

We Have to Look at the Serpent Before Our Nation Can Heal

Why would God have the Israelites look at a bronze snake lifted up on a pole in order to be healed?

Has anyone other than me ever struggled with that story in Numbers 21? It is where the Israelites complained to God and Moses (again) about the food they were eating. As a result, venomous snakes suddenly appeared in their midst and began to strike. People were dying. In order to be healed, those that had been bitten had to look upon a bronze snake lifted up on a pole to live.

That story has always messed with me. But as I was reading the other morning, the Holy Spirit brought it back to my remembrance. I believe it pertains to the day in which we live.

As a quick refresher:

Then they journeyed from Mount Hor by the Way of the Red Sea, to go around the land of Edom; and the soul of the people became very discouraged on the way. And the people spoke against God and against Moses: "Why have you brought us up out of Egypt to die in the wilderness? For there is no food and no water, and our soul loathes this worthless bread." So the Lord sent fiery serpents among the people, and they bit the people; and many of the people of Israel died.

Therefore the people came to Moses, and said, "We have sinned, for we have spoken against the Lord and against you; pray to the Lord that He take away the serpents from us." So Moses prayed for the people.

Then the Lord said to Moses, "Make a fiery serpent, and set it on a pole; and it shall be that everyone who is bitten, when he looks at it, shall live" (Num. 21:4-8).

So why would God require those that were bitten to look at the bronze snake rather than something more reflective of Him?

It was that He required them to look at their sin.

The significance that this is Holy Week shouldn't be lost on us. This is a time in which we are to look at the cross and the price Jesus paid as He took our sin upon Him. We are also called to reflect on and repent of any sin in our lives. And while biblically, the serpent typically represents Satan, John 3:14 tells us that lifting the serpent up on a pole was a prophetic act of Jesus' crucifixion.

Just as Moses lifted up the snake in the wilderness, even so the Son of Man must be lifted up.

The serpent represented the sin, grief and sorrow Jesus would bear for us. And just as we have to look to the cross and look at the sin Jesus bore for us, we must now look at the sin that has been tolerated in our land.

I remember when my grandmother was in her upper years. She never left her home. She didn't like to watch the news because it was negative. I was her caregiver. I remember mentioning to her one time a news event that revealed intense corruption. "That's enough!" she interrupted me. "I don't want to hear it!" My normally soft-spoken grandmother was firm in her resolve. It was easier to turn her head than to look at what was taking place in the world around her.

I know we have all heard family, friends or even perhaps we ourselves say, "I just want to get back to my normal life. I don't want to have to deal with this anymore."

Yeah, we all do. But let me encourage you, we can't turn our

heads from the evil that is coming to light. And when sin abounds, God's hand is lifted and opens the door to enemy attack.

We can no longer refuse to look at and acknowledge the sin we have tolerated in our midst.

The more I research, the more my eyes are opened to the horrible and insidious things that have been occurring in our nation and the world—all right under our noses. I am tempted to look away. It would be easier to ignore it and let my life and thoughts go back to "normal," but I can't. And neither should you.

We have all been bitten and have to be willing to look at the bronze snake on the pole if we want to be healed. We have to be willing to look at the sin—and repent individually and as a nation.

We are all in various places of awareness to what has transpired not only in America but around the world. The horrors are undeniable:

—Pedophilia rings of high-ranking government officials and Hollywood elites have operated for years.

—Two million children are sex-trafficked each year, with over 300,000 here in the U.S.

—Over 60 million babies have been aborted since Roe v Wade legalized the murder of infants in the womb in 1973.

—Vaccines are made up of aborted fetal tissues which runs through the veins of almost every American citizen born from 1963 and after.

—American government officials bullied leaders of other nations to force them to promote and legalize LGBTQ laws and abortion or else financial assistance would be withheld.

–Justices across our land became judicial activists, overturning the rights of the people and called evil good and good evil.

–America’s educational system was hijacked to brainwash and manipulate our children to reject God, their parents and their God-given identities.

–The church has been silenced and compromised under the false narrative of “separation of church and state” and pastors bullied to trade their voices to speak into relevant issues of society in order to retain non-profit status.

And I could go on.

It’s easier to turn away and defend ourselves by saying, “But I didn’t know and I don’t know what to do. I’m simply one person,” but we can no longer say that. If we want to be healed, we *must* first look at the bronze serpent that has been lifted up. It is the sin, idolatry, pride, arrogance, fear and our own selfish desire to live a “normal” life while evil runs rampant around us.

Lord, forgive us that we allowed these evils to happen on our watch. How could we have not known? We were completely asleep at the wheel as we chose our “normal” lives and to turn our heads away.

Friends, we can do so no longer. The venomous snakes have been unleashed, and the only way for our land to heal is to stare the evil in the face, acknowledge it and humble ourselves before the Lord in repentance. We can no longer look away. For if we do, healing will not come. Healing requires an action.

There is nothing comfortable about this time in history. But we must recognize that when God brings revelation in an area of our lives that needs correction, it is because He is ready to deal with it and invites us to allow Him to do the surgery so we can be healed. Surgery is never fun. It is painful. But

it is necessary. Necessary for us to live. Necessary for revival.

As we reflect on His death, burial and resurrection, may we take this time to reflect on the sin that we have tolerated and determine that it can remain no longer. In Revelation, the Lord revealed the areas of sin that caused the church to have its lampstand removed:

–“You have forsaken the love you had at first” (Rev 2:4b, NIV).

–“Do not be afraid of what you are about to suffer” (Rev 2:10a).

–There are some among you who hold to the teaching of Balaam, who taught Balak to entice the Israelites to sin (Rev 2:14). (This was about exchanging obedience to God for prominence and financial gain. In doing so, Balaam gave insight to a government leader how to entice God’s people into greater sin.)

–They tolerated Jezebel, “she misleads my servants into sexual immorality and the eating of food sacrificed to idols. I will make those who commit adultery with her suffer intensely, unless they repent of her ways. I will strike her children dead” (Rev. 2:20b-23a).

–“I know your deeds; you have a reputation of being alive, but you are dead. Wake up!” (Rev. 3:1b-21).

–“See, I have placed before you an open door that no one can shut. I know that you have little strength, yet you have kept my word and have not denied my name” (Rev. 3:8).

–“I know your deeds, that you are neither cold nor hot. I wish you were either one or the other! So, because you are lukewarm—neither hot nor cold—I am about to spit you out of my mouth” (Rev. 3:15-16).

This is a sobering hour. It is a wake-up call to the church whether we will choose to be light in a dark world or whether we will look like the world. We can no longer refuse to ignore the sin. We must look at it and address it.

We are to be holy as He is holy (1 Pet 1:16). But be encouraged, for He has also given us His promise:

“Since you have kept my command to endure patiently, I will also keep you from the hour of trial that is going to come on the whole world to test the inhabitants of the earth. I am coming soon. Hold on to what you have, so that no one will take your crown” (Rev. 3:10-11).

Lord, we ask You to forgive us, and we humble ourselves before You. We can no longer say we didn't know. The evidence is everywhere of lifestyles, abuse and sin that are a stench to You. Lord, we ask You to forgive us and cleanse us and cleanse our land. Sweep over our nation with Your holy fire and purify our hearts. Lord, we pray for revival. {eo}

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