

# 21

## Chapter

Numbers 21:4–9

# The Bronze Serpent on the Pole

### Today's Lesson:



1. To understand that complaint and resentment in the church lead to judgment.
2. To understand that salvation is not a matter of what we do, but rather a matter of who we rely on.

Open Your Heart



The picture above is of a sculpture on Mount Nebo in Jordan.

What do you think is the message behind this piece? Give the sculpture a title and write down any thoughts that come to mind.



## Understanding Today's Lesson

The day when the Israelites could finally enter the land of Canaan after dwelling in the wilderness had finally arrived. Moses asked the king of Edom if the Israelites could pass through Edom to Canaan, but the king of Edom came out with many people and blocked Israel from passing through Edom. This forced the Israelites to bypass the land of Edom and return to the far and barren roads to the south. When the Israelites had to take the rough and difficult road, they were upset and resented God and 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" (Numbers 21:5). Because of their resentment and complaint, God sent fiery serpents that killed many Israelites. Because of this event, the Israelites confessed their sins and asked Moses to pray to God. God told Moses to make a fiery serpent and hang it on a pole so that whoever was bitten by the serpents could see it and live. Moses made a bronze serpent and hung it on a pole, and everyone who was bitten by the serpents and looked to the pole lived.

The incident of the bronze serpent signifies the cross of Jesus. Just as those who were bitten by the fiery serpents could live only by looking at the bronze serpent, souls that are stung and killed by the poison of sin can only be saved by looking at the cross of Christ. Many people think, "What must I do to go to heaven?" However, the important fact in receiving salvation is not about what we should do, but rather who we look at.

Notes:



## Memorizing Bible Verses

And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life.

(John 3:14~15)



## Meditate

# On These Verses

1. After you have meditated on the following verses, give a title of the verse or write a short summary of the verse. Also, write down things you have felt about the verse, or other verses that it has reminded you of.

(1 Corinthians 10:9–12)

(John 1:29–34)

(1 Corinthians 1:18–21)



## Changing

# Directions

1. Suppose that you are bitten by a fiery serpent and are dying in pain. How would you react if someone told you, "You can live if you look at the bronze serpent on the pole"? Write down your thoughts.

2. In the Bible, God sometimes gives commands that are difficult to understand according to our own common sense or reasoning. With that in mind, let's write down two more instances where this is the case.

① Telling General Naaman that he will be healed of leprosy if he immerses himself in the Jordan River seven times.

② The city of Jericho will collapse if you walk around it once for six days, seven on the seventh day, and shouting on the last lap.

③

④

3. Read Luke 5:1–6. Jesus told Peter to go into deep water and lower his net to fish, but this was a request that could not be understood by Peter's own common sense and experience. What was the reason behind Peter's obedience? What was the result?

4. Why do you think God gives commands that are difficult to understand rationally? Write down your reasoning.



Applying

## The Word to My Life

For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also.  
(James 2:26)

1. Please write down how you will apply what you learned today throughout this week.

1.)

2.)

3.)

2. Look back and reflect on how successful you were at applying last week's lesson.



Praying

## To Live According to the Word

Whenever complaints and resentment bloom in my heart, I should pray that I can count the graces that the Lord has given me so far and have a heart of thanksgiving in all things.



# Our Story

## The Life—Changing Bible



We gain much knowledge and information through quality books.

Sometimes we come across books that touch our hearts and change our thoughts.

Reading good books is especially important in life.

In this manner, books play the role of providing us with information.

## Information



So how does the Bible benefit us?

We who have met God and Jesus Christ through the Bible have something in common: the transformation of our lives.

The Bible can transform a person's whole life.

## Transformation

**All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work. (2 Timothy 3:16–17)**

## Look to the Lord (The Story of Charles Spurgeon's Salvation)



January 6, 1850. It was the most important day in Charles Spurgeon's life. Spurgeon suffered from much inner wandering and anguish before becoming born again on this day. Later on, Spurgeon looked back on those days.

"When I was young, I had a very painful period of about five years, it was a dark period. If someone truly feels how terrifying the law of God is, I can fully understand him because I've had that same feeling. Anyone around me at that time would not

have found any sin in me, morally and ethically. However, when I looked upon myself, I was a sinner who was rebellious against God. As a result, I met Moses who led me to the law. I ran into the good law of God, that is, the Ten Commandments. As I dealt with the Ten Commandments and reflected them onto myself, I knew that I was certainly a sinner in the eyes of the Most Holy God."

"At that time, my heart was like the sun that had lost its light, and the sins I committed drove me into a pit of despair where only chaos, emptiness, and darkness existed. I prayed earnestly and searched the words of the Bible eagerly, but I didn't get any answers. As time passed, my heart became more frustrated. Now I thought that all I had left was to find peace of mind. I tried to convince myself that I was a child of God and that I had the privileges of the chosen people by coming up with various theories, but all my efforts were in vain, and the privilege could not be mine. My problem was that I definitely didn't understand the gospel."

The law alone cannot provide forgiveness of sins. Spurgeon was so frustrated that he went to all the churches in Colchester and wanted to find an answer, but couldn't find anything, and no preacher could help Spurgeon. Some preachers spoke of God's absolute sovereignty. At that time, he listened to the sermons cheerfully, but it never helped Spurgeon who was contemplating on how to receive salvation. At the end of sermons, his only thought was "Great sermon", but the problem in his heart was not resolved.

Another preacher always preached on the law, which only put a yoke of pain on the congregation that the preacher himself could not practice, and only emphasized the zeal of human action. Listening to such a sermon seemed to cultivate people's hearts (though it can't be known exactly), but the seeds didn't fall and there was no fruit. In addition, preachers said, "Believe in the Lord Jesus, then you and your household will be saved", and he heard this many times and read it in the Bible, but he still didn't know what it meant to believe in the Lord Jesus. It was January 6, 1850 that changed the entire life of Spurgeon who was so troubled. That day, Spurgeon was saved after hearing a layman's sermon at a church he stopped at by chance. Spurgeon writes like this to describe the situation:

"Even nowadays, I sometimes think of that time, and if it hadn't been for that huge blizzard that morning, I might still have been wandering in the dark. Fortunately, I was saved because of a snowstorm from God. That morning it snowed so much that the roads were blocked. I was forced to attend a small and insignificant church not far from my house. Fewer than twenty people were sitting in the chapel, and no pastor came out because of the blizzard. Before long, a shabby man, perhaps a tailor or a cobbler, climbed into the pulpit. The man's entire preaching was a memorization of the Bible, and this was because he had no manuscript prepared. The text was Isaiah 45:22 which says, "Look to Me, and be saved, all you ends of the earth!" but that person could not even read properly. However, that was not an issue."

The speaker began to say this:

"Dear friends, this is very simple. It says here to look to God. To look to, by definition, is by no means difficult or hard to do. Do we need to raise our legs or move our fingers to see something? Not so. All we have to do is look. This is true. We don't have to go to college or receive some kind of education to learn how to see. Anyone can look and see. In the same way, the Bible says to just look. 'Look to Me', is what the Bible says.

However folks...You only look to yourselves. Does looking upon yourself solve your problems? Not so. You must not look upon yourselves. The Bible tells us to look to Christ. So, look to Christ. Look to Him this very instant. Some people think that we have to wait for the Holy Spirit to work. There is no need for that. Look to Christ this instant! He says, 'Look to me'".

Then the man, who delivered words with strength, took a moment to breathe and slowly opened his mouth again.

"Look to me! I am hanging on the cross!

Look to me! I am spilling drops of blood!

Look to me! I am dead and buried!

Look to me! I am resurrected!

Look to me! I am ascended. I am sitting on the right hand of the Father.

Look to me! Look to me! – This is what Jesus Christ is saying."

Having said this, the layman looked at Spurgeon who was sitting right beneath the pulpit. Spurgeon, who was attending for the first time, was immediately noticed because only a few people had gathered. He turned to Spurgeon saying, "If you do not obey these words of the Bible, you will be pitiful in your life, and after death you will always be miserable and sad. But if you obey this scripture at this time, you can be saved!" He gathered his strength and spoke again.

"Young man, look to Jesus! Look now!"

Spurgeon was taken aback and shot up from his seat. And at that moment he looked to Jesus. This is how Spurgeon describes it:

"At that moment, the cloud that had filled my heart was lifted, and the light of salvation shone in my soul. I truly looked to Jesus. I wanted to stand up on the spot, overflowing with emotion, to praise the Savior's precious blood and the simple and clear gospel of Christ. When the heavy burden of sin, which had been carried for so long, rolled forever upon my shoulders, I was intoxicated with joy like the pilgrim in John Bunyan's *The Pilgrim's Progress*. It was only then that I could understand the words that Bunyan exclaimed about his being born again and that he wanted to cheer and shout like a child."

And later on, Spurgeon also said this about his salvation:

"The wine squeezed out of the barrel of repentance is indeed of great value. The gold mined in the mines of repentance is pure gold. The pearls found in the caves of deep pain are truly brilliant. Such a spiritual experience acquired by a man who was completely obsessed with a deep and grieving guilt is of great value indeed. Those who stand condemned before God and have a rope tied around their neck are those who will shed tears of joy when they are forgiven of their sins and washed clean with the blood of the Savior and will live for His glory. Even if it is a church that preaches the true gospel, and among the ten million armies of heaven who have won victory, no one will turn away from sin and be granted a new heart unless they have experienced suffering because of Jesus."





# Wednesday

Sermon

Date.

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Title:

Speaker:

Main Passage:



# Sunday

Sermon

Date.

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Title:

Speaker:

Main Passage: