

Discouragement and the Divine Remedy

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- [0 : 0 0] I'll read from the Old Testament, from the book of Numbers, in chapter 20, reading at verse 14 and into chapter 21.
- Numbers, chapter 20, reading at verse 14. And Moses sent messengers from Kadesh unto the king of Eden.
- Thus saith thy brother Israel, thou knowest all the travail that hath befallen us. Our fathers went down into Egypt, and we have dwelt in Egypt a long time.
- And the Egyptians vexed us and our fathers. When we cried unto the Lord, he heard our voice. Sent an angel, that brought us forth out of Egypt.
- And behold, we are in Kadesh, a city in the uttermost of thy border. Let us pass, I pray thee, through thy country.
- [1 : 0 3] We will not pass through the fields or through the vineyards. Neither will we drink of the water of the wells. We will go by the king's highway.
- We will not turn to the right hand nor to the left till we have passed thy borders. And Edom said unto him, thou shalt not pass by me, lest I come out against thee with the sword.
- And the children of Israel said unto him, we will go by the highway. And if I and my cattle drink of thy water, then I will pay for it. I will only withhold doing anything else.
- Go through on my feet. I will only, without doing anything else, go through on my feet. And he said, thou shalt not go through.
- And Edom came out against him with much people and with a strong hand. Thus Edom refused to give Israel passage through his border, wherefore Israel turned away from him.
- [2 : 0 8] And the children of Israel, even the whole congregation, journeyed from Kadesh and came into Mount Hor. And the Lord spake unto Moses and Aaron in Mount Hor, by the coast of the land of Edom, saying, Aaron shall be gathered unto his people.
- For he shall not enter into the land which I have given unto the children of Israel, because you rebelled against my word at the water of Meribah.
- Take Aaron and Eliezer his son. Bring them up unto Mount Hor. Strip Aaron of his garments and put them upon Eliezer his son.
- And Aaron shall be gathered unto his people and shall die there. And Moses did as the Lord commanded. And they went up into Mount Hor in the sight of all the congregation.
- And Moses stripped Aaron of his garments and put them upon Eliezer his son. And Aaron died there in the top of the mount.
- [3 : 1 7] And Moses and Eliezer came down from the mount. And when all the congregation saw that Aaron was dead, they mourned for Aaron thirty days, even all the house of Israel.
- And when King Arad the Canaanite, which dwelt in the south, heard tell that Israel came by the way of the spies, then he fought against Israel and took some of them prisoners.
- And Israel vowed a vow unto the Lord and said, If thou wilt indeed deliver this people into my hand, then I will utterly destroy their cities.

And the Lord hearkened to the voice of Israel and delivered up the Canaanites. And they utterly destroyed them and their cities.

And he called the name of the place Horma. And they journeyed from Mount Hor by the way of the Red Sea to compass the land of Edom. And the soul of the people was much discouraged because of the way.

[4 : 24] And the people spake against God and against Moses, Wherefore have ye brought us up out of Egypt to die in the wilderness? For there is no bread, neither is there any water.

And our soul loathes this light bread. And the Lord sent fiery serpents among the people, and they bit the people, and much people of Israel died.

Therefore the people came to Moses and said, We have sinned, for we have spoken against the Lord and against thee. Pray unto the Lord, that he take away the serpents from us.

And Moses prayed for the people. And the Lord said unto Moses, Make thee a fiery serpent, set it upon a pole, and it shall come to pass, that every one that is bitten, when he looketh upon it, shall live.

And Moses made a serpent of brass, put it upon a pole, and it came to pass, that if a serpent had bitten any man, when he beheld the serpent of brass, he lived.

[5 : 40] Amen, and may God bless to us, that reading, from his truth. Let us again sing to his praise, from Psalm 106.

Psalm 106, at verse 43. Psalm 106, verse 43.

He many times delivered them, but with their counsel, so they him provoked, that for their sin, they were brought very low.

Yet, their affliction he beheld, when he did hear their cry, and he for them his covenant, did call to memory.

After his mercy's multitude, he did repent, and made them to be pitied, of all those who did them, captive lead.

[6 : 45] Let us sing these verses, Psalm 106, at verse 43. How many times, delivered them. They made him not only, but with that counsel, they had opened, They have no hope, not for their sin, they wed the very low.

Yet their affliction be held, when he did hear that cry.

And give for them this covenant, it's called to make all you.

Of the earth's mercy's multitude, he did repent on me.

And give for them the Lord, who did not give for them.

[8 : 49] Let us now turn to the book of Numbers, chapter 21. And we may read again at verse 4. And they journeyed from Mount Hor by the way of the Red Sea to compass the land of Edom.

And the soul of the people was much discouraged because of the way. I am quite sure that most, if not all, have heard sermons on the fiery serpents which afflicted the people of Israel.

And let's be clear. Fiery serpents don't mean animals that somehow spout fire or breathe fire.

It simply means poisonous snakes. That's what the term means. And possibly more often than not, the sermons you heard had a broad evangelistic theme.

And some may have been preached from the reference to this episode in John's Gospel, where the Lord Jesus Christ himself makes reference to this event.

[10 : 21] But this evening I wish to look at this incident in its own setting. And for me, one of the striking things about this happening was that it took place among the church, as represented by the people of Israel.

And I say deliberately the church, the visible church in the world. Although I would not say that every Israelite was a member of the invisible church.

That would be to flagrantly fly in the face of the teaching of the Bible. You may remember what Paul wrote in his letter to the Romans.

For they are not all Israel, who are of Israel. Yet as a people, Israel represented the church of Christ in the world.

A people of whom God states, The Lord your God has chosen you to be a people for himself. A special treasure above all the peoples on the face of the earth.

[11 : 38] The Lord did not set his love on you, nor choose you, because you were more a number than any other people, for you were the least of all peoples.

But because the Lord loves you, and because he would keep the oath which he swore to your fathers, the Lord has brought you out with a mighty hand, and redeemed you from the house of bondage, from the hand of Pharaoh, king of Egypt.

Now, in that statement, there are very significant words used to describe this people. They were chosen.

They are a special treasure. They are loved by God. They are brought out by God. They are redeemed by God. And all of these terms and words are so applicable to the church of Christ in the world.

These are the very terms that you would use to describe the church of Christ in the world. Chosen, special, loved, brought out, and redeemed.

[12 : 51] That's what the people of Christ are. They were chosen from all eternity in Christ. They are treasured by God. They are loved by God.

They are brought out by God. They are redeemed by God. So, these terms are precious and deeply meaningful. And this incident that is recorded for us here in the book of Numbers is, first of all, spoken to Israel, the representative of the church of God in the world.

Here are the professing people of God. Now, when you read the book of Numbers, you, I think, without doing any injustice to the Bible, you could call the book of Numbers Moses' Pilgrim's Progress.

It contains a full account of the progress of pilgrims through the wilderness until they come to the promised land. And like John Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress, it's not just a history of any one person or nation.

It is the picture of the life of all God's people. Now, probably no, no one person among this gathering will pass through all the troubles experienced by the Israelites.

[14 : 18] So, as to become, as it were, in one person, an example of all the wilderness experience, that would be exceptional. But take the whole of us together as the church of Christ, and you will find that our lives are mirrored, pictured, and foreseen in the travels of God's chosen people from the land of Egypt to the promised land of Canaan.

And I wonder if any of us can see ourselves, even in the passage before us this evening, not only those who may be young in faith, but those who have been for many years following the Lord and are hoping to enjoy your portion in the better country sooner rather than later.

Because if Moses and Aaron, who were saints of God, if they sinned on the journey, and they did, and for their disobedience, they were not permitted to enter into the promised land along with the people of Israel.

There are surely few of us who can read the story, if there are any of us, without stating, I do remember my faults this day.

If they, such significant, such highly thought of, like Moses and Aaron, then who of us can say that we are without fault this day?

[16 : 11] The passage before us occurred almost at the end of Israel's wanderings. They had been for almost 40 years in the wilderness, and they had come within sight of the promised land.

They had only to cross through the country of Edom, and they would have been at once in the land which flowed with milk and honey. The land that had been promised to them, the land that they looked forward to occupy.

But the Edomites would not permit them the privilege of passing along the highway. And so, because Israel must not fight his brother Esau, the Edomites were the descendants of Esau, they were called on to go around the border, to come down to an arm of the Red Sea by a long and weary march, just when they seemed to be on the border of their covenanted inheritance.

Remember then this happened towards the end of their journey. Let none of us imagine or assume that we have so much experience, that we have accumulated such great knowledge, and therefore that we are immune from making errors, because we are so close to the promised land, we are not.

We are sinners as long as we are in this life. So, may the Holy Spirit help us while we seek to learn caution from this part of inspired history, for these things occurred in their lives, for the instruction of the Church in every generation.

[18 : 03] So, I'd like to highlight four thoughts this evening. First of all, discouragement in their life. Secondly, discord. Thirdly, distressing chastisement.

And finally, divine remedy. Discouragement leading to discord, leading to divine chastisement, leading to a divine remedy.

Discouragement. The soul of the people was much discouraged because of the way. That's what our text sets before us.

And I am sure you noted from our reading that their discouragement arose after a time of great encouragement.

The Canaanite king of Arad had fought against them and taken some captive, we are told. And so we read of Israel's approach to the Lord in prayer on their vow.

[19 : 06] Israel vowed a vow unto the Lord and said, If thou wilt indeed deliver this people into my hand, then I will utterly destroy their cities.

And the Lord hearkened to the voice of Israel, delivered up the Canaanites, and they utterly destroyed them and their cities. And he called the name of the place Harna.

Now here are the people who were unable to defend themselves properly, who lost some of their personnel because of their inability to defend themselves properly, and they cast themselves on the care of God.

Now, there's a very real lesson there. That's what the believer ought to do. In every situation in life, when you feel overwhelmed, when you feel you are struggling against the odds, where do you go with your burden?

You go to God. And so, through divine intervention, they had enjoyed victory over their enemy. They were, you might say, now on a roll.

[20 : 17] You could say to quote a phrase, so I had a cloud nine experience. Yet, almost immediately after that, we read, they became discouraged.

Their time of happiness and joy was followed by further testing. And I believe that is often the case in the lives of believers.

Times of victory, times of great joy, times of divine assistance and blessing are inevitably followed. by further testing.

And so we read, there is discouragement. Almost as if the victory, so recently enjoyed, had not occurred. And I'm going to suggest that it is at times when believers have a high point experience that you are frequently at your most vulnerable in life.

When you have a high point experience, then you are most vulnerable in life. Then you discover that you are not as sanctified as you had hoped or believed.

[21 : 35] Remember, it was after the crushing victory, top of Mount Carmel, and the slaughter of the prophets of Baal and the reversal of a period of three years of drought that we find a disconsolate prophet Elijah under a broom tree.

And you remember how he prayed. We are told he prayed that he might die. And then he states, it is enough, Lord. Take, take my life, for I am no better than my fathers.

He had just experienced a spiritual high, the ultimate mountaintop experience. He had witnessed the mighty acts of God and fire and rain and caramel.

Well, there are different kinds of mountaintop experience in the lives of believers. You don't have to go to the top of a mountain like Elijah did.

You can have mountaintop experiences in the world. Times of rich blessing. Times of the favor of the Lord. Times, perhaps even at communion time.

[22 : 46] A period of exalted emotion and so on. It's during these days, it's as if you're in a protective bubble. And then you go out to face the world.

You discover, if you have not already discovered, that you cannot live a godly life on sheer emotion. Add to that the feeling of emptiness that often follows ministering in the name of God.

When Elijah was on the mountaintop, the strength of the Lord surged, as it were, through every fiber of Elijah's being.

and now he felt drained and empty. Sometimes for a minister, when you give everything in preaching, you sometimes feel the following days that you are running on empty.

Assuredly, there are times when God's people become discouraged to their shame. And I say that deliberately to their shame.

[23 : 54] And we have to confess it. It is by faith that the people of God live, not by discouragement. Discouragement is the opposite of faith.

it doesn't help the Christian to live. It is generally the fruit of unbelief. And so, by discouragement, we cease to live a healthy and a vigorous life, and we begin to faint.

Yet, even those of God's children, who have had much experience of blessing on the journey, at times give way to discouragement.

And the reason may be found arising from so many different reasons. For the people of Israel, in this context, it arose, you could say, out of bitter disappointment.

They could see the promised land within a day's march or less. And so, for Edom to say, you shall not pass by me lest I come out against thee with a sword, how very disappointing that was.

[25 : 03] They tried negotiation. And it did nothing for them. And the children of Israel said unto Edom, we will go by the highway. And if I and my cattle drink of thy water, then I will pay for it.

I will only, without doing anything else, go through on my feet. And the response was just as inflexible as the first time, and access was denied them.

And he said, thou shall not go through. And Edom came out against him with much people, with a strong hand. Thus, Edom refused to give Israel passage through his border or his territory.

They were so tantalizingly near, and yet so far. So, it was additional sore trial, after all these years of wandering, to have become so close, and then to be forced to march back to the Red Sea.

How really heartbreaking for these people, for them to see the land of promise, and yet to be unable to place their feet on it. It was a bitter disappointment.

[26 : 18] And there may be similar trials in store for you as a believer. It may be that you entertained the notion that you have made amazing progress in the divine life.

And then something occurred which showed you your frailty, your fragility, and your weakness. And you were forced to weep in secret places and remonstrate with yourself.

Perhaps saying, after all I have suffered, and yet is my progress so minimal? John Newton, in verse put it like this, I ask the Lord that I might grow in faith and love and every grace.

Might more of his salvation know and seek more earnestly his face. I hoped that in some favored hour at once he'd answer my request and by his love's constraining power subdue my sins and give me rest.

Instead of this he made me feel the hidden evils of my heart and let the angry powers of hell assault my soul in every part.

[27 : 52] Yea more with his own hand he seemed intent to aggravate my woe. Crossed all the fair designs I skimmed cast out my feelings laid me low.

Lord why is this I trembling cried will thou pursue thy war to death tis in this way the Lord replied I answer prayer for grace and faith these inward trials I employ from self and pride to set thee free and break thy scheme of earthly joy that thou may seek thy all in me that thou may seek thy all in me so the word discouraged here has implied within it the element of impatience something you can see how they would be impatient they had done almost 40 years of wandering it's not always easy to be patient is it you know some people if

I can use an illustration don't even have the patience of a mousetrap You know how sensitive these old-fashioned spring traps were.

Perhaps your fingers were caught in one when you were trying to set it. Hypersensitive and lethal to the mouse if it was caught in it.

Well, some people are like that, virtually no patience. And the Lord uses trial in the lives of believers to produce patience.

[29 : 49] Remember what the Apostle James writes, My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into various trials, knowing that the testing of your faith produces patience.

But let patience have its perfect work, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking nothing. Indeed, we count them blessed who endure.

You have heard, he says, of the perseverance of Job, and seen the end intended by the Lord, that the Lord is very compassionate and merciful.

Write in the letter to the Hebrews, You have need of endurance or of patience, so after you have done the will of God, you may receive the promise.

So here there is discouragement in the lives of the people of God. And that leads to discord. And the people speak against God and against Moses.

[30 : 51] Wherefore have you brought us up out of Egypt to die in the wilderness? For there is no bread, neither is there any water, and our soul loathes this light bread. No food, no water is the complaint.

Here are a people who could speak experimentally of a mighty deliverance. A people who were specially favored.

A people who had been guided and led by the Lord in a pillar of cloud by day, and a pillar of fire by night. And yet, and yet, you find this element of discord as they complain.

I have to say, as they complained yet again. You remember how the psalmist sums it up? How often did they him provoke within the wilderness, but in the desert did him grieve with their rebelliousness.

When God's people are in real trouble, the Lord is long-suffering and tender towards his afflicted. When the people complained of thirst, you remember what happened?

[32 : 00] The Lord sweetened the bitter waters of manna for them. When they were hungry, he gave them bread from heaven. He gave them manna. But then, when they had nothing to justify their complaint, they merely grumbled because they were discouraged.

And he dealt with them very severely, and sent these poisonous, venomous snakes among them, which bit many of them, so that many of their number died.

And you see, there are five things here that Israel does. First, they become impatient.

Now that's, and they're discouraged. That's understandable. You know, if they could just go through the land of Canaan, the land of Eden, rather.

Canaan's not that far away. I have already referred to this. It's understandable that they're impatient. But it is not excusable.

[33 : 08] It's not excusable. It's understandable they are impatient, but not excusable. Why? Because this is at least in part the result of their own sin.

You remember how the spies had been sent out to conduct research in the land of promise. And you remember the majority of the spies came back with a negative report.

They were fearful and apprehensive. They saw people like giants. And they lost all their courage in the face of what they saw.

And so they produced a negative report. Two of the spies were faithful, Caleb and Joshua. And they produced a positive report. But the children of Israel followed the majority of the spies.

The report that was produced by them. And the fallout comes after their rejection of God's command to them to go into the land. It's of their own making.

[34 : 27] So that it's, so although it's understandable that they're impatient, it's inexcusable. It's the first thing. And the second thing is this. Notice how they disrespectfully and derverently speak against God and Moses.

Who do they think they are? Moses is God's personally appointed mediator. And God, well, he's God.

He's the God who brought them out of Egypt. He's the God who parted the Red Sea. And they speak against him and they speak against Moses. Of course, we've never done such a thing.

Eh? You've never done such a thing? Are you sure? Are you sure?

You've never questioned God? You've never thrown the question back in his face? Have you ever asked him, what are you exactly doing, Lord?

[35 : 38] Do you know what you're doing in my life? You've never questioned the way God has mediated his word to you? Oh, not only that.

But have we not frequently been guilty of complaining of minor issues? Minor issues. Perhaps these minor issues are seen more clearly today in comparison to the ugly and distressing scenes that we are currently seeing in the country of Ukraine.

And you see your own issues as minor in comparison. when you enjoy the comfort of home and the benefits of home.

Not having to vacate your home, not having your home destroyed by military shelling and so on. And perhaps that helps you to see that your complaining is of minor issues rather than of major issues.

The people disrespectfully and irreverently speak against God and Moses. And then thirdly, specifically, they have the gall to call into question God's plan of redemption.

[37 : 05] Basically, they are accusing God of having a poor plan. Now, that takes some brass neck, doesn't it? They speak against God and against Moses, Wherefore have you brought us out of Egypt to die in the wilderness?

There is no bread, neither is there any water. In other words, they're saying to God, You have a bad plan. It's not a good plan. You should have left us in Egypt. That's basically what they're stating.

And then fourthly, they doubt God's ability to provide for them in the wilderness. There's no food and water here. What has he been giving them all these years?

Through the rock, you remember, he provided water. He gave them bread from heaven. He's provided them food to eat. He brought them quails so that they had meat to eat. So you see, what they are complaining of is not really true.

And fifthly, they ungratefully belittle God's provision for them in the wilderness. Our soul loathes this worthless bread.

[38 : 23] bread. And you remember that some of this food would be collected before the children of Israel would go into the land of promise and they would place it in the ark of the covenant, the bread of heaven.

And yet, they speak of it as worthless food. They ungratefully run down God's provision for them in the wilderness. So what do they do?

They don't acknowledge his power. They don't appreciate his generosity. They don't recognize his mercy. They don't accept his sovereignty. And they don't trust his word. All gold into one.

That's how sinful their sin is and their disobedience. And you know, every time we sin, we do the exact same thing.

Every time we decide we're going to do it our way and not God's way, we are doing the exact same thing as Israel.

[39 : 25] So, you see, it's easy to point the finger at the people of Israel until we realize that we are doing it our way. We're doing the very same thing. That's something of the gravity of sin.

Every time that we refuse to obey obey the word of God, we're rejecting the counsel of God and we're saying my way is better than God's way.

Exact same thing as Israel is doing here in the wilderness. That's something of the gravity of their sin. They dishonor God and so there is discord.

They are complaining of God. What did I do to deserve this? Have you ever said that to him? Yeah? What didn't you do to deserve it?

Oh, you see, it comes out in so many ways and that leads to distressing chastisement. So there is discouragement, discord and distressing chastisement.

[40 : 47] The Lord sent fiery serpents among the people and they bit the people and much people of Israel died. You may recall the writer of the letter to the Hebrews writes, My son, do not despise the chastening of the Lord nor be discouraged when you are rebuked by him.

Why? Why does he say that? Well, this is the reason. For whom the Lord loves he chastens and scourges every son whom he receives.

No chastening seems to be joyful for the present but painful. Now, just think of that for a moment.

Do not despise the chastening of the Lord nor be discouraged when you are rebuked by him. For whom the Lord loves, he chastened. If you weren't loved by the Lord, you wouldn't be rebuked and you wouldn't be chastened.

You see, perhaps we tend to think of chastening as something negative but chastening in the Bible means both instruction and correction.

[42 : 05] All scripture is breathed out by God and profitable, says Paul writing to Timothy, and for training, amongst other things, for training in righteousness.

Often it does include, chastening does include some type of adversity or suffering. but the encouraging fact of the matter is that the Christian, the believer, is always under the discipline of God.

And you could say that there is not a moment when God does not discipline your life. The Christian life is a life of discipline and of instruction.

what do we call those whom Jesus called to be especially with him for three and a half years during his public ministry?

Do we not call them disciples? And the word disciple means a learner or a student. And it comes from the same word that we get discipline from in the Bible.

[43 : 17] They are forms of the same word. So those who are believers are disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ. You are a constant learner and the master is always teaching his students.

At times, yes, when necessary, correction is applied. That is part of it. But it is not the whole. God lovingly disciplines the believer by instructing them as well.

God's discipline is God's instruction of his people which happens all the time. punishment proceeds from our love to justice.

Not from love to the person who is punished. But you see, chastisement is very different. Chastisement is from love to the person chastised, although mixed with displeasure against this sin.

sin. The people of God had been saying in this context, things are bad. We can't cross Eden. We can't get access to the promised land.

[44 : 29] And it's as if God is saying to them, you want to see how bad things can get. You don't think that things can get worse.

They grumble at God because of their adversity and he sends trial. And you know, sometimes we only learn the lessons that we ought to learn in small trials by being faced with greater trials.

We only learn the lessons that we ought to learn in small trials by being faced with greater trials. So there is distressing chastisement, there is discord, there is discouragement, and finally there is a divine remedy.

And the Lord said unto Moses, and it's important that you note what is said here wasn't left to the imagination of Moses, wasn't left to the imagination or the understanding of the collective people.

It's the Lord who gives the instructions, make a fiery serpent. It had to be made in accord with divine instructions. Set it on a pole and it shall come to pass that everyone is bitten when he looks upon it shall leave.

[45 : 53] Now, at a human level, that sounds so ridiculous, doesn't it? How could you possibly be healed from just looking to a bronze serpent on a pole?

love? You see, God's solution to the situation has no human explanation for his effectiveness.

But you see, what the bronze snake on the pole is a picture of, it's a picture of God's corrective chastisement on Israel for their sin.

See, isn't it interesting that in the other Hebrew sacrifices, when the representative sacrifice was being prepared to be slain, in their place for their sin, what did the head of the family do?

He had to place, he had to touch the representative sacrifice. But here all they have to do is to look, just look. They are to look away from themselves and to this symbol, this sign that God had provided.

[47 : 14] Can you imagine a more dramatic way to emphasize that Israel has nothing to do, absolutely nothing to do with the sparing, forgiving, saving power that God is to display in the healing of these people from the bites of these poisonous snakes.

They are contributing absolutely nothing. All they have to do is look. You know, we like to think that we have a part in our salvation, that we have earned it, that we have done something to gain the favor of God.

You couldn't be further from the truth. It is provided all by him, in his grace.

All they have to do is look. And is that not in essence the act of saving faith?

Look into Christ, looking away from ourselves, from our good deeds and our bad deeds, and looking to Jesus alone. And surely that is one of the reasons why Jesus points and draws attention to this passage when he's trying to explain the new birth and faith to Nicodemus.

[48 : 50] You remember this is the passage that Jesus goes to when he's speaking to Nicodemus, before he said, for God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten son, that whoever believes in him should not perish, but have a little life.

Before he says that, Jesus says, Nicodemus, as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the son of man be lifted up, that whoever believes in him may have eternal life.

And then he says, for God so loved the world. In other words, Jesus is saying to Nicodemus, just as people had to look at that bronze snake on the pole, simply trusting on God's word of promise that you will look at the snake you'll be saved, so also sinners must look to Christ and him crucified.

But you know, there's a bit of a difference about what we see when we look to Christ and him crucified.

the bronze snake was a picture of God's vehicle of just judgment on Israel for their sin.

[50 : 07] But the cross of Christ is a picture of God's just judgment on sin. But there's a problem.

if it's just a picture of God's just judgment on sin, like the snake on the pole, who would be on the cross? Would it not be you and me?

But it's not. There's a substitute there. There's God's own son, and he's bearing the just judgment that you and I deserve.

because in the final Analyses, the cross is not only a picture of God's just judgment on sin, but of his lavish, extensive mercy in providing for sinners like you and me a substitute to whom all you have to do is look and live.

Look and live. the divine remedy. Look to the uplifted son of man.

[51 : 25] That's the real cure for discouragement and impatience and discord. Look to the uplifted son.

That's where salvation is to be found. Not in anything that you and I can do because we can do absolutely nothing.

We're asked to look and look implies trusting. Trusting in an uplifted Christ. Oh my friend, is that what you're doing?

Are you trusting in the Christ who bore the penalty for sin? In the Christ who is the true substitute for sinners, who deserved the just judgment of God, the Christ who experienced abandonment on the cross in order that sinners like you and me might experience the sweetness of eternal blessing throughout all the ages of eternity.

So we have discouragement, we have discord, we have distressing chastisement, and we have the divine remedy. Look, says God, and live.

[52 : 53] Let us pray. Eternal and ever blessed one, oh, we thank thee for the wisdom of the divine mind that provided such a suitable way of salvation for unworthy sinners, a method of salvation that could never, ever have been devised or thought of by frail men.

and we bless thy name this evening that look into Christ there is salvation for every sinner who is persuaded by thy truth through the illumination of thy Holy Spirit to look to him and to live.

May it be true of each one of us and the glory shall be thine. In Jesus' name we ask it. Amen. Amen.