

"The Bronze Snake"

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[0:00] Good morning, brothers and sisters. What a joy it is and a privilege for me to be here with you. For those of you who don't know me, my name is Tyler.

I'm one of the lay elders. And it is a true delight and privilege to be able to bring you God's Word this morning. Let's pray together, asking for the Lord's help before we begin.

Oh, Father in heaven, like Moses, Lord, would Christ be lifted up like the bronze serpent?

Help Christ to be exalted, the risen and reigning King of the universe. And Father, help me as an ambassador to bring this glad tidings, this message of reconciliation.

Would it go forth by the power of your Spirit? And like a magnet, would you draw all people to yourself by the power of the Spirit? Father, open eyes, open ears. Father, help me to declare the glories of your majestic name.

[1:05] I pray this in the mighty name of Jesus. Amen. Friends, let me ask you a question.

If you could have a conversation with Jesus, what would it be about? What would you talk to him about? Maybe if you're here and you're a scientist, you think, Jesus, you're the sovereign Lord, the creator of heaven and earth, things visible and invisible.

Jesus, how exactly did you create the universe? Start at the very beginning. Maybe for some of you, your life feels like a puzzle scattered on the floor, and you'd like his help to put the pieces together, to help you understand where the dark puzzle pieces of your life fit in the overall picture. Now, one fascinating conversation that we see with Jesus is with Nicodemus, the passage that George read for us earlier. Nicodemus wanted to have a conversation with Jesus about religion. Jesus, what's it all about? Help me put the pieces together. Nicodemus was an older man, a learned one, an influential one, a student, a scholar even in the scriptures.

[2:25] But there was a gap between his credentials and his comprehension. He possessed knowledge, yes, but he lacked something. And he was at a point of personal crisis.

He wanted to discuss ultimate things of reality. Jesus, what is religion really all about? And he came to Jesus by night. And the context tells you all you need to know.

He says in verse 2 of John chapter 3, He says, Jesus, we know you are a teacher come from God. And Jesus, with the skill of a trained physician, diagnoses Nicodemus immediately.

And he tells him of his greatest need. Nicodemus, unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God. Everything you've achieved is not enough.

You lack this one thing. You must be born anew. Now, I'm sure at this point, Nicodemus' head is spinning. He's confused. He asks the question, how can these things be?

[3:29] Jesus explains further. But still, he doesn't understand. He lacks comprehension. But then in verse 14, Jesus picks up an analogy to help explain.

One that Nicodemus no doubt was familiar with. Verse 14, Jesus says this, And 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. Now, Jesus was comparing his own death on the cross to this story. As Moses lifted up the serpents, the Son of Man must be lifted up.

Now, that's a risky story. It's pretty shocking. Jesus, why would you compare yourself to a snake? You sure you want to go there?

There are other places in the Old Testament. Why compare yourself to a serpent? Maybe this would be an analogy that would make Nicodemus even more confused. Friend, the snake, the serpent, on a pole was such good news that Jesus needed Nicodemus to understand this reality.

[4:36] What was this story, and why was it so important to understand, to truly grasp what spirituality, what religion, what Jesus was really all about? Well, let me invite you to open your Bible to Numbers chapter 21 as we look at this story together.

It's page 120 of the Pew Bible. And if you're not familiar with the Bible, the big numbers are the chapter numbers, and the smaller numbers are the verse numbers. And it will help you to follow along to have your Bible open as we look together.

And we're going to be looking at this text in three parts. Point number one will be the rebellion of God's people. Point number two, the remedy. And point number three, the road to glory.

So let's read the first nine verses together in chapter 21. God's Word says this.

When the Canaanite, the king of Arad, who lived in the Negev, heard that Israel was coming by the way of Atherim, he fought against Israel and took some of them captive.

[5 : 45] And Israel vowed a vow to the Lord and said, If you will indeed give this people into my hand, then I will devote their cities to destruction. And the Lord heeded the voice of Israel and gave over the Canaanites.

And they devoted them and their cities to destruction. So the name of the place was Hormah. And from Mount Hor they set out by the way to the Red Sea to go around the land of Edom. And the people became impatient on the way.

And the people spoke against Moses and against God. Why have you brought us out of Egypt to die in the wilderness? For there is no food and there is no water, and we loathe this worthless food. And the Lord sent fiery serpents among the people, and they bit the people so that many people of Israel died. And 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. And the Lord said to Moses, Make a fiery serpent and set it on a pole. And everyone who is bitten, when he sees it, shall live.

[6 : 56] So Moses made a bronze serpent and set it on a pole. And if a serpent bit anyone, he would look at the bronze serpent and live. Oh, this is God's word. Let's stop there.

Well, if you're new here, we've been going through the book of Numbers, which is a story of the people's journey into the promised land. To situate ourselves in the story thus far, remember in Exodus, God saves his people in Egypt from slavery, fulfilling the promise he made to Abraham 400 years earlier.

Through 10 devastating and astonishing plagues, he delivers them with his mighty arm and his outstretched hands. In Numbers, he brings the people to the edge of the promised land.

And this is the moment they've been waiting for. The door is open and it's time to go in. But in Numbers chapter 14, the people, they get cold feet.

They don't trust God. They accuse him of conspiring to murder them in the wilderness. And the people in the land, they say, are stronger and taller. They're powerful warriors. They have walls to the sky.

[8 : 07] We can't defeat them. Let's go back to Egypt. Forget about what God has said. There's no way we can do this. And how dishonoring those words were to God.

God had said he would protect them. He would fight their battles. And yes, humanly speaking, they had absolutely no chance. They were a bunch of farmers with pitchforks and shovels against a legion of well-trained Spartan warriors, as it were.

There's no way they're going to win. Unless, of course, you had a much more powerful warrior fighting on your behalf. They failed to put their faith in the promise.

And the door that was open, God slams that door shut. And God punishes them by their wandering 40 years in the wilderness. The children will enter the promised land, but only until the old generation has died.

Now we come to chapter 21, and this is the turning point. Because remember, last week, the old generation is now dead. Remember chapter 20? Miriam dies.

[9 : 13] Aaron dies. Moses isn't going in with them. The people are weeping by the end of chapter 20 and verse 29. The old generation is now dead.

The new generation now has their eyes set on the promised land. So let's begin by looking at this astonishing scene with the bronze serpents.

And it seems so important that Jesus needed Nicodemus to understand this. Let's look at the people's rebellion. That's point number one. Look down at verse 4. It says, the people set out again. But then we see an all-too-familiar pattern. Same story, different chapter. The people start complaining. They start grumbling. Delicious bread, remember, has been raining from the sky in the

manna.

Yet they say, we detest this loathsome food. It's worthless. You know, parents, it's like kids at dinnertime. This food is worthless.

[10:13] I guess they wanted some variety in their diet. I mean, they had been eating it for 40 years. At this point, they were tired. They were tired of the manna. But now there's a biblical way to bring our cares, our concerns, even our complaints to God.

The Psalms teach us how to do this. The Bible calls this to lament. They could have said, God, we are tired of this bread.

We are thirsty, weary, we're hungry. We long to be in the promised land. How long, O Lord? Give us relief.

Father, we trust you. Bring us relief. But that's not what they do, is it? Instead, they shake their fists at heaven. God's grace is taken for granted.

God's faithfulness and His grace are nothing to them. It's worthless. Well, friends, how often are we like Israel? You know, I wonder what the hardships you're facing and how you've responded to those hardships.

[11:23] And, of course, life has unexpected challenges, doesn't it? A desire to be married, a finding yourself single, crying kids. Not being able to have kids, disobedient kids.

Pain from an aging body. Not having the job you need. Having a job, but then having a boss who always seems out to get you. Having a job and not being recognized.

Instead of bringing those concerns and cares to God, we find ourselves shaking our fists at God, don't we? God, what you've given us is worthless. Friend, do we lament or do we sinfully complain? No, I guess we all find reasons to complain, don't we? You know the feeling. It's never enough. Always jumping from one thing to another. And complaining is the water we drink. It's the air we breathe.

I mean, what would we talk about with other people if we didn't complain about our circumstances? Friend, complaining is much more dangerous than we think. And we see that sinful desire blinds us to the reality as it really is.

[12:24] Because what is God's response to complaining while it's judgment? God says, this is blasphemy. In verse 10, He says, you all get snakes.

God is saying, you've taken my grace for granted. Here's what life is like in the wilderness. And He sends in venomous snakes in His anger, in His wrath.

And the text calls them fiery serpents in verse 6. Other translations call them venomous snakes.

And the reason they're called fiery is what happened when they bit you.

When you were bit, the snake would inject its venom. And your body would begin to burn like fire because of a scorching fever. Now, we don't know what kind of snake it is.

Is it a black mamba, a king cobra, a venomous viper? Either way, these snakes are deadly. This is terrifying. This should alarm you.

[13:22] You know, growing up in Arizona, I remember being on a nature hike in the wild. And then I heard the rattle of a venomous rattlesnake. It's a way of saying, stay away before I bite you.

Now, I don't mess with snakes. I ran as fast as I could doing a beeline back to base camp. I was terrified. But here, there was nowhere for them to run. You know, imagine for a second the terror of the people for just a moment.

The venomous serpents are entering the camp and coming for them. The camp is with two million people, almost a city. There are no walls. They live in tents. And they're sleeping.

The snakes slither into their tent unnoticed and then plunge their venomous fangs into a part of your body. And as more people are bitten, many are dying. So you can imagine the fear begins to spread like wildfire in the camp.

And the people cried out to Moses in verse 7, 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.

[14:24] And then Moses intercedes for them as he often does. You know, as a quick aside, good for Moses here. After everything we saw that happened in chapter 20, God tells him, look, you're not going in with them.

And yet he's not mailing it in. There's no lame duck leadership here. He still is interceding for the people. Good for him. And then God tells Moses to give them a remedy.

That's point number two. The remedy after the rebellion. Now God in his wisdom doesn't take the serpents away. He commands Moses to make a replica of the serpent and then put it on a pole. He says, spread the message throughout the entire camp. And there are millions of people. Spread a message to everyone that whenever someone is bitten by the serpent and looks at the bronze serpent God, he will heal them.

You know, imagine how this would work. A man, let's call him Issachar. He's in the camp. And then he goes into his tents and he's rummaging around.

[15:27] And these aren't rattlesnakes. There's no warning before they attack. And underneath a pile of his clothes, one of these serpents lunges at him and plunges his fangs into the man's wrist. The man starts to feel confused.

He's sweating. He feels feverish. He starts to feel sick inside. How long do I have to live, he thinks to himself. He's not sure. You know, he knows he has a problem.

And just that morning, he heard this strange message. Look at the bronze serpent and you will live. But then his mind begins to flood with doubt.

He thinks to himself, this whole bronze serpent thing is ridiculous. All this is nonsense. It's foolishness. How can it be?

A bronze serpent lifted up on a pole will cure me of my wounds? What, with a glance? It's impossible. Who in their right mind would, when they're bitten by a snake, would believe such a thing?

[16:30] And it's just the means, but the material itself. We have to understand, this is a shocking image to use in that culture. He thinks to himself, a snake? Really?

It's not even gold. It's bronze. It's worthless. The man thinks, I hate snakes. Why would I look at a snake? Why would God want me to look at this disgusting image?

Snakes are filthy. They're unclean. They're killers. They've killed countless people. They represent what? They represent evil.

They represent the curse. You know, preparing, I was trying to think of something in our culture that we would find reprehensible. Something or someone with a loathsome reputation.

Now, I have to be careful here. But I suppose it's like if someone put up a huge billboard at the center of New Haven with a picture of Jeffrey Epstein at one of his parties.

[17:29] You know, imagine in that picture for a second, you see Jesus there in close proximity to Jeffrey Epstein. Caption, Jesus, friend of sinners. Point being, you need to identify with Jeffrey Epstein if you are to come to Jesus.

That would be a scandal. A loathsome creature with a loathsome reputation. God put an image that was detestable in their culture on a billboard, a banner.

That's what the word pole means. A banner, a billboard. Lift up this image high on a pole as the only means of deliverance from this deadly disease. So what does Iskar do?

He thinks to himself, I'm too smart for this superstitious nonsense. And so he takes the matter into his own hands. Maybe he tries to suck the poison out of his leg. Maybe he has a friend that has some medical training.

Well, maybe he can just sleep it off. He'll feel better tomorrow, he thinks to himself. I don't need to look at the serpent. And if I'm not feeling better, then I'll look at the serpent then. But that night, Iskar, he drops dead.

[18:35] Imagine another person, let's call her Rachel. She's not as antagonistic, but she is presumptuous. One night, Rachel is sleeping, and then in the middle of the night, a snake plunges its venomous fangs right into her calf.

Rachel thinks to herself, I've heard the message. But, you know, I've lived a pretty good moral life, haven't I? I've brought my offerings this year. I can recite the truth as good as any Israelites.

In fact, my mom and dad looked at the serpent. And if God was going to heal anyone, he'll heal me. I'll even pray about it tonight. But that night, she drops dead.

She did not personally look at the serpent herself. Verse 6 says many people died. Many died.

Countless people had the opportunity and chose not to.

Whether it's pride, presumption, procrastination, they all perished. They died from their unbelief. But now, imagine for a moment, another man is bitten.

[19:36] He feels weak. He cannot even see straight. He's not sure if he can get himself out of bed. A friend sees his condition and reminds him of the promise.

Anyone who looks to the bronze serpent will live. A friend urges him to look and live, look and live. He thinks about that promise. He's heard about what God has done.

He believes that God is real. And then he believes the word spoken. He took it by faith that this would heal him. So with the help of a friend, he staggers out of his bed.

He goes outside. He looks at the bronze serpent. He sees it shining, glistening in the sun. Then God in his grace heals him.

He trusted in the promise God had given. Let's take a step back. What is God doing here in this new generation? Well, you see, God is dividing those bitten by serpents into two categories, isn't he?

[20 : 39] Those who look will not perish, and those who do not look are condemned. They will die. He's separating those in Israel, those who have faith and those who do not.

Friend, what about us? What about you? What about me? Do we recognize our need and put our faith in the promise? You see, it's not just Israel under this judgment, but the whole world stands under God's judgment.

But Jesus made that very clear. The wrath of God remains on those outside of Christ. John 3, verse 36, whoever believes in the Son has eternal life. Whoever does not obey the Son shall not see life. But the wrath of God remains on him. And just like Israel, God is not indifferent to our sin. You see, God made us in his image. He created you and I to enjoy him supremely, to love him, to trust him, to be in relationship.

But we have sinned against this good God, just like the Israelites. And what do you think is more likely to kill you, friend? A venomous snake bite or sin?

[21 : 49] See, sin is laced with poison that will kill you and me, left untreated. And there's no remedy that we can come up with for this problem of God's wrath. We can't work out our own cure.

Before looking, friend, you must know that you and I have this venom running through your veins. The venom of sin which will lead to death and hell. Now, you might not feel a scorching fever in your body from a venomous snake bite.

But left to ourselves, our sin will ruin us. And you might say to yourself, I don't feel myself to be in any desperate need at all. Well, I'm quite fine, thank you. But, friend, that only shows you that your wounds are the more deep and deadly.

You know, ask a doctor if they've ever met someone who appeared healthy but was unaware of a deadly disease that had gone undiagnosed. Friend, you suffer from the same pride and presumption that killed many in Israel that day.

But, friend, there is good news. Because God's mercy is held out to you today. Because does not the cross of Christ ensure the same benefit to those who look to him?

[22 : 57] Isn't there a perfect congruence? Did you see it, what Jesus came to do? Think again to John 3, verse 14. As Moses lifted up the serpents in the wilderness, so the Son of Man must be lifted up, that whoever believes in him may have eternal life.

And as John read, what follows is perhaps the most famous verse in the Bible, John 3, 16. For God so loved the world. Meaning, it doesn't mean that God loved the world so, so, so, so much.

He does. His love is limitless. It's infinite. But what it means is that God loved the world in this same way. God shows his love by, just like the serpent in the wilderness, God shows his love by sending his Son.

That whoever believes, whoever looks to the Son, would not perish but have eternal life. If you look, you will live. Now, friend, that's good news, is it not? Because Jesus, 2,000 years ago, fully God and fully man, he came and lived a perfect life.

You see, he never sinned. Every single thought was a perfect, God-glorifying thought. He never sinfully complained. But despite never sinning, he goes to a cross. He went as a substitute.

[24 : 09] And just like that bronze serpent, Jesus was lifted up. Lifted up on a cross. And the image of a snake is no accident. Because on the cross, he became a curse.

He became the image of a snake. Paul says God made him to be sin. The one was, he was cursed, and he was lifted up in full view.

Oh, friend, he bore the wrath that we deserved. Do you see that? On the third day, he rose from the dead. The Son of Man was lifted up after his resurrection.

He was lifted up in his exaltation and his ascension. Lifted up to the Father's right hands. And as Moses told the people, I say to you this morning, look to him and you will live.

Look to him by faith. See Christ lifted up. Look. See that his work glistening, shining in the sun. The Holy Spirit gives us eyes to see the glory of Christ.

[25:07] See the cure, friend. Look and live. Do you see the greatness and glory of this great love? Do you see this as foolishness, stumbling block? Friend, pray the Spirit will give you eyes to see the glory of Christ.

Because this is the wisdom of God. Jesus is the healing and rescue from the poison of sin and the wrath to come. And all you need to do is look. Whoever believes in him will have eternal life. It's for the rich and the poor, the young and the old. It's for sinners the size of Goliath. No matter what your past, no matter what you've done, all you must do is look and you will live. And the cure isn't just for Israel. It's for the whole world. It's for a multitude that no one can number from every tribe, tongue, and nation. Now there's a man who heard this story, this message, and it changed his life.

It was January 6, 1850. A 15-year-old young man was on his way to church in Essex, England. And then a fierce blizzard set in.

[26:09] It was so severe that he had to turn on a side street, and he went into the first church that he saw. He wasn't a Christian, but he was despairing and in darkness. And the preacher he heard that day was a lay preacher, an uneducated man.

He couldn't even pronounce the words correctly. But during that storm, God would change this man's life, and through him, the lives of millions of people. The man was Charles Spurgeon. Let me share this story in Spurgeon's own words.

As he's sitting there in this chapel of 13 to 15 people, and this lay preacher comes up. Spurgeon writes this. He says,

Look to Christ. Christ says, Look to me. Some of you, we look into the spirits working. Ah, you have no business with that just now. Look to Christ. The text says, Look unto me.

Then the good man followed up his text in this way. Look unto me. I am sweating great drops of blood. Look unto me. I am hanging on a cross. Look, I am dead and buried. Look unto me.

[28:08] I rise again. Look unto me. I ascend. I am sitting at the Father's right hand. Oh, look to me. Look to me. When he had gone about that length and managed to spend about ten minutes, he was at the end of his tether, Spurgeon writes.

Then he looked at me under the gallery, and I dare say, with so few present, he knew me to be a stranger. He then said, Young man, you look very miserable. Well, I did, but I had not been accustomed to have remarks made on my personal appearance from the pulpit before.

However, it was a good blowstruck. He continued, And you will always be miserable. Miserable in life and miserable in death if you do not obey my text. If you obey now this moment, you will be saved.

Then lifting up his hands, he shouted as only a primitive Methodist could do. Young man, look to Christ. Look, look, look. You have nothing to do but to look and live. God uses the foolishness to accomplish his good purposes, does he not?

I saw at once the way of salvation. I know not what else he said. I did not take much notice of it. I was so possessed with that one thought. Like as when the brazen serpent was lifted up, the people only looked and were healed.

[29:17] So was with me. I had been waiting to do fifty things, but then I heard the word look. What a charming word it seemed to me. Oh, I looked until I could have looked my eyes away. There and then the cloud was gone.

The darkness rolled away. In that moment I saw the sun, and I could have risen that instant and sung with the most enthusiastic with them of the precious blood of Christ and the simple faith which looks alone to him.

Friend, learn from this example. Some of you want to do fifty things. Friend, do this one thing. Look. Look.

Look. Look. That is faith, friend. As one person said, faith is grace where the eye looks, the hand grafts, the mouth that feeds upon Christ.

All you need to do is look. And he not only shows us his nail-scarred hands, he promises to take you into his arms. Jesus says, whoever comes to me, I will never cast out if you just look to him.

[30:19] Now that's just point number two, the remedy. And as amazing as that is, you know, for the original audience, that wasn't the most important part of this chapter. Because if you look at the

Old Testament authors as they look at Numbers chapter 21, what they grab isn't the bronze serpent primarily.

What they're looking at is God conquering kings and bringing the people into the land. So let's consider that point together. Point number three, the road to glory.

And what we see in the rest of this chapter is that God can win impossible battles. Now remember, Israel has suffered defeat and now Israel begins to march to victory to take the promised land.

Go back to verse one. The first battle begins. The chapter begins with a conflict with the Canaanite king, the king of Arad. He fought against Israel and they suffer a setback.

Some are taken captives. What would they do? Would they go back to Egypt like their parents wanted to? No. No, they made a vow to the Lord in verse two. Lord, if you give these people into our hand, we will destroy them.

[31 : 26] They asked for divine help. Their prayer went up and God's help powerfully came down. Verse three, the Lord heeded the voice of Israel and gave over the Canaanites.

And the battle is won because of their own efforts? No, it's because God is with them. Verse three, they call the place Hormah, which means destruction. That was literally the case.

But the name is significance. Because 38 years prior, when the people refused to go into the land, when the people got cold feet, they experienced a great defeat.

And that place was called Hormah. Now, this is the way of saying, look, the tide has turned. The people were destroyed 38 years earlier, but now the Israelites are marching toward victory.

And the rest of these kings of this chapter are telling the same story. Israel is conquering. You see that with Sion of the Amorites and Aga of Bashan. Look at verse 21.

[32 : 23] They ask if they can pass through. In verse 23, they get an answer, no. Same answer as Edom. Israel is like, yeah, we're going through. In verses 21 to 26, King Sion is defeated.

In verse 21, Israel defeated him with the edge of the sword and took possession of his land. They're marching to victory, to the promised land. You see the same pattern in verse 31 to 34.

You look down, Israel defeats the mighty King Og. The Lord tells the people to not fear in verse 34. Do not fear him, for I have given him into your hands and all his people and his land.

And you shall do to him as you did to Sion, king of the Amorites, who lived at Heshbon. Now, why are these names important? Well, remember when the Israelites were afraid of battling the giants? Friends, these are the giants. These are the very giants their parents were afraid of. You know, King Og literally was a giant. He was like 12 feet tall.

[33 : 26] In Deuteronomy chapter 3, Moses says he slept on an iron bed 13 and a half feet tall and six feet wide. The man was huge. But God says, don't fear them.

And he is teaching the people, you know, it's easy to hand over these nations. It's easy as for me, friends, to hand over a pen to you. These Goliath nations are nothing before God.

They're a mere speck of dust in the scales of history. They are no match for the living God. And that's why this text is so well remembered. Because you can read Psalm 135 and 136, you can read that this afternoon.

These are songs of praise. And the psalmist celebrates the great acts and great mighty works of God. And he celebrates the conquering of these kings. That's how he knew that God's love endured forever.

Or you can read in Nehemiah chapter 9, he prays and remembers God giving Israel the land and rehearses God's faithfulness. And he remembers these very victories to help him remember of God's faithfulness to the people.

[34 : 32] So, friend, if you are here and you are a Christian, it's the same for us. We are part of the present but not yet kingdom of God. You know, of course, in the New Covenant, God's kingdom does not refer to a nation state living within a geographic region.

Church, you are, but you are a chosen people, a holy nation, a royal priesthood, a people for God's own possession. Our citizenship is in heaven. And if you are in Christ, just like God's people in the Old Testament, we are still journeying to the promised land.

There is a battle that needs to be fought. There is a battle, a spiritual war that is being waged. And we live in a fallen world of flesh, the world and the devil rebelling against the authority of God.

And this reality has led the church to speak of the church militant in this present age. The church is engaged in a battle as God builds, expands, and defends His kingdom through the power of the Holy Spirit.

But one day, God will finish what He starts. One day, the church will be triumphant. You see, in the first part of this chapter, with the bronze serpent, we see God will show grace and will heal and deliver His people from sin.

[35 : 41] The rest of this chapter shows that God will, by His power, keep His promises and bring the people into the promised land. So the first part is Christ's first coming.

And the second part is Christ's second coming. Brother, He will finish the work that He starts. He will finish it. Romans 8 is the great Mount Everest of assurance.

Romans 8 begins with no condemnation, ends with no separation, and in between, there's no defeat for the Christian. God will bring us to the promised land.

Even in trials, there's nothing that can separate you from the love of God. And just like these Israelites, is it not true that we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us? We fight. We battle.

We will suffer setbacks like the people of Israel did, but we endure. We march to victory not in our own strength. We march in the strength that God supplies. And as a Christian, you march toward victory with every believer throughout the ages, knowing that one day we will experience triumph.

[36 : 48] The church will be triumphant. The outcome is secure. So, friend, let me ask you, what are areas that we rationally think that God is not big enough for Him to accomplish when He calls us to do as a church?

There is nothing that will prevent God from doing His work. As Hudson Taylor says, depend on it. God's work done in God's way will never lack God's supply. And notice their posture as they journey.

Look at verse 17. In the wilderness journey, God supplied their every need and given them water. And we see their hearts are lifted up. They're singing along the way. Friend, they're singing because God had given them a small well.

You know, how mentally practical is this for us today? You know, if you find yourself in the wilderness coming out of time of pain, of sorrow, of trial, friend, what are the wells in your life that you can thank God for?

Yeah, that would be a great thing for us to help each other see in our trials. Helping each other see those wells in our lives. We can say, Lord, I see you in that. Thank you for providing for me.

[37 : 57] I praise you for your faithfulness for giving me this well. Friend, we sing songs to remember God's faithfulness. And that's our posture as pilgrims to the promised land.

And one day, God will deliver everything he's promised. Verse 45, the last verse of the chapter will end there. It says, they defeated him and the sons and all his people until he had no survivor left.

And they possessed his land. God came through on his promises. God is faithful to deliver on what he said he would do. And we long for that day as Revelation 11, verse 15 says.

The kingdom of this we'll sing one final song that's about casting our eyes on Jesus, looking to him. So if you're able, please stand and let's sing together.