

The Book of Jude (Part 16) - The Cost of Our Sin...Is it Worth It?

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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/8gfzp37/the-book-of-jude-part-16>

***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.**

[Music montage]

The letter of Jude. The warnings of history to the ungodly. Wolves in sheep's clothing.

[Daniel Joseph]

Shabbat Shalom, everyone. Well, we're going to get back to it today, and for the last couple of weeks, we've been looking at the life of Balaam and how Balaam has been interacting with the one God that reigns, the Most High God, the God of Israel. One thing that is clear to me, and it comes from the testimony of the Torah itself, is that Balaam had a radical, life-changing—listen to me carefully—a radical, life-changing experience with the God of Israel. It changed his life and his perspective. This is a guy that experienced all the elements that we see wrapped in the grace message. Where you talk about people confessing faith in the Messiah Yeshua, you talk about people changing their hearts that if that doesn't please you, LORD, then I will turn back; I will go back. Talk about people getting the anointing of God experiencing these types of things; all of those beautiful elements of the Gospel are on Balaam. Hear me out here; don't turn this into a fictitious experience, a fake experience, as though Balaam himself were to basically fabricate this emotion.

I think of atheists; when they think of us and our faith, they say, Your faith is just a crutch. You're weak-minded, so you need a crutch to help cope with all the things that are in the world. Nothing could be farther from the truth when it comes to Balaam. This is real, his experience with the LORD, his heart for the LORD, him confessing the LORD and saying, I'm not going to go beyond Your Word. That's real, and if you don't get that part, nothing else that we talk about today is going to mean anything. You've got to understand, his experience with the LORD is as authentic as it gets; however, unfortunately, as we continue today, Balaam's not going to hold it together; he's just not, and this is what makes this story so frightening.

This, especially, is what makes this story so relevant as I look at a church being ripped to shreds. It's given itself to compromise more and more with each passing day. So, this message, as I said before, is a message that needs to be heard today. This is a message we need to independently hear and allow to sink into our ears and deep down into our hearts.

We're going to continue, and we left off at Numbers Chapter 24. Basically, what happened is it came to a crescendo. The story hit a tipping point where Balak was so upset, he was just done with Balaam. He called Balaam to curse Israel, and all he can do is bless them over and over and over again. Now you've blessed them three times. You know, Balaam, I said, I'd honor you, but I'm not going to, and Balaam has a response. He's like, What did you think was going to happen? Honestly, I told you that you could give me your house filled with silver and gold, and guess what? I cannot go beyond the Word of the LORD. This is where we pick the story up. Then, Balaam, further in response to Balak, says, Come with me; I'm going to show you what's going to happen to your people. This is what's going to happen, and Balaam lays one more prophecy on Balak. Now, if Balak wasn't mad enough and frustrated enough, oh, this is a doozy.

He gets into a prophecy in Numbers 24:17—... **A Star shall come out of Jacob; A Scepter shall rise out of Israel, And batter the brow of Moab...** and what is He going to do? This is a prophecy of the Messiah Yeshua, Jesus of Nazareth. He's going to come and batter the brow of Moab. Basically, the word that Balaam leaves with Balak after Balak just chews him out was, You know what, Balak, you're as good as dead. The Messiah is going to rise, and He, Himself, is going to destroy you. What do you think of that? Those are not usually the words we hear about Yeshua. Of course, once you get into Revelation, you get that, the Wrath of the Lamb is coming. He's going to draw a sword; He's going to destroy people with the sword of His mouth, and people are going to be cast into hell. Well, that prophecy that Balaam lays on him, man, does that extract that right out of it. It's extremely powerful.

After he gets done with this prophecy, we're going to go to the last verse in the chapter. It says in Numbers 24:25—**So Balaam rose and departed and returned to his place; Balak also went his way.** Please pay attention to this. The last verse in Chapter 24; it's pretty unambiguous, right? It basically says they're going to part ways. Balaam's going to go his way, and Balak's going to go his way. You can look at this and say, if this was your first time going through the Torah, Okay, this is pretty much the end of the story. There's going to be no further interchange; this is done; however, the very next verse we read is this: check this out. —Numbers 25:1—**Now Israel remained in Acacia Grove, oh, and the people,** meaning Israel, **began to commit harlotry with the women of Moab.** (Emphasis added). What?

Now hold on a second; first things first, who is the King of Moab? Balak. Yeah, that's the guy that has declared Israel his enemy; that's the guy that is out to destroy Israel. Like I said before, if it was my first time going through the Torah, and I just got done reading Chapter 24, and they parted their ways, Balaam said his piece, and this is the deal: guess what I'm not thinking is going to happen? This, where Israel is basically like a 1407 BC Woodstock. I did not expect Israel to go and party and fornicate with them. Who expected that? This is insane; the world has flipped upside down. What is going on?

If that weren't bad enough, it goes on in Numbers 25:2-3—² **They**, meaning the Moabites, **invited the people to the sacrifices of their gods, oh, and the people ate and bowed down to their gods.** ³ **So Israel was joined to Baal of Peor, and the anger of the LORD was aroused against Israel.** (Emphasis added). So, let me get this straight: from Chapter 24, the very end, they're just separating. The very next thing we read is that Israel is giving itself in harlotry to the women of Balak's kingdom, and now we're told that they are also worshiping the gods that Balak worships. What did I miss? I miss something between the end of Chapter 24 and the first verse of Chapter 25 because there's obviously a significant bit of information there. There has to be; you can't go from there to here; think of this.

Here's the beauty: we actually get what happened, that little significant piece of information, as we go to Numbers Chapter 31. So, we're going to jump ahead and try to fill the gap. —Numbers 31:1-2—¹ **And**

the LORD spoke to Moses, saying: ² "Take vengeance on the Midianites for the children of Israel. Afterward you shall be gathered to your people." This is the LORD basically declaring, Hey, because of what they did to you, because they lured you and seduced you, go kill them all; take them out. This is the LORD giving the charge.

We moved to Numbers 31:8—**They killed the kings of Midian with the rest of those who were killed—Evi, Rekem,** and this is interesting; I highlighted this, just kind of a side note, **Zur, Hur, and Reba, the five kings of Midian.** (Emphasis added). The reason I highlighted Zur is because he's kind of a character of significance, especially in regard to what the Torah records. If you go back to Numbers Chapter 25, you discover something. Keep in mind, when Israel joins themselves to the women of Moab, it is thousands upon thousands upon thousands of Israelites that have done this. So, you have to think that if thousands and thousands and thousands of Israelites went and fornicated with women, well, there's a lot of stories to be told.

Only one story is brought to the table, and that one is Zimri; he's of the tribe of Simeon. He takes a Midianite woman, Cozbi, by name, and presents her in front of Moses. This is no joke; you can go home and read it. He presents her in front of Moses and all the elders, then takes her in a tent to fornicate with her. You want to talk about a brazen, unashamed ability to sin. That ought to be a little flag for you when you look out at what's going on in this country that does not know how to blush. The church, the church doesn't know how to blush; it lost its ability to blush. What can you expect to follow? Judgment when you're at that point. I digress, but Cozbi, this woman that Zimri took to fornicate with in front of all the elders of Israel, her father is Zur.

Then we get to this, and this is where we get to the meat of the matter. —Numbers 31:8—**... Balaam the son of Beor they also killed with the sword.** (Emphasis added). Has everyone lost their mind? Because I was back in Chapter 24 and everything seemed to be put in order. Israel's getting blessed. Israel is impenetrable; they're powerful, and things look good. Balak is totally powerless; he can't do anything. The next thing I read is Israel is fornicating. They're bowing down to false gods, and now Balaam is getting killed. How does this make sense? This is a God that was blessing Israel, and last time I checked in Genesis, when you bless Israel, you're blessed. This doesn't look like a blessing to me. Again, I ask what happened. There's a lot of stuff going on here; what happened?

We're going to drop down to Numbers 31:15-16—¹⁵ **And Moses said to them: "Have you kept all the women alive?"** ¹⁶ **"Look, these women caused the children of Israel, through the counsel of Balaam, to trespass against the LORD in the incident of Peor,** Why is Balaam dead? Why did Israel kill him? Because he is the culprit, it all began with him. He counseled the Midianite women, the Moabites, that this is what you need to do. You need to go out and allure them, seduce them, and what is the payment of that? What did Israel expect? Well, this was it, **and there was a plague among the congregation of the LORD.** (Emphasis added). 24,000 people were wiped out because of this event.

Now, there are a lot of questions that need to be asked, and number one is, what in the world happened to, You can't curse Israel? What happened to that? What happened that there's no witchcraft or divination against Israel? What happened to the LORD's promises that He has given to Israel? The untouchable has become touchable, and the unbreachable has become breached. How is this possible? This is something you want to pay attention to because it applies to every single one of us today. I want to begin by saying this: there is no witchcraft, there is no divination against Israel; it will not happen. Dark spirits and dark powers, they cannot override the protection, the promises, the faithfulness of God; it'll never happen.

So, what did happen? Listen to this: the invitation. They didn't use witchcraft, they didn't use will, they didn't use might, they didn't use swords, they didn't use tanks, spears, or whatever. They didn't go to war against them. They invited them to come and fornicate; it was an invitation. It wasn't until Israel yielded; they yielded to that invitation, and that's when all hell broke loose. How demonic and frightening is that? God's promise holds fast. Now, keep in mind, the rest of Israel, let's be honest, it was untouchable; they didn't lose a hair. Why? They stayed faithful. They stayed under the grace of God. They stayed under the protection of God. But God has given us free will, and you can walk out of that free will when you yield to all those little invitations that you're going to get from Hasatan. The devil is going to give you invitation after invitation, and he's got your number. That's the thing I despise so badly. So many people that I pray with, he's got every one of your numbers because he knows your Achilles heel. He knows where you're weak, and where do you think he's going to hit you? He's going to hit you right at your weakest spot, and he's going to be inviting you.

Some of these invitations come in different forms; some are going to come in the form of temptation. For a lot of men, it'll come in through the computer; it'll come in through pornography. He's inviting you. Come, come and feast; come be with us. He's inviting you to go to a land of unforgiveness, saying, No, you're justified; you don't have to forgive that person. He's going to invite you to the land of pride that refuses to humble yourself. You're going to get so many different types of invitations, and I'm telling you right now, it is on you. If you accept that invitation, know this: you're one of the 24,000. No, the grace will not cover you. The protection, the beauty, and the promises God will not cover you when you walk away from Him. That is a biblical fact; you come out of the protection. That is not worth it.

This begs another question. I mean, think about how all of this craziness is happening. What happened to Balaam? How does this even come together? Why would Balaam do what he did? We just spent an entire chapter where he himself said, I will not go beyond the word of the LORD, and I won't curse Israel. I won't get involved in any of that. I'm only going to bless them. He, himself, saw that it pleased the LORD to bless them. What happened to him? Something happened between Chapter 24 and Chapter 25. I'll tell you exactly what happened. The same tactic that the devil used against Israel, he first used against Balaam; that's what he did. He gave Balaam an invitation.

Now, if you remember that invitation, we already know what it is. See, when Balak came on the scene and offered him riches beyond his wildest imagination and offered him the glory of men, that was quite an offer. Some would say that's irresistible, and somewhere between Chapter 24 and Chapter 25, the enemy keeps playing that over and over again. This is what you had on the table. Oh, this is what you turned away from? You could have had it all. What we're seeing here is that Balaam is not taking every thought captive to the obedience of Christ. He's not casting down arguments and strongholds with the knowledge and the holiness and the faithfulness of God. This is what is happening to him. He is literally experiencing firsthand the flesh warring against the Spirit and the Spirit against the flesh.

How many of you can relate? Every single day you get up, and you start wrestling the flesh against the Spirit and the Spirit against the flesh. You talk about certain people that deal with addictions, whether it's alcohol addiction, whether it's drug addiction, whether it's sex addiction—all of these types of things; all they hear, all day in their mind, they're playing this through. If they're not drinking, they're dreaming about drinking. If they don't have a needle in their arm, they're only thinking about how I can get that next needle in my arm. Do you understand how this works in the attack on the heart and in the mind? The devil has your number. He's going to hit you every time where it hurts, and there is only one place of safety, and that is Yeshua. End of discussion, and this is where we need to be.

What we're seeing here is that Balaam didn't hold the line; the devil wore him out. In his relentless pursuit of him, he wore him out, and Balaam, like Israel, yielded. He yielded to something he should never have gotten involved in. He took his hands off the plow.

I want to take you to Second Peter, and the beauty of Second Peter is this: this is our companion epistle. Peter tells the same story; he's given the same message as Jude is giving. We know Jude brings Korah to the table, he brings Cain to the table, and he brings Balaam to the table. Peter doesn't do that; Peter brings one name to the table, and it is Balaam, and the guy gets very comprehensive in regard to his discourse on Balaam. I want to take you there and give you a little support of what I'm telling you. This is what we read in II Peter 2:15—**They have forsaken the right way**; I want to stop. They have forsaken; okay, if you're ever given to Calvinism, you've got to listen to these things. You have to listen to the story of Balaam; you have to listen. To forsake the right way means you had the right way and you were in the right way. At one time, you truly were walking in the right path. Peter says they have forsaken the right way **and gone astray, following the way of Balaam the son of Beor**, then he says this: **who loved the wages of unrighteousness**; (emphasis added) loved is *agapao* (ἀγαπάω) in the Greek where most of you heard *agape*.

When Peter uses the word loved, that's the most intense aspect. This *agape*, Balaam had an *agape* for the wages of unrighteousness and the wages of unrighteous counsel. The wages got him; the riches of the world sucked him in. A guy that was anointed with the *Ruach Hakodesh*, a guy that confessed sin, a guy that confessed the one true God of Israel, and the devil got to him. What in the world is going on? He had given his heart. He started giving his heart over to the things of the world; it's so crazy to me. It's so messed up that this guy can have an authentic experience in the Gospel and end up on this side of the tracks. The threat is real, I kid you not.

I'll take you to Matthew Chapter 13, where Yeshua talks about guys like Balaam and explains it so well in The Parable of the Sower. He talks about the sower sowing seed by the wayside and by the stony ground. Then we read this in Matthew 13:22—**Now he who received seed**, and I want to stop here because seed is the Word of God. You have to understand the parable. The Parable of the Sower: What he's sowing is the Word; he's sowing the Gospel. This is what Balaam received, and this is what many, many Christians receive. He who received seed **among the thorns is he who hears the word, and the cares of this world and the deceitfulness of riches choke the word, and he becomes unfruitful**. (Emphasis added).

Do you understand? This is exactly what happened to Balaam. He had a true, authentic experience with the one true God, but he was in the thorns. Over time those thorns begin to creep in and squeeze tighter and tighter, and you better believe the devil is there knowing his weak spot, aiding this whole situation. He was trying to wire Balaam in such a way as to communicate to him that you can't walk away from that kind of riches. You need to do this; you can have such glory from men. Look at that stuff you're missing. You're missing out. It chokes to death. This is exactly what Peter's talking about when Peter says he loved the wages of unrighteousness.

Then Peter goes on and says this in II Peter 2:16—**but he was rebuked for his iniquity: a dumb donkey speaking with a man's voice restrained the madness of the** what? The *prophétés*, the **prophet**. He calls him a prophet because what do prophets do? They prophesy. Was he prophesying on behalf of Baal, Chemosh, or Moloch? He prophesied on behalf of God; even Peter recognizes this. The thing with false prophets: the Torah talks about false prophets; Prophet Jeremiah runs up against Hananiah, who is a

prophet of God. He's a real prophet of God, but unfortunately this real prophet jumps the tracks and starts false prophesying because he's prophesying out of the desires of his heart. Hananiah experienced something, the desires of the heart, that he elevated higher than the will of God. This is how this crazy stuff happens; it's crazy.

II Peter 2:17— **These are wells without water**, now, the imagery that Peter is using here is important because the whole context is what? The whole context is the church; in Second Peter Chapter 2, it's the church in the Book of Jude. These are Christians; that's the context. It's people who turn the grace of God into lewdness. What does Peter use for imagery to describe these kinds of people? Wells without water. Why do people go to wells? For life, right? This meant so much more in the first century than it does today. You're out, you're on your journey, you are going from well to well to well; that's what you're looking for because you cannot survive without water. He uses us as descriptors of, we are to be wells. Yeshua says, Whoever believes in Me, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water; *mayim-chayyim* (מַיִם חַיִּים) is to come out of you because Yeshua is in you. That means you're to give life to other people through Yeshua; this is the concept. Well, these Christians are wells, but they have no life, they have no water, they have no sustenance, they have no fruit. Then he goes on and says they are **clouds carried by a tempest, for whom is reserved the blackness of darkness forever**. (Emphasis added).

II Peter 2:19-20—¹⁹ **While they promise them liberty, they themselves are slaves of corruption**; they say, Christ has set us free; Christ has made us all free, yet they themselves, the very people that are preaching this, are sinning. They're abandoning the Word of God; they're not listening to His commandments, **for by whom a person is overcome, by him also he is brought into bondage**.²⁰ **For if, after they have escaped the pollutions of the world**, again, just to beat this down with good measure, we're talking about someone that had escaped the pollution; they had the Gospel; they had an authentic experience with Christ; there's no debate, **through the knowledge of the LORD and Savior Jesus Christ**, oh, but then he says this: **they are again entangled in them and overcome, the latter end is worse for them than the beginning**. (Emphasis added). You understand, we're talking about authentic Christians jumping the tracks like Balaam. Keep in mind, as Peter is saying this, what is the one name he has in view? Balaam. It makes perfect sense when you actually study the story.

II Peter 2:21—**For it would have been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than having known it**, oh, and **to turn from the holy commandment delivered to them**. (Emphasis added). What is happening with these Christians that were wells once filled with water and now the water's gone? They stopped listening to God; they stopped spending time with Him. They stopped praying, they stopped obeying Him, and they became more like the world. They started following the dictates of their own heart; they started following the lust of the eyes, the pride of life. See, because the devil has told them, You will surely not die. You will not die; it's okay; you can dabble, and hear everyone's doing it. You will die; the Bible is certain. You cannot rebel against God; you cannot abandon Him. It will be the end for you.

Then he says in II Peter 2:22—**But it has happened to them according to the true proverb: "A dog returns to his own vomit," and, "a sow, having washed, to her wallowing in the mire."** (Emphasis added). Understand something: Balaam returned and began to drink his own vomit; this is what Balaam did. This is why his story is so relevant for us today. This is why it's relevant for a church that's coming unglued; that is becoming a well with no water.

Paul says this in I Timothy 4:1—**Now the Spirit expressly says that in latter times**, which we're in, **some will depart from the faith**, they were in the faith; their faith was authentic in Christ, and now they're gone; they've abandoned ship. They'll depart from the faith, and then we told why. Because it will be **giving heed to deceiving spirits and doctrines of demons**, (emphasis added), demons who are going out, peddling this nonsense that you can live like hell and inherit heaven. The demons are gathering Christians right now to come and drink their vomit; that is what is happening right now. To acquiesce to the desires of the world. God wants whatever your heart's desire is; this is what the church has been told. Whatever your desire is, God's okay with it.

How about if we ask God? What happened to that? How about if we ask God if He is okay with it? No, no, no, don't confuse people with the facts; don't do that. Paul goes on in I Timothy 4:2—**speaking lies in hypocrisy**, What kind of lies? The kind of lies that tell you, I don't need to do what's in this Bible. I don't need to keep the Torah. I don't need to keep the commandments. Lies, like the Law is oppressive; Christ did away with that. They speak lies in hypocrisy. Then it goes on, **having their own conscience seared with a hot iron**; (emphasis added). How does that happen? How does your conscience get seared with a hot iron? It's when you come to a point where you will not receive the correction of the LORD. You will not hear this Word. You don't want anything to do with it.

In fact, it says in Proverbs 12:1—**... But he who hates correction**, I love the New King James, the best version ever on this. He who hates correction **is stupid**. You're dumb. It's true, if I'm a man, that's not going to receive correction according to the Scripture, and the Proverbs are filled with this: you're dumb. I don't want to be dumb; I don't. I don't want to be stupid, but this is what happens. It's when they will no longer hear His Law. They will no longer hear His words, and they stop up their ears; they're done.

Hebrews 10:38—**Now the just shall live by faith; but if anyone draws back, My soul has no pleasure in him.**" (Emphasis added). The way this is worded is almost disarming, that the LORD has no pleasure in him. It's almost like, well, if you do that, I'm not really happy with you, but it's all good. No, this is if you don't do what I say, I will literally come and kill you. I will kill her children with death. You will be thrown into the lake of fire for all eternity. When I look at this, when He says, My soul will not have pleasure, understand the gravity of that statement, of drawing back like Balaam. Balaam, who drew back to the old sins.

Is there anyone here—I suspect not, but is there anyone here where the devil has not tried to bring you back to your vomit? Is this not what he does? This is the M.O. Your flesh is inclined to go back and drink your own vomit, to partake in your sin. How do you combat that? Giving your heart to the LORD, getting strong, praying, fasting, and saying no and replacing those desires by turning to Yeshua, calling on His name, immersing yourself in His Word, and putting people around you to hold you accountable. Putting people around you that are going to speak life into you. You know, the computer isn't going to give you life. This is where a lot of guys get themselves in trouble, going to pornography; there's no life in that.

I'm going to put up some names here, and I have others that I could put up. I just grabbed the ones that I was thinking of. —**Korah – Cain – Esau – Saul – Demas – Gehazi – Balaam – Judas**—All these men have something in common across the board. They all did something, and it's all the same; they all walked away. They all jumped the tracks. You think of Korah, you think of Cain, you think of Esau. Esau was given the birthright, the great blessing, and he sold it for a bowl of stew. His salvation, what God had given him, meant nothing to him; it meant nothing. Every one of these guys on this board had a real experience with the living God, a real experience, communication with God. Saul, are you kidding me?

Saul was made king of Israel, anointed with the Holy Spirit. This guy prophesied; God carried out great exploits as Saul was king, absolutely amazing. Saul knew the LORD.

Demas in the New Testament, a companion of Paul, did ministry side by side. Can you imagine? One of the most famous evangelists that has ever existed in the world is the Apostle Paul, and Demas was with him. Is that impressive? Yes. To be a part of Apostle Paul's circle in ministry, that impresses me. Demas was right there. Do you know what Paul tells Timothy? He has to break the news to him. —2 Timothy 4:10—**for Demas has forsaken me, having loved this present world...** Isn't that interesting? It's the very same issue that Balaam has. Balaam gave his heart to the things of the world. Yeshua says in Luke 16:15—**... For what is highly esteemed among men is an abomination in the sight of God.** But Demas walked away. All the miracles that he would have seen through the Apostle Paul, I mean that guy raised the dead; he had handkerchiefs being taken away from him, and demons were flying out of people. Demas jumped ship.

Gehazi, the servant of *El-ee-shaw*, or Elisha the prophet, think about what he just got done seeing. He just saw Naaman, a Syrian, or *Na'aman*. What happened to *Na'aman*? He was healed of leprosy. He sees the power of God; he just sees a leper totally cleansed. He is in the Kingdom of God. I mean, Gehazi is seeing this. He travels with a man with a double anointing of Elijah; think about what he experienced and what he saw, and the moment *Na'aman* is healed, he starts scheming how to make money and profit off of God healing him. Wages of unrighteousness, he's thinking about the things of the world, not the power of God. That blows my mind and scares me to death. You can have people exposed to such power, to such glory, the glory of God, and they walk away. How does this happen?

You've got Balaam; you've got Judas Iscariot. Judas himself went out doing miracles. Judas himself went out casting out demons; we know this; it's a biblical fact. He is part of the greatest ministry that has ever existed. He was one of the 12 apostles, and what did Judas do? He betrayed his master for 30 pieces of silver, for wages of unrighteousness. Wages of unrighteousness, he wanted the money. You saw how short-lived that was, going and hanging himself. Judas is a betrayer if you think about this. Judas is one of those characters that has put the fear of God into me so mightily because of the reality when we go and sin. What are we doing? We're betraying Yeshua, and the devil doesn't want you to have that perspective. He doesn't want you to see that you're being a traitor; you're being a Judas. Oh, but then you come to church, and you say, Shalom, Rabbi, and betray Him with a kiss as you lift your hands up and sing the songs, and then you go home and sin. I don't even know how to follow up on that, on how demonic it is. How delusional this whole generation has become, filled with sin.

There's something else here that I want to point out with all these guys. something that every single one of these guys lacked. It's a common denominator, and it's something that we need to pay attention to here. Not one of these guys had perseverance, not one. Not one did what Yeshua said we had to do in Matthew 10:22. He says, **You will be hated by everyone because of me, but the one who stands firm to the end will be saved.** Do you understand? Salvation hinges upon your endurance. We don't like that because that means that we have to take this seriously. I'm going to have to be a living sacrifice; I'm going to have to do this. Only those who endure to the end will be saved—perseverance. Perseverance is going to plow through tribulation. Perseverance is going to plow through the trials. Perseverance plows through the pain, plows through discouragement, plows through despair, plows through fear, and it says no to all the invitations of temptation. That's endurance; that's perseverance. When the world hits you the hardest, and you lose everything, more than you could have imagined, like Job, and you're wallowing and you're suffering physically in the flesh, then you come out and say, Blessed be the name

of the LORD. Endurance, this is endurance. This is who we need to be in this generation because we will not make it through this generation without endurance.

Paul says this in Galatians 6:9—**And let us not grow weary while doing good**, which means walking in righteousness and holiness, **for in due season we shall reap if we do not lose heart**. (Emphasis added). Yeshua says in Luke 18:1—**... always pray and not give up**. Don't lose heart. Why are we being told not to lose heart? Because there's a threat, you're going to lose heart. David says in Psalm 27:13—**I would have lost heart, unless I had believed That I would see the goodness of the LORD In the land of the living**. Unless I had that faith. See, perseverance is one of the barometers of your faith. If you're not persevering through the things that you're going through, you've got nothing. You have no faith.

Let me offer a little motivation. I want to take you back to the passage that started all of this in talking about these men who have turned the grace of God into lewdness and what they need to be warned of, what they need to hear. We're going to look at this through the lens of Balaam; it's fascinating. — Matthew 7:21— **"Not everyone who says to Me, 'LORD, LORD,' shall enter the kingdom of heaven**, As I go through this, I always mention number one: you have to understand these are professing Christians. They know Him; they're calling Him by name. I would argue this is the scariest verse in all the Bible. Yeshua just got done saying, Not everyone who confesses Me is going to make it. How am I supposed to process that? He is saying not everyone who confesses to Me is going to get in. What does He mean? He goes on and tells us, **but he who does the will of My Father in heaven**. (Emphasis added).

We have to obey God. We've got to obey His commands. When the young rich man comes to Him in Matthew 19:16 and asks, **"Good Teacher, what good thing shall I do that I may have eternal life?"** I want eternal life. Yeshua's response was (Matthew 19:17), **keep the commandments**. The very response you're not going to hear today, the very response that nobody wants to hear in the church. We just don't want to do it, and Yeshua sends this warning: You better hear it. Not everyone who confesses Me is going to get in.

Then He moves on to Matthew 7:22—**Many**; I wish it was some; I wish it would just even say remnant or a tiny bit. Many **will say to Me in that day, 'LORD, LORD**, they're confessing Him; oh, **have we not prophesied in Your name**, oh, guess what? Saul prophesied. Guess what? Balaam prophesied. He had the anointing of the living God, and let me put things in context. One of the most powerful messianic prophecies to this day was through Balaam, right in Chapter 24, one of the most awesome messianic prophecies of Yeshua. Isn't this mind-blowing? He says, Many will say to me, They're going to confess; they've prophesied in His name; they've **cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?**' (Emphasis added). Yeah, what did Judas do? Oh, yeah, he cast out demons. That's what Judas did being a part of the ministry, no question. He did many wonders as he was going about in the ministry of Yeshua.

There are going to be a lot of Christians at the end that are going to be really surprised because Yeshua is going to say—Matthew 7:23—**And then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from Me**, just to bring a little clarity to the table, there are some teachers that say, Well, you know, the fact that He said, I never knew them, they were never saved; they never had an authentic experience with the Gospel. The Calvinists love to interpret this passage this way. Nothing could be farther from the truth. The only way to understand this is through interpreting Scripture with Scripture. In other words, let me show you what I mean in a moment, but for now, let's just finish this out. I never knew you; depart from Me, **you who practice lawlessness!**' (Emphasis added).

The thing that's going to keep people out of the kingdom is walking away from the Torah, walking away from the commandments of God. That's what's going to keep them out of the Kingdom of God. That horrifies me, especially in light of the fact that you have churches today, and what are they doing? They're promoting abortion. You can't make this stuff up. Literally pastors promoting abortion. We have pastors promoting the LGBTQ lifestyle, an alternative lifestyle. Lifestyles that are condemned in Scripture. Lifestyles, they have no place in church. The church is the place to tell them the truth, to love them, to be patient with them, to show them kindness, and to bring them into the Kingdom of God according to His Word. That's what the church is for, but now it's a sounding board for exactly what the world is resounding. What the world is sounding out, the church is doing the exact same thing. The church has become a place of hedonism. All you need to do is look at the Seeker Sensitive Movement and the Word of Faith Movement. Certainly, there are good Christians in all of these, but, you know, you've got guys flying around in 20-million-dollar jets; this is nuts; this is crazy.

This stuff does not belong in the church. And you know what? At the end, is it going to be worth it? Ask Gehazi, was it worth it? Ask Judas, was it worth it? Ask Balaam, was it worth it? It's not worth it. I'm struggling now, more than I've ever struggled before with the church, because things are starting to come unglued in this world, Amen. I'm seeing people waver and falter beyond what I even thought. I thought I had a good perspective. I understated the problem; they are not taking seriously the Word of God; that's just the bottom line. There's a report I read just last week, talking about how biblically illiterate Christians really are and some of the things they believe are astounding. They don't believe that people should be getting their morality from the Bible. What? How does that even work?

Let me take you to Ezekiel and get into this concept of what Yeshua just shared with us in Matthew. Ezekiel 33:7—**"So you, son of man: I have made you a watchman for the house of Israel; therefore you shall hear a word from My mouth and warn them for Me.** Another mind-blowing moment here for me is that Ezekiel is raised up as a watchman. The Holy Spirit anointed, he prophesied, and guess what? The guy is still speaking today through the anointing of the Holy Spirit.

The warning stands, and what is this warning? Well, we go here to Ezekiel 33:13—**When I say to the righteous that he shall surely live, but he trusts in his own righteousness and commits iniquity,** they're righteous. I have the Gospel; I'm in tune with the LORD; we're in a relationship. But when I get comfortable with the LORD that I can sin, I'm good because I'm under grace. I get comfortable with sin, and I acquiesce to the things of the world; well, then we're told this: **none of his righteous works shall be remembered;** (emphasis added). I want to stop there. Everything he did for the LORD, the prophesying, the casting out of demons, and doing many wonders in His name—all of it is forgotten, and that's why Yeshua says, I never knew you; no recollection. See, that's what happens. Whoever sins against Him, Exodus 32:33, God will blot him out of His book. You were in the book, but you got blotted out. See, if you're not in the book, He never knew you. Do you understand what's being communicated? **but because of the iniquity that he has committed, he shall die.** Period.

As we continue, we're going to end here because the LORD offers hope. This is where I land, on this hope. As we go to Ezekiel 33:14-15—¹⁴ **Again, when I say to the wicked, 'You shall surely die,'** I want to stop there. That means the adulterers, the fornicators, and women who have been giving their babies up in abortions. I mean, atrocious types of sins, murderers, the covetous, the idolatrous, the ones who are worshiping Satan—think about all these kinds of sinners, and then think about this: **if he turns from his sin and does what is lawful and right,** ¹⁵ **"if the wicked restores the pledge, gives back what he has stolen, and walks in the statutes of life without committing iniquity, he shall surely live; he shall not die.**

That's hope. I don't care if you're a Satanist, if you're a woman who had committed three, four, five, or six abortions, or if you're involved in the LGBT community; you've been living a gay lifestyle for 30 years. Guess what? You need to meet the power of the blood, the blood of Yeshua. You call on His name, that pain, that hurt, that suffering, that regret, Yeshua will meet you. He will cover you; you have hope; this is the Gospel. The Gospel is the hope that all the things that we have done and none of us are better than anyone else because we've all fallen short. The true Gospel is the love of Yeshua that He will cover your sins and you don't have to be bound by them, and you don't have to be bound by the enemy; you can be set free. That's true liberty, and then you walk in that liberty and the freedom of His Word. Are we good? Amen. Let's close in prayer.