

# God Growing His People To Do His Work

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[ 0 : 0 0 ] This message was recorded at Vision Baptist Church in Alfred, Georgia. It is our prayer that you'll be blessed by the preaching of God's Word. Get you to do anything, I'd like to see you love Jesus and love His book. Amen?

And so go with me to Numbers chapter 21. I hope you've enjoyed finding out what a good book it is. If you've read your Bible from cover to cover, which I hope you do, I hope you make a habit of reading the Bible.

I hope you make a habit of reading it and memorizing it. It is the Word of God. If you believe that, say amen. How do you know it's the Word of God? You never read it. Say amen. And so read it, memorize it, and get it in your heart.

Maybe Numbers will be more interesting to you the next time you go through it as you've been spending all this time in the book of Numbers. And tonight, I don't know if we can finish in 29 minutes.

I don't know if we can finish Numbers 21, but let me read it to you. I'm going to skip around like we always do. But read and mark some things in your Bible to look at later.

[ 0 : 5 6 ] The Bible says in verse 1, And when King Arad, the Canaanite, which dwelt in the south, heard that Israel came by the way of the spies, then he fought against Israel, and he took some of them prisoners.

So Israel is in the middle of a fight. They've got some people after them. Aaron has just died. Miriam has... Did I say that right that time?

Everybody was laughing at it the way I said it last time. Miriam. I've been working on that. Miriam. Sounds really funny. Sounds a lot better in Spanish. But anyway, Miriam has died.

Aaron's died. Moses isn't getting into the promised land. And now they're getting prepared for battle. God is working their life. And so he fought.

Some guy comes out and fights against Israel, takes some prisoners. Verse 2, Israel says, God, if you'd do something, if you'd help, we'll just wipe them off the face of the planet. And so in verse 4, they're journeying around from Mount Hor, by the way, the Red Sea, to compass the land of Edom.

[ 2 : 0 0 ] And the soul of the people was much discouraged because of the way. You ought to mark that verse. That's an entire message right there because we live...

Life gets old. Drudgery. Same thing you did yesterday. And same thing you did the day before. And that's what you're going to do again tomorrow. Somebody said, I just don't know if I'm going to spend the rest of my life doing the same job.

Well, I hate to say this, but you're probably going to get up tomorrow and take a bath and eat some breakfast and put on some clothes and go do a job and come home. And if you think it's going to get different every day, you better change jobs often.

You'll probably get hungry that way. Verse 5, And the people spake against God and against Moses. That's what they're accustomed to doing, isn't it? And they said, why did you bring us out here to die in the wilderness?

And we hate this light bread you give us. We loathe it. We can't believe this manna you feed us every day. And in verse 6, God, the Lord, sent fiery serpents and they bit the people.

[ 3 : 0 6 ] And the people, many of the people died. Then the people came to Moses in verse 7 and said, We have sinned. We have spoken against the Lord and against thee.

Please get rid of the snakes. And Moses prayed for the people. And God gave the most unusual way of getting people healed and getting people well.

He said, Moses, make a fiery serpent. Get you a burning looking on fire looking kind of serpent. Put him on a pole and stick him up in the middle of the camp.

And whoever looks on it shall live. It's an interesting thing, by the way, just for all of you. It wasn't hidden. It wasn't stuck in a tent so only a select few could get it.

He said, stick it up in the middle of the tent. Raise it up good and high. Where everybody can look at it. That's a little lesson for some of you. Especially you missionaries. Get it up high. Believe God will heal everybody. Amen.

[ 4 : 0 2 ] Not just a select few some of y'all think he might go for. Amen. And verse 9 says, And Moses made a serpent of brass. He put it upon a pole and it came to pass.

If a guy got bit by the snake when he beheld the serpent of brass, he lived. I want you to skip down to verse 14. I want you to circle this. We're going to talk about that serpent of brass, Lord willing, tonight.

Verse 14, circle this. What he did. I love that phrase. Look at what it says in verse 14. Wherefore it said in the book of the wars of the Lord, what he did in the Red Sea.

You know, the story of the Bible is really what he did. The Bible story is not about you and me. It's about him and what he did. Verse 14, he said, I'll get them over there and I'll give them some water.

And in verse 17, the first time since they left Egypt, they sing a song. It's the first mention of singing. In verse 17, Then Israel sang this song.

[ 5 : 0 1 ] Verse 23, Just like Edom wouldn't let them go through, Sion wouldn't let them go through. In verse 23, And so they came out against Israel to fight them. And this time Israel whipped them and took their land.

And in verse 25, They took all of their cities. And in verse 23, They went up by the way of Bashan. And Og, the king of Bashan, Went out against him, He and all his people. And the Lord said to Moses, Don't be afraid of him either.

I'll give him to you. You're going to win. In verse 35, They didn't leave anybody alive. And they took his land. So it's a great chapter With a lot of truths in it. And we'll see what we can cover.

So let's ask the Lord to open our eyes And see if we can learn something. And as we study it, Apply it to your life. Father, do a work in our lives. Magnify you. Magnify Jesus.

Magnify what you've done. Help us as little nothing, Specs on a globe. Look up into the great God Who could call this earth this footstool. And realize how big you are And how great you are.

[ 6 : 0 0 ] And how we don't understand you. And we can only get glimpses of you As you reveal them to us in your word. And I pray God you'd help us to love you And worship you And magnify you For the great God that you are.

And I'll give you praise in Jesus' name. Amen. First thing is back in verse 1, They're back to the battle. They are back to the battle. In the story, They're going to kill the Canaanites.

And you're probably, Some of you might read that And you might say, Boy, you know God, He's just kind of mean, But he's wiping out these Canaanites. But if you go around the Bible, Read a little bit more of the Bible, You'll find out the Canaanites Are wicked people.

Look, if you would, At Deuteronomy chapter 20 and verse 17. Deuteronomy verse 20, Or chapter 20 verse 17 says, Thou shalt utterly destroy them, Named of the Hittites and the Amorites And the Canaanites And the Parasites And the Hittites And the Jebusites As the Lord thy God has commanded thee.

And here's the reason. Look in verse 18. That they teach you not to do After all their abominations. I don't want you to learn All their wicked junk.

[ 7 : 05 ] I want them gone. Which they have done unto their gods. And so should you sin against the Lord your God. So it was really a question of The God of heaven or rejecting Him.

Love God or don't like God. You're with God or you're against God. You're either for me or you're against me. And these other people had rejected the God of heaven. These Canaanites have Baal as one of their gods.

The storm and rain god. The Lord and master to them. They have Dagon. The god of corn. And Hadad. The thunder god. They had goddesses of love. And mother goddesses.

And they practiced ritual prostitution. Very likely they even did human sacrifice. Might make a note in the corner of your Bible right here. Psalm 106 and verse 34. Look what it says.

They did not destroy the nations concerning whom the Lord had commanded them. But were mingled among the heathen and learned their works and served their idols which were a snare to them.

[ 8 : 03 ] Yea, they sacrificed their sons and their daughters unto devils. And shed innocent blood. Even the blood of their sons and of their daughters whom they sacrificed unto the idols of Canaan.

And the land was polluted with blood. Thus for they defiled with their own works and they went a whoring with their own inventions. I hope you realize God said, get rid of them.

They are serving false gods. They're influencing other people to serve false gods. And whenever my people hang around with them people they pick up the wrong stuff. We could stop right there and that would be a good separation lesson, wouldn't it?

Tell me who you run around with and I'll tell you who you are. That's Spanish. For English version of birds of a feather flock together and if you're not careful you'll hang around with people that don't believe Jesus is God.

You'll hang around with people that try to make you think that Muslims worship God just like you worship God in other places and other people. Now everything's okay but the truth is you can't get to God except through Jesus.

[ 9 : 00 ] Amen? And don't be tolerant. You hear that one? Don't be tolerant. Truth is truth. And you say, well I know some people that don't believe like I do.

Well good, they're wrong. It's not a matter what you believe it's what the book says. And I'm not talking about nitpicking stuff here. We're talking about Jesus is the only way to God. Amen? That's a pretty big one.

They came out to fight against Israel and they take prisoners and God's people ask for His power to defeat them and they are totally defeated. They lack about two years in the wilderness and they're going to be home.

They're going to cross over into the promised land. They've been waiting on all them old people dying for 38 years everybody's been dying. Remember that. For 38 years they wake up every morning bury a few and move on. Bury a few and move on.

There's bones all over that wilderness because they denied God they didn't believe Him and now they're not getting in. And God seems to be putting them into battle in Numbers 21 because when they cross that river and they get over in the promised land they're going to have to fight.

[ 9 : 57 ] They're going to have to fight. It's serving God's a fight. Serving God's a fight. It's standing for God and standing for what's right and God's teaching them. They're going to need to be ready for battle when they get to the promised land.

And this applies to you. And you may not realize that but you're in a war and everything around you would have you doubt God.

Everything around you would have you say I don't believe the old Bible's not good. The old Bible's out of date it doesn't work anymore and I'm not sure God's the only God and I'm not sure Jesus is the only way and I'm not sure this serving God stuff works.

You're in a war you just don't know you're in a war. And if you don't know you're in a war you're in really bad shape. He's whooping up on you and you ain't figuring it out. And some of you got doubts in your mind and you wonder if God is true and you wonder if the Bible's true and you wonder if there's a real heaven and if there's a real hell and the devil's in a war with you.

A war to make you think God doesn't love you. To make you think you cannot be used of God. He fights and he takes prisoners. He fights and he takes prisoners.

[ 11 : 02 ] You must learn to do battle against principalities and powers Paul's battle about a visa is not with flesh and blood or men it's with the devil who would do anything he could. The reason Brother Wilson can't get into Israel the devil don't want a guy that's going to take the Bible there.

You must learn to stand for God when all the junk comes into your mind. Many of us never get full victory because we never destroy the armies of Satan that come against us.

Okay I just want to say some things here and make you mad at me but here we go. When you keep playing with sin and you leave the door open for Satan to make a mess of your life and make a mess of your mind you continue to play with things that appeal to your flesh instead of seeking the things of God you're never going to get full victory.

Some of guys simply won't quit looking at porn. You just simply won't quit will you? Well it ain't hurting anybody and I'm just looking on my little old phone can't see much it's not a big deal what you don't know is you're in a battle.

Some of you guys can't girls too can't quit flirting with another man's wife or another man a lady's husband you just can't quit the flirting stuff a little wink a little walk a little funny you're playing your little games and you don't realize you're in a battle.

[ 12 : 24 ] God wants you to live a life that honors him say amen. And so I hope we watch TV programs we ought not watch we go places we do things you will be affected by the friends you keep the books you read and the programs you watch.

For my young missionary friends you read some books sometimes that teach you God doesn't love people. You ain't read that in a book I mean this book you read that in another book by a guy who thinks he's smart but he hasn't read the book very much and most of you read more books about the book than you do the book.

I didn't mean to be mean tonight Brother Mize am I preaching yet? Uh oh you must choose not he told me that night he said you almost got to preaching you must choose not to allow things to mess you over spiritually you must realize this is a war and you must stand for God.

We're in a war by the way they're fixing to go into the promised land they need to know that and I'll just say this to you seriously from the bottom of my heart there are times I want to run there are times I want to quit preaching there are times I get to thinking nobody loves me nobody appreciates me I just think I'll go eat worms did your kids ever say that you know that's what we used to tell them when they started their whining and fussing and I want to run I want to quit on God I want to do something stupid wild thoughts come into my head I got to realize somebody's fighting me you're in a war you're in a war number two the second thing you find is over in verse four sin enters the camp even after a great victory they just had a battle they went and won and wiped out the enemies verse four and they journeyed from Mount Hor by the way of the Red Sea to encompass the land of Edom they're going around to Edom to get over where because they're not going to fight them because they're kin folks remember and the soul of the people was much discouraged because of the way because they got discouraged they said things they probably didn't really want to say because when you get discouraged and you get tired and you get whiny and you get gripey you'll say something that you probably would have kept your mouth shut about and so they talked against God and against Moses in verse five and said here we go again you always take us out in the wilderness to let us die and in verse five they say and God we don't like manna we're just going to go ahead and tell you we don't like manna we would like better provisions if you could put a little mayonnaise on it slap some ham in there maybe we'd like it better even though we don't eat pigs amen in verse six cheese would have helped it too in verse six

God sends the fiery serpents in amongst them the key to the Christian life is patience or endurance I don't know how to say that to you better than that when I was a young a long time ago I was a young preacher I wanted God to do something big in my life I wanted to have this prayer meeting and have God just come on me and do something big with me boom give me victory and you know what I've seen God do some big stuff but when you get there doing big stuff you still got to get up the next day and take a shower you got to put your pants on you got to go out and fight again and it's like you know we want that climatic movement moment in the movie but we don't want to die but if you're going to get that climatic movement and have that the last thing that happens you're going to have to die right after that you all want God to do something but the Christian life is about we're in the wilderness we're traveling over we got to get around Edom and we're traveling we all got we have all our victories in our lives just like they did but as soon as that battle is over we're still alive and more testings are coming you say

[ 15 : 57 ] I had some really hard times in my life when I had to prove I love God I think I ought to be over that well you're not it's about walking and not fainting Isaiah chapter 40 and verse 31 said they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength they shall mount up with wings as eagles they shall run and not be weary they shall walk and not faint but life got tiring to them life got tired you ever notice you pay the light bill and they send you another one you pay the house payment and they send you another one you pay the taxes on your property okay they're paid no they're not there's another one coming and so life gets tiring they got tired and they got discouraged they wanted to get there they wanted it now and not having to continue waiting one of the funniest things with kids on deputation and back when our kids were on deputation they didn't have car seats but they also didn't have we didn't have seatbelts and car seats but we didn't have little

TV monitors and everybody with their own individual headset you know they get in the car and turn it on and zone out that's the greatest thing in the world I was in a foreign country and the family wanted to talk to me about some problems in the church and so I said well what do you want to talk about they said could you just wait a minute as soon as we get them under the headsets we'd like to talk but if we get them under the headsets they don't know a thing we're talking about we talk right in front of them and so but our kids used to we at Betty even got a somehow we got a tape and said are we there yet are we there yet because that was their question all the time and that's what's going on here are we there yet they wanted there now you remember that they are taken the long way because they didn't fight with Edom Esau's descendants we all get tired in the way the drudgery the same old thing every day we are very we are you know I don't ever preach a great message I don't ever preach a great message and and have hit the pinnacle I get through preaching this tonight we got another one coming Sunday morning we finish up Sunday morning I can walk out of the pulpit going oh did pretty good okay here comes another one that's life we are impatient and we get angry because we can't have what we want right now just like they did their anger and impatience made them speak against God and what he was doing in their life we don't like your bread you brought us out in the wilderness to die we are not happy and we want to go back it seemed that they were going to die without ever getting what he had promised have you ever felt that way they saw their discomfort they despised what God was doing for them there's some really wonderful things that are that manna was great but they tempted God 1st Corinthians chapter 10 and verse 9 the Bible says neither let us tempt Christ as some of them also tempted and were destroyed of serpents you see the manna was angel food have you ever eaten angel food cake that's that's that's that's what this called angel food psalm 78 25 man did not eat angel man did eat angels food and he sent them meat to the full but they said we don't like it it's so easy to get used to what

God is doing for us and take it for granted I can tell you I can tell you that there have been many times that I've flat out been aggravated at God because he just didn't seem to do something new for me I don't thank him that I eat every day I don't thank him that he's taken care of me and protected me and watched over me and been good to me every day you know sometimes you just get kind of like well I'm tired of eating the same bread every day all they had to do was wake up in the morning step outside their tent pick up it and fix it any way they wanted but they weren't satisfied they didn't have to make a long trip to the grocery store they didn't have to pay Master Card or any of that they didn't have to get new shoes they didn't have to get new clothes but God you're not very good to us that manna was more than just a picture of bread it was a picture of Jesus in John chapter 6 in verse 32 Jesus said verily verily I said to you Moses gave you not that bread from heaven but my father gives you the true bread the bread of God is he which comes down from heaven the real bread that comes down from heaven ain't manna it's me in effect they were rejecting God and what he was doing for them they were rejecting

Jesus the very son of God when we get angry with God about our lives and circumstances we're rejecting his lordship and power in our lives we had this piece of land in the Bible college and it was about 30 40 acres of land all together we kind of got to mark off our own boundaries because it was in the desert and I paid I think eight or nine thousand dollars for the first section of land and we've got this piece of property and brother Paul prayed with me and we just were so excited we built and they beat us up and sent us to the hospital and we lost that land and I could not understand I was very upset and then I would come back to America and there was a church in Cartersville I would go speak there and they would say what you do with our money we gave you like ten thousand dollars towards all that you lost it are you going to get the land back and I was like look people give me a break and but God in heaven was looking and saying Austin you don't know this but I got a better piece of land than you ever dreamed of and so we lost our land

I went out to go knocking on doors in another area close to that when we got out of the car we heard people talking and they're talking in Spanish everybody talks in Spanish they're all talking and we hear them say there come them badness that beat up our people we didn't beat them up they beat us up it was so funny in the newspaper when they ran the and on TV news that night they showed all the people that got beat up and it was our people and said look what the badness did to them it was our people our people I wanted to say I wanted to scream it came out in the newspaper later that me and my assistant pastor were suspects in a murder case and I wanted to say I go down to the grocery store the little tienda and I try to order something and I notice they all act real funny I don't know I'm a murder suspect I have no idea and I go home my kids come down and say dad you know what's going on you're a murder suspect sometimes sometimes we get angry and we flunk the test Paul you're in one of those tests by the way in Deuteronomy chapter 8 and verse 15 this is a wild passage of scripture who led thee through that great and terrible witness where in were fiery serpents and scorpions and drought where there was no water who brought thee forth water out of the rock of flint who fed thee in the wilderness with manna which thy fathers do not that he might humble you that he might prove you to do you good in the latter end what's going on my babies are sick my wife is sick

[ 22 : 54 ] I got financial problems I got all this junk going on in my life I don't know why God's doing me this way the God of heaven is like I'm testing you son you gonna trust me I got good stuff for you I'm doing a big work in your life it's easy to me tell you that you ought to study all this and read it and think about all the mess ups you've had and so God sends judgment with no warning you know the other time Moses is kind of mad in the last chapter you remember Moses is like I'm gonna strike the rock because then people ought not be mistreating me where are you God why don't you step in and help me God didn't do anything this time they get to griping and here come the snakes in verse six no warning the snakes come they bite the people and they die now there are fiery serpents biting that evidently are bit and have a painful hard death they repent maybe for the first time it sounds like it might be genuine in verse seven the people come to Moses and said we sin we've spoken against you and we've spoken against the

Lord please ask God to take them away but God didn't just take them away I don't know if you notice that there's no mention he took the snakes away it's like he doesn't take sin away he's not going to get you out of the war he's not going to solve all your problems I wished we could all just wake up tomorrow and be floating down the swanee river enjoying life and sipping pink lemonade that's not what's going to happen so God didn't take it away he provided a solution in verse eight he said you make a fiery serpent you set it on a pole and if they do get bitten just tell them to look to the snake look to the serpent and they'll live and he made a serpent he put it on a pole and it came to pass it if you got bitten you just looked at the serpent and you lived Moses prayed for the people the people could look to the serpent and live that serpent was an illustration of Jesus being lifted up you say how do you know that well John 3 14

Jesus Jesus says as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness even so must the son of man be lifted up that whosoever believes in him should not perish but have everlasting life let me stop and just say there is a lot of interesting things and when you're a bible reader you won't draw your conclusions from theology books I saw a guy put out and said when you get into your new office don't let your theology books draw dust be sure and stay in them and I really thought about you and I thought I hope you let them draw dust and you read the real book I'm all for the theology books I really am I'm all for them if you got a real strong dose of this book then you can kind of evaluate those books he prayed they looked they got healed by the way where was the snake placed on a pole and lifted up Moses wasn't walking around going

I like you not you not you that wasn't what happened I know y'all got a theology book says that but that's not the story here he just said this look look if you'll look you can get healed just look in 2nd Corinthians chapter 5 and verse 21 he made him to be sin for us who knew no sin that we might be made the righteousness of God what the law couldn't do Romans 8 3 and that it was weak through the flesh God sending his own son in likeness of sinful flesh in for sin condemned sin in the flesh Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law Galatians 3 13 and he became a curse for us 1st Peter 2 24 who his own self bear our sins in his own body on the tree that we being dead to sin should live so everybody could see him just like

Jesus was lifted up so all could come to him in Isaiah chapter 45 and verse 22 the Bible says look unto me and be ye saved all the ends of the earth for I am God and there is none else that's a good verse amen he said look unto me and be saved now I know when he said look unto me I know exactly what he talking about he talking about an old snake that got held up and they knew about it and he prophesied somebody else is going to be lifted up anyone can be saved except those that refused to look or those that couldn't see there are those that do not know there's a remedy so we must get the news to them now just let me tell you this they all get saved all they gotta do is look I know that's shocking to some of us but all they gotta do is look but there are people that don't know 1st 7th 115 this is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptance that

[ 28 : 01 ] Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners of whom I am chief he said this is faithful what I'm saying is a true saying and everybody ought to just accept what I'm about to say he came into the world to save sinners and he's already got the worst one that was me rest of make that big a deal got the chief already amen all the Indians can follow so it's time to quit they will sing in verse 14 excuse me they're going to sing in verse 17 but just let me remind you please if I can have three things I guess that we've really looked at tonight number one number one there's always going to be war you're always going to be in a battle you don't ever get to a place I guess I don't know maybe you do maybe when you're over 60 you get to a place one day where the devil don't bother you no more and you just love Jesus and go around singing all the time

I don't know because I ain't but 60 but I've never met anybody that told me that I've even read where great men of God were laying on their deathbed dying and saying pray with me brother I just want to believe it's still true they were scared even dying and I've sat with a guy dying and he was scared you said why was he scared because we're in a battle because we're in a battle you can wake up and they tell you you got cancer and you don't just automatically go no problem I trust the sovereignty of God everything's gonna be alright I ain't worried about bang just go to cutting don't matter that's not how you feel might be how you ought to feel but most of us don't and life can get weary life can get with your life not going the way you want it can get weary but you gotta trust there's a big God in heaven working in your life amen and then you gotta know this he doesn't get us out of the junk he just raises a snake up you can look at he didn't get rid of the snakes read the story there's no mention of him getting rid of the snakes he just said so

I've got a funny feeling ain't everything gonna just work out you know you know you know you know you know you know you have some thorns on them roses some stickers amen so trust God but here's the beautiful thing in the middle of all your mess look unto him he saved us he keeps us saved he's going to keep us saved all the end he's going to do the work so lift him high there are people all over the world one of the reasons you know you're in a missionary church full of missionaries you know why because they don't know that all they gotta do is look at the serpent on the pole they don't know that all they gotta do is look to Jesus crucified and paying our sin debt so we can be saved so let's take the gospel to them if you understand that say amen father in heaven I love you I thank you so much for the privilege I have to open your Bible and share it they need you to do something big in their life and



I know you are doing something big I know you haven't abandoned your children I know you love them I know you care about them and I know you're at work in their lives and I'm asking you dear God to keep working and keep strengthening them help them to trust you Holy Spirit I know that they can keep trusting you there I ask you to forgive me for how I'm not happy with you today how I'm not satisfied with the light bread the manna you give me God forgive me for my ingratitude my lack of saying thank you for what a sweet and wonderful God you are you have met every need I've had for 60 years you've given me a wonderful church to serve you and given me wonderful wife wonderful children wonderful health God you've done so many great things for me forgive me for my lack of gratitude forgive me for my getting upset when things don't go my way help me to trust you do work in our lives and

I'll give you praise with your heads bowed and your eyes closed location contact information and more audio and video recordings