cease*. Because we have human nature and we're human beings, and we want to make sure that we're limiting our speech and we're watching what we're saying.

And I always go back, one of the most wonderful times in my life was right before we left Babylon, the year before that, when me and Petra first got married, and we had just a beautiful congregation, and we're coming to understanding on certain things that I didn't in 25 years as a believer, and even as an elder. And one of the things was get rid of our TV.

That's what we all talked to this congregation, everyone agreed to it. And we used to meet every single night of the week, at one of the brethren's house, we all lived close to each other, people moved to get close to each other, so we weren't really a community yet, but we were at least living in the same area. And what was wonderful about it was, all we did was pray, and read scripture, and discuss it. That was it? Every single night! There was no worldly talk, there was no worldliness. It was the most beautiful thing I ever seen. And I'll be honest, I wasn't the most spiritual person at that point, I hadn't even left Babylon, but by the other people doing it, it made me more spiritual too.

And sometimes we've got to make ourselves committees of one, because, like I say with music and someone says, "Is this music good to listen to on Sabbath?" And my answer always is, "Well, if you can't listen to it on Sabbath, you probably shouldn't be listening to it anytime." And it's the same thing with our conversation. Yes, we need to have more sanctity in our conversation on Shabbat. Shabbat, our whole conversation should be Scripture and uplifting and helping each other, but during the week the same thing, like, we shouldn't be together for hours and hours, and everything is just worldly, small talk. And this is where offense starts to come, because worldly, small talk will lead into worldly conversation, worldly conversation will lead into gossip, and gossip will lead into offense. So we want to make sure that, like I said, many words ***in the abundance of words sin does not cease***. Proverbs 17 in verse 9 ... Proverbs 17 in verse 9 says:

Proverbs 17:9 *He who covers a transgression seeks love but he that repeats a matter separates friends.*

So when something does come up, whether you said something that you know you shouldn't have said that you offended somebody; or you're the offended party. Something was said to you that you're offended. *He who covers a transgression seeks love*. Are we trying to cover the transgression or are we trying to multiply it? People say things sometimes. Sometimes they say things that didn't come out right. They didn't mean it. And other times they might have said things that came out the way they meant and they said it. And they shouldn't have said it. But is everything trying to be covered in love? Or is it like, oh now you have this fire. Somebody said this and you're going to go and spread it because somebody made a mistake or said something they shouldn't.

So again, *he who repeats a matter separate friends*. And sadly enough through the years, I've seen friendships that were there for a long, long time that, poof, were gone, over gossip and over things that shouldn't be said and unfortunately that happens. So **gossip does bring offense**. Right?

But what about now the offended person? So we all know we shouldn't offend somebody. We all know if you offend somebody, we'll get into to this shortly, go to the Matthew 18 process, but what about the offended person? I hardly ever hear anything spoken about the offended person because it's just like a subconscious thing that the offended person, oh, you have to feel sorry for him and he's the person that's hurt. But what's the reality of even the offended person? Even if they really were offended, even if somebody did something or said something that offended them. Proverbs 18 and verse 19 ... Proverbs 18 and verse 19 says:

Proverbs 18:19 *An offended brother is worse than a fortified city; yea, their contentions are like the bars of a castle.*

And unfortunately, there are some people that *want* to be offended. There are some people that *look* to be offended. They're looking to anything that's said to take it in a way that's offensive. And I tell the story one time at Sukkot, a family that used to come there at Sukkot and the wife was just a really contrary spirit. Unfortunately today, she doesn't believe in Yahshua anymore.

But they were staying in the hostel next door and the lady was complaining. And then I said, okay, let me go there and see what's the situation. She came up to me and I guess she was expecting me not to be able to solve the problem. But she says, "Oh, you know, well, you know, there's no hot water in this place. And, you know, it's so busy that, you know, we don't have time to cook and, you know, our place is too small."

So I said, "Well, you know what, I got an extra room for you. So now you can have the extra room. And I talked to the man already, your hot water is going to be on there in an hour or two." And I said, "And here's some money. Go out and have dinner tonight. You don't even have to cook." And her answer was, "Well, if that's your answer, we're leaving."

So I guess in her mind, she already had in her mind that I wasn't going to try to solve the problem. But there's some people there that instead of looking to praise Yahweh, instead of having a mental capacity of love and praise, their mind is on offense. They want to be offended. And no matter what you do, they're going to be offended.

And the sad part about it is whether you're the offending party, like I said, offend one of these little ones, it's better a millstone around your neck. But if you're the offended party, you're also the guy with a millstone down there. You're not going to be in the kingdom if you're offended because you're walking away, you're moving away.

So **offense doesn't help anybody on either way. It doesn't help the person who's doing the offending. It doesn't help the person who's being offended**. It's just ... it's a nasty subject that whatever side of it you're on, you want to get out of it. Because it's a lose/lose situation. Like I said, in life, everything has to be win/win. If you're doing something, it's got to be win/in for both parties. This is lose/lose. Nobody wins in the situation.

So even if somebody offended you and you're the offended party, you've got to figure a way to say, "Let me ... we'll get into Matthew 18." Either go into the Matthew 18 and do something but get over it. Because if you stay offended, we're going to see what happens. You're going to grow a root of bitterness and you're not going to be there. So either way you're on it, **you don't want to be with offenses**.

Mark 4 in verse 14. Mark 4, and this is the parable of the sower in the field, right?

Mark 4:14-17 *The sower sows the Word. And these are those by the wayside where the Word is sown. And when they hear, Satan comes at once and takes away the Word having been sown in their hearts ...* These are sometimes new

people ... *And likewise, these are the ones having been sown on the rocky places, who, when they hear the Word, they immediately receive it with joy, And they have no roots in themselves, rather are of a short time and **when affliction happens, or persecutions because of the word, they are quickly offended.***

So sometimes, and like I said, yes, we need that maturity and the first thing you don't bring up with a brand new person is leaving Babylon if they're an American or something that's so important. But you want to know something. If they're offended at the Word of Yahweh, I don't take any responsibility for that.

There's times ... because sometimes I can be blunt. Sometimes I could be frank. It's just my personality. So, I've said it several times to people that were offended at something I said. If the way I said it, if it came across unloving or on caring, I 100% repent and apologize. But **if it's what was said in the Word that you're offended at, I don't apologize. I am never going to apologize for the Word of Yahweh.** I'm not going to apologize for Yahweh's stance on divorce and remarriage.

We just had a situation recently where somebody was supposed to be coming to a meeting and getting baptized. I found out they're living with a woman that's not their wife. They have a wife that they're not living with. And boy was this person calling me judgmental and every other word under the sun. Because I told him he can't be baptized while he's living in adultery with a woman. I'm not ashamed of that and I don't feel sorry for that because that's the Word of Yahweh. So if in my human frailty, I say it wrong, I will apologize every time. But if you're offended at the Word of Yahweh, like it says here, Yahweh predicts this.

So many people that come, especially in the time we're living in now, even they get baptized, they're not really repenting of their sins. And a lot of times they get baptized in a few months, they're off doing something else. So that's not my responsibility. And it's not your responsibility. So, if people are offended at the Word, what can we do? You can't allow Satan to bring fake guilt.

And that's **every single human being is responsible for their own sins and their own actions. We reap what we sow.** It's that simple. So, it doesn't mean that if we did something that may have caused offense, we don't need to go to the person and apologize. We'll get into that in **Matthew 18**. But **if someone is choosing their way or they're offended at the Word of Yahweh or they're leaving the truth, that is not the responsibility of anybody but the person who's doing it.**

2nd Thessalonians 2, we see this. And like I said, it's a scary time because we're living in a time where most people are not going to make it into the kingdom. And **we have to make ourselves committee of one to do whatever we have to do to make sure we're not one of those people.** 2nd Thessalonians 2 in verse 3 says:

2nd Thessalonians 2:3 *Do not let anyone deceive you in any way, because **that Day** ... the Day of Yahweh ... will not come unless first there comes a great rebellion, ...* Many translations say a great falling away. It literally means a defection from the truth ... *and the man of sin is revealed, the son of perdition,*

So let's drop down to verse 9. Why is this happening? Is it happening because of whatever? Now look why it's happening, why people are falling away in the end time. It says:

2nd Thessalonians 2:9-10 *His coming is due to the working of Satan in all power and miraculous signs and lying wonders, ... It's because people are too much in love with the system and the things of the system ... and in all deceit of unrighteousness in those who will perish, because they did not receive the love of the truth in order for them to be saved.*

And I'm not going to read it in this sermon about **1st John 15 through 17**. I read that about every third sermon. But it's very true **if you love the things of the world, the love of the Father is not in you.** And this is the reason why most people

fall away in the end time because **they love the world too much, which means they love themselves too much**. And they don't want to sacrifice. And to be honest, if I didn't have the spirit of Yahweh, I'd probably do the same thing.

Like if I was an atheist and I didn't think of anything in the future, why would it be more blessed to give to someone else than to receive? The human mind can't concept that. The human mind is no, I'm going to feel better when I'm receiving, when I'm getting it. Only through the spirit of Yahweh do you see you actually do feel better when you're giving to someone else, than receiving. But that's got to be a transformation from the spirit of the world to the spirit. So this is why people fall away because *they have not the love of the truth to be saved*.

So in this case, this is where again, if we cause something to help that process, we need to go to the person and let them know that. But if someone is just falling away because they don't receive the love of the truth, there's nothing we can do. And I've said this many times, years ago, I had a thousand people in my local congregation. If one person, one out of a thousand didn't show up on Passover, it was, you can't believe it. Today, half the people baptized fall away in months. Some of them you never ever hear from the day they're baptized on. So we're living in a different world. It's totally different. And although as an elder, as a senior pastor, I try my best to support and to help people to share with them, but what can I do? Everybody's got to work out their own salvation when fear and trembling. So if somebody is baptized and then they just go out on their own, there's not a whole lot we can do.

2nd Thessalonians 2:11-14 *And because of this, Elohim will send to them a working of deception, for them to believe the lie, that those not believing in the truth, but who have delighted in unrighteousness may all be damned. But we ought to thank Elohim always concerning you, brothers, beloved by YAHWEH, because Elohim chose you from the beginning to salvation in sanctification of the Spirit and through a true faith, to which He called you through our preaching, to be the glory of our Master Yahshua Messiah.*

2nd Thessalonians 2:15-17 *So, then, brothers, **stand firm and strongly hold the commandments** you were taught, whether by word or by our epistle. But may our Master Himself, Yahshua Messiah, and our Elohim and Father, the One having loved us and having given everlasting comfort and good hope by grace, encourage your hearts, and may He establish you in every good word and work.*

And that's the way to get around offenses, like I said, whether you're the offended party or the offending party, is to **be in the Word, encourage, have encouragement, get our mind on the work and the Word of Yahweh, and we will not be part of being in the offense circle**. In the end, many don't have love for the truth. And like I said, unfortunately, sometimes they want to play the victim and blame somebody else for their commitment to the truth.

And like I said, one example is the teaching on divorce and remarriage, where people will say you're judgmentally or this, you're that. And it's like I didn't write the Bible. All I'm doing is as a servant of Yahweh, I have to share with them. Like I told this gentleman, I wouldn't be showing you love. If I baptize you, I'm baptizing you to your death. You're living in a sin. That's the one thing that will bring you eternal death. You'll have no hope in the White Throne Judgment.

And of course, sometimes when people live in it, and they don't want to see it that way, they have the false grace on their mind where yes, except Jesus in your heart, and then you can live in sin and you get the best of both worlds. And it's just not the way it works. That's not reality. It's not what Scripture says. And it's a lie of Satan. It's the same lie he gave Havah and Adawm in the Garden of Eden. And it's the same lie he's giving people today.

Psalms 119:165 *Great peace is to those who love your Torah. And there is no stumbling block to them.*

Many translations say, and nothing will offend them. So same thing, because offense is a stumbling block, right? So do you love the Torah of Yahweh? And I, this is one of the first scriptures that I remember being a young believer hearing in

a sermon. And it's always been one of my favorite scriptures, because whenever something offended me, I thought about this. And I said, if I really love the Torah, nothing will offend me. Because the only thing that matters is what was done or said is it true before Yahweh? And if it is true, you have some repentance to do. And if it's not true, then what's the difference?

I'm not going to allow myself to be offended because somebody lied about me or someone got upset about me. That's their problem. They're sinning. But I'm not going to allow myself to get in the offense loop by it. So, if you really, really have great peace *to those who love the Torah, there's no stumbling block*. There's no offense to that person. So true believers will not be offended.

So what if we've already offended somebody? What if we've offended somebody? Or maybe if we've been offended, what if we're in that situation right now? Let's go to Matthew 18. And I've said this before, Matthew 18 is such ... it's such a simple thing, but it's such an awesome process, because whether it's community living or just a problem between two people in the congregation, Matthew 18 works in every situation.

Matthew 18 in verse 12. So I'm picking up right after where we left about Yahshua saying whatever is causing you to offend somebody, if it's your hand, if it's your eye, and of course He's saying this in jest. Not in jest, but as a parable almost, He's not telling us to maim ourselves because we know even without a hand or an eye you can still sin, but He's using it whenever ... it's a Aramaic idiom ... **whatever is causing you to do this, you have to get rid of in your life**. So verse 12 through 14 says:

Matthew 18:12-14 *What do you think? If there be to any man a hundred sheep, and one of them strays away, will he not leave the ninety-nine on the mountains, and having gone he seeks the one having strayed? And if he happens to find it, truly I say to you that he rejoices over it more than over the ninety-nine not having gone astray. So it is not the will before your Father in Heaven that one of these little ones should perish.*

So if you've offended somebody and you know it, simply go to them, seek them out and just apologize. And the day and age we live in today is very easy. In olden days, that person could be thousands of miles away and you might not ever know where that person is again. Today you can write a simple email or letter or whatever, and if you've offended somebody it's real easy. Just clean your soul from it. So it's a very easy thing to do if you've offended someone to look for the person, apologize, ask forgiveness. And again, the best thing to do is to handle the situation as soon as it happens. Don't let the sun go down in your wrath because we know it could build up after that. And now we get into Matthew 18. So let's go to verse 15.

Matthew 18:15-17 *And if your brother with you is at fault, go rebuke him, between you and him alone. If he listens to you, you have won your brother. But if he does not hear, take one or two more with you, "so that on the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established." But if he fails to hear them, tell it to the congregation. And if he also fails to hear the congregation, let him be to you as a tax collector and a heathen.*

So this can be used in a situation where someone is sinning. It could be used in a situation where there's an offense. It can be used in a situation where there's a misunderstanding. It could be used in every situation. **Matthew 18 is about communication**. It's about when there's a problem between two people, or even if it's not a problem between you and anybody but you saw somebody sin. You saw somebody stick their hand in the offering box and take money out. Or you saw somebody with a flask of whiskey in the back of the service, whatever it is.

Whenever you personally either saw somebody do that you're witness to, or if there's an offense, there is something, all you have to do very, very clearly, you go to the person quietly. You don't tell other people – “You know what happened? You know what so and so did?” No, No, you go to the person quietly. You don't gossip. **Gossip magnifies the offense**.

I've done this many, many, many times with elders over the years where an elder has caused a problem or an elder did something. And my mind is with the elders, we're together. We're working for the kingdom and I know I've said this through the years. I know the weakness and the strength of every elder. I know the weakness and the strength of myself. So when I see a weakness of an elder overtook him, my thing is - to try to go there, cover the offense and make it right, and give the person the opportunity to make it right without making a big deal about it. And if that happens, then it's great. If it doesn't happen, if the person's trying to deny it or the person doesn't want to do the right thing, right? What happens?

If it's not successful, when you go quietly, you bring a mediator and witnesses. So you have to bring witnesses in the situation. If the person is still lying and not listening, you bring an elder into it if you can't solve it. So it's very, very clear. And then if the person does not want to change a repent, like it says, you may have to put him out of the Congregation.

To be honest, in all my years as an elder, more than 30 years, and there's been hundreds and hundreds of situations in the Congregation, this has probably only happened to handful times, where you literally had to put somebody out, hardly ever. Because usually the person doesn't want to be put out, and the person will admit what he did, or you come to some kind of conclusion. So very, very rarely do you ever have to get past the third point. Unfortunately, every now and then it does happen, but very, very rarely. So it's a great process. No matter what the offense is, or what the situation is, it's a very simple thing. You go to the person quietly, you try to solve it. If not, you bring witnesses. If not, you bring in an elder and get the Congregation involved.

So the question comes, what if this has happened more than once? What if it's happened two times? What if it's happened three times? So let's go to verse 21. That's exactly the question that the Apostle Kefa asked.

Matthew 18:21 *Then, Peter drew near to him and said, My Master, how many times should I forgive my brother with me who is at fault. Should I forgive him up to seven times?*

Comment: Right? And we know that seven is the always number of completion. We know what Shemita is, we know with the Sabbath cycle. So seven is a good number of completion. You usually don't want to go past seven. That's the full cycle. But look what Yahshua says.

Matthew 18:22 *Yahshua says to him, I do not say to you, until seven times, but rather until **seventy times seventy seven**.*

And some people try, someone actually asked me that question, they times 70 times 77. They said, so is it 400? And it's like, no! Like you might ... oh, I hope you never get to that point where there is somebody. I have a feeling somebody would be ... really show their insincerity if you had to forgive them 490 times or whatever it is. But at the end of the day, what He's trying to say is **there is no end to the forgiveness if there's true repentance**, there's no end to it.

So that's Yahweh's responsibility to make those judgments. **Our responsibility is always forgive because we're not the ones that are going to pass judgment on people on Judgment Day.** It's going to be Yahweh. And we don't want that root of bitterness growing inside of us. So, Yahweh is ... He's a wise Elohim. He knows what He's doing. And He understands us better than we do. And we leave it up to Him.

I've given messages before on forgiveness. And the one thing I think that I will never, ever understand in my life is how somebody, a baptized true believer, cannot forgive somebody else for something. *Knowing* that it's not only ... it doesn't matter what they did, whether they killed your child, whatever it is. **If you don't forgive, you can't be forgiven.** And the only thing that comes in my mind is **someone that doesn't forgive, just doesn't see the need for them to be forgiven.**

It's got to be just such a self-righteous, Laodicean attitude. Because if you understand every day of your life, and I hope you do, pray every day before you go to bed and ask Yahweh for forgiveness of things you may have done and may not

even know you're done, you will not be forgiven if you're not forgiving the other people. And that's ... He goes right into this. So I'll read it:

Matthew 18:23-25 *Because of this the kingdom of Heaven has been compared to a man, a king, who desired to take account with his slaves. And he having begun to reckon, one debtor of ten thousand talents was brought near to him ... That's a pretty big amount ... But he not having any to repay, his master commanded him to be sold, also his wife and children, and all things, as much as he had, even to pay back.*

Matthew 18:26-28 *Then having fallen down, the slave bowed the knee to him, saying, Master, have patience with me, and I will pay all to you. And being filled with pity, The Master of that slave released him and forgave him the loan. But having gone out, that slave found one of his fellow slaves who owed him a hundred denarii ... one hundredth what he owed ... And seizing him, he choked him, saying, Pay me whatever you owe.*

Matthew 18:29-31 *Then having fallen down at his feet, his fellow slave begged him, saying, Have patience with me, and I will pay all to you. But he would not, but having gone away he threw him into prison until he should pay back the amount owed. But his fellow slaves, seeing the things happening, they were greatly grieved. And having come they reported to their Master all the things happening.*

Matthew 18:32-35 *Then having called him near, his Master said to him, Wicked slave! I forgave you all that debt, since you begged me. Ought you not also to have mercy on your fellow slave, as I also had mercy? And being angry, his Master delivered him up to the tormentors until he pay back all that debt to him. So also My heavenly Father will do to you unless **each of you from your hearts** forgive his brother their offenses.*

So **it's not just saying the words but it's forgiving from our heart.** It's not holding. And you know what, when you do it, you only free yourself. I can honestly say a thousand percent, I have nothing against anybody in this world. There's nothing I can't think of one person I can say, "Oh, I hate this person. I hope bad happens to them or anything else."

Because I know that if I had that, I know number one, my sins wouldn't be forgiven. And number two, I know it would destroy me. It is a cancer. It will destroy you. It will lead to a root of bitterness. So why did Yahweh put that in there? Even if someone doesn't ask for forgiveness, even if you say I forgive you when they spit in your face, because like I told my dad recently, he was saying this, he said, I just can't see it. If someone did evil, if they killed and not repenting, how could you forgive them? I'm saying, "Dad because all you're doing is giving it up to Yahweh. It doesn't mean that they're not going to pay the penalty. They will pay the penalty because they're not going to spit in Yahweh's face."

What it's doing is **you're not being the judge.** You're saying I trust you Yahweh for you to do the righteous thing. And you know what? If the person does really repent, then I want him to be forgiven, just like I want to be forgiven. So it's the best of both worlds. If the person doesn't repent, he's still going to suffer for what he did on Judgment Day. And if he did repent, no matter what he did, he will be forgiven the same way. I did much worse than anybody ever did to me and Yahweh's forgiven me. But **if we don't forgive, we will not be forgiven.**

And like I said, forgiveness ... and the older I get, the more it's magnified. It's the greatest gift Yahweh could have ever given us, that we do not have to live with any kind of bitterness in our heart over anybody or anything. And that's the freedom. That is the freedom to life to only have loving your heart, not to have anything against any other person in this world. How beautiful of a thing. So like I said, if we don't forgive, we won't be forgiven and we will build a root of bitterness. And **it is self-righteous, not to forgive when Yahweh is forgiven us.**

What excuse can we say? Except in our mind, we're thinking our sins are not that bad. And that's the one thing with baptism. Like I said, if you've never repented with tears, you've never really repented, not to cry every single day. But

when you're first ... particularly being baptized, wow, if you're not at a point where you realize what you are inside and without the spirit of Yahweh you're nothing, then it's only a ritual. You've got to get to that point. You've got to get to that point where you're understanding how much you *need* Yahweh's forgiveness in your life. And once you see that, you will never hold bitterness against another human being for whatever they did.

Hebrews 12: and 14 and 15 ... Hebrews 12:14 and 15.

Hebrews 12:14-15 *Eagerly pursue peace and holiness with all, without which no one will see YAHWEH. Watching diligently that not any lack from the grace of YAHWEH, ... and how are you lacking? ... that "no root of bitterness growing " may crowd "in on you", and through this many are defiled;*

And it's the same way if you had a tumor in your body somewhere and as it's growing, it's growing, it could be pressing on your liver, it could be pressing on your kidney and as it's crowding in on you, eventually it can kill you. And it's the same way with a root of bitterness. **A root of bitterness will destroy you** because where it starts as this little thing, it magnifies. And I know myself, maybe some of the same way, maybe not, but I know when there's something on my mind like something big, you lost your passport and you have a flight in a week, whatever.

When there's something important on your mind, you can't help but think about that all the time. And that's why the Bible says *don't let the sun go down in your wrath* because when it's a problem with somebody or it's something that's causing you anger, every time as you're thinking about it, it's being magnitude and magnified and magnified. And the **better thing to do is just get over it.**

You know, it's almost like if you were ever in school and something happened in school and the teachers said, "We're going to call your parents." And then all of a sudden you're waiting hours and days and weeks and every day you come home waiting for your father there with the belt and the worst thing they can do is not to call the parent. Because if they call them the first day and then you get it all out and it's like, "Oh, I'm glad that's over with." But every day that goes on and it's not out yet ... and that's why I figured too late, I was better off telling my parent myself, just getting out of the way and then it's over. And every day you walk home you don't have to worry, did they call today? Is my father going to know?

So that's the point of it, it frees you. **It frees you and it makes sure no root of bitterness will grow.** A root of bitterness is a spiritual cancer and it will destroy you. **Yahweh owes us nothing.** We have to make sure we understand that. Do you realize what Yahshua went through for us to be alive? So now, when we look at our forgiveness, right? And I hope each of us feel that way that whatever someone did to me, wow, I had way more forgiveness I needed of Yahweh. And you know what Yahshua had to go through to give me that forgiveness?

Let's take a look at it. Matthew 26, because He did no sin, He did know wrong. And He was falsely accused and put up offenses and all these things against Him, people did. And what was His answer? What was His answer? That's why I can't buy the false apocryphal books that some of the churches like the Catholic Church has, they have something called First and Second Infancy - when Yahshua was a little boy and he was playing marbles and he lost and he turned one of the kids into a crow and all whatever. It's like, no, that never happened. That's nonsense. Because that was never the way Yahshua was from the time He was born He was offended and given to offenses, but He never let it affect Him. And we're going to see. So Matthew 26 and verse 59. Let's see how Yahshua handles these things.

Matthew 26:59-60 *And the chief priests and the elders and the whole Sanhedrin looked for false testimony against Yahshua, so that they might put Him to death, but did not find any, even though there were many false witnesses coming forward, they did not find any ...* See in our case, maybe the offense that you have was a false offense, but we have a lot of other offenses that weren't false. So if we need forgiveness, how can we hold somebody else? Not forgive them.

Matthew 26:60b-63 *But at last, coming up two false witnesses and This One said, I am able to destroy the sanctuary of Elohim, and in three days to rebuild it. And standing up, the high priest said to Him, Do you answer nothing? What do these witness against you? But Yahshua kept silent ... He left it up to Yahweh. He wasn't going to try to justify himself before man. And that's why I say, as long as Yahweh knows the truth, you don't have to justify yourself to anybody ... Do you answer nothing? What do these witness against you? But Yahshua kept silent. And answering, the high priest said to Him, I put You on oath by the living Elohim that You tell us if You are the Messiah, the Son of Elohim.*

Matthew 26:64-68 *Yahshua said to him, You said it. I tell you more. From this time you shall see the Son of Man sitting off the right hand of YAHWEH in power, and coming on the clouds of the heaven. Then the high priest tore his garments, saying, He blasphemed! Why do we have any more need of witnesses? Behold, now you have heard His blasphemy. What does it seem to you? And answering, they said, He is deserving of death. Then they spat upon his face and they were striking him on his head, and others were beating him saying, Prophecy to us, Messiah. Who is the one striking You?*

Wow. And here it is at any time. What did Yahshua in the Garden of Gethsemane, "Don't you know, I can get 12,000 legions of angels right now?" And He could have done it right there. But He didn't ... He didn't. He took that humiliation of beating for each of us so that we can be forgiven. If He would have ended it there, none of us would be in this room today.

Go to Matthew 27, one page over verse 38.

Matthew 27:38-40 *Then two bandits were crucified with Him, one to the right, and one to the left of Him. But those passing by, blasphemed Him, shaking their heads, and saying, You the one razing the sanctuary and building it in three days, if You are the Son of Elohim, come down from the torture stake.*

Matthew 27:41-44 *And in the same way, the chief priests with the scribes and elders, mocking, said, He saved others; He is not able to save Himself. If He is the King of Israel, let Him come down now from the torture stake and we will believe Him. He trusted on Elohim. Let Him rescue Him now, if He desires Him. For He said, I am Son of Elohim. And also the bandits crucified with Him defamed Him, saying the same thing.*

So wow, like I said, **He is the atonement for our sins**. And He went through humiliation that He didn't have to. Because He didn't do any sin. There was no reason for Him to do it. And like I said, **you have to make it personal** because **if you were the only person in the world that sinned, the plan would have been the same**. Yahshua still would have went through the same kind of humiliation for you. So we have to take it internally. And we have to make sure we internalize what He did for us. And we have to make sure we give the same. That's the least we can do is forgive other people and not be offended. And what was His answer to all this? Was it giving back reviling for reviling or evil for evil? No. Luke 23 and verse 33.

Luke 23:33-34 *And when they came to a certain place, which is called "Skull", they crucified Him there and those doers of evil, one at His right and one at His left. And Yahshua said, ... what was His answer? ... Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing. And dividing His garments, they cast a lot.*

Wow. So His answer wasn't judging them. His answer was saying, **Father forgive them for they know not what they do**. His answer was all for forgiveness for them and not petty offenses, which is pride. Right? And if there are big things that people aren't repenting of, like I said, Yahweh is going to ... and sooner or later, those sins are going to be paid at the Judgment Day, but it's not for us to make those judgments. Our way is to say the same thing. *Father forgive them for they know what they do*. So again, we're human beings. We're in an unjust world. This is the way it should be. And unfortunately, it's not always.

And in the world where sometimes offenses cannot be covered for different reasons, things come up, there is a point where separation has to happen. Acts 15, as we see it even with apostles. So, I'm giving best case scenario where you hope things can be worked out. But sometimes for different reasons it couldn't be. And it's not even always sin. It could just be by looking at things differently. Acts 15, verse 35. And this is, like I said, with Barnabas and the Apostle Paul.

Acts 15:35-37 *And Paul and Barnabas stayed in Antioch, teaching and announcing the good news, the Word of Elohim, with many others also. And after some days Paul said to Barnabas, Indeed, having turned back, let us look after our brothers throughout every city in which we announced the Word of Elohim, how they are holding it back. But Barnabas desired to take John with them, the one having been called Mark.*

Acts 15:38-41 *But Paul thought it well not to take that one with them, he having withdrawn from them from Pamphylia, and not going with them to the work. Then there was sharp feeling, so as to separate them from each other. And taking Mark, Barnabas sailed away to Cyprus. But having chosen Silas, Paul went out, being entrusted by the brethren to the grace of Elohim. And he went through Syria and Cilicia, making the congregations strong.*

So in the case where things couldn't work out, we see that Paul went one way to Cyprus and we see that Silas, or rather Barnabas went to Cyprus and we see that Paul and Silas went to Cilicia. So there is a point like I said where separation is best to avoid further problems in the future.

I know in the past there were times where people that have left our Congregation for different reasons. And I always said I'm not the only game in town. If you feel somebody else's leadership is better, if you feel you could serve somewhere else in the body, that's fine. I've never said we're the only true church and all the other nonsense that some of the other ones have said.

But the advice I did given those situations was **don't stay on your own** because it is a body and even though we have different fingers and different limbs, there are different sacred name groups and different Sabbath congregations. There is nowhere in Scripture for somebody to stay on their own just to do their own thing. **There is no such thing as private ministries in Scripture.**

And unfortunately, I can tell you just about every single person that has left did exactly that. They didn't join with somebody else because they couldn't, which just proved where the problem was coming from. And a lot of times in pride, self-righteousness and Laodicean spirit, people cannot work with other people because of that. And it's a shame ... it's a shame, but it comes up sometimes. But that really proves it to me anyway in some of those cases in the past, where instead of people joining with another group, which was fine in my mind, they just tried to stay on their own to do their own thing. So, and again, we're one body. It is a body. So although a time series separation, we always have to stay part of the body. 1st Corinthians 10:31 says:

1st Corinthians 10:31 *whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do all things to the glory of Elohim.*

So, on the end of the day, that's got to be the goal of everybody, right? So, there's times, and I've had this in some congregations, where there was friction, even in some communities, and somebody was just like, "But no, but no, we have to make it work. We have to make it work" when it was just a round peg in a square hole.

And I said to people sometimes, I said, "Well, maybe it's better you go over here and do this." And it's like they didn't want to do it. Because at the end of the day, if it's not furthering the kingdom, you could be risking your own fruit you're bearing or salvation. And that's why it's not the best case scenario, but we even see that it happens in Scripture. And if it happens, it happens, it's just part of life. But if it does, everything still has to be done in love and with a proper spirit and for the furthering of the work.

So back to Matthew 18 and verse 7.

Matthew 18:7 *Woe to the world from its offenses! It is a necessity for offenses to come, yet woe to that man through whom the offense comes!*

So **we do not want to be the person who's causing the offense. And we don't want to be the person who's being offended.** And I could tell you one way through my life, and I'm not going to say I've never been offended. Of course, I think everybody has been offended. And sometimes there's something good to be offended by because **if the Word of Yahweh is being broken, we should be offended.**

If you're coming to services somewhere, and the people are cooking or they're breaking the Sabbath, I hope you're offended. I hope there's a point where you're going to come out and say something and be offended. But **the offense should never be personal. The offense should be toward the breaking or the violating of the Word of Yahweh.**

So one way in my life, and I've talked about this in the Bible school, rules that you set and empowering scriptures. But one empowering belief that I have is - **never expect anything from anybody, and you'll never be disappointed.** If you're expecting things ... if I'm coming and I'm saying, "Well, you know, I'm the elder, I should be getting gifts or I'm the elder, I should be sitting in the top seat or I'm the elder, I should be doing this" then I'm going to get offended in times over nothing.

Because you know what? If I'm really the elder, I should be sitting in the back. If I'm really the elder, I should be doing the least of it. I shouldn't be looking. So I learned in my life, if you expect nothing from anybody, you'll never be disappointed. And then whatever little thing you get, you're going to be happy. You're going to be happy. You're going to be thrilled because you're not expecting anything. And that is one way in life of not being offended.

When you start having expectations, that's where offenses come. And then what happens? Those expectations, if you really think about them, a lot of times it's just pride, right? Because why should we expect anything? The Bible says expect nothing but to love one another. So, of course, you're not going to expect insults and humiliation. That shouldn't be something you expect either. And that's where the Matthew 18 process comes from if you felt that way.

But I'm talking about in general, I have seen, even when I was in Church of God, I have seen people leave the church over something as silly as somebody else wound up being the usher instead of them. And it was like, wow, I come every week and I'm on time and I'm doing this. And he wound up being the usher and I wasn't the usher. And they left the Congregation over something as silly as that. But again, it happens. So that's why I say expect nothing from anybody and you'll never be disappointed. **It's when you make false expectations of people that you get offended.**

So we have to think that way. And at the same rate, expect nothing for anybody but **give double to everybody.** In your mind, **try to give as much as you can to others but expect nothing.** Expect nothing in return and expect nothing to start out with. If your expectations of other people is nothing, anything that happens, you will really be satisfied with.

Romans 8:28 *But we know to the ones loving Elohim, all things work together for good to those being called according to purpose.*

So in the end, everything works out in Yahweh's purpose. And **Yahweh will would not have allowed things to happen that were not for our good.** So even if you are being falsely accused or something's coming, it doesn't mean you have to like it. It doesn't mean you can't go to the person like Matthew 18. But the point is **if Yahweh allowed something, maybe He's doing to test you. Maybe He's doing to see your attitude.** Because like I said, **the only thing that matters is, is it true? What does Yahweh think?** So all things are controlled by Yahweh. And even if somebody really did do something

to you that is offensive, we need to have the example of Yahshua to forgive, learn from the experience. Doesn't mean you can't go to them like Matthew 18, but we don't want to build a root of bitterness.

And if it was false, gossip, approach the person with the Matthew 18 and try righteously to solve the situation. Because like you said, all of us have said things at times that came out the wrong way and we wish we didn't say them. And if it hurt somebody, then we just have to be mature enough as a believer to go to the person and ask for forgiveness; or if they came to us, the same thing. Proverbs 13, verse 20, it says:

Proverbs 13:20 *He who walks with the wise shall be wise, but a companion of fools shall be broken.*

So again, a lot of times situations come up because of maybe it could be the people were choosing to be with the time we're spending. And it's one of the things I've been thinking about, at least the last year or so ... how most people in life, the people that are their friends, I look at throughout my whole life and family members, it's usually very few people pick the people their friends with. It just happens you work with somebody, they become your friend. They're your neighbor over here, your friend, well, what if I live somewhere else? Then I'd have somebody totally different.

You shouldn't just spend the vast majority of your time with people that just happen to be next to you. You should choose. And that's why I say, yes, we have to love everyone in the Congregation, but it doesn't mean you're going to have the same close relationship with everybody. And in community, I think you should choose who you're living with and who you're not living with. I think that's a choice that people should have. And the friendships, **the people you're spending the most time with should be people that are searching and trying to do the most for Yahweh the way you are.**

So that's something that ... and I know when I left Church of God, I had people try to guilt me to that over and over and over. And I was shocked because in Church of God, I thought everybody had the same dedication, whatever. Once Church of God fell apart and some of these people were sitting in my living room, I was shocked. I was shocked of how little spiritual prowess some of these people have. One guy came up to me and said he was only there because he wanted in a romantic way to go after somebody's child. And I was like, get out of my house ... get out of my house. You're never coming in here again.

So if just the fact that we all believe in the seventh day made us believers, then we'd be going to synagogue. So it's not the fact in that yes, we all are believers. Yes, we should all get along. Yes, we shouldn't have offense. But that doesn't mean that you have to sit there every week with people that have no commitment to Yahweh. Because I know I don't want to do it. I don't want to be ... I know in the end, if I'm with Laodiceans and I'm with Babylonians, I'm not going to make it in the end time. And I hope you feel the same way. And that's why it's not being self-righteous. It's just a matter of being honest and trying to make ourselves a better person too, so that we can be that person to somebody else. But we should be thinking about it. So we want to make sure, like it says here, *he walks with the wise will be wise, but companion of fools shall be broken.*

And who are the people that we are befriending? Who are the people we're spending time with? And in the Congregation, sometimes there's new people like I said, you may be mentoring or you may be helping. That's wonderful. But are the people you're spending the most time with ... sometimes it's not even people in the Congregation. I had a guy come up to me one time at the school years ago. And he was trying to put down the Congregation. He said, "Elder Don, I don't feel comfortable with the people in the Congregation. I feel more comfortable with the people at work." And we actually had a pretty good Congregation at that time. And I came right out and said, "It's because you're too worldly."

This was somebody that was a very worldly person. And of course, he felt more comfortable with the beer drinkers and the cursers and all the other people than the people in the Congregation that were trying to be righteous. So if that's the

case, we have to look at ourselves too to see, why do I feel uncomfortable? Is it because people are being unrighteous or is it because they're being righteous?

And if I'm feeling uncomfortable because people are trying to obey Yahweh and I have things in my life that have to change, then maybe there's things that I need to change too. So again, a lot of it is looking inside, praying, fasting, if we have to, really looking how I can change *me*. Because again, whether I'm the offended person or the offending person, if I could change myself to be neither, that's all I can do. That's the only thing I can do. And the last scripture here, Proverbs 10 in verse 12. Proverbs 10 in verse 12 says:

Proverbs 10:12 *Hatred stirs up fights, but love covers over all transgressions ... Hatred stirs up fights, but love covers over all transgressions.*

And one thing is - **if there's enough love in a congregation, any offense can be covered**. And I think about it. I look at my family, my immediate family, when I was growing up, I said this many times, my grandmother had 15 children, had a lot of cousins and aunts and uncles. And wow, if you ever came to a Tuesday night meeting with all my family there, you would think World War III broke out back then. Yelling, screaming, buns and thoughts flying over the table. But one thing is, amazingly, through all those years and years and years, love covered everything because no matter how bad a fight was, no matter how bad it was the next week they'd all show up again because that's just the way it was, nothing is going to break up family. And we are a family. We're the family of Yahweh.

So if the more love that's there, doesn't mean that you might not get offended, or you might not have an intense conversation, but love does cover a multitude of sins. So we have to work on that. We have to work on loving each other more so that if there is offense it's covered, it will be covered by love. I love that scripture. *Hatred stirs up fights, but love covers over all transgressions*. So yes, **Matthew 18:7**, *offenses will come*, but it doesn't have to be you. Offenses come by pride. We must humble ourselves as Yahshua did and trust Yahweh for all and love covers everything, even offenses. Yahweh bless.