

**Second Sermon**  
**Their Example, Our Warning**  
**Pastor JD Farag**

KAPONO: Would you join me in a word of prayer? Thank You, Lord. Thank You, Lord, that our joy comes from You. That our peace, that our love, and that this life, this everlasting life, Lord, it all comes from You. This morning would You please guide and direct us in Your word? Lord, I pray that our ears would be receptive, that our hearts would be receptive, our mind would be focused, Lord.

So Holy Spirit, would You lead us? And we thank You for this time that we can come together in this place that You have provided for us, Lord, to hear Your word. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

PASTOR JD: Amen and amen. Good morning and welcome. You can be seated. So glad you're here. Those of you online, we're so glad that you're joining with us.

Before we get started, though, I want to take a moment to provide you with an update concerning our ongoing Maui missions support. First, you might want to save the date of Thursday, March 9th because Lord willing and if we're still here, Pastor Steve Santos and his wife Kim will be here. I've asked Steve to do a follow-up to our Thursday night Maui update titled, 'Jesus Loves Lahaina,' which was back on Thursday, September 21st of last year. And he has graciously fully accepted my invitation.

In the meantime, he wanted me to share with you the following. And I'm going to just read what he wrote. And as I do — I was sharing this First Service during the Update — I really believe this is going to resonate and connect with a lot of people with everything that's happening in the world today.

So he just asked me to share this, and it's a good word. It's a word fitly spoken. "Aloha, JD, CC Kaneohe, and Friends of Lahaina. Please be praying for Lahaina! Be praying for the people of Lahaina's hearts and minds to turn to Jesus, that many will open their hearts to the healing and help that comes only from God's Word by the Holy Spirit.

The six-month anniversary was on Thursday, February 8th. So many people are still dealing with PTSD. Add to that the growing fears and the prevailing uncertainty of not knowing where will we be living next month, next week? Will we have to leave Lahaina? How will I provide a home and food for my family when the Red Cross and FEMA are done?

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And all of that with the piles of paperwork and failing communication that accompanies it and more, to the point of many living in what I would call a *[And this is interesting]* recurring despair. *[Recurring despair]*

People are okay one minute, and then with all of the unknowns piling up and the weight of it all, the loss of homes, loved ones, comes back like waves, and they are washed back into a pit of despair. From hope to hopelessness. Lahaina needs Jesus.

The governor, the mayor, all of the special interest groups, Uncles and Aunties and Kapuna all have their ideas of how to rebuild and restore Lahaina, but none truly seek God. But all just do whatever is right in their own eyes, which we know never goes well.

There is no question that the devil is all over this! From spouse and child abuse that has escalated in close, tough spaces at the hotels, yelling and fighting is common with some that will argue that it's part of our culture. And it is. But not the Hawaiian culture, but the culture of the lost.

I know that so much of what we are seeing is the enemy playing with and preying upon people's hearts and emotions and he is attempting the same with God's people. The words of Jesus come to mind from *Matthew 24*, **"To deceive even the elect, if that were possible."** I know that Scripture and verse is not in this context, but it fits here as well. Pray that believers in Lahaina would truly believe and not listen to the lies of the enemy or the mixed-up multitude *[A reference to the mixed multitude amongst the Israelites]* the mixed-up multitude and naysayers *[Get this]* within the church! *[Within the church]*

I can't help but see and feel that we are being tested as with fire. Pray for us, for leaders. Pray for the church that we would be strong and courageous. Pray that God's church, despite all of these things we cannot understand right now, that we would grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Ahh! There's the rub! *1 Peter 1:6-7* **"In all this you [We] greatly rejoice, though now for a little while we may have had to suffer grief in all kinds of trials. These have come so that the proven genuineness of our faith — of greater worth than gold, which perishes even though refined by fire — may result in praise, glory, and honor when Jesus Christ is revealed."**

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Pray that Christ is revealed in us. Pray that His name is heard and known. Blessings to you all. May His love from above rest upon you and upon your family and His church until He calls us home. Pastor Steve and Kim and Calvary Chapel Westside, still in Lahaina. *[Still]*

Also, *[He says lastly]* Now, lacking our previous facility due to the contamination in the burn zone from the fire, please pray for a place, a home for Calvary Chapel to rest, a place where Jesus can be found by Lahaina. *[And I'll add: In Lahaina]* Aloha and Mahalo in Christ.

So please pray as the Lord puts it on your heart: the suffering of these precious people there on Maui in Lahaina. All right. Well, one verse again today. We were doing so well last week, and we did three verses. So I hope you enjoyed it while it lasted. You'll see why.

I think many of you maybe know why, especially those of you that read ahead to stay ahead. But just *verse 11* will be our text and I'll ask you to stand if you're able. If not, where you're seated is fine.

I'm just going to read the text, just *verse 11*, where Jude continues to write now, inspired by the Holy Spirit, and he says, *verse 11*, **"Woe to them! [A curse upon them] They have taken the way of Cain; they have rushed for profit into Balaam's error; they have been destroyed in Korah's rebellion."**

Let's pray. If you would, please join with me. Father, thank You. Lord. We readily admit and humbly confess that we are a needy people, and we need You, Lord, oh, how we need You.

And that's why we're here today. We come before you hungry and thirsty, knowing that only You can satiate that hunger and that thirst that we have in our souls. Lord, we come here before You today with an anticipation, really an expectation that You're going to speak into our lives.

You're going to minister to us, You're going to encourage us, You're going to strengthen us, You're going to comfort us. Lord, You're going to teach us because the Holy Spirit's our teacher and our guide as You open up the eyes of our understanding to just this one verse that we have before us today.

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So, Lord, will You do that? We're asking You for that and we're thanking You for that in advance. In Jesus' name. Amen and amen. You can be seated. Thank you.

What I want to talk with you about today is how God's word is replete with example after example that serve as warnings to us. And such is the case with Jude in particular.

And I probably say this every week. I hope you don't tire of me saying it. But Jude kind of shifted gears, as we say, as he began this letter telling them — telling us that he really wanted to write about the salvation we all share in common, that he was excited about it and wanted to write about it.

And then it's like God just stopped him dead in his tracks and said, No, you're not going to write about that. You're going to write about this because this is serious. And instead of a letter from Jude about the common salvation we all share and rejoice in, we now have a letter from Jude about warnings, warnings about people, men creeping in, unaware, undetected in our midst.

Don't look at the person sitting next to you. I'm always careful when I say that, not as much as I should be, probably. People will come in, slither in, creep in unaware, undetected.

And now Jude, inspired by the Holy Spirit, is warning us about them. And in so doing, He draws upon these examples from the Old Testament. In fact, there are eight examples just in Jude, just in 25 verses and 613 words. I did not do the counting. I owe a debt of gratitude to the people who do that counting. But somebody counted all the words in the *Book of Jude*: 613 words, 25 verses, and 8 examples.

And we got three of those eight examples in just this one verse, succinctly wrapped up in one powerful packed verse, *verse 11*. And that's why we're only taking *verse 11*.

How am I doing? That's my story and I'm sticking with it as to why we're only doing one verse today.

Back on January 28, we actually borrowed this verse from Jude for the Prophecy Update because it is so apropos for us today, so much so that it could have been written today and actually in some way it was written for us today to take heed to God's word.

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And that's why we have before us these three examples. They were written for us today in order that we might take heed to the warnings in our day from these examples.

This is what Paul wrote to the Corinthians in his first Epistle, *Chapter 10, verse 11*. **“These things happened [Why] they happened to them as examples.”**

Who's them?

Israel.

Why?

They were examples.

Why were they written down?

I'm so glad you asked. They **“were written down as warnings for us, on whom the fulfillment of the ages has come.”**

Think about this. Have you ever asked yourself why we have some of the passages that we have in our Bibles? I mean, we're asking this on Thursday night in Ezekiel with all of the detail of the measurements of the Millennial temple.

I can rest assure you that nobody has any verse out of *Chapter 40* in Ezekiel through the end of the book in *Chapter 48* as a life verse. **“And the post measured five cubits.”** Wow, man, that's a life verse for me.

But why do we have that? Well, we're learning why. Because every word is in God's word for a reason. But there are certain accounts, particularly in the old Testament that — can I just say it? TMI: Too much information.

Like I don't want to know that, especially when we were studying through *1 and 2 Samuel, 1 and 2 Kings, 1 and 2 Chronicles*, and we were getting into the study of the life of David, the sweet psalmist of Israel, the man after God's own heart, the murderer, and the adulterer.

I'm like, no, I don't want to hear that! Why did you record that? *1 Corinthians 10:11*.

Because it is a warning to you from that example.

I mean, we learn a lot from David, don't we? We love the Psalms dearly, don't we? But when it comes to the examples that we have in Scripture, they serve as warnings, much-

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needed warnings for us. And that's why it is that we even have those details, as graphic as they are in some cases, recorded in our Bibles.

Here's what I'm thinking. I'm not going to look at anybody when I say this. So... but I'll just say it. I would much rather learn from your — the consequences of your sin than mine. Let me try that again.

And by the way, I'm going to look at you now because you're looking at me like, you know, well, that's not very loving. Well, come on, you're the same way. And that's biblical, by the way.

It's like God saying, I want you to learn from their mistakes so that you don't repeat them. Take heed to these examples so that you do not repeat them. This is a warning to you to learn from them.

I would much rather again, I'll — I'm trying to redeem what I just said, so just let me have it. Isn't it true that you would rather learn from somebody else's mistakes so that you don't repeat those mistakes? I don't want to learn that — I see what happened to you. I get it, man. I ain't ever doing that because I see what happened to you when you did that.

Am I doing any better? Am I getting any closer? Probably not. Should I just quit while I'm not ahead?

But this is what Jude is saying. These are why we have these examples, and we're going to draw upon three. By the way, the three examples we have in *verse 11*, these guys: Not good guys, not good examples.

They're bad examples to warn us and to protect us. So as we go through them, I would just kindly and humbly ask that all of us, myself included, maybe myself especially, would allow the Holy Spirit unfettered access to our hearts, to that recess in our hearts, to search our hearts and see if there be anything at all that would keep us from knowing Him, hearing Him, loving Him.

Maybe better said, has there been anything that has taken up residence in my heart, in my life that would resemble in any way the examples that we have before us today?

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And the reason I'm saying that by way of an introduction and a preface is because if we're honest, we would have to admit that we're all prone to dismiss extreme examples like this, and we do so under the banner of well, I would never do what Korah did.

What did Korah do?

We're going to talk about Korah in a moment. I would never murder my brother. **“Am I my brother’s keeper?”** I would never murder my brother Abel.

Well, we're going to talk about that in just a moment. Not so fast, by the way.

And I surely would not do it the way Balaam did, **“the way of Balaam.”** I would never do that.

Don't be so sure. See, we always shed ourselves in a more favorable light. And I know I mention this often, but when you're in the Scriptures, you're in the Word, the Word gets in you. When you search the Scriptures, the Scriptures search you.

And here's what the search finds. It finds that you are that man. You are that bad. You are fully capable, and this is the truth of the matter. We are all fully capable of this and even worse, which is again, why we have this in our Bibles.

So you ready for the first one? In the first part of *verse 11*, murderous anger.

Oh, come on, Pastor JD, I've never murdered anybody.

Hold on. Now, this example of Cain is recorded in *Genesis 4*, where we're told that Cain became very angry when God rejected his offering. He accepted Abel's offering; rejected his offering.

Now that's a study unto itself. But it was so much about rejecting Cain's offering and accepting Abel's offering as it was about Cain's unbelief and Abel's belief. Stay with me.

Cain could have repented when God asked him about his anger. **“Sin is crouching at your door,”** Cain. Warning! Warning! Take heed. And He asked him about his anger, but instead, Cain murdered Abel in his anger, murderous anger.

So we have throughout the ages, all of these generations from the beginning of time with Adam and Eve and Cain and Abel, we have this example of murderous anger.

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Now, let's fast forward to *Matthew's Gospel, Chapter 5*.

Oh, no, you didn't.

Oh, yes, I did.

Jesus is speaking and He says, *verse 21*, **“You have heard that it was said to those of old, ‘You shall not murder, [Thou shalt not murder] and whoever murders will be in danger of the judgment.’ But I say to you [Wait for it] that whoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment.”**

Stop right there. We'll continue on in a moment. But there's something I need to draw your attention to here. Did you catch that? **“Thou shalt not murder.”** Not kill. There's a difference between kill and murder. We kill in self-defense. But murder, that's different.

And that commandment, by the way, is better understood as “thou shalt not murder,” not “thou shalt not kill.” I don't want to get into the delineation between the two, but I hope you get that. It's going to be germane to our understanding of what Jesus is saying to us here.

We have an example in God's word of the sin of anger, and left unchecked, the sin of anger leading to murder. I murder them in my heart; I'm guilty of murder. It's a murderous anger. There's a righteous anger. And listen, I'll save you the time. I try to couch all of my anger as righteous anger because after all, I'm the pastor, so it's a righteous anger.

No, it's not. It's a sinful anger. And then you let the sun go down on your anger. And that's even worse because when you do, you give the devil a foothold. You're just going by his playbook, playing right into his hands. And again, left unchecked, that anger can turn into murder in your heart. And we have this example, and it's recorded for us as a warning to us. Take heed to this warning because anger can lead to murder.

Well, maybe I have been angry, and maybe it wasn't a righteous anger. Maybe it was a murderous anger. And by the way, our imaginations can get very creative when it comes to this, right? When you're angry with somebody, you're already playing out scenarios in your mind. You're murdering them in your mind and your heart.



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So now listen to what Jesus says, and it's for our benefit. The one who is allowed anger in the heart and this potential for that anger to lead to murder — this is for your own good. I'm warning you about this as an example of this because I love you and I want to protect you from what will happen to you if you don't do something about this.

You ready for it? Listen to what He continues to say. **“Whoever says to his brother, [Jesus speaking] ‘Raca!’ shall be in danger of the council. But whoever says, ‘You fool!’ [Man, I’m already busted right there] shall be [In traffic especially] [Never mind] shall be in danger of hell fire.”**

Okay. I'm in big trouble right now. Wait a minute. So I'm angry in my heart, and I'm calling them names.

[ Comment off mic ]

Oh, good. Somebody else said... Now, I don't feel so alone. I'll just let the Holy Spirit deal with you then. Conviction loves company, doesn't it?

What happened to my text? Oh, you got to be kidding me. Well, yeah, no. I cut it off. Another long week.

He goes on to say — I can't believe I did that. I deleted it. Awe! I didn't delete this. Only problem is, I can't read it. I don't know why they make them so small these days. The font just gets smaller and smaller. Just a minute. Just bear with me. Don't be too hard on me. You do this too.

Here it is, right here, *Matthew 5*. Listen. *Matthew 5*. I want to pick it up in *verse 23*.

*Matthew 5:23*, He goes on to say, **“Therefore, if you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your gift there in front of the altar. First go and be reconciled to your brother then come and offer your gift.”**

In other words, you're serving in the church, and you're murdering your brother in your heart, and you're serving with that gift and offering that gift that you have. Jesus is like, no, leave it here. Go. Come back after you settle this.

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And you better make it fast because, *verse 25*, **“Settle matters quickly with your adversary who is taking you to court. Do it while you are still with him on the way, or he may hand you over to the judge, and the judge may hand you over to the officer, [This is getting bad] and you may be thrown into prison. I tell you the truth, you will not get out until you have paid the last penny.”**

In other words, this could cost you everything. You better settle it quickly. You better settle this matter of murder in your heart. Don't even bother serving. Leave your gift at the altar that you were going to offer in your service to the Lord. You go settle that and you make it right.

Do you realize I just explained as well as I can, which isn't that great, one of the most disobeyed commandments in all of God's word? Can I take you to *Matthew 18:15-17*?

You can — this is homework. If you've got a matter that is unsettled, you go to that person eyeball-to-eyeball, belly-to-belly — for me, it's always belly-to-belly — and you try to resolve it.

And if that doesn't work, then you take two or more witnesses. And if that still doesn't work, you bring it to the church leadership. And if that still doesn't work, then you throw them out of the church and you treat them as you would an IRS agent, I mean, tax collector.

[ Laughter ]

Have nothing to do with them.

Wow, Jesus said that?

Yes, Jesus said that.

Wait, so *15, 16, 17*: First one-on-one, try to resolve it. Can't resolve it. *Verse 16*, bring two or more witnesses. Can't resolve it? *Verse 17*, take it to the church leadership. Still can't resolve it? Kick them out of the church.

Wow! Why so serious? I mean, that almost borders on being disproportionate.

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No, because of what can happen. Left unchecked, it will spread like wildfire throughout a body of believers, and not only what it does to a church body, but what it does to somebody, anybody who does this.

This is — this is God saying, I'm going to tell you the truth because I love you. This is the love in truth. The truth — what a — just pray for me.

[ Laughter ]

The truth in love because of love. I was telling my son the other day, I said, the only reason, you know, I say this to you is because I love you. If I didn't love you, I wouldn't bother, right?

The only reason we speak truth into somebody's life is because we care enough to do so. We love them enough to do so. And the ***“wounds of a friend are faithful, but an enemy multiplies kisses.”***

You're my friend, and you love me if you're going to speak truth to me. You're not my friend if you don't love me and won't speak truth to me. You only tell me what I want to hear, not what I need to hear. Well, what I need to hear is take heed to this example from God's word of the deadly danger of murderous anger in the person and example of Cain.

Well, I wish I could tell you that it's going to get a little bit easier, but it's not. It's going to get harder because now in the second part of *verse 11*, we're going to talk about this Balaam guy and godless greed.

Jude turns a corner, goes from murderous anger with the example of Cain to godless greed with the example of Balaam. Notice the detail with which Jude is inspired to write about this Balaam guy. **“He rushed and ran greedily in error for profit.”**

Did you get all that? That's interesting detail. In other words, there was an urgency in his greed. And he didn't just walk into it. He ran into it. He rushed into it.

Why?

Because of his greed.

What for?

Profit.

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Okay, so what's the — why of all of the examples that Jude could draw upon, is he inspired to bring up this example of Balaam?

I'm so glad you asked. I don't think you can overstate the importance of just this one example. In the interest of time, I'll do my best to provide you with the backstory, but we're going to have to rewind to the *Book of Numbers* and then fast-forward to the *Book of Revelation* to fill in the blanks.

So what did this Balaam do? Well, what he did in the end would be his end. So here's what happened. And *Numbers* records it in great detail again, for good reason, by the way.

So Balaam, greedy, has this gift of prophecy where he can prophesy and pronounce and declare prophetically a word and bless or curse. And there's this other guy with a lot of money by the name of Balak who is very threatened by the numbers of the Israelites which continue to grow and pose a formidable threat to the Moabites and the Medianites.

And so Balak catches wind of this Balaam guy. I guess he's well known. He finds his ad online and goes to his website — I'm trying to bring it into some modern-day terms here — and he hires him. And he's going to pay him a lot of money to pronounce a curse upon the Israelites.

And Balaam's like, yeah. So you know how this goes down? He sets out on his donkey. This is no ordinary donkey, as you know. This is a talking donkey because God's going to try to get through to Balaam by talking through a donkey.

This is one of those — just again, let me have this one too. If God can speak through a donkey, God can speak through me and you too. I mean, He doesn't need — you know in fact, any donkey will do, and I will not use the King James version for that animal. Anyway...

So he speaks through the donkey, stops him trying to get him to come to his senses. You cannot curse these people. You can try.

Yeah, but this Balak guy is going to pay me a lot of money to do it. So get out of my way.

And here's the donkey. You know, what's so humorous about it? And this is one of those places where, you know, God's got a sense of humor. It's not so much the donkey talks to Balaam. It's that he talks to the donkey.

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Can you picture it? Wouldn't you have loved to have been a fly on that donkey and watch this conversation? I mean they're going back and forth, and here's the donkey going, why are you hitting me? You know, I'm just the messenger. You don't like the message; you take it out on the messenger? This is a message from God!

And you know you're in trouble, dude, when God has to use someone like me as a donkey to get through to you. You know it's bad. Okay, well, that was a little bit extreme, but...

So he's going back and forth. Well, I've been your donkey, faithful donkey for years. Why are you beating me? Because he was beating him!

And then finally gets back on him. And the donkey's like, okay, God, can I be excused now? This is on him. I did what You told me. I spoke to him. You spoke through me. He's still hell-bent, quite literally, on cursing Your people.

And God's like, go ahead. So he goes ahead, and he gets there. And what comes out of his mouth, but one of the most, if not the most, glorious blessings to ever be uttered upon God's people.

And Balak is infuriated. Hey, we signed a contract. I'm paying you big bucks, Balaam. What — a lot of B's in there — what's going on here?

He's like, I don't know what's going on here. I'm trying. And it's like I try, and what comes out of my mouth is not a curse, but a blessing.

Well, stop blessing them! I hired you to curse them, to stop blessing them because these are a blessed people that keep multiplying. They're blessed and multiplying.

So he takes him to a different vantage point. This was actually — there was a reason for this. But he takes him to a higher mountain and says, okay, now try here because you're not getting paid until you curse them.

So what comes out of his mouth again? But I mean, just — it's almost more glorious than the preceding blessings. I would encourage you to read those blessings that come out of his mouth upon God's people, the Israelites. And he can't, for the life of him to save his life, he cannot curse these people.

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Now we know why because of *Numbers Chapter 6*. We've talked about this before. We have the numbers — I know this is deeply profound — of the camps of the Israelites in the *Book of Numbers*, which is about the numbers of the camp of the Israelites.

And you look at those numbers in the *Book of Numbers*, and you have the numbers of the camp to the east, the numbers of the camp to the west, the numbers of the camp to the north, the numbers of the camp to the south, and the tabernacle right smack in the middle, in the shape of a cross.

And that's why. "Because there is therefore now no condemnation [No curse] upon any that are in Christ." You can't curse them from without. The gates of hell cannot prevail against the church outwardly.

So what's Balaam going to do? Ah-ha! I don't know how much time went by. We're not told. We're not given that detail in the narrative. But certainly it couldn't have been very much time that had passed because of the greed of this Balaam. He's going to get that money one way or the other. So he comes up with another way, "**the way of Balaam.**"

Enter Revelation 2:14. This is the letter to one of the seven churches, the Church of Pergamos, Pergamum. It's actually transliterated. It's two English words: Perverted Gamy. 'Per'gamos. Gamy: monogamy, polygamy, a perverted marriage.

And this is really a picture of the church during the period when the church married the state. And from within, what could not be accomplished from without was accomplished from within.

You've heard that saying, "You can't beat them, join them." That's what Satan did. I can't curse them. I can't beat them. I think I'll join them and do an inside job.

And that's what we read in *verse 14*. Now understand, this is Jesus dictating to John by the Spirit what to write to this literal church in Asia Minor, then called. We understand it today as modern-day Turkey.

Just *verse 14*, Listen to this. "**But I have a few things against you, [Speaking to this church] because you have there those who hold the doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balak to put a**

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**stumbling block before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed to idols, and to commit sexual immorality.”**

Oh, that's the way he did it. The doctrine of Balaam, **“the way of Balaam.”** What's the way of Balaam? What way did he employ in order to get God's people cursed?

He couldn't do it from without. So he taught Balak. Notice he instructed Balak. He said, I'm going to get that money out of you if it's the last thing I do. And he got paid. He said you can't do it that way. You can do it this way, though.

So what you're going to do, Balak, is you're going to have the Israelite men be seduced by the Moabite and Medianite women who are going to seduce them and they're going to commit sexual immorality. And in the heat of the moment — you'll forgive that description — they will then introduce these other gods and idolatry that the Israelites will then worship, and then that will bring the curse of God down upon them, by them, because of them.

In other words, you can't curse them, but they can bring God's curse on themselves. Again, this is what I mean when I say you cannot overstate the importance of just this one example.

The way of Balaam is alive and well today. Because again, the gates of hell — the Bill Gates of hell —

[ Laughter ]

I couldn't resist. I'm sorry — that was no extra charge — cannot prevail against the church. You cannot. The church is unbeatable. But the only way, *[The way of Balaam]* to destroy a church is to do it from within, where the people bring it upon themselves. They commit sexual immorality.

The thing that Balaam was paid by Balak to do could not be done by him. It was done for him, instead of him, by the very people he was trying to do it to. And that's the way he did it. And it all stemmed from godless greed.

Think about it. This is *1 Timothy 6:10*, or is it *12*? I just taught it First Service. That's bad I don't remember. Anyway, I know it's *1 Timothy 6*. It's the most misquoted verse in all of the Bible, arguably. You know it well. **“The love of money is the root of all kinds of evil.”**

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It's misquoted that money is the root of all evil. No, it's not money. Money can be used for good, or money can be used for evil. Money is neutral. It's the love of money. And Balaam was in love with money. I'm in love with money. Greed: It drove him. It propelled him.

I mean, there's no other explanation, is there? It's inexplicable. Why would he go to such an extent to succeed in getting paid by having a curse be brought upon God's people? What would drive someone to do that? Greed. The love of money.

So now I probably should have asked you this earlier. I already know the answer. It's rhetorical. How you doing? Murderous anger and godless greed. And we got one more and then we'll be done.

And then I'm just going to run to the car and go home because this is a biggie. Envious jealousy, third part of *verse 11*. Again, one verse packed with three examples. And I was already convicted even before the first one, and so were you too.

I mean, murderous anger. How many times, God, have I been angry with somebody and committed murder in my heart? How many times have I kind of out of lust, greed — I don't want to look at anybody with these words — lust, greed, pride — they're all roommates. They all live in the same home. They don't share the same room. They have their own separate rooms, but they're roommates. They're in the same family.

How many times have I just in the pride of life, the lust of the eyes, the greed of the flesh — and now you've got to bring Korah in as an example of envious jealousy? I mean, if you prefer, consuming covetousness.

Again, we, in the Prophecy Update talked about Korah's consuming covetousness. So consuming was Korah's covetousness that God would have the ground under him literally open up and swallow him up, consuming him and all with him.

This is *Number 16*. You know, *Numbers*, the *Book of Numbers* gets a lot of bad press. The *Book of Numbers*, it sounds so boring. It's probably one of the most exciting books in all of the Bible.



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Remember when we went through it? I was actually looking at my archive notes. I don't want to tell you what year it was. It was a long time ago in a building far, far away. I don't know how long it took us, but we went through the *Book of Numbers*.

It was of the most fascinating studies in the entirety of God's word. Well, this happens to be *Numbers Chapter 16*. It is, I mean, what an account. Talk about detail.

So here's what happened, okay? So we can fully grasp why it is that God would inspire Jude to use Korah of all people as an example. I would have probably used a different example, which is why God did not inspire me to write this letter. But Korah?

Okay, first of all, he's Moses' cousin. He's also from the priestly tribe. But apparently, if you look at some of the Psalms, you'll find the heading, the title of those Psalms, they are songs that are written by the descendants of Korah.

What went wrong? Those are beautiful songs. And apparently Grandfa — father — grandpa, I was going to say grandpa. Again, very long week. I'll try to make the sermon not so long as my week.

But here's Grandpa Korah, who is the cousin to Moses, who challenges Moses, who wants to take the position from Moses and be Moses to the Israelites instead of Moses because he was jealous of Moses.

I mean, this guy was good in a very evil way. He was so good that he was able to recruit in his campaign 250 elders. Boy, that'll split a church when you can get 250 elders to come against the lead or senior pastor, in this case, Moses, who you happened to be the cousin of.

So they approached Moses. And I could just imagine how the tone in his voice — here's what he basically said to Moses. Moses, you take too much on yourself. Translated: You think too much of yourself. Who do you think you are? Do you think that God only works through you? God works through all of us. So I don't think you're all that. So I think that...

here's — can you imagine Moses? If you know how he was called — remember the whole burning bush thing? Imagine 40 years, not just in the desert, the backside of the desert.

That's a detail unto itself, isn't it?

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Why do I need to know about the backside of the desert? The desert is bad enough. I take it that the backside of the desert is way worse than the desert itself. I mean, the backside of the desert for 40 years!

And God comes to him. He's not talked to anyone for 40 years. So God comes to him and appears to him behind — can you imagine? He goes about his day just like any other day. He doesn't even have his own flock. It's his father-in-law's flock. He owns nothing, and he's happy. I don't know how happy he is.

[ Laughter ]

Sorry. That was no extra charge too. I need to really — just pray for me again. So here he is. And then all of a sudden...

Can you imagine? He's going about his day, and all of a sudden, he sees a bush on fire. I'm sure that's not the first bush he's seen on fire. But this one isn't going out. He's looking at this thing going, what's up with this? So he walks a little bit closer, and then all of a sudden, the bush talks.

And God — you talk about talking through a donkey. Now God's talking through a bush? And He says to him, "Take your sandals off because where you're standing is holy ground."

And then from that burning bush, God calls Moses to be the deliverer of God's people. And here's Moses. He's like, God — this is, I know, a very loose paraphrase — You have pulled the wrong file. You've got the wrong guy. I can't even talk. These last 40 years on the backside of the desert, I've developed a speech impediment, so I can't talk anymore.

So that's why throughout the Old Testament we read, "**And God commanded Moses to command Aaron.**" So nice try, Mo. You're not getting out of this. Your brother, your older brother Aaron, is going to speak for you since apparently you can't speak now. So that's why Aaron is the one doing all the talking for Moses, instead of Moses.

In other words, Moses didn't want this job. He tried everything to get out of this job. He did not want to do this. And he basically pleaded with God, which is really, to me, the litmus test of men and women mightily used of God.

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The common denominator is they never sought that. God sought them. God doesn't call the qualified. If He did, I would not be your pastor. He qualifies the called. He's not looking for ability. He's looking for availability.

And certainly Moses had plenty of that. You're available. I'm going to choose and use you. And that way they'll know it's not you, it's Me. Because look at you. (Chuckle) No. Don't look at you. I mean, that's obviously not going to be you. It's going to be Me. And that way only I get all of the glory as it should be.

So Moses has to do this now, but he never wanted to do this. And so now here comes his cousin. If I'm Moses, I'm like, wait a minute, Korah, dude, you want my job? Take it! Thank you! Oh, finally! I never wanted this in the first place!

But he can't. Because here's the problem. Slaves can't quit. I tried. I'm just being open with you. Bond slaves: You're a slave of Jesus Christ. You can't quit.

And here's the other problem. God's not going to fire you either. You try. You know, you tender your resignation. God, I quit. You need to fire me. And then God says you're not fired. You still have to do this because I've called you to this.

Okay, so he has to do it. Now, here comes his cousin, and he wants his job. And so what does Moses do, the meekest man who ever walked on the face of the earth? By the way, that's parenthetical in Scripture, meaning that it was added. It's been, I believe, wrongly attributed to Moses. Inspired by the Holy Spirit to pen certainly the first five books of Moses known as the Torah or the Pentateuch.

But I don't think that he wrote that about himself. That would blow the whole thing. I'm the meekest man who ever walked on the face of the earth. Well, now you're not because you just said that.

That's the thing about humility. As soon as you start getting proud of your humility, you're no longer humble because now you're proud of your humility.

Anyway, enough of my problems. I have confessed that sin and repented.

So here comes Korah. So what does Moses do, the meekest man who ever walked on the face of the earth? He says, Okay, cuz. Let's just — let's just show up. We'll set up an

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appointment here first thing in the morning, right at the front of the tent of meeting, the tabernacle, and we'll just let God decide this.

I mean, if God chooses you, praise God. I mean, take it. But let's just let God decide that because that's not my decision to make. So God called me, and apparently, you're jealous of me and you want to take the job from me for yourself because you think you're all that. Then fine; let's see what God has to say about that.

By the way, that's a good way to handle decisions, isn't it? Especially when you're attacked and challenged. Why don't you — you know what? Let's let God decide. What do you think? I'm not going to try to defend myself.

I mean, I can picture myself. If I were Moses, and I had my cousin, Korah, come to me and want my job, I could picture myself.

Well, I'm not going to go there. You'll think very differently of me. It's not good. It's not sanctified for sure.

But I would just, I would have a talk with my cousin. I would lay hands on my cousin.

[ Laughter ]

Who do you think you are? You think I wanted to be a pastor? I never wanted to be a pastor. But God ruined me for Him. I mean, ruined my — anyway, I don't know why I went off on that. (Frustrated sounds) Apparently, I — I'm still — this is still an issue; otherwise, I wouldn't have mentioned it.

But again, the litmus test. When God called me into the pastorate, it wasn't like, yay, my application finally got accepted. It was more like, uh-oh. No! Because I saw what my pastor went through. And I even remember in a board meeting one time telling my pastor — famous last words — I never want to be a pastor, seeing what you go through as a pastor.

And you know, as God as my witness, he looked at me and he laughed. It's kind of like he knew. And I thought about it afterwards and I said, oh, no! Never say never.

So I mean, here comes now somebody saying, well, I'm going to take the pastorate of this, God's church, from you. Well, that's not for me to decide. That's for God to decide. So let's let God decide.

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So first thing in the morning, they show up. They got their censers, 250 elders. Korah — could you imagine — chest out, nose up. Okay, Mo, let's go. And here's Moses going, okay, what do you want to do about this, God?

I'm sorry. It's just it's — this is — I know God's got a sense of humor. It's kind of like the earth — this literally happened — the earth opened up and swallowed them up, and they died. I guess that's God's decision. I guess we know the answer.

I know I've shared this. I'll share it again. I'll never tire of sharing it, even if you tire of me sharing it.

But if I was Moses, I would have seized upon that opportunity. After Korah and his 250 cronies have been swallowed up by the earth that God opened up, I would have taken that moment, taken the microphone. You would have done the same thing. Anybody else want my job? This would be a good time to say something. Speak now or forever hold your peace.

Well, the story doesn't end there. I mean, this is unimaginable. Can you imagine the numbers of the Israelites that witnessed this? Bye, Korah, Elders.

Moses did I — have I told you lately how much I love you?

[ Laughter ]

Right?

Well, then the next day comes, and the Israelites have had a chance to kind of let this sink in, no pun intended, and — actually pun intended. That was pretty good. I'm taking it.

And they start murmuring and complaining against Moses and against God. So do you know what God does? You know what He does. He sends fire down to torch them. I forget how many tens of thousands — I probably should have taken the time — I don't have the time — just to go back into my notes. I encourage you to read it, *Numbers Chapter 16*. It's better than Netflix, man.

And so, I mean, it was 20 - 30,000 Israelites, they burn alive (*a plague*) to death because God just burns (*a plague*) them. Wait, you're angry because I opened up the earth and swallowed up Korah?

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This is — (Chuckle) I am sorry, but zap! You know, He just torches them (*a plague*) on the spot. And then here I am again. I'm getting the mic up. Anybody else want to complain about what just happened?

But that's not what Moses does. What do Moses and Aaron do? They start praying for them, interceding on their behalf, pleading with God. God, spare them, don't kill them.

I wouldn't have done that. I would have been like, wow, God! Go, God! Thy will be done. But — you don't look at me all spiritual. You would have done the same thing.

But they don't do that. They pray that God would just stay His hand, and God does. How many lives were spared because they prayed, interceded on behalf of their enemies? These guys were posturing themselves as enemies against Moses and Aaron and by extension, God.

So pray for your enemies, those who spitefully use you, speak evil of you, take advantage of you, post stink about you on social media. Pray for them. And don't pray that God will torch them. That's not a prayer He's going to answer.

Okay. So, Pastor, are you almost done?

Yes, I am. Here's the bottom line, and we're done. All three of these men: Balaam, Korah, Cain — I want you to think this through with me, they were all on the receiving end of God's longsuffering. Do you realize that? Every single one of them and the many like them, had an opportunity to repent but didn't.

God takes no delight in the punishment of the wicked. Never imagine that God was taking delight in swallowing up Korah and the 250 elders and burning (*a plague*) the 20-30,000 plus Israelites.

No, even with Cain, maybe especially with Cain, He asks him, really warning him about his anger. "Sin is crouching at your door," Cain, and if you continue in this anger, you're going to murder your brother, and you're going to seal your fate.

Balaam, I tried to get through to you through your donkey, and you wouldn't listen. Korah? Your cousin Moses: I gave you a night to sleep on it. And you still showed up in the morning wanting to continue this pursuit, driven by consuming covetousness.

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Boy, I tell you, covetousness, jealousy, envy — we've talked about the distinction between the three — they will eat your lunch. The bitter fruit that comes from that will eat your lunch.

You can ask Ahithophel about that. We've talked about him. He was David's right-hand man. When he spoke, he spoke as the oracles of God, and in the end, it was his end because it was left unchecked, and that bitterness took root. And covetousness will do that. It will drive you to this and even worse.

Here's the takeaway, and then we're done. God, in His love, His mercy and His grace, like with them, gives us a window of opportunity to repent. Are we going to, unlike them, take heed to it?

I know this goes both ways. We talked about the double-edged nature of God's word as a double-edged sword, actually sharper than a double-edged sword. But this goes both ways because you might be on the receiving end of a Cain or a Balaam or a Korah, or you might yourself be the Cain, the Balaam, or the Korah.

Either way, God is merciful, and He's warning you and giving you an opportunity to repent. You know what repentance means, simply? This is a word that has been taken so out of its context. It simply means to change your mind, do a 180. Repent.

Because when we change our minds, He changes our hearts and our lives. And He wants us to have life, and He doesn't want for us to ruin our own lives. And all three of these will ruin your life. They will destroy your marriage. They will destroy your family.

I mean, this is a warning for all of us, written for us today. These examples were recorded in detail as warnings for us, lest we repeat their folly and sin and wickedness and reap the consequences of doing so.

I'm done. Kaponu, come on up. Wow, that was a brutal close. Why don't you stand up? We'll close in prayer and song. I tell you, when you teach the word of God verse-by-verse, this is what happens. One verse, just one verse.

Oh God, thank You. Tough stuff, but good stuff, God, just so good the lessons that can be learned and what we can take away with us from this.

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And I hope that we do, Lord, but we need the Holy Spirit to do it. Left to ourselves we'll just have this left here. But if the Holy Spirit takes this to the next level in its application to our lives, beginning that process as arduous as it might be, as difficult as it might be, of just convicting, not condemning, convicting us. Bringing about a godly sorrow that leads to a genuine repentance, not a worldly sorrow, but a godly sorrow and a true repentance and a true change.

Lord, I want I want to pray, lastly, for anyone who is on the receiving end of evil men like this, and they've been victimized by this. Lord, would You encourage them and comfort them and strengthen them supernaturally as only You can? Encourage their hearts and be a shield about them, a protection for them. And do not pay them as this wickedness deserves. Lord, deliver them. Maybe not as dramatic as Korah, but, Lord, just deliver them from the likes of this.

And for anyone who has any of this in their hearts, in their lives, Lord, I pray for, again, a genuine repentance, a godly sorrow that leads to a genuine repentance. In Jesus' name. Amen.