

The Book of Jude (Part 14) - The Error of Balaam, Confrontation with the Angel of the LORD

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The following text is a message from Corner Fringe Ministries that was presented by Daniel Joseph. The original presentation can be viewed at <https://cornerfringe.com/media/gvjzrkg/the-book-of-jude-part-14>

*Portions of this document have been edited from the video message to better present a comprehensive, written document. Special attention was given to preserve the original context, but this document is not verbatim. Scripture verses are in the red text with other quotes in blue. Therefore, it is recommended that this document is printed in color. The Hebrew words are generally accompanied by the transliteration into the English alphabet. In most cases, the Hebrew is to be read from right to left.

We're going to press on in this study on the Book of Jude, and we are in Jude 1:11—**Woe to them! For they have gone in the way of Cain, have run greedily in the error of Balaam for profit, and perished in the rebellion of Korah.** (Emphasis added). The writer brought three names to the table, and he's very specific. These are really perfect illustrations of what he wants us to learn. Perfect illustrations of what it looks like to be a man who turns the grace of God into lewdness. What it looks like to pervert and insult the Spirit of grace, to take the grace of God in vain, to be a dreamer. So, he brings these men to the table, all of whom—this is the most terrifying part—all these men knew the LORD. They all had an experience with God—a real experience. Well, thus far, we've covered two of the three; we've looked at Cain, and we've talked about the rebellion of Korah, but now we're going to get into the last one mentioned here, and that is the error of Balaam.

I'm going to say this before we get going. The more we dig into this, the more frightening this story becomes. This is a story which needs to be told today. It applies today. The relevance of this story for the church is terrifying. So, as we go through this, I ask you to please listen to this carefully. Listen to this message, and this is going to take a couple of weeks, but this is so relevant. This is one of those messages that if this hits its mark, it'll change people's lives. Let me say one more thing. Well, let me preface today's message by saying that I didn't plan to do this on the day of this particular commentary. So today, I find it a little bit interesting because, my wife will tell you I can't plan a trip out the front door. So, I was not intentional about making this land on today's Torah portion in any way. Still, it fascinates me scripture tells us on the testimony of two, all things are established. Today Eric gives this phenomenal commentary on the Torah portion, and then the LORD lines it up with this message. So, He's got my attention. I didn't even know it was going to happen like this.

With that said, let's break into this. Numbers, chapter 22 is where the story begins. What you have, as Eric mentioned in his commentary, is you have the children of Israel coming and filling the plains of Moab. They're coming in, and I want you to appreciate the historical context. I want you to understand what Balak saw when Israel was coming in, and I want you to understand what he thought, because this is central to how we proceed in the story. So, Balak sees Israel coming in; now, keep in mind the scholars estimated it was somewhere between 1.2 million to over 2.2 million children of Israel coming in. Think about those numbers. Unbelievable, they just covered the land. I wonder how much land you could even see as Israel's making their way in.

Here's the other thing: as Israel is coming in, they're not coming in like a bunch of reckless vagabonds who are confused and lost. What Balak sees is Israel's army. He sees the glory of Israel coming in. They

are organized. God split Israel into four companies. They had 12 tribes, with three tribes per company. He divided them into companies, and when Israel moved, they did so militarily. They were so organized. Judah, Issachar, and Zebulun would be the first to pack up and go, and they would lead the Israelites out to the next place or, in this case, to the plains of Moab. Next, you had Reuben, Simeon, and Gad. That company, the second company, would follow them, and this gets so awesome. Then, the Ark of the Covenant with the Levites—that's when they come in and follow those two companies—followed by Benjamin, Ephraim, and Manasseh, the third company. The fourth company would have been Dan, Asher, and Naphtali. They moved in a very organized military fashion.

So Balak is seeing the glory of Israel come into his land, an awesome sight, no question about it. More than that, here's what he's thinking. Israel is just coming off a victory of wiping out the Amorites. Why is that important? Go back to the previous chapter, chapter 21, and you'll find out why that's important. The Amorites had already laid waste to Moab long before. Moab could not resist the Amorites. They couldn't hold them off. Now, you have Israel coming and destroying an enemy you could not hold off, and now they're coming for you. This is the context of what he's seeing, and he is terrified. He is so terrified in his heart, and he knows how real this is, and views it as an impossible situation. Yes, in Balak's mind, listen to me carefully; he cannot win the war. Israel is invincible; this is mission impossible. So Balak does the one thing he believes will work, which is his only hope. What is that? He chooses to delve into the spirit realm. He wants to call upon demonic powers because he knows, in the physical realm, what he's dealing with cannot be dealt with.

It's interesting; I want to point out something curiously absent from the text as we look at the story. What you will see is it's important to realize what's not there. Balak does not call any other kingdom or nation or people to come and help him against Israel. Now, I must tell you, read the Bible, begin in the Torah, and proceed through the rest of the Tanakh. What you'll see over and over again is every time war erupts, the kingdom that is outmatched and outgunned, what do they do? They get help from any other nation. You come and help me; I'll pay you handsomely. He doesn't do this; he doesn't call any other nation. That tells you something. He doesn't call any other nation because he doesn't believe it would work. Do you understand the context of what Balak believes he's seen? He doesn't believe he could win this, so he has to go to demonic powers, and there's only one man on the planet who he's going to call. He's a world-renowned sorcerer, and that is Balaam, the son of Beor.

If you want to put this into further context, it's a guarantee that during his time, during Balak's reign, he had countless sorcerers within an arm's length of him who he could have called upon. All the magicians and all of this, he could have grabbed one of them, but what does he do? He goes for Balaam, who scholars estimate was over 420 miles away. We're talking about a 22-to-25-day journey one way. Literally, at that point, it's going to the end of the earth, if you will. This is the guy he wants. Balaam is world-renowned. This guy had channeled dark powers like no one else on the planet. He's a man of great power.

So, Balak sends his messengers to Balaam, and this is where we pick it up. —Numbers 22:6—**"Therefore please come at once, curse this people for me, for they are too mighty for me. Perhaps I shall be able to defeat them and drive them out of the land, for I know that he whom you bless is blessed, and he whom you curse is cursed."** (Emphasis added). If you have any questions regarding Balaam's power and his reputation as a true sorcerer, let it be laid to rest now. Balak already knows; he has evidence. The way this is written, he knows he already has examples of the people Balaam has blessed. Everyone he blessed is blessed, and everyone he cursed is gone; nothing is left. This is a guy of unreal power.

Now, I want to put this into context for you before we get further into this message because you will need some perspective. The way I want to do this is to play a couple of clips for you of some witches and warlocks who have abandoned witchcraft and found Jesus; they found a greater power. In every one of their testimonies, there is a common thread, and I want you to find it. They're saying something the same: it doesn't matter what testimony we go to; you need to acquire that, and there is a second thing which we're going to extract from this, which is even bigger, which is central. It's central to everything we talk about today for you to appreciate this story. So, what I'm going to do is play these clips. I want you guys to watch and pay close attention.

[Video Montage]

Carol Kornacki on the Sid Roth Show, 1998—

Carol Kornacki: One of these days, when I'm old enough, no matter what it takes, pregnancy or what, I'm getting out of here. And I'm going to find two things: I'm going to find power, and I'm going to find love. You see, my mom was into spiritualism, and she used to go to a place called Lily Dale in Jamestown, New York. It was a self-contained spiritualist camp, and she would go there and hear all these past, present, and future things, tea leaves and cards. And she'd come home with miraculous stories, actually, of these things that were going to happen in our home, and Sid, they'd happen. And I would go to church on Sunday, and I'd be sitting on this pew looking up at this dead man on a cross, and I'd say, where are you? Who are you? And I would think he's dead. He's a big plaster depiction of a man who's dead.

Sid Roth: Why? Why'd you think that?

Carol Kornacki: Because I always thought, where are you when my brother's molesting me? Where are you when my mommy's slapping me? Where are you when my father's beating me for nothing? Where are you when we're hungry? Where are you when there is no milk in the house or there is no cereal? No one explained anything to me, so I left it at, He's dead, and I'm going to find power. So, my mother coming home with spiritualist stories intrigued me, and I would think that's where the power is. They know things that nobody else knows, so that's where the power is.

So, I became very, very studious about astrology, witchcraft, and card reading, and that card reading became my niche. Sid, I would walk into a room with a deck of cards and read everybody's mail. I thought that I had come into this great power that I had been looking for. The trouble is when you play with the devil, he doesn't play fair. He'll give you everything you want: all the drugs you want, all the women you want, all the promises, and all the power you want. When he's done with you, he'll kick the legs out from under you. And so here I was with these spirits, operating in this power, cursing people. I cursed one man; said he fell three stories into a wheelbarrow. Thank God that wheelbarrow was there, because he would have been killed. I was asked to project, and I was studying all this witchcraft. I thought everything was wonderful. The same spirits, as you said in the opening, that gave me power began to turn on me and I was totally suicidal. And then one day, standing in a bar, serving drinks, stealing from the place, everything they had, stealing and lying and getting high in the bathroom, a young woman approached me named Linda Smith. And you know what, Sid, she really believed in the power of God. She knew I'd experienced the power and darkness, that I knew it was out there, that it worked. But she wanted me to see a higher power, a greater power that superseded the power that I was operating in.

Sid Roth Interviewed by Kathryn Kuhlman, 1972—

Sid Roth: He got me involved in the psychic world, and I didn't realize I was tying in with the devil when I was involved in astrology and in mind control activities.

Kathryn Kuhlman: How did you ever get involved with that?

Sid Roth: I was looking for power. I found a power there. I found that astrology isn't fake; it works.

Kathryn Kuhlman: You have a brilliant mind. You have a mind that works very quickly. You like to explore the unknown.

Sid Roth: I was looking for power, and I found it. Let me tell you about some of the things that I was able to do. I'm not saying that I'm bragging. I'm trying to explain it to you. I was able to open up a dictionary and ask myself a specific question and just turn it randomly and point to a word, and I'd have an exact answer to my question. I was able to close my eyes, and someone would give me the name of someone I'd never heard of before, and I could describe them and tell you what was wrong with them physically. And I thought that this power was really tremendous. I began to be able to impose my will on people. And then all of a sudden within me a feeling said, where is the power coming from? And I went to the instructor who taught me the course, and I said, where's the power coming from? And he didn't know. So, he sent me to the instructor for the Oval East Coast for this particular course, and I asked him the same question, and he wasn't able to answer my question. And I remember at the time I had met a lot of born-again Christians, and they started to tell me about Deuteronomy 18, in which the Lord Jesus Christ forbids having anything to do with this sort of activity. And I asked him about it at the time, and he said to me, "Sid, the only evil is in your mind. That's the only hang-up. There's no such thing as the devil." And I walked away from that man, not being completely satisfied because although he told me what it wasn't, he didn't tell me what it was. He didn't tell me who I was tied into.

John Ramirez Testimony—

John Ramirez: I was going to a demonic church from seven in the evening to five in the morning, being trained by witches and warlocks, colors, principles, and rights. Who owned this region? Who was in this region? Who was running this principality? What principality name is this? How to channel powers.

At the age of 13, I was astral projecting my body. I would leave my body home and go to regions and go into the spirit realm and curse, the dark side, curse the neighborhood, curse, put the spirit of prostitution, further drugs in the neighborhood, homosexuality spirits here, demonic spirits here, spirit of murder, spirit of suicide. I know how to channel all the spirits into the neighborhood. At the age of 15, 16 years old, I was going to hospitals and putting death in ICU, death in one room so this person can die because I wanted to be promoted with the devil, to move up the ranks, to be the biggest devil worshiper in New York City. The ring of the people that I was with, there was in this demonic world, doctors, lawyers, principals, judges, police officers, they were all into witchcraft. There were all, even singers today that are very well known. I would move principalities in that region and put them to the control of demons on the ground to operate.

To church, to cut down the church, to cut down the growth of the church, to cut down the opportunity for people to get saved. If I tell you I was going to kill you in 30 days, you prepared your funeral; you were gonna die in 30 days. If you, I don't care who you are, I don't care who you knew, I don't care what you call yourself, if you were Catholic, and you say you were Christian, and you said you were a believer, I was going to kill you unless you had a real relationship with Jesus Christ.

And I was the third person who received that book, and I would take symbols from that book into witchcraft to people and put people in, make people lose their mind. I put witchcraft on people, making

people get diseases out of nowhere. I put witchcraft on people, making people get leprosy. I put witchcraft on people, make people get cancer. I mean, I did witchcraft on people. I gave people miscarriages. I gave people abortions. I get people; I put people in the hospital for surgery. They didn't even have to go for surgery. I did witchcraft on people who lose their minds. I put spirits of a bipolar person, for schizophrenia; I put spirits of disease on people. I put suicide spirits on people.

I'd be up all night long praying and talking to the devil. When Christians can't even go to church for one hour. When Christians can't even pray for one hour. The spirit realm is more real than the natural realm, and we fail to see that. And whatever is not covered with Jesus Christ is an easy target to bring down.

[Daniel Joseph]

A lot of things were said in these clips. The last thing said is really important. The spiritual realm is more real than the natural realm. Balak believed it. Balak believed that, and this is why he's going to Balaam. There's one thing you saw continuously, a common thread through every one of those clips, and there are many, many others I could show you. They're all saying the same thing. They got into it because they wanted power, and every single one of them found it. They wielded this power. It's not greater than the power of Yeshua. This is not about exalting witchcraft. This is about understanding this story. This is about understanding these powers exist, and as John Ramirez says, "Man, I'm going to tell you right now, if you don't have a real relationship with the Yeshua, you are open season". It is going to be open season for you. They will have authority and the ability to move. The spirits are moving, and they're being moved. This is real. So, that's the first thing I want to tell you. I'm going to hold off on the second thing, which is even much larger than that.

We're going to continue our story. —Numbers 22:7-8—⁷ **So the elders of Moab and the elders of Midian departed with the diviner's fee in their hand**; this is going to prove to be pretty central to the entire story. We're not going to get too much into that, but they had a diviner's fee in their hand, **and they came to Balaam and spoke to him the words of Balak.** ⁸ **And he (Balaam) said to them, "Lodge here tonight, and I will bring back word to you; wait, as the LORD speaks to me."** **So the princes of Moab stayed with Balaam.** (Emphasis added). As the LORD, notice all the caps. Let's look at this in the Hebrew, *yā·dab·bêr Yah·weh 'ê·lāy (יְהוָה אֵלַי) יָבִיבֵר*). This is a pagan warlock, witch, and sorcerer, and he is now calling on the one true name of the God of Israel. In fact, Yahweh, this Tetragrammaton, right there, is explicit and exclusive to the God of Israel. We could talk about the term El; it translates into other gods. We could talk about Elohim, but not Yahweh, not the sacred Tetragrammaton; it's never confused or mixed up with any other God; that's the first thing you need to realize.

What in the world is a pagan sorcerer doing calling upon Yahweh? Let me say this: we know for a fact Balaam is a pagan sorcerer, not from just Scripture. We know this from a secular text, the Deir Alla text that was found. It talks of Balaam, the son of Beor, a man who communicated with all sorts of gods, who literally was receiving messages from Ishtar and Saggur and all these other gods named Shaddai, not to be confused with El Shaddai. We know he's a pagan sorcerer, and these men Balak is sending for him, because of who he is, he needs to tap into this realm, and now this guy has taken the sacred name of God upon his lips and in a context of seeking Him. Seeking Him, going to Him to seek His counsel. You want to talk about mind-blowing; how do you wrap your mind around that?

I love this passage because many people see it as an enigma. You know, kind of wrapped in a conundrum, hidden in a mystery. They don't know what to do with this; they have no clue what to do with it. There are a lot of interesting hypotheses out there, but I'm going to tell you this, and I'm glad you're sitting down. You're going to understand why I showed you all these testimonies because the

further we get into this story, the more you're going to realize that Balaam had a revelation. We're not told when that revelation happened, but we know for a fact this guy had a revelation like that of John Ramirez, Carol Kornacki, and Sid Roth, all servants of the devil, worshiping the devil, practicing witchcraft, and now here we see Balaam had a similar revelation. As we continue, you'll see just how real what I'm telling you is.

We move on and go to Numbers 22:9-10—⁹ **Then God came to Balaam and said, "Who are these men with you?"** Now look at this. ¹⁰ **So Balaam said to God, "Balak the son of Zippor, king of Moab, has sent to me, saying,** (emphasis added). I highlighted this to help you out. God came to who? Balaam. What's the next thing you read? Balaam said to God. I don't care how you want to try to understand this or redefine it; very simply, there's a line of communication between Balaam and God. That cannot be debated. This is huge, and this is what every Christian wants. Everyone who comes into faith, the faith of Yeshua, wants an open communication line with God. We're told in scripture, sin separates us; we can no longer communicate with God. He doesn't respond to sinners. Yet here we're seeing something so bizarre, built upon what we just read, that now he is seeking God. Clearly, he has found Him, and God is communicating with him.

Now, look at this; it gets crazier. —Numbers 22:11—**'Look, a people has come out of Egypt, and they cover the face of the earth. Come now, curse them for me; perhaps I shall be able to overpower them and drive them out.'** So, Balaam is talking with the LORD, Yod Hey Vav Hey. He's having this communication and tells Him exactly what Balak wants. This is what the messengers said, and I'm relaying it to you. He's telling the LORD the truth, unlike Cain.

Numbers 22:12—**And God said to Balaam, "You shall not go with them; you shall not curse the people, for they are blessed."** Mind-blowing. Pivotal. One of the main pivotal moments in this story begins to reveal what is going on. Now, the LORD is coming in and instructing Balaam on this. Do you think for a moment that God's concerned about the power of Balaam versus the promise He's made available to His children? Can you even imagine God thinking —Are you really going to? Oh, Balaam, don't curse them, please. You know, if you do, I can't hold you back. What am I going to do? —Do you see how ridiculous that notion is? I bring that up because that's not what's going on here. Why is God telling him, don't curse them? Listen to me: God showed Cain the same thing that is being poured out on Balaam—grace.

See, there's a little prophecy/promise, a promise to Abraham back in Genesis 12:3 that says, **I will bless those who bless you, and I will curse him who curses you...** What does God know? If Balaam takes this journey to curse Israel, what will happen to Balaam? He's cursed. God is pouring out His grace. If God were looking to take out Balaam right now, this one who is seeking His counsel, He would say, —Oh, Balak's calling you to curse my children? Well, have a nice journey; go ahead, knock yourself out.

If God intended to take him out, you can go through scripture and see how God marvelously works to bring judgment on the wicked. A perfect example was His judgment on Babylon, who came in and destroyed Israel. Yes, the LORD wanted to punish His people, but by bringing them in, He set them up. You touched My people; you went against My Holy Word; now I'm going to take you out. God could have done this, but He doesn't. Grace is being poured out. He is protecting Balaam, and there's no way to debate it. This is what is happening because God is not in fear of Balaam. To build on this, go to the next chapter, and we'll probably get there next week, but Chapter 23 says there is no sorcery against Jacob. I don't care; with all the sorcery Balaam's got and all the power he channels, he could do nothing against the promise of God or against His people. Nothing, and so we're confronted with something amazing here.

We continue to Numbers 22:13— **So Balaam rose in the morning and said to the princes of Balak, "Go back to your land, for the LORD has refused to give me permission to go with you."** (Emphasis added). Who is Balaam submitting to? His own will? See, you don't get any of this with Cain; you don't get this at all. Here, Balaam is in full submission. The things I would expect to see in the gospel, the elements that need to be there, are already starting to unfold here by him confessing, trusting, and going to seek counsel from, and submitting to God. God hasn't given me permission; he doesn't say Baal. All the other gods we know for a fact Balaam was aware of existed and had operated with, and working with demons. He knew of all of them; he didn't call in any of them. He doesn't say, well, I've got to get the permission of Yahweh, and then I've got to get the permission of Molech. You don't find that. It's interesting; in this narrative, there's only one God mentioned, and that's the one true God. It's absolutely amazing.

Numbers 22:14-15—¹⁴ **And the princes of Moab rose and went to Balak, and said, "Balaam refuses to come with us."** Again, why? Because God said so. He's yielding. ¹⁵ **Then Balak again sent princes, more numerous and more honorable than they.** Balak is upping his game. Now, pay attention to the details because the devil is in them. The devil is working through Balak. He's guiding Balak, and the devil is not going away. This is because if you turn down his offer, he will come at you another way. Make no mistake, you have to draw from this. We're told in James 4:7, **... Resist the devil and he will flee from you**, but if you think he's not coming back, you're delusional. Most of you have lived life long enough to know how many times the devil will circle back on you: every time. Every time he circles back, he will up his game. He's going to wait and hit you when you're most vulnerable, when you're at your weakest, because he's evil. He doesn't care about you. He's not going to show you mercy.

Numbers 22:16—**And they came to Balaam and said to him, "Thus says Balak the son of Zippor: 'Please let nothing hinder you from coming to me; now this is where it gets good, 'for I will certainly honor you greatly, and I will do whatever you say to me. Therefore please come, curse this people for me.'"** (Emphasis added). Unbelievable. He is coming to bless him in a way that Balaam has never been blessed before. Do you want honor? Do you want admiration? Do you want the admiration of people? Do you want to be glorified? It was a narcissist's dream. Do you want all of this? I'll give it to you. But not just that; look at this: in addition to that, I will give whatever you say to me. He's literally giving Balak a blank check. Whatever your heart desires, I will give it to you.

I'm reminded of when Yeshua went into the wilderness, driven out by the Holy Spirit, to be tempted by the devil. He had fasted for 40 days. "If you're the Son of God, please, by all means, turn these stones into bread", and Yeshua doesn't fall for it. He brings Yeshua into the temple, the high pinnacle, and says, "Throw yourself off, and His angels will save you". The last one's really fascinating; he takes Him to the high mountain, and on that high mountain, he shows Him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory in a moment, and he says, all of this, I will give to you if you fall down and worship me. Now, I want you to understand this is exactly what Balak is offering Balaam. I will give you glory; I will give you honor; I will give you whatever you wish; the sky is the limit. In a sense, this is the very thing he is offering.

How does Balaam respond? We go to Numbers 22:18—**Then Balaam answered and said to the servants of Balak, "Though Balak were to give me his house** and that's important, you stop right there. His own residence would have been the crème de la crème, the most coveted, the most sought after, the most honored place in the land. And so, Balaam's careful in his wording, **full of silver and gold, I could not go beyond the word of the LORD my God, pi Yahweh elohai (פִּי יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי) to do less or more.** (Emphasis added). I'm showing you in Hebrew because it's not the word of Moloch, my god, or Baal; it's the sacred tetragrammaton. No other God is joining him. There's only one God mentioned, and he says, He's my God.

What we are looking at is a real situation Balaam had, a real revelation of who Yahweh, King of Israel, is. We have so many testimonies we can look at over the years of witches and warlocks coming into faith, even after dabbling in great power. Once they come into the knowledge of the God of Israel, once they come into the knowledge of Jesus, Yeshua, they're hooked, and they start professing what? *Ho Kyrios mou kai ho Theos mou* (Ὁ Κύριός μου καὶ ὁ Θεός μου), my LORD, and my God, like doubting Thomas, says to Yeshua, my LORD, and my God. Notice, he says, you're not going to move me; I will not go beyond the word of my God. I mean, this is commitment. Again, everything that I expect to see in the gospel is embedded right here.

Numbers 22:19-20—¹⁹ "Now therefore, please, you also stay here tonight, that I may know what more the LORD will say to me." He doesn't move and say, I'm going to seek the counsel of another. No, I will seek the counsel of YHVH, of Yahweh. ²⁰ **And God came to Balaam at night and said to him,** (emphasis added). Again, there is a clear line of communication between the LORD and Balaam, unlike Saul, who tried to petition the LORD, and guess what? What did the LORD not do? He wouldn't answer him. Neither by the prophets nor the Urim and Thummim, but here, Balaam is talking to the LORD, and the fact that He came to him at night, what is this telling you? He's coming to him in dreams and visions at night. That's one of the things when you read Numbers 12:6—... **If there is a prophet among you, I, the LORD, make Myself known to him in a vision; I speak to him in a dream.** So now we're starting to see the prophetic status happen. I mean, that's what prophets are, right? Prophets are people who God talks to.

Numbers 22:20—**And God came to Balaam at night and said to him, "If the men come to call you, rise and go with them; but only the word which I speak to you—that you shall do."** (Emphasis added). Again, this is the second, probably one of the most pivotal moments in the entire story. The details... pay attention to the details. Two things are commanded here. Let's look at the first. If—it's a preposition, don't forget it. If the men come and call you, then rise and go with them. That's the first thing that was said. Then we jump down; here's the second thing: pay attention. **But only the word which I speak to you,—that you shall do.** Do you know what's interesting? This is so huge. The first time I read this, I expected to read, "whatever I speak to you, make sure you speak to them". That's not what's said, although, listen to me carefully, He is going to say that later on. He's going to tell them whatever I speak to you, speak to them. He doesn't say that in this text. What does he say? **That you shall do.**

When you come into the gospel, you come into the faith of Jesus Yeshua, and here's what happens. You're now presented with a whole new lifestyle, a new way to live. You're told things as Paul tells you in Romans 2:13—**for not the hearers of the law are just in the sight of God, but the doers of the law will be justified.** James 1:22—**But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves.** The Word, we're talking about the Word coming from God, and He's being commissioned to actually do it. I think of Hebrews 5:9 — Yeshua **became the author of eternal salvation to all who obey Him** and do His commandments. I think of Psalm 111:10—**The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom; A good understanding have all those who do His commandments.** It's a recurring theme throughout scripture.

There's kind of a tie-in; I think of Abraham. When God comes to Abraham, it's interesting; you have some dialogue; looking at Genesis Chapters 12 and 15, but then when you get into Genesis 17:1, the LORD says to Abraham, **walk before Me and be blameless.** Do what I say; keep My Word; do it. See, because that's the call of the gospel. The gospel doesn't have a calling of you just conceptually believe in Jesus, and you live a life however you want to live. That's not what Balaam is being presented with. That's not what God presents to him right now. He says, "listen to My Word and do it". It's just such bizarre wording; it catches you; it catches you off guard.

Numbers 22:21—**So Balaam rose in the morning, saddled his donkey, and went with the princes of Moab.** (Emphasis added). What just happened? We missed something. Let me put this back up here. — Numbers 22:20—**And God came to Balaam at night and said to him, "If the men come to call you, rise and go with them; but only the word which I speak to you—that you shall do."** (Emphasis added). In Verse 20, He said, "If the men come and call you, rise and go with them", but in Verse 21, he just rose up in the morning, and he went about his merry way. Something happened between Verses 20 and 21; something happened in the night. This is huge; it's the old proverbial, I hear what I want to hear, and I believe what I want to believe. Christians never do that, right?

Think about this: The devil has made a virtually irresistible offer which is looming in the background. The Spirit is warring against the flesh, and the flesh against the Spirit. This offer is looming in the background, and yet the voice of the LORD has commissioned him: Listen to My Word and do it, and there's a war. Somehow, throughout this night, he's being compelled to go. Well, you know what? God did say if the men come; I can go with them. Maybe God is blessing my way. Maybe God wants me to go. I mean, who knows? We weren't there, but when you can get there between Verses 20 and 21, you know something to this degree happened. He was in warfare. All you need to do is be a human being and come into faith, and you're hit with warfare. You're hit with trials, tribulations, and temptations, and Balaam is no different. No different; he's hit with this.

I think of Psalm 56:5; David says something interesting: he says, **All day they twist my words...** If I had a nickel for every time, over the last 20 years of counseling people, where someone came to me and tried to justify what they were going to do in their life through the Word, and yet having to come in and say, "that's not exactly what the Word is saying". It happens all the time; it's unbelievable.

This is happening right now with Balaam. How does God react to hearing what you want to hear, believing what you want to believe? —Numbers 22:22—**Then God's anger was aroused because he went** because he wasn't listening; he did not obey, **and the Angel of the LORD took His stand in the way as an adversary against him.** (Emphasis added). As an adversary, if we could just grab this portion, and every time temptation comes knocking at our door, if we could retain the reality of if I'm going to rebel against God, it means I'm going to cast His commandments aside and I'm not going to do them. I've heard His Word, but I won't do it. If we could realize Yeshua will come and take His stand against us, that we are making the King, who we profess, our enemy. That might impact the way we make our decisions and give us the strength we need to overcome the temptations we are certain to face. There's no question about it.

So, the last part of Numbers 22:22 says, **And he, Balaam, was riding on his donkey, and his two servants were with him.** We're going to try to jump over this real quick and summarize. Balaam gets on his donkey; his two servants are with him. It's interesting; the Targums actually attempt to allude to the fact that this is Jannes and Jambres, the very ones that resisted Moses, according to the Apostle Paul, which is fascinating going back to these magicians in Egypt. It's an interesting thought, but don't be distracted by that. He's on his donkey. He starts going, and his donkey starts acting weird, in ways that it never acted before. Three episodes happen: the first one, the donkey goes off the road, takes him in the middle of nowhere, and Balaam, his anger is aroused. He's angry that this has happened and starts to beat his donkey. The second episode happens where the donkey goes up against the rock and crushes Balaam's foot, and he gets even angrier. Then, this third event happens when the donkey drops down, and Balaam is absolutely losing his mind; he is so livid. All these things are happening, and what he doesn't see is what the donkey sees. He doesn't see that the angel of the LORD is now an adversary against him.

Numbers 22:31—Then the LORD opened Balaam's eyes, and he saw the Angel of the LORD standing in the way; look at this, **with His drawn sword in His hand** (emphasis added). Now you have to love the irony here. The third event, the third episode, happens with Balaam when the donkey drops down, and Balaam absolutely goes ballistic; one of the things that he says in Numbers 22:29—... **"I wish there were a sword in my hand, for now I would kill you!"** Isn't that interesting? The LORD opens up his eyes, and what does he see? He sees the angel LORD with a sword drawn, ready to kill him; a tidbit of irony.

Think about one of the passages we quoted in this series, which talks about the fact that God is angry with the wicked every day if he does not turn back, if you're walking in your sin. —Psalm 7:12— **If he does not turn back, He will sharpen His sword; He bends His bow and makes it ready.** In other words, He's preparing to take you out. Literally, we're seeing that verse come to life in the story of Balaam. He has not done what the LORD said, and now He's sharpening His sword; He's preparing to take him out. Again, I tell you, if we could just retain this imagery in our own life when we're deciding whether to walk with the LORD or not walk with the LORD, it's much easier when you have eyes to see. —Psalm 119:18— **Open my eyes, that I may see Wondrous things from Your law.** Oh, please, God, open our eyes.

Well, how does Balaam respond to this event of seeing the angel with a sword drawn in his hand? This is what we read—Numbers 22:31—... **and he bowed his head and fell flat on his face.** (Emphasis added). Now, no matter how you cut this, guess what this is. This is the position of worship, prostrating, reverential fear. This is exactly what you want to see. This is what you want to see.

We move on to Numbers 22:32—**And the Angel of the LORD said to him, "Why have you struck your donkey these three times? Behold, I have come out to stand against you, because your way is perverse before Me.** (Emphasis added). Oh, here we go again. Pay attention because the grace of God is being poured out. The Word, literally, the Word of the LORD, is coming and showing the error of his way. Clearly, this angel could have never opened his eyes and just taken him out. He didn't; the angel doesn't do that. Instead, he tells him, you're walking in sin; you've done wrong.

I think about all those Scriptures, like Psalm 119:105—**Your word is a lamp to my feet And a light to my path.** The light exposes the darkness; that's what God's Word does. Paul says in Romans 7:7—... **I would not have known sin except through the law. For I would not have known covetousness unless the law had said, "You shall not covet."** Think of Psalm 19:7—**The law of the LORD is perfect, converting the soul;** it turns you, converting the soul; it turns the soul back from sinning. That's the thing: when God's Word goes out, when His law goes out like it went out to Nineveh and said, You're all going to die because you're living in sin, it saved their lives. The Word of the LORD saved their lives, a call to repentance. There are so many other examples I could give you. Josiah, he's king over Judah, and what happens? Hilkiah finds the Torah and gives it to Shaphan, the scribe. Shaphan, the scribe, brings it into the presence of the king. The first time the king hears the Torah, he tears his clothes; he's broken. He can't handle it because it exposed all the sin. That's what it does. That is exactly what is happening here: Balaam's sin is being exposed through the Word, and the mercy of God is being poured out on him. Numbers 22:33—³³ **"The donkey saw Me and turned aside from Me these three times. If she had not turned aside from Me,** obviously the angel is speaking to Balaam, **surely I would also have killed you by now, and let her live."** In other words, mercy. You're only alive because of grace. ³⁴ **And Balaam said to the Angel of the LORD, get this, "I have sinned.** (Emphasis added). What did Dan pray before I came up here? It was a prayer. It was 1 John 1:9—**If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.** Every element of the gospel you're looking for, to complete the gospel, is found in the story with Balaam. Balaam, who called upon the one true God, the Tetragrammaton, Jehovah Yahweh, he has had grace, he's had the experience of grace, now multiple

times, he has had the Word of the LORD speak into his life in conviction. Now, after that conviction, what does the LORD expect every Christian to do when the Word exposes sin? He expects you to confess your sin. So, he confesses, I mean, this is the best remedy for us, period. When it's tempered with humility and faith, when that happens, then watch out.

Then he goes on and says this in Numbers 22:34—... **for I did not know You stood in the way against me.** He was blind to his sin, just like David. David was blind to his sin. Nathan's talking: he's giving him this parable about this little lamb, and David's like, "that guy should die". He had no clue that he was referring to himself; he condemned himself. So, Balaam is like, I didn't know You stood in the way against me. Isn't that just the case? Sin blinds us, and then he says this: this is incredible. ...**Now therefore, if it displeases You, I will turn back.**" (Emphasis added). What is our job as believers? What should be our concern? To please the LORD. What is Balaam exhibiting, and what is his only concern right now? LORD, if my way is not Your way and it displeases You, it makes You unhappy; I'm gone. I'm going this way. Again, when we enter into the gospel and bow down and confess Yeshua as LORD, and we say we will listen to Your Word, we will follow You. We confess our sins, and we agree; we commit. There's a commitment in this relationship. I'm not going to do the things that displease You.

This is mind-blowing; it makes me think of Isaiah Chapter 56. I didn't put this up here, but I want to read this. —Isaiah 56:1-4 —¹ **Thus says the LORD: "Keep justice, and do righteousness, For My salvation is about to come, And My righteousness to be revealed.** It's literally a prophecy. The Messiah Yeshua is coming; prepare yourselves. Now, here's the deal: Isaiah Chapter 56 is geared toward Gentiles. This is important because Balaam is what? He's a Gentile. He said, ² **Blessed is the man who does this, And the son of man who lays hold on it; Who keeps from defiling the Sabbath, And keeps his hand from doing any evil."** Then he says this: ³ **Do not let the son of the foreigner Who has joined himself to the LORD Speak, saying, "The LORD has utterly separated me from His people";** You Gentiles, don't say that because the ones that keep His Sabbath, when you keep His covenant, you hold fast His covenant. This is interesting; this is what it goes on to say: ⁴ **... And choose what pleases Me;** now, that statement is made in correlation specifically with those Gentiles who keep the Sabbath and hold fast to His covenant; they **choose what pleases Me.**

This is interesting to me, because this is what we're called to do. It terrifies me when I talk to Christians, and they don't even have the heart of Balaam. They're not worried about pleasing the LORD. Even Balaam, a man who was a wicked, pagan sorcerer who found a greater power, humbled himself before the LORD and said, I'm not doing anything that doesn't please You; I want to find out what pleases You. This is one of the things I have wrestled with. That's why this story is so critical for us today. It's so critical for the church, on so many levels, because the parallel is frightening. When you have a Gentile who is coming out of Gentilism, out of paganism, as all Gentiles do, and they come into the true knowledge of the God of Israel, they commit themselves, they experience real grace of God, they confess sin, and they confess commitment. The story is going to get way crazier as we continue. We're not going to continue today; we'll end here for today, but we'll delve into this further next week, and it gets more terrifying as we go.