

## The Ten Commandments - Part 39: You Shall Not Steal (2/25)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/8mv9vqv/the-ten-commandments-part-39>

**\*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.**

Shabbat Shalom everyone.

Today we are going to break new ground. We're going to dive into the Eighth Commandment within the Ten Commandments and it's this—**Exodus 20:15- You shall not steal**. Again, in the Hebrew it's even more succinct, it's even more brief; it's **Lō tignōb** (You shall not steal). And a couple things that I want to mention before we get into today's message is the following. Number one, you're going to need to be on your toes today. I'm going to hit you with one passage after another. We're going to be combing the scriptures all over the place and jumping from one place to the next quite quickly.

And so, I'm going to need you guys to be right there with me. The other thing I want to mention is this, we're actually going to get through this commandment today. Now that's kind of a miracle in itself. Right? And so, however, having said that, as we get to the end of this series we will be circling back to this commandment. There's more that I'm going to bring to the table, and you'll understand why that is when we get there. With that said, I thought it would be appropriate to open with a little bit of perspective of delving into this subject with some statistics.

The first one I want to show you is, check this out, this is what this article records. **Old Republic Surety-Nearly 30 percent of all business failures are caused by employee theft according to the Better Business Bureau**. Even if that number is relatively close, that is staggering. I mean, that blows my mind. Three out of every 10 companies fails solely due to the employees stealing from the company. I want you to understand the impact.

I want you to see the impact that breaking the Eighth Commandment has. You know what brings prosperity at least in part when we look at societies and cultures that flourish? It's ethical businesses producing things for society including providing jobs. Isn't it an amazing thing how destructive this failing to keep this one commandment can be to society. The numbers tell you the entire story. For companies to go under, how many people were directly impacted by this? Who had a job there that no longer has a job? And so, you need to understand that when we're talking about walking away from God's Commandments, it produces not blessing nor prosperity. It produces death and financial ruin. The exact opposite of prosperity.

Now this goes on and says the following: **Old Republic Surety-Corporate Security Experts estimate that 25 to 40 percent of all employees steal from their employers**. And again, I'm going to argue that if this

was even relatively close, that should make you step back and say, “Oh God. Help us if this is happening in this country.” If this is at all true, do you know what that tells you? We have an epidemic. We have a serious problem. Our society is falling into total depravity. It is sad.

Let's not stop there. We read this: [Deep Sentinel-Shoplifting Statistics \(2022\) Look at the Numbers-According to FBI crime data there were more than 548,000 shoplifting cases in 2021, nearly 20 percent of all reported theft larceny/ crimes.](#)

And that's not all. Look at this: [And those are only the people that got caught and turned in.](#) (Emphasis added). [In fact, shoplifters say that someone catches them in only one out of every 49 instances of a shoplifting crime. If that's true, there might be upwards of 26 million shoplifting incidents per year.](#) (Emphasis added).

Try to take that in. What does that number tell you even if it's relatively close? It tells you we have an epidemic in our society. Our society is falling into total degradation. You know, if you want a barometer of a healthier society, take the law of God and put it over society. Take just the Eighth Commandment, thou shall not steal (**Lō' tignōb**). Put that over. How do we look as a nation?

We do not look well. We look like a nation that's going to literally fall into judgment. If those statistics weren't bad enough, then we have to read headlines like this: [Large Florida Church removes Pastor for stealing from offerings.](#) Then we read these headlines: [The New York Times-Louisiana Pastor pleads guilty to Stealing Nearly 900 000 from Church and School.](#) We have to read headlines like this: [Miami-Dade pastor accused of stealing money and home belonging to elderly couple.](#)

This is a pastor. Then you read this: [CBS Pittsburgh-Retired pastor accused of stealing more than 350, 000 from Northside church.](#) You read headlines like this: [Chicago pastor steals one million from church funds to buy a new Bentley.](#) Unfortunately, you cannot make this stuff up. The sad part is we could do this all day long. We're not even putting this commandment upon a secular society. We now put this commandment and hover it over the church. And there are so many that I could bring to the table that shows you pastor after pastor after pastor who's not heeding those words, **Lō' tignōb**, **Lō' tignōb**, (Thou shall not steal); they're not heeding it.

And so, I'm going to tell you so that you understand how we look according to the barometer of holding the Law of God over this country. I kid you not; we're coming into judgment, and just this one commandment is enough to tell me it's coming, and I will argue it's already here; it's already starting to unfold.

With that said, let's get scriptural. I want to take you to the Gospel of John in John 10:10. These are the words of Yeshua. He says—**The thief** (Now keep in mind this is a title name for the devil.) **does not come except to steal, to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly.** (Emphasis added).

The first thing I want you to see is that Yeshua strikes a stark contrast between his character and the character and nature of the adversary, the devil. The devil comes to steal; Yeshua comes to give. The devil comes to kill; Yeshua comes to give life more abundantly, eternal life. The enemy comes to destroy. Yeshua comes to build and to strengthen. These could not be more opposite. You have light versus darkness; you have righteousness versus lawlessness; you have giving versus stealing.

I want you to think about something because we're reading about an image (Referring to John 10:10). What is being described here is the image of the devil. This is his character; this is his nature. Listen to me carefully! When you do as he does, when you get caught in that moment and you break the Eighth Commandment, and you go on and to steal, whether pastor, congregant or otherwise, you bear the image of the devil. You are doing the deeds of your father the devil. That's your paternity test. You want to know who you really worship? You want to know who you really serve? What is your fruit? What are the things you're doing? How are you walking? Are you walking in his Law and in his Righteousness, or are you walking in the word of the devil? That's scary thought, and we need to have some perspective on this issue regarding stealing lest you think it's going to be okay. It is not okay when you bear the image of the devil. That is not okay.

Building upon this, Yeshua says this in the gospel of Matthew. And this is the parable of the Sower. **Matthew 13:19- When anyone hears the word of the kingdom, and does not understand it, then the wicked one comes and snatches away what was sown in his heart.** (Emphasis added). Why does he do that? He is the thief, and he comes to steal. What is the ultimate heist of the devil? What is he after more than anything else? To take from you the very thing that he took from Eve in the garden: the Law of God, the Commandments of God. This is what he's after. And it's sickening to see what he accomplished in the garden. He went and stole that commandment from her so that she could eat from every tree including the tree of knowledge of Good and Evil. He continued and he seduced her. When he did this, there were two things that happened: he removed the law and says, "No, you are surely not going to die. You don't have to worry about the commandment." But he added to that: "You will prosper, and your eyes will be open. You will be like God." You need to understand when the enemy comes to you to persuade you, to take the commandment, he's come to steal the Commandment that says, "Thou shalt not steal," from you so that you feel okay, and you feel that you're justified.

Maybe you're taking something from your employer thinking that he's not going to miss it. Therefore, it doesn't matter, and the enemy starts to justify these things. And ultimately, what he gets you to see is the reason people are going out and stealing. Most often they believe they're gaining; they believe they're prospering. This is exactly what happened in the garden, and this is how the enemy comes in and works us over. He's stealing the law of God. You can maintain your position, hold the line, and say, "No," **Lō' tignōb (Thou shall not steal)** recognizing God said this, and cling to his words. If you let those words go, understand that you are worshipping the devil. If you believe the devil's words over the Lord's, this is not going to end well for you. He may convince you that you're going to prosper by taking something that doesn't belong to you, but it's not going to work out well for you in the end.

Let me jump ahead to Matthew 27. This is where Yeshua is on trial before Pilate. **Matthew 27:16-17- And at that time they had a notorious prisoner called Barabbas.17- Therefore, when they had gathered together, Pilate said to them, "Whom do you want me to release to you? Barabbas.** Now remember we've talked about this in this series. In some of the older manuscripts, it actually says this is Jesus Barabbas. **Who do you want me to release to you? Jesus Barabbas or Jesus Yeshua Ha Mashiach, he's called the Christ, he's the Messiah.**

I want to step back because again what is the contrast here between Barabbas who is a typology of the devil? The contrast is Barabbas is over here, the Messiah Yeshua is over here. Yeshua came, and what did he do? He forgave sins, he gave life, and he literally raised the dead. He showed compassion. He spoke the truth. What is Barabbas known for? There are three things Barabbas is known for in scripture characteristics that the gospels record. Number one, he was known for rebellion. Number two, he was

known to be a murderer. And the third thing is he was a thief. It literally records that he was a robber. These are the attributes of this Yeshua Barabbas put in contrast to Yeshua the Messiah.

We jump to verse 20 and we read this—**Matthew 27:20- But the chief priests and elders persuaded the multitudes.** Now get this. These are the teachers of the Torah; they are supposedly righteous men. They're going around and persuading the Jewish multitudes that they should ask for Barabbas and destroy Yeshua.

Continuing in **Matthew 27:21- The governor answered and said to them, "Which of the two do you want me to release to you?"** (Emphasis added). And what did they say? **They said give us, Barabbas!** (Emphasis added). So instead of desiring righteousness, they wanted sin. Instead of calling out for truth, they called for the lie. Instead of calling for The Giver of Life, they called for the thief.

Do you understand that when you engage in the activity of thieving, you are literally putting yourself in the crowd, back in Yeshua's day, when he's on trial, and you are the one crying out give me Barabbas. That's a perspective that'll keep you out of hell. That is a perspective that we need to possess in order to know the reality of what we're getting ourselves into.

I want to take you to the targums. I want to look at the Ten Commandments, specifically our commandment the Eighth Commandment. I want to show you how it's worded in the targums. And listen to me carefully. We are so blessed with translations where you move from the original Hebrew and can bring it into the Aramaic such as we have with all the various targums. Whether Onkelos, Neofiti, or Pseudo-Jonathan, there's a great blessing that happens with the translation. The reason there's a great blessing is that the scribes, these Targumists, when they're put to it, and they need to translate particular passages, oftentimes give a beautiful unearthing of riches of insight, a beautiful blessing or bonus points, if you will, in regard to what the passage actually means.

And I can tell you this happens in the Septuagint all the time where they had to translate the Hebrew Bible into Greek. If you want proof of that, just read the New Testament. You can read the book of Hebrews as it literally draws from the Septuagint which had a very different wording regarding the sacrifice that was to come. It says, "A body you have prepared for me," versus what the Hebrew says, "My ears you have opened." This is a profound revelation.

You get these amazing bonus points for having this translation. As we go to the targums, you're going to see how the targums translate **Lō' tignōb**, two words. This is incredible because it's going to illuminate a lot. It says in Targum Neofiti, Exodus 20:15a **-This my people, children of Israel, you shall not be thief.** This is virtually identical with the exception of, "my people, children of Israel, but you shall not be thieves." It is virtually identical to what we read in the Hebrew, **Lō' tignōb**, (Thou shall not steal). It doesn't end there. Listen to what it says next—**Nor should you be companions or partners with thieves.** (Emphasis added). That just brought in my understanding and my perspective of **Lō' tignōb**. So, it's not just simply about you getting your act together and not going out sinning. The Targumist says that this commandment refers to you and who you keep company with. That's what this commandment covers.

This is all interesting because the Apostle Paul would seem to agree as he shares the very same type of teaching with the Corinthian Church as he talks about what fellowship has with righteousness, with lawlessness. What communion has with light, with darkness, or what accord has Christ with Belial? None! Absolutely none!

Now going back to 1 Corinthians 5. Remember what he said to them. He warned them and said, “You are not even supposed to eat with such a person who is behaving lawlessly and named a believer.” We are supposed to completely separate ourselves from that person. That's the reality of this verse.

So, what is being communicated here is incredible, and the Proverbs agree as well. **Proverbs 29:24A-Whoever is a partner with the thief hates his own life.** (Emphasis added). This is exactly what scripture teaches. So, as we understand **Lō' tignōb** (Thou shall not steal) broadens you're understanding, this means you don't hook up with thieves. Do you know what the Targumists are doing right now? Exactly what Yeshua did in Matthew 5, 6, and 7. As Yeshua comes out to teach the Torah, he starts saying things that you actually don't find in the commandment but were the original intent. He's not coming out expanding the law or rewriting the law; he's coming out telling you what it means.

An example is that when he says, “You shall not murder,” and you say, “I haven't physically done it, therefore, I'm okay,” you are not because if you have hatred in your heart. The intent of the commandment is much broader than what you're making it out to be. Or if because I haven't committed the physical act of adultery, I am not innocent of adultery if my eyes are looking upon others and have lust in my heart. If I do that, I'm an adulterer. This is exactly what the Targumists are doing here; it's profound.

But they're not done. So, they tell us not to be companions and partners with thieves. and then it goes on and it says this in **Targum Neofiti- Exodus 20:15B- And people who steal shall not be seen in the congregation of Israel.** In other words, thieves shouldn't be freely roaming around in our assembly or in our society. Our society should not be tolerating the kind of statistics that we're reading about today. We are to be intolerant. We are called to be intolerant towards sin. And the law of God brings the blessing.

There is a purpose, there's protection if you want your society to prosper, if you want them to be blessed, if you want to be protected, listen to the Lord. Put the command on the forefront.

But now, it's going to tell you why you don't let this stuff happen in society; it's going to show you. **Targum Neofiti- Exodus 20:15c- Lest your children arise after you and they also learn to be people who steal.** Do you understand? This is where you get into the monkey see monkey do effect, or maybe Paul's more profound articulation of, “A little leaven leavens the whole lump.”

One sinner will destroy much good. You can't allow this kind of lawlessness to exist in society; it will come at a price. And that price is the next generation rising up. They will look at what's happening, and they will do it. It's one of the great mysteries of the world, at least to me. Why is it that it's so easy for us to emulate sin? Why is it so easy for us to pick that up? I think most of us will answer that that's the nature of the flesh Daniel. I agree. It comes so naturally.

And so, when you allow sin to do that, it will infect more than one generation. You'll have an entire corrupt generation rising. But unfortunately, that's not the end of it. The Targumist goes on and tell you what to watch out for. **Targum Neofiti Exodus 20:15c-Because by the sins of thieves, famine comes to the world.** (Emphasis added). You will see judgment. The Targumists looked at this historically. You need to understand they are looking at how God has worked historically. This is one of God's go-to regarding judgment.

I'm going to tell you again that you can take the law of God as a barometer and put it over this nation collectively, and the only thing that you can see that is actually going to come is judgment and famine. This country, if it does not turn and repent, it is going to experience the horrific Judgment of God. They will experience famine, the sword, and pestilence. And I will tell you we're already seeing it. It's already begun.

I want to take you back to the Gospel of John. As you come to chapter 12, Mary is going to pour out this incredibly costly oil upon Yeshua. This is a beautiful act of worship. It is so incredible it has been preserved to this day, for thousands of years. She was preparing Yeshua for his burial. If you want to talk about profoundness, this is it. Let me take you to verse 4. Not everyone thought this was a good idea. **John 12:4- But one of His disciples, Judas Iscariot, Simon's son who would betray Him, said, 5- "Why was this fragrant oil not sold for 300 Denari and given to the poor?"**

You must understand how expensive this oil was. 300 Denari is 300 days wages. You're talking almost a year's worth of wages. She dumps it all at that moment on Yeshua. And isn't it interesting that Judas the social justice warrior, the one who is so concerned about the poor, this great advocate for the poor, is appalled. He's a righteous devil. As we continue, we learn something about his motives. **John 12:6- This he said, not that he cared for the poor, but because he was a thief, and he had the money box; and he used to take what was put in it.** (Emphasis added).

This is unbelievable! The money box was the ministry box. This is what supported them in their ministry. This is what supplied their needs and brought the supplies in so that they could function in ministry without distraction. And Judas was not concerned at all for the poor. He was concerned about his own back pocket and how he could line his pockets. And he saw this, one of the most glorious acts recorded in scripture, this woman honoring and worshiping Yeshua, as a waste!

There's another lesson I learned looking at this story. When you have a heart given over to thieving and to stealing, you are blind. You will not be able to see the Kingdom of God. You will not be able to see righteousness when it unfolds right before your eyes! Judas should have been in awe over what this woman had done for the King of Kings and the Lord of Lords! Instead, he was disgusted. That aspect of knowing that you will be buying sin and corruption in your heart, and it will blind you so you won't be able to see, should scare you straight.

I don't want to be blind. Judas was a pastor. He was a shepherd, and he was spreading the gospel to all these pastors. Doing what Judas did by dipping into the money box of ministry left him blind. Listen to me, all these pastors mentioned at the beginning of this message are Judas. We have shepherds who emulate Judas Iscariot. And now you have the blind leading the blind. This is not okay. This is a bad situation.

On the heels of that, I want to take you to the Book of Malachi, because what you're going to realize is that this, unfortunately, isn't the only way to steal from the Lord. We read this in **Malachi 3:7- Yet from the days of your fathers you have gone away from my ordinances and you have not kept them.** The Lord is coming out with a scathing rebuke against his own people, against his church. **Return to Me, and I will return to you," says the Lord of hosts. "But you said, 'In what way shall we return?' They're stupefied and dumbfounded.** What are you talking about when you say, "Return to you"? They don't understand. And the Lord says this—**Malachi-3:8- "Will a man rob God? Yet you have robbed Me! But you say, 'In what way have we robbed you?'** Again, they are dumbfounded. Why are they being accused of robbing God? How have we robbed you? **In tithes and offerings.** (Emphasis added).

This is stealing from God. It's one thing to steal from one another. That'll get you a one-way ticket to hell. To steal from God is another level of thievery; it's an abomination. It is the grossest of errors to go steal from the Lord. You're no different than Judas Iscariot who is taking from the money box and, therefore, stealing from God.

This is how the Lord sees it. This is a scary thing. And if you go back to chapter one, the Lord talks about the kind of offering Israel has brought. Do you know what they offered to the Lord? The lame, the sick, and the blind. The garbage they won't even give to their own governor. And the Lord says, "You think that's going to please Me? You think that's really pleasing? Do you think you're honoring Me? Go give it to your governor and see what he'll do.

The Lord saying that not even man would accept this nonsense. You have not given me the first and the best. The Lord is worthy of our first and our best. End of discussion. Anything less is robbery.

Then the Lord goes and puts the fear of God into us. **Malachi 3:9-10- You are cursed with a curse, for you have robbed Me, even this whole nation.10- Bring all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be food in My house, try Me now in this," Says the Lord of hosts.** (Emphasis added). We are told to test him.

It goes on and says in **Malachi 3:10B- "If I will not open for you the windows of heaven and pour out for you such blessing that there will not be room enough to receive it.** God takes it very personal when we don't give him his due. So personal, that failure to give God his just due results in a curse. You know, tithing is one of the ways God has chosen, not man. It's one of the ways that God has chosen to be honored. And to fail to do this is total thievery; it is stealing.

Again, this is nothing different than what Judas Iscariot had done. I can remember talking to this woman who doesn't come to Corner Fringe; this was some years back when I was going to another church. She had struck up a conversation with me regarding tithing. It was an amazing conversation. She was expressing that she probably should have been tithing to her church, but she hadn't been tithing. I dug in a little bit, and we talked a little bit about scripture. I could tell there was something there that wasn't coming to the table, so I kept digging and digging. Finally, she just came out and said, "Daniel, you must understand that if I gave a tithe, I fear that I'm not going to have enough." It was interesting because the devil used fear to convince her that robbing God was a good idea. That is scary. The devil comes at us tactilely because it is his goal. What the devil wants from all of us is to rob God because that's what the devil does.

When the word is sown, we read this in Matthew 13. What does the devil do? He goes out and takes the word; he wants to steal from God. It is the ultimate heist, and this is what he's constantly doing. He wants us to follow him, he wants us to worship him. And when we're not listening, we're not obeying, we become like the devil; we become literally the devil's children.

Let me take you to Nehemiah because I want to show you the trickle effect and why it's so important. Let's be clear; how many of you think God needs your money? He doesn't need your money. God doesn't operate on that wavelength. He doesn't need my money. But there is a purpose, and I want to show you this in **Nehemiah 13:9- Then I commanded them to cleanse the rooms; and I brought back into them the articles of the house of God, with the grain offering and the frankincense.** I want you to understand the context here. God has brought Israel back home and replanted them in the land that

they were promised. They had been in Babylon. But now they're home. But God must send Nehemiah to go straighten things out because they're not doing things right. And so, Nehemiah goes to straighten out the crooked past, one of which was the Shabbat. They were desecrating and defiling the Shabbat. Nehemiah sets it in order.

That's not all he sets in order—**Nehemiah 13:10-I also realize that the portions for the Levites had not been given them.** Where did that come from? The tithes and the offerings. This is how the Levites as ministers of the kingdom were supported. So, he goes on—**For each of the Levites and the singers who did the work they had gone back to his field.** (Emphasis added). Now we're getting somewhere. Now we see that when people rob God and don't give the tithes, they don't give God his due, it directly impacts God's kingdom and those he has appointed to serve him on behalf of the whole of the church. And when that doesn't happen, the devil knows what happens. These people go home. I'm going to tell you, and you can read it in scripture, when the shepherds go home, it's over. This is what the devil is after. The devil wants the shepherds to go home.

Do you understand this trickle effect? When you commit one sin, don't think it affects only one person or in one way. This is a cancer. One sin will metastasize and affect all sorts of people and all sorts of situations. Of course, the devil doesn't want you to see any of that, but the Lord does.

Moving to the next verse—**Nehemiah 13:11- So I contended with the rulers, and said, "Why is the house of God forsaken?" And I gather them together and set them in their place.** (Emphasis added).

Do you understand why God doesn't need your money. But why the tithes to him? To honor him. It is something solely that is established to build his kingdom. You can see why the devil would want to corrupt pastors and prevent that so when the tithes come in the pastors, rather than growing the ministry, rather than sowing into the ministry, rather than starting other ministries rather than funding missions, oh no, they need to drive Bentleys because that almost makes sense.

**Genesis 14:20- And blessed be God most high, Who has delivered your enemies into your hand. And he gave him a tithe of all.** (Emphasis added). Here's the context: Melchizedek the Cohen Gadol, the high priest of God Most High, who is serving in Yerushalayim (Jerusalem), met Abraham after Abraham had a great victory and gained great spoil. What does Abraham do long before the Torah was ever given at Mount Sinai? The great patriarch is tithing; he literally pays his tithes.

And I'm showing you this so that you know the patriarchs are this incredible template for us to emulate. They had a relationship with God. They knew him, and it is an amazing thing. They did not mess around; they were not in the business of robbing God.

Moving on to Jacob another patriarch. **Genesis 28:20-Then Jacob made a vow saying, "If God will be with me, and keep me in this way that I'm going, and give me bread to eat and clothing to on.** (Emphasis added). Notice that he is not asking for a Bentley or out saying he really needs 65 million so he can fly around in this awesome jet. He's not asking for eight million dollars to buy a big lavish home. The heart of Jacob is, give me exactly what I need. It sounds familiar to me when Yeshua says, "Give me this day my daily bread." He does not have a covetous heart; he's not looking to be rich. He is looking to the Lord to give him what he needs.

Continuing—**21- So that I can come back to my father's house in peace then the Lord shall be my God.** I like the targum version even better. It says, The Word of the Lord shall be my God. Yeshua will be my

God. **Genesis 28:22- And this Stone which I have set up as a pillar shall be God's house.** Talking about Beit El or Bethel. **And of all that you give me I will surely give a tenth to you.** (Emphasis added). Jacob knew, "I am not going to rob God."

You know there's a proverb Proverbs 3:9 kab-bêḏ 'eṭ-Yah-weh mē-hō-w-ne-kā; ū-mê-rê-šîṭ, kāl tə-bū-'ā-ṭe-kā. And what it says is honor the Lord with your wealth (mē-hō-w-ne-kā;) and with all (kāl-) the first fruits (ū-mê-rê-šîṭ) of all your increase, of all your (tə-bū-'ā-ṭe-kā) increase. This is what we are called to do. This is how God has established it. This is how he has chosen to be honored. He doesn't need your money. He does need to be worshiped, he does need to be feared, nor does he need to be obeyed. It's not simply about money. It's about worship, and the devil wants to take it. And the devil wants the ministries to be defended so that shepherds don't go out.

Let me show you 1 Corinthians 6:9 and show you how serious this is. **1 Corinthians 6:9-Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived.** (Emphasis added). Every time Paul says these words, stop where you're at and recognize what he is about to tell you. There is great deception. There's deception involved in the following. There's deception in fornicators, idolaters, adulterers, homosexuals, sodomites, and all those behaviors and those acts. There's great deception and great persuasion that hits men, but it's not just them. He goes on and says—**Nor thieves will enter or will inherit the kingdom of God.** (Emphasis added). That means whether you're stealing from God or whether you're stealing from your fellow neighbor or your employer or whoever it covers the full gamut, thieves will not inherit the kingdom of God.

Let that sink in. It'll make you think twice about when you go to your next hotel, and you really like that comfortable pillow. I know I've looked at and really wish I had this pillow. But it never came home with me. Let me be clear; I could show you all these statistics that are astounding. In some of these articles, they estimate 70% of people are taking, stealing, something. Oh God! Help us that is not the behavior of the righteous. The behavior of the righteous is to defend the law and to walk in God's law. When no one is looking, that's when you know you're walking with Yeshua. It's when no one's looking at you. It's not when your pastor is looking over your shoulder, and you're being well behaved. It is when no one sees you, and that's your heart. Your heart is to serve him because you fear Him; you love His Word. You know it's true, and you know if you don't follow it there will be hell to pay.

Now, listen to the Proverbist. This is a Gour, (**Gour תפילה means prayer in Hebrew**). This is a prayer. As we go through this, does this reflect your prayer life? Is this how you pray? This is what we read. **Proverbs 30:8- Remove falsehood and lies from me; give me neither poverty nor riches-- feed me with the food allotted.** Does that sound familiar? That's exactly what the patriarch Jacob asked for. That was his prayer. Only give me what I need, my food, clothing, and just the bare essentials. A Gour prays the same prayer. How many of you are praying, "Lord, don't blast me with riches?" Is that part of your prayer? Or something like, "No, Lord, don't bless me with riches. I don't want riches." I'm going to estimate that not a whole lot of you are praying for that. Not a whole lot of you are praying this prayer as a whole (Referring to Proverbs 30:8). This is what we need to pray for. We need to pray what Yeshua taught us to pray in the Our Father prayer. It is to give us this day our daily bread. That is the extent. It is the total extent of our desire because what we want is the bread from heaven.

Well, all we desire is him. When you get to that moment, I'm telling you you're walking in your first love. I'm going to tell you that's where the joy is. If the enemy has come and stolen your joy, you are off because joy doesn't come with materialistic things. There's a reason why these rock stars and Hollywood movie stars are committing suicide. It's proven that none of those things has brought joy. There's only

one who brings joy. And when we realize what the true riches of the kingdom are, you don't have that heart to thieve, and you don't have that heart to steal because it's absurd.

The Gour goes on in **Proverbs 30:9- He says lest I be full and deny You**. So, don't bless me so abundantly lest I forget who you are. **And say, "Who is the Lord?" Or lest I be poor and steal, and profane the name of my God.** (Emphasis added). Two things I want to mention here are that when you read in the Torah about those men who go out and thieve and steal, the Torah mandates that it's going to be repaid. And in Exodus 22, it doesn't just say that you will repay. It says that if you stole an ox, you're going to pay five to one. Five oxen were a lot of wealth back in the day. If you stole a sheep, you're going to repay four sheep. So, if you sold it or slaughtered it, you're going to pay through the nose. If it was caught in your hand, and they say you stole it, or you are walking away from the owner's land, you're taking his sheep, you're to repay double.

And here's the thing, this is what the Torah says, "If the thief cannot repay, he's to be sold as a slave." You're to go into total bondage, total oppression. That's exactly where the devil wants you; you're to be sold as a slave. These are all the things, truths of the law, the devil wants to shield you from. He will tell you, "No, nothing to see here." If you take whatever it is that you're looking at that you feel you need, he's going to blind you to the consequences, he's going to blind you to reality just as he did to Eve.

And the thing that I really want you to walk away regarding what he says right at the end is, "To steal is to profane the name of God." Get some perspective on that. It's not worth it primarily because you're blaspheming His holy name. And you are blasphemy in His holy name because you're bearing the image of the devil. You're doing the work of the devil. You can call out and say, "I follow Jesus," but if you're doing the work of the devil, you are crying out for Jesus Barabbas, you're not calling out for Yeshua HaMashiach.

I want to take you to the Gospel of Luke. John the Baptist comes on the scene, and his ministry is so critical and so important. I'm going to tell you this, never at any time is it more relevant than it is today because I believe we are in the days of Elijah. I believe we are in a time where the very message that John the Baptist went out and preached, "Repent for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand," was a warning for the people that Yeshua was coming soon. The message today needs to be Jesus is coming; you better get ready. You make the crooked path straight; you prepare the way of the Lord. Let the hearts of the fathers return to the children and of the children to the fathers. Get ready; this is his message in the most mind-blowing way. This is how the gospels record what he preached.

Now check this out, this is what he preached. **Luke 3:9- "And even now the axes laid to the root of the trees. Therefore every tree which does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown to the fire."** These trees represent people. He's warning them that if you don't get it right and don't start bearing good fruit, meaning I walk in the Commandments of God, and stop sinning, you're as good as dead. You are cut down. Go back to Deuteronomy 20 this is what is talked about in the context of war. God tells Israel that when you go in a context of war, you can go cut down any tree you want as much as you need, but not the ones that bear fruit.

It's a very spiritual context. It's not just a literal context; it's an application, but it's a very spiritual application revealing exactly what John is revealing here (Referring to Luke 3:9). When you bear fruit, you won't be cut down.

And so, the people are going to respond. **Luke 3:10- So the people asked him, saying, “What shall we do then?”** (Emphasis added). He terrified the people. John the Baptist's message was coming out in that hell is coming, and judgment is coming. He is going to destroy the sinners from the earth. This terrified his audience so much so that they're responding to John asking him what they should do. Now John answers them—**Luke 3:11-He answered and said to them, He who has two tunics, let him give to him who has none; and he who has food, let him do likewise.”** What is the opposite of stealing? It is giving.

You're going to see this as we continue. This is about stealing, and this is about giving. **Luke 3:12- Then tax collectors also came to be baptized, and he said to him, “Teacher, what shall we do? 13- And he said to them.** (Emphasis added). Look at this. **“Collect no more than what is appointed for you.”** (Emphasis added). The tax collectors were loathed and hated. And not just because they went out doing the government's bidding, Rome's bidding of taxing the populace. But because tax collectors were also known for getting a little something extra for themselves. In other words, stealing to make money. John tells them literally; he brings the eighth commandment to the table and says, knock it off. Stop stealing.

**Luke 3:14- Likewise the soldiers asked him, saying, “And what shall we do?” So he said to them, “Do not intimidate anyone or accuse falsely.** (Emphasis added). And look at this. **Be content with your wages.** (Emphasis added). Here's another situation where soldiers have the authority and power to shake people down to make a little extra something by abuse their authority. That's called stealing. John warns them literally using the eighth commandment. Twice he has come to the table using this commandment and tells them to know it off. And what does he say? What is the antidote to stealing? (Referring to Luke 3:14). Be content with your wages. Do you want to come into line with the Lord and with his heart? Do you want to be drenched in the spirit of God? Learn how to be content. That's the antidote.

When I was growing up, I knew a guy who clinically you would call a kleptomaniac. He stole constantly. Everything that he saw, he believed he needed it. Even if he didn't need it. But everywhere he went, he was stealing; nobody trusted this guy. That was all he knew because he knew nothing about contentment; it eluded him entirely. It was a sad thing. But this is the antidote.

Paul says this. **I Timothy 6:6-7- Now godliness with contentment.** (Emphasis added). It's not a little gain. **It is great gain.** (Emphasis added). **7- For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out.** Paul understands this reality quite well. He understands what John the Baptist was teaching. They're teaching the same thing.

Moving on to **I Timothy 6-8- And having food and clothing with these we shall be content.** What did Jacob pray? Give me my food and put clothing on me. That's all the patriarch asked for and nothing more. And that is the very thing that comes back, it resurfaces. In the New Testament and the teachings of Paul, with food and clothing we are to be content. If we are not content beyond these two things, we have a relationship problem with the Lord, and I'm going to tell you out of that will come things like stealing in all different forms, and there's so many different contexts that we could talk about that I didn't even get into today.

**I Timothy 3:9- But those who desire to be rich fall into temptation and a snare.** These are people that will be taken into stealing. **And into many foolish and harmful lusts which drown men in destruction and perdition.**

So, let's get to the conclusion here. Paul wraps this up beautifully, and he says this in **Ephesians 4:28- Let him who stole steal no longer.** I want to stop here because this is an important passage. It says if you're

one of those that have been stealing, and you're taking something from your employer, and you're thinking it doesn't matter because my employer is never going to miss it, he doesn't need it anyways, listen to me, that's got to stop! The beauty is what Paul is saying here is there is hope and there is forgiveness if you listen to the words of the Lord when he said, "Return to me, and I will return to you."

So, Paul is saying there is hope for the ones who used to steal. Listen to the message in **Ephesians 4:28- Steal no longer. but rather let him labor, working with his own hands what is good.** So that what? **That he may have something to give him who has need.** (Emphasis added).

Interesting polar opposites. I was working for the devil, the very thief; I was doing his work, and I was thieving. Now you slide to the other side, and you return to the Lord. And what does Yeshua do? What is Yeshua known for? Putting the interest of others before his own. Total opposite mentality.

**Psalm 37:21- The wicked borrows and does not repay, but the righteous shows mercy and gives.** (Emphasis added). The wicked will steal; they'll take no concept to repay. But the merciful, the righteous, they show loving kindness; they show forgiveness. They don't harbor bitterness in their heart, and they give. This is how we should be known in this generation that is totally overwhelmed by this whole concept of thieving. It is really disturbing.

We're going to close here.