

The Ten Commandments - Part 43: You Shall Not Covet - Part 2 (4/1/2023)

The following text is a message from Corner Fringe Ministries that was presented by Daniel Joseph. The original presentation can be viewed at <https://www.cornerfringe.com/media/wnz4zq6/the-ten-commandments-part-43>

***Portions of this document have been edited from the video message to better present a comprehensive, written document. Special attention was given to preserving 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 transliterate, English word. In most cases, the Hebrew is to be read from right to left.**

Video Clip:

The Victory Channel:

Jesse Duplantis: He said, "I heard you was a millionaire." I said, "That's not right. That's not true!" He said, "Yes, it is." I said, "No, it's not. Multi. Now, add that to it, you'll be all right." Oh, he couldn't handle that. He'd like to have had a fit. And I said, "You mess with me, and I'll buy this station, and I'll fire you." Well, he didn't like that. You know that was a little fleshy, but it felt good.

Jesse Duplantis: I honestly believe this; that the reason why Jesus hadn't come is because people are not giving away what God told them to give. You see what I'm saying. I mean when you understand it, you can speed up the time.

Inside Edition:

Inside Edition speaker: These are some of the most popular and flashy TV evangelists in the country. These men appear to have made a lot of money, and they travel, well, like kings. When our Lisa Guerrero tried to ask one of these wealthy preachers about that, some might say she was treated in a very non-Christian way. (video shows her being dragged away)

Kenneth Copeland: There ought not be any poor among you.

Inside Edition speaker: They're among the most popular televangelists in America.

Creflo Dollar: Cause I just need more! I just need more!

Inside Edition speaker: And they're wealthy beyond imagination.

Jesse Duplantis: One of my chandeliers cost more than most people's house. I got 22 chandeliers in the house.

Inside Edition speaker: They live in huge mansions, drive fancy cars, and forget about flying coach. They own some of the best private jets money can buy.

Jesse Duplantis: They don't think I should have that plane. God told me to have that plane.

T.D. Jakes: See God is my business partner, and my giving to Him is His cut. And if I rip off His cut, why should he bless me? I started giving on that level, so that God would owe me. Oh, y'all don't hear what I'm saying you; can't handle that. I started giving on the level where I put God in debt, and God said, "I'll owe no man." I started giving on the money that I wanted to make. I started giving on a deal that hadn't closed yet, and that God had to open up the windows of heaven and pour me out a blessing because He wasn't going to be in debt to me.

Creflo Dollar: (He was criticized for 65-million-dollar jet request.) If I want to believe God for a 65-million-dollar plane, you cannot stop me from dreaming.

Creflo Dollar: (You can read this on the screen: [Seed According to Creflo is Money. Christ Never Taught This, But the Prosperity Gospel Does](#) as Creflo says this): Harvest responds only to seed, not to prayer, not to fasting or any kind of position you have.

Robert Tilton: You should have moved a long time ago. You're missing it, and your family is suffering by it. That's a word as surely as I'm speaking by the Spirit of God. That is a word for a person, right now. That is God penetrating your heart. It's burning on the inside of you, and you need to make a vow of faith of a thousand dollars. Oh, Bob, couldn't you say 25? No!

Mike Murdock: I have a feeling that somebody that wants a credit card debt wiped out, that if you'll use your faith as you sow, as you sow the thousand on a credit card, as you use your faith, God's going to wipe out your credit card indebtedness.

Unknown Televangelist: (There is money all over the steps leading to the stage. The televangelist is running through the money shouting): Put some anointing on this money. You put something up here. Prosper! Prosper I said! (Applause)

Unknown Televangelist: Hallelujah! This is your week! I declare! I decree! This is it! (He shouts): Money cometh to me now! (Then the audience chants "money cometh to me now" over and over, while stretching out their hands as though receiving the money.)

These words appear on the screen: "The early church was married to poverty, prisons, and persecutions. Today 'the church' is married to prosperity, personality, and popularity." By Leonard Ravenhill

End of video clip.

Daniel is speaking:

Shabbat shalom.

Who knew we would ever live to see the day where Christians are in the house of God, stretching out their hands, not to Jesus, but to money. They are not begging for forgiveness or for the deeper truths to be revealed to them of the character of the living God, but they are begging for the prosperity of the

world. That is absolutely demonic. You are living in a generation, right now, that is of special note. I want to open up today by reading from the gospel of John:

John 2:14-16—¹⁴ **And He—Jesus, *Yeshua*—found in the temple those who sold oxen and sheep and doves, and the money changers doing business—**This was in the house of the Lord—¹⁵ **When He had made a whip of cords—**This was one of the most unique moments you'll read in all of the ministry of Yeshua. This was completely out of the ordinary. This was the exception, not the rule. The rule was Yeshua healed, showed compassion and mercy to sinners, raised the dead, and gave the blind sight. Now, He made a weapon and turned violent—**He drove them all out of the temple—**The whip was for them—**with the sheep and the oxen, and poured out the money changers' money and overturned the tables.** ¹⁶ **And He said to those who sold doves, "Take these things away! Do not make My Father's house a house of merchandise!"** (emphasis added).

Do you want to provoke the Lord to anger so He comes out of his normal character of being that God who introduced himself to Moses as—⁶ . . . **"The LORD, the LORD God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering . . ."** (Exodus 34:6)? If you want to provoke him to anger and see a different side of Him, just turn the house of God into a house of covetousness, and you will see the judgment of God. Look at what we see happening, right now, with the churches. The churches should be terrified for their very lives.

2 Peter 2:1a—Peter said—^{1a} **But there were also false prophets among the people, even as there will be false teachers among you—**Peter was very clear; he was talking about the church. He was talking amongst believers in Jesus, *Yeshua*. This was the body of Christ, and within the body of Christ perverse men would rise up—**who will secretly bring in destructive heresies** (emphasis added).

Peter gave the same sermon that Jude gave, and Jude tells you exactly what the secret destructive heresies are. Jude 1:4—⁴ . . . **ungodly men, who turn the grace of God into lewdness** . They blaspheme the holy name of Yeshua. They insult the Spirit of grace because they live like hell and believe they will inherit heaven.

1 Peter 2:1b-3—^{1b} **even denying the Lord who bought them, and bring on themselves swift destruction.** ² **And many—**not some— **will follow their destructive ways, because of whom the way of truth will be blasphemed—** listen to this—³ **By covetousness they will exploit you with deceptive words; for a long time their judgment has not been idle, and their destruction does not slumber** (emphasis added).

Notice, Peter identified what would drive these perverse teachers, shepherds, and pastors that would rise up within the body of Christ. They would be driven by covetousness.

2 Peter 2:13—¹³ **and will receive the wages of unrighteousness, as those who count at pleasure to carouse in the daytime. They are spots and blemishes, carousing in their own deceptions while they feast with you.**

This reflects exactly what Paul said to Timothy in 2 Timothy 3:13—¹³ **But evil men and imposters will grow worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived.** There's a cesspool of deception going out. The people are totally deceived, and they believe what they're doing is legitimate.

2 Peter 2:14—¹⁴ **having eyes full of adultery that cannot cease from sin, enticing unstable souls. They have a heart trained—**In the Greek, "trained" means rigorous exercise like athletes training their bodies

to compete at the highest level—in **covetous practices, and they are accursed children** (emphasis added).

Notice, Peter is very clear. If you give your heart to covetousness, you are damned. You will be in the group accursed of God, and be totally eternally separated from Him. This whole topic of covetousness is not a little thing; it's a massive idolatrous issue.

2 Peter 2:15—¹⁵ **They have forsaken the right way and gone astray, following the way of Balaam the son of Beor, who loved the wages of unrighteousness;** (emphasis added).

Balaam loved the wages of covetousness. Have you ever studied Balaam in the Torah? Balaam had one of the most awesome and radical experiences in his life. He had a life-changing experience with the God of Israel. The God of Israel spoke to Balaam and revealed Himself to him. Balaam trembled and feared for his life. And the same God of Israel showed him mercy and compassion and anointed him with the Holy Spirit, *Ruach HaKodesh*, to where one of the most prolific Messianic prophecies that exist anywhere in Scripture came through Balaam. Balaam experienced all this awesome power of God, but that wasn't enough for Balaam. He derailed because his heart turned. He loved the wages of covetousness so much that he sold out. Do you know what happened? Do you know how God deals with those who give their hearts to covetousness? God takes them out. God had Balaam put to death.

All the corrupt shepherds in the pulpits, today, peddling this seeker sensitive, watered-down, greasy grace prosperity gospel should read the Bible. They should tremble with the fear of God because you can't take the great responsibility of declaring the gospel, then peddle a gospel of prosperity and walk away from that. You will never walk away. You will experience the judgment of God. Teachers have even a stricter judgment. It's a frightening thought.

You know the tragedy of this situation is that the shepherds aren't the whole problem. The problem is much bigger. The problem is the people. Ponder this for a second. How much impact would the prosperity preachers, who have given their hearts to covetousness, have on anyone if no one listened to them. Upon hearing them preach, a person should say, "You are so far off base. You are so off focus. You are preaching covetousness, and I'm not going to listen to you." If no one listened, there would be no influence, and yet the masses flock to these preachers.

This goes back to what I talked about in my last message. The Apostle Paul told Timothy—³ **For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but according to their own desires—their covetous desires—because they have itching ears, they will heap up for themselves teachers; ⁴ and they'll turn their ears away from the truth . . .** (2 Timothy 4:3-4). Thus, there are masses of people wanting these teachings and flocking to these preachers. Thus, you have the birth of the mega churches. If you've been around for the last four decades, you've seen how the mega churches have grown and grown. The biggest churches out there are the ones with seeker sensitive, watered-down, wishy-washy prosperity teachers.

In the early 1700s, Daniel Defoe, a prolific English author, analyzed the growth of the church. His conclusion was absolutely fascinating:

Daniel Defoe, 1660-1731—**Wherever God erects a house of prayer, the devil always builds a chapel there; and 'twill be found upon examination, the latter has the largest congregation.**

Why does Satan get the larger congregations? Because that's who the people want. That's the message the people want to receive. They don't want to go to church anymore to be convicted. They don't want to hear the truth. They don't want to change. They have covetous hearts and want the things of the world.

I have physically seen Christians, who believe the “name it and claim it” theology, tape pictures of worldly possessions they want on their walls or refrigerator, then “name it and claim it” and ask Jesus to give that to them. There was a day we used to put Bible verses on our fridge, and now that's being replaced with materialistic things. Absolutely demonic.

I want to go to 2 Kings. Most of you are familiar with the story of Naaman, the leper, who was a commander of the army of Syria and an honorable man. Because he was a leper, this nice, young girl from Israel told him there was hope for him; he needed to get healed by a prophet in Israel whose name was Elisha. So, Naaman went to Elisha. To make a long story short, Elisha told him to dip in the Jordan seven times. Guess what? He was healed. The power of God fell on this man. It's a miraculous story.

What follows next is interesting. Let's begin at 2 Kings 5:15—¹⁵ **And he—Naaman—returned to the man of God—Elisha—he and all his aides, and came and stood before him; and he said, “Indeed, now I know that there is no God in all the earth, except in Israel—The power of God fell on him, and he gave glory to the only true God, the God of Israel. This was magnificent because God was receiving praise and honor—now therefore, please take a gift from your servant.”** (emphasis added).

Naaman was an honorable man. He hoped to be healed, so before he left his home, he was mindful and prepared to show his thankfulness by offering a gift.

2 Kings 5:16—¹⁶ **But Elisha said, “As the LORD lives, before whom I stand, I will receive nothing.” And he urged him to take it, but he refused.**

2 Kings 5:20—²⁰ **But Gehazi, the servant of Elisha the man of God said, “Look my master has spared Naaman this Syrian, while not receiving from his hands what he brought; but as the Lord lives, I will run after him and take something from him.”**

This was where things went sideways. Gehazi, the right hand of Elisha the prophet, saw this whole situation unfold. He saw Naaman supernaturally healed by the power of God of leprosy, an incurable disease. What did Gehazi think? He wanted to take this amazing act of God, this amazing ministry, and turn a profit. If only Gehazi had had the heart and wisdom of Yeshua.

Matthew 6:19—Jesus, *Yeshua*, said—¹⁹ **Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal;**

Don't do it. It's interesting, in verses 19 and 20, Yeshua showed two different types of investments we can make. The first investment is into the things of the world, the possessions of the earth. There is a particular investment advisor, if you will, that tries to compel and convince people that the best investment is to invest in worldly pleasures; the experience will pay great dividends; it's worth it. Yeshua, also an investment advisor, basically said, “That's a dead end and the worse investment you can make. You will lose everything, including your soul, if you invest your time, resources, and heart into worldly pleasures.” Then He explained the second type of investment you can make:

Matthew 6:20—²⁰ **but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal.**

This is the wisdom of Yeshua. He said, “Don't work for this life; lay up treasures in heaven.” This means we are to be ministry minded; we are to be Kingdom minded.

A lot of people have a bucket list: I want to do this; I want to visit Paris; I want to save this amount of money by the time I retire; I want to own a house by the time I'm 24; we could go on and on. All of it has to do with the riches of this world.

Start going down your list of goals you want to accomplish. What is your bucket list? What are your goals? What are you looking to accomplish? What do you desire? Is it “I want to pray more”? Is it “I want to spend more time in the Word”? Is it “I've been selfish for so many years that I want to be mindful about sowing into other people. I want to encourage other people in the Word. I want to start praying for people more. I want to take the time to do that. When I go out in public, I want to make sure I'm the guy holding the door open for somebody, so I can bless somebody. If the Lord opens a door for me, I will talk to somebody about Him.” What do you desire? Yeshua said that if you invest in the world, you are dead. Then he said:

Matthew 6:21—²¹ **For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also** (emphasis added).

Do you understand that your treasure depicts what you love and desire? It depicts the passions of your heart. If that is the things of the world, that is where your heart is. Your treasure depicts who you serve. That is a sobering thought when you do a true audit of your life.

Luke 12:15—¹⁵ **And He—Jesus, Yeshua—said to them, “Take heed and beware of covetousness, for one's life does not consist in the abundance of the things he possesses.”** (emphasis added).

Yeshua came out with a warning. Why did Yeshua have to warn us about covetousness? Because Yeshua knew the dark power and how compelling and convincing the devil is with what he has to sell you. He has investments he wants you to invest in. They are all worldly, all will come to an end, and all will burn, but he pitches it as “This will be the greatest pleasure you'll ever know. If you need to accomplish these things in your life, and you need to have these experiences, invest with me.”

Yeshua warned you of this dark power. This seduction and allure are nasty, and this is the very thing that allured Gehazi. I call this “the Gehazi effect.” Gehazi was taken by this dark power, this dark spirit. Getting back to our story:

2 Kings 5:21-22a—²¹ **So Gehazi pursued Naaman. When Naaman saw him running after him, he got down from the chariot to meet him, and said, “Is all well?”** ^{22a} **And he said, “All is well—listen—My master has sent me,** (emphasis added).

No, Elisha did not send him. Gehazi was lying. A couple of weeks ago, we talked about how the function of the lie is to mask the desires of your sins. When you've been infected by sin, and you want to hide it, you bring out the lie; it's the mask.

So, Gehazi lied through his teeth; Elisha did not send him. Pay close attention to what we are about to read because you will see Gehazi was no idiot. What Gehazi said was extremely believable and

sophisticated. He said in 2 Kings 5:22b—^{22b} saying, ‘Indeed, just now two young men of the sons of the prophets have come to me from the mountains of Ephraim. Please give them—This was not about Gehazi. He sounded concerned about the ministry, the sons of the prophets, which, by the way, is why this was so believable because the prophets received support. Even into the first and second century, they received support. So, it seemed like Gehazi was really concerned—a talent of silver and two changes of garments.’”

The whole thing was a fabrication, but it sounded really good; this was a good ministry. I mean, this was your ancient form of a televangelist. Listen to how Naaman responded. Keep in mind that Gehazi asked for a talent. You are about to see the kind of honor Naaman had:

2 Kings 5:23a—^{23a} So Naaman said, “Please take two talents.”

You already see the heart of Jesus, *Yeshua*—⁴⁰ If anyone wants . . . your tunic, let him have your cloak also (Matthew 5:40). Gehazi came to Naaman and asked for one talent. Naaman was so thankful to the Lord, and loving Him, he offered Gehazi two talents, double what Gehazi had asked for. Naaman was a man of honor.

2 Kings 5:23b—25—^{23b} And he urged him, and bound two talents of silver in two bags, with two changes of garments, and handed them to two of his servants—In other words, Naaman didn’t even make Gehazi carry it; his own servants did the labor—and they carried them on ahead of him. ²⁴ When he came to the citadel, he took them from their hand, and stored them away in the house; then he let the men go, and they departed—the servants of Naaman went back—²⁵ Now he went in and stood before his master. Elisha said to him, “Where did you go, Gehazi?” And he said, “**Your servant did not go anywhere.**” (emphasis added).

He lied right to the face of a prophet. This was not wise, but darkness, covetousness, makes you a fool. There is a great blindness that sets in. So, Gehazi continued to cover his sin.

2 Kings 5:26a—^{26a} Then he said to him, “Did not my heart go with you when the man turned back from his chariot to meet you?”

The Targums really hit it with a great revelation of what Elisha just communicated. The Targums say that the Spirit of prophecy came upon Elisha. In other words, the Spirit of God revealed to him exactly what Gehazi did. Elisha knew exactly where Gehazi went, why he went, and what he did. The spirit of God spoke to Elisha, a prophet of God. Elisha continued:

2 Kings 5:26b—^{26b} Is it time to receive money and to receive clothing, olive groves and vineyards, sheep and oxen, male and female servants?

Let that sink in. Elisha the prophet said to Gehazi, “In this time, in this generation, in this age, is this what we are supposed to invest in? Is this what we are supposed to be laboring for?” These words of Elisha were reiterated in the New Testament by Jesus, *Yeshua*, in Matthew 6:19—¹⁹ Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal. *Yeshua* is telling you exactly what Elisha told Gehazi: this is not the time to lay up earthly possessions. Elisha is one of the most prolific typologies of *Yeshua*. We won’t get into that today, but Elisha was anointed with a double portion of Elijah. Way more miracles are recorded and more power displayed

regarding Elisha than Elijah. That was exactly how it was when Yeshua came after Elijah the prophet, also known as John the Baptist.

Think about how Yeshua's teaching in Matthew 6 goes back to the Old Testament teaching of Elisha in 2 Kings 5. The lesson was "do not store up treasures in this age," but this is what Gehazi did. Pay close attention because this is the payment the covetous can expect:

2 Kings 5:27—²⁷ **Therefore the leprosy of Naaman shall cling to you and your descendants**—look at this—**forever, *lā·'ō·lām*** .” **And he went out from his presence leprous, as white as snow** (emphasis added).

Take this in because this conveys a deep spiritual reality that judgment that comes upon the covetousness is eternal. It is final; it's forever, *lā·'ō·lām*.

If you want to take this a step further, put this story into context for a second. Think about the fact, and this is no exaggeration, that Gehazi was part of one of the most prolific, powerful, and influential ministries that has ever existed in history. Elisha, the prophet, had double the anointing Elijah had. Gehazi was to Elisha as what Joshua was to Moses. Gehazi was in the innermost sanctum of ministry, and not just any ministry, a ministry fraught with power.

Gehazi saw things with his own eyes. He saw the Shunammite woman's son dead and raised to life again. He saw Naaman, the leper, with an impossible incurable disease, immediately cured just by dipping in the water. It sounds like a fantasy. Gehazi saw things other men could only dream of, yet Gehazi drifted. That wasn't enough. The beautiful grace and power of the God of Israel wasn't enough. He longed for the things of the world. If that doesn't scare you, and if that doesn't reveal to you how strong this draw of covetousness is, I don't know what will.

Let me build on this by reading in the New Testament from the little book of Philemon:

Philemon 1:23-24—Paul said—²³ **Epaphras, my fellow prisoner in Christ Jesus, *Mashiach*, greets you,** ²⁴ **as do Mark, Aristarchus, Demas, Luke, my fellow laborers** (emphasis added).

Paul mentioned Demas here in Philemon and also in Colossians. Demas was with Paul, and let's be honest, the Apostle Paul was one of the most prolific, most powerful, and most influential ministries ever to exist on planet Earth (again, no exaggeration). And guess what? Demas was on the front lines with Paul. What I would give to experience that ministry for just one day, and Demas was immersed in it! We are told God worked unusual miracles by the hand of the Apostle Paul to the point cloths were taken from him, and demons were coming out of people because there was such an anointing on this man. Demas saw things no one else ever saw, things only people could dream of.

Listen to what Paul said in his letter to Timothy because Philemon and Colossians were written before Paul's second letter to Timothy. So, later on, we read this:

2 Timothy 4:10a—^{10a} **for Demas has forsaken me**—imagine the things Demas saw, yet he forsook Paul. Why? —**having loved this present world** (emphasis added).

The dark power, seductiveness, and cunning and alluring nature of covetousness takes people out in the most profound ministries ever known. This is not something you want to underestimate. This is as serious as it gets.

Matthew 13:22—Talking about the parable of the sower, Jesus, *Yeshua*, said—²² **Now when 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 “the Gehazi effect”? Do you understand what happens? *Yeshua* articulated it perfectly. These people can have the powerful word of God and can experience the gospel firsthand in ways people could only talk about, but if you are sown among the thorns, and you haven't let go of the things of the world, make no mistake, those things will choke out the Word. Gehazi was sown among the thorns. His covetousness choked out the Word. Demas was sown among the thorns, choking out the Word. Such a scary thought to see the amazing, beautiful character, power, love, and mercy in *Yeshua*, yet that wasn't enough. Talk about blasphemous behavior! Covetousness is blasphemous behavior. *Yeshua* built on this back in chapter six:

Matthew 6:24—Jesus, *Yeshua*, said—²⁴ **No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be loyal to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon, *mamōna*** (emphasis added).

Mamōna is an Aramaic term that refers to the riches (possessions) of this world. You can't say, “I'm going to follow Jesus,” while you chase the things of the world. That is an impossibility. You can't say, “I love *Yeshua* so much,” and yet give your time and focus to achieve the things of the world.

The scariest part of what *Yeshua* said is **“for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be loyal to the one and despise the other.”** There is no gray area. There is no ambiguity. You don't get to dabble your foot in the world and say, “I will put a couple toes in the world, and Lord *Yeshua* can have the rest of me.” That's not how it works. If you give even a shred of your heart to covetousness, you are a hater of *Yeshua*, the Redeemer of the world. *Yeshua* could not have put this in more simpler terms. He could not have drawn a more definitive line in the sand. And he could not have hit us harder if he wanted to. *Yeshua* was crystal clear: if you want to give just a little, two, three or four percent, to the world, you hate Him.

Let's read from Psalm 73. For me, personally, this is one of the most important passages. The psalmist gets extremely vulnerable and transparent about the inner depths of his heart and how he feels and thinks. I relate to this so well, and you'll understand why as we get into this. I will explain that, but in Psalm 73 we read: ¹ **A Psalm of Asaph. Truly God is good to Israel, to such as are pure in heart.**

Everything that follows was built upon this premise. This set the stage. Notice, he didn't say, “God is good to Israel.” That was not the statement. He was specific. You'll appreciate this in a moment. He said, “God is good to Israel,” specifically to those who are pure in heart.

That reflects *Yeshua*'s teaching in John chapter 8 where a certain sect of Jews came to Him and said, “Abraham is our father. We are physical descendants of Abraham.” In other words, they told Him they were somebody. *Yeshua* responded in John 8:39—³⁹ **“If you were Abraham's children, you would do the works of Abraham.”** *Yeshua* told them they were not Abraham's children, but of their father the devil.

The same concept Yeshua conveyed was what the Apostle Paul conveyed in Romans 9:6—⁶ **For they are not all Israel who are of Israel.** It's those who are pure in heart. Matthew 5:8—⁸ **Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.** All you need to do is read the Scripture. God wasn't good to all those who were physical descendants in Israel. Study Bible history and you will see God brought horrific judgment against them. Because they were not pure in heart, not a soul in the wilderness entered into the promised land except two, Joshua and Caleb.

Psalm 73:2—The psalmist delves into this—² **But as for me, my feet had almost stumbled; my steps had nearly slipped.**

In other words, the psalmist said that something almost took him out, derailed him, and brought him out of the faith. He told us what it was in verse 3.

Psalm 73:3—³ **For I was envious, qanah** —as in *El qanah*, jealous God. I was jealous—**of the boastful, halal**—in the Hebrew, it's those who are praised. I was jealous of those who the world respects, adores and exalts to the highest of highs—**when I saw the prosperity of the wicked.**

Asaph, a righteous man, looked at the topography around him and saw what was going on. He was dumbfounded, may I say enamored, with the reality that the wicked were supremely blessed. They had everything. He went on to explain:

Psalm 73:4-7—⁴ **For there are no pains in their death, but their strength is firm.** ⁵ **They are not in trouble as other men, nor are they plagued like other men.** ⁶ **Therefore pride serves as their necklace; violence covers them like a garment.** ⁷ **Their eyes bulge with abundance; they have more than the heart could wish** (emphasis added).

They needed nothing. He looked with his own two eyes and saw their strong health, finances, worldly possessions, status, and how other men looked up to them. In every respect, there was strength in their life; they needed nothing.

Psalm 73:12-14—¹² **Behold, these are the ungodly, who are always at ease, they increase in riches.** ¹³ **Surely I have cleansed my heart in vain, and washed my hands in innocence.** ¹⁴ **For all day long I have been plagued, and chastened every morning.**

In other words, the psalmist said, “What's the point? Why have I repented? Why do I labor to strive on the narrow and difficult path? Why would I do this? I've cleansed my hands in vain because all day long I am plagued while I can look with my own two eyes and see people blaspheme the Lord. I see people who don't care about the Lord, and they have everything their heart could desire. Their health and finances are intact. People admire them. They are exalted and lifted up. They have no needs.

You can hear what Asaph said and what he thought, “Lord, you told us to follow you, and we are supposed to be the ones blessed.” Everything Asaph saw was the exact opposite. He thought, “The people who don't follow the Lord are the ones blessed while we suffer and wallow in affliction, whether in health, finances, etc. We don't have the worldly possessions everyone else has. We don't have the status and praise of men everyone else has.” Asaph struggled with this.

This is when I will get to the point and be transparent. I have been there, you have no idea, hanging by a thread, emotionally and physically worn out with the adversary kicking me all over the place, thinking,

"Lord, I've dedicated everything to you. I'm doing the right things. I'm praying, fasting, and seeking you with all my heart, but everything my eyes see tell me everyone is more blessed. They don't have health problems or financial problems. They have everything." I have been there. I know how Asaph felt. I have thought these thoughts.

Psalm 73:15-16—Asaph continued—¹⁵ **If I had said, "I will speak thus,"**—What does he mean, "If I will speak thus"? It means, "If I will speak that I have cleansed my hands in vain, and there is no point of walking in righteousness and being a living sacrifice" (as Paul called it in Romans 12). If I would say that righteousness is pointless—**Behold, I would have been untrue to the generation of Your children.** If I had fallen into that, I would have led the people off a cliff—¹⁶ **When I thought how to understand this, it was too painful for me** (emphasis added)

Do you understand the travail? It was too painful for him because he was sucking wind, hanging by a thread, and had nothing left physically or emotionally, and yet he saw everyone else looking like they had the riches of the kingdom. It was too painful.

Psalm 73:17—¹⁷ **Until I went into the sanctuary of God, then I understood their end** (emphasis added).

Paul said—⁷ **For we are to walk by faith, not by sight** (2 Corinthians 5:7) because our eyes deceive us. We can look at the world, all the prosperity, and how everything is going well for them, but we need to look in the Word. We need to get into the sanctuary and seek the Lord with all our heart. When you seek His face and His counsel, guess what you will find? Exactly what Asaph said. You will find that judgment will come upon them. It's sin for a season. Their pleasures are nothing but a vapor. They will come to nothing very soon. Asaph got that revelation after he sought the Lord.

Do you understand the more time you spend in the Word, the greater clarity you will have? It has saved my life to look at the truth of God's Word and His promises. That's where I need to stay, no matter what my eyes see going on in this world. The moment you move away from the Word, you will start saying, "I've cleansed my hands in vain. What's the point of everything I'm doing? What's the point of working ministry? Nothing good is happening."

Psalm 119:50—The psalmist said—⁵⁰ **This is my comfort in my affliction, for Your word has given me life.**

The Word of God will cultivate life within you, not just clarity, so you understand it. It will cultivate life. That is where you will derive joy in the storm where things are brutal and you are crying out to the Lord as David—^{16b} **For I am desolate and afflicted.** ¹⁷ **The troubles of my heart have enlarged; bring me out of my distresses!** ¹⁸ **Look on my affliction and my pain, and forgive all my sins** (Psalm 25:16b-18).

Psalm 73:18a—The psalmist continued—^{18a} **Surely You set them in slippery place....**

See, Asaph has read the Torah, and guess what? He drew from Deuteronomy 32:35—The LORD said—³⁵ **Vengeance is Mine, and recompense; their foot shall slip in due time.** That's where the sermon, "Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God," was birthed. That's where Asaph went and read the Word and knew their lives were a lie. Psalm 62:9 says—⁹ **Surely men of low degree are a vapor, men of high degree are a lie.**

Continuing in Psalm 73:18b-19—^{18b} **You cast them down to destruction.** ¹⁹ **Oh, how they are brought to desolation, as in a moment! They are utterly consumed with terrors** (emphasis added).

It will all be over: all their joy; all their glee; all the pleasures of the world they fill themselves with; all their covetousness from the pursuit of riches and worldly possessions to pornography; all they covet and engorge their heart with; it will come to an end. They will all be destroyed and their money with them.

Psalm 73:20-21—²⁰ **As a dream when one awakes, so, Lord, when you awake, You shall despise their image.** ²¹ **Thus my heart was grieved, and I was vexed in my mind.**

What is grieving Asaph? Why is he vexed? Is he vexed over the fact that God will bring the wicked into judgment? Absolutely not. That's not why he's grieved or vexed. He's grieved because:

Psalm 73:22—²² **I was so foolish and ignorant; I was like a beast before You** (emphasis added).

That's why he was grieved. He was foolish and ignorant when he said, "Surely, I've cleansed my hands in vain. There's no point in walking in your righteousness when the only payment I have is being afflicted and plagued all day long, morning, noon, and night." That is what he was grieving.

You can only come to the place in your life where you can grieve those ridiculous thoughts that this is totally pointless, when you seek first the kingdom of God and delve into His Word. The Holy Spirit straightens this all out to where you can come to repentance, be ashamed, and realize this is not right thinking; this is how the devil wants me to think; he wants me to believe this.

Psalm 73:27—²⁷ **For indeed, those who are far from You shall perish; You have destroyed all those who desert You for harlotry.**

Those who leave for covetousness think that Jesus, *Yeshua*, wasn't enough. His love, His mercy, His Word, His truth, and His power weren't enough. They need to invest in the things of the world. They need those things to feed upon.

Psalm 73:28—²⁸ **But it is good for me to draw near to God. I have put my trust in the Lord GOD, that I might declare all Your works.**

Asaph just gave us the recipe to deal with this situation. If you get to the point you feel you are wasting your time, it is time to draw near to God and put your trust in Him. The writer of Hebrews gave us a similar recipe articulated a little differently;

Hebrews 13:5a—^{5a} **Let your conduct be without covetousness; be content with such things as you have** (emphasis added).

The writer of Hebrews gave you the formula for dealing with covetousness. You have to be content. With all due respect, you ask, "How do I do that? Where do I get authentic contentment so I don't walk around saying, 'I'm content,' when I'm not." "I need to be content in my heart. How do I do this?" He continued:

Hebrews 13:5b—^{5b} **For He Himself has said, "I will never leave you nor forsake you."** (emphasis added).

The writer of Hebrews went back to the Word and said, "Remember the promise. Do you understand what you have? *Yeshua* is more than enough." This is the answer for fighting covetousness, the dark

power which has taken out many great men in some of the most unbelievable ministries that have ever existed. This is how you battle:

Proverbs 14:14—¹⁴ **The backslider in heart will be filled with his own ways, but a good man will be satisfied from above** (emphasis added).

A good man has a proper relationship with Yeshua and can't get enough of Him. He doesn't have an adulterous, covetous heart with an eyeball over here, keeping an eye on the world, desiring the things of the world, and being two-faced to the Lord. A good man is enamored with His love.

James 4:1—¹ **Where do wars and fights come from among you? Do they not come from your desires for pleasure that war in your members?** (emphasis added).

James said, "You are at war." You don't get to sit this war out. You may say, "Daniel, I just don't have the energy anymore. I'm not going to fight this." You don't have a choice. If you don't fight, you lose. You must fight this war because you know what Jesus, *Yeshua*, said—⁴¹. . . **The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak** (Matthew 26:41). Paul said—¹⁷ **For the flesh lusts against the Spirit, and the Spirit lusts against the flesh** (Galatians 5:17). There is a war.

As long as you are in the flesh, it doesn't stop. As long as the devil and his agents are roaming around, you will be tempted. The devil is a marketing guru. Over 20 years ago, I remember taking marketing courses and being dumbfounded and thinking, "Wow, Satan is running the show here." The whole concept of marketing is getting people to want what you have and utilizing different tactics to make that happen. This is Satan. How does Satan get you to want what he wants you to want? There are unbelievable layers of strategy in marketing to get you to buy stuff you don't need. There is a war.

James 4:2—² **You lust and do not have. You murder and covet and cannot obtain. You fight and war. Yet you do not have because you do not ask** (emphasis added).

James 4:4—⁴ **Adulterers and adulteresses! Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God? Whoever therefore wants to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God** (emphasis added).

I don't care if you give one, two, or ten percent of your heart over to covetousness and to the things of the devil; you ⁴. . . **make yourself an enemy of God** (James 4:4). It goes back to what Jesus, *Yeshua*, said—²⁴ **No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other** (Matthew 6:24).

You have to make your decision, right now. **Choose you this day whom you will serve** (Joshua 24:15). Make full surrender to Yeshua or you are not in. You know what? The line in the sand has been drawn. You don't want to be on the wrong side.

Please listen carefully to what Paul said because this puts everything that we talked about today and in your life into perspective. This does it:

2 Corinthians 6:11-12—¹¹ **O Corinthians! We have spoken openly to you, our heart is wide open. ¹² You are not restricted by us, but you are restricted by your own affections** (emphasis added).

I want that to sink in because there are a lot of people here today or watching online, and if they are honest, they will say, “You know what? I don't have the joy I used to have. I don't feel connected to the Lord anymore. I feel almost complacent. I feel there's an emptiness within me. I don't feel the power. When I first came into the faith, I had this power, this focus, and this clarity.”

These are things we feel as believers. I want you to understand what is happening. Paul told you, “You are not restricted by Paul; you are not restricted by Daniel; you are not restricted by your family members or by your spouses; you are not restricted by anyone; you are not restricted by the Lord.”

Does the Lord restrict? Let's look at Matthew 8:2-3—² **A leper came and worshiped Him—Yeshua—saying, “Lord, if You are willing, You can make me clean.”** ³ **Then Jesus, Yeshua . . . said, “I am willing.”** This is the heart of Yeshua. Yeshua said—¹³ **Whatever you ask in My name, that I will do** (John14:13). Does that sound like Yeshua is restricting your faith? You are restricted by your own affections.

So, if you wonder why you've lost that passion, you've lost that fire, you've lost that joy, you've lost that focus, and you've lost that clarity, I'm telling you, right now, you have affections for the world, and it has limited you. You cannot walk in the power of Yeshua while you hold on to your love for the world. You have nothing. You have no power. And this is why we have powerless, empty vessels calling themselves Christians who make no difference in anybody's life. Affections! That's what's limiting us.

Do you know what revival is? It's cutting all the strings off of all those affections you have. Cut off all your worldly goals and watch what the Lord will do. You will not be restricted. You will experience the power of the Holy Spirit. You will experience His truth, not in your mind, but in your heart. The Holy Spirit will minister to you in unimaginable ways. This is what we want.