

THE SERPENT | NUMBERS 21:4-9

March 26, 2023 - Lead Me to the Cross

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SERMON QUESTIONS

OPENER:

If you could put some sin on a pole today, which you need to be freed from slavery to, what would it be?

WHAT DOES THE PASSAGE SAY ABOUT MY SINFUL NATURE?

1. Read Exodus 21:4-5. The Israelites grew impatient and grumbled against God and against Moses. Can you identify with their frustrations? Recall an incident in your life where you allowed your emotions to take over and spin out of control. What impact did this have on your thoughts, attitude, and on others?
2. Read 2 Kings 18:3-4. The sin that Israel kept falling back into was idolatry. Romans 1 says that people like to worship created things, rather than the Creator. In what ways have you put creation (someone or something) in the place of God? Why do we need to be reminded of this danger?
3. What role does remembrance of God's goodness and faithfulness play in our posture toward God and others? How do you attempt to remember God's goodness?

RECALL: Faithlessness in God results in sin with consequences, which can be painful.

WHAT DOES THE PASSAGE SAY ABOUT GOD?

1. Read Numbers 21:6 – 8. How does God respond to Israel's sin? Why do you think He responded this way? How does Israel respond?
2. How does God respond to Israel's confession? What does this reveal about his character? Why would He do this rather than just heal them on the spot or kill the snakes? What might God be looking for from the bitten people?
3. What do you learn about God from how He used the symbol of Egypt's ruler - the serpent - to remind Israel of the consequences of their desire to return to Egypt?

NOTE: God is quick to hear, clever in developing a resolution, eager to heal and forgive.

HOW DOES THE PASSAGE POINT TO JESUS?

1. Read John 3:14-15. How does Jesus put Himself into our story from Numbers? What does it mean for Jesus to be 'lifted up'? What is the result of 'looking at' Jesus?
2. Read 2 Corinthians 5:21 and Galatians 3:13. If anyone or anything that is put up on a pole (or cross) is cursed because of sin, why would God send Christ there? Why would Christ allow himself to be put there?

NOTE: My sin was nailed to the cross with Christ IF I choose to repent and turn from it.

HOW DOES GOD WANT ME TO RESPOND?

1. Have you recognized the seriousness of your sin and the urgency to look to Christ on the cross? If you have not yet confessed that you are a sinner and looked to Christ on the cross, you can do that today. Share with your group and/or trusted friend, and seek the Holy Spirit's help to grow.
2. Ask the Holy Spirit to reveal any sin that you need to repent of. Confess and ask God for the grace and power to resist temptation. Rest in the assurance that He forgives you and empowers you to overcome. Share with your group and/or a trusted friend so that they can pray for and with you.

NOTE: ALL of us are guilty of sin. Refusal to acknowledge sin and repent denies the power of Christ to transform our life from poisoned in slavery and death to a life of freedom and victory.