



Through the Bible Series: Numbers

Book of Numbers

Items Needed

- ✓ Bible with marked scripture
- ✓ Crayons/Pencils/Markers
- ✓ Illustration Photos in order of use for lesson.
- ✓ Copies of Word Trace
- ✓ Copies of Coloring Sheet
- ✓ Copies of Take Home Overview



Books of the Bible Series: Numbers

Objective of Lesson

The objective of this lesson, and every lesson in this series is for our children to become familiar with the structure and order of the books of the Bible and point out how each book is written to specifically picture the person and work of Jesus Christ.

Scripture Reference

Book of Numbers

Lesson Instructions

1. For the last few weeks we have been learning the books of the Bible and what they are about. Can any of you name the books we have learned so far? Genesis, Exodus & Leviticus. Can you find them in your Bible?
2. Today we are going to learn the fourth book of the Bible. That book is called Numbers. As with the other three books we have learned, this one gives us an illustration or picture that represents how Christ saves His people from their sins. This book is no exception. Can you find the book of Numbers? Find the very first chapter and verse and point to it for me.
3. All the things that we have been learning that happened to Israel in the Old Testament (the first half of the Bible) were written down in the Book of God

for our comfort, so we can understand, learn of, and believe the truth of how God saves sinners from their sins. It actually says this in the Bible. (Romans 15:4 and 1 Corinthians 10:11.) Genesis showed us how God created the world and how, when we fell into sin, He had already arranged for His Son Jesus Christ to save us. Exodus showed us how Christ was going to become a man and bring His people out of bondage of sin. Leviticus showed us how Christ is our priest and sacrificed himself to pay for our sins. Today we are going to learn that Numbers is about our problems as believers in this world. When we don't believe God, God assures us that He does not change - that He continues to deal with His chosen promised people - not for anything they have done, but for what Christ has done FOR them. Today we are going to learn the good news that nothing we can do, or have done, can mess it up! God is faithful (He keeps his promises)!

4. After Israel left their bondage in Egypt, they wandered in the wilderness (the desert) for 40 years. (show wilderness picture) This book is about what happened in that 40 years. The reason they wandered in the desert for 40 years is because of something which we all are guilty of- not believing God and what He says to be true. We all foolishly imagine that what we want to do and the way we want to do it is the right way. The Book of Numbers teaches us that we must believe our God, that we must trust and follow Christ in all things (Pro. 3:5-6) - not our own reasons or thoughts or someone else's!
5. There are four different pictures of our Lord Jesus Christ that we are going to learn about. In these stories (pictures) we are going to see how God's people did not believe and trust God. They tried to fix things for themselves; but the Lord, consistently and faithfully, showed them in spite of their unbelief that HE was going to save them from their sins. The first is Aaron's rod that budded. (Num. 17:1-13) (Hold of the photo of Aaron's rod.) One day, God said to Moses, "Take a rod from each of the leader of the twelve tribes of Israel. Write down the name of each man on the rod.

Write the name of Aaron on the rod from the tribe of Levi. The rod of the man that I chose to be the priest will be budding with almond flowers, so that I will get rid of all the complaints the Israelites have against you." The people were arguing among themselves on who was going to be their representative, their priest, but God was showing them here He has already chosen a priest. Moses spoke to the people and got the rod from each leader of the twelve tribes of Israel. Aaron's rod was among the twelve rods. Moses wrote the name of the leader of the twelve tribes on their rod, and then put the rods in the tabernacle of the Lord. (hold up picture of tabernacle) The next day, Moses went into the tabernacle of the Lord and he found that the rod of Aaron was budding with almond flowers with ripe almond fruits. (picture of the budded rod) Moses gave back the rod to each leader of the twelve tribes. God said to Moses, "Bring back Aaron's rod and put it in the tabernacle of witness to be kept as a sign that I will entertain no more complaints against me or they will die." Moses did as the Lord told him and put Aaron's rod in the tabernacle to serve as a sign that no more complaints will be brought up to the Lord or they will die. So the Israelites said to one another, "Surely if we come near the tabernacle of the Lord, we will die." This rod was a picture of life out of death by which God used to show the people Aaron was His servant. This is a picture of how our Lord Jesus Christ died and from His death, life was created for His people, and He was declared to be the servant and Son of God. (Rom. 1:3-4)

6. The next story is about the water that flowed from the smitten rock. (Num. 20:1-13 and 1 Cor. 10:4) (hold up the picture of water from the rock) Moses was the leader of the people of Israel. He was leading them from Egypt to a land that God would give to them. They were wandering through the desert and people were thirsty, so they began to grumble and complain to Moses. "We are dying," they said, "Our children are dying, and our cattle are dying." "Why did you bring us out of Egypt to die out here in the desert?" Moses went to his tent and fell on his knees before God. "What should I do?" Moses

prayed. "There is no water in the desert. The people are thirsty and they are ready to kill me." God answered Moses and said to him, "Take your shepherd's staff and walk ahead of the people. I will meet you by the rock at Mount Sinai. When you come to the rock, strike it with your staff and water will flow from the rock. The people will have plenty of water to drink." Moses did exactly what God told him to do, and guess what happened? He got water from a rock! Here is our unbelief bubbling up again. In spite of the fact Israel did not believe, God would save them; he provided what they needed just the same. This is a vivid picture of Christ and our salvation. In spite of our unbelief that God can and will save, God sent His Son, Jesus Christ to save us. Just like this rock flowed forth water only after it was smitten by Moses with the rod, so the Son of God, our Lord Jesus Christ, flowed the water of life to chosen sinners after being smitten by God with death - by the rod of God's holy law.

7. The next story we are going to cover is the brazen serpent. (Num. 21:1-9) This is another clear type and picture of our great Savior. (John 3:14-16) The children of Israel had been wandering in the wilderness, and they were tired, thirsty, hungry, and complaining. They were blaming God for their problems. They wanted more than the manna (bread) God was providing each day. They actually wanted to go back to their old way of life in Egypt where they were slaves. This was a sin against God and God corrected them by sending lots of poisonous snakes among them. Can you imagine the people starting to scream, "Oh no! Snakes!" - as they were trying to get away from them? God told Moses to make a bronze snake and put it up on a pole. (hold up the picture of the brazen serpent) If a person was bitten, he could look up at the pole and live. The poisonous venom from those fiery serpents killed many. All who looked upon the brazen serpent were immediately healed of their plague. How is this a picture of Christ? In spite of our unbelief, the Lord came and was lifted up, and God promises that every sinner who looks to Christ by faith is immediately made whole.

8. Our last picture is the cities of refuge. (hold up the picture of the city of refuge) When a man killed another man, even if it was an accident, the law said he must die. For those who were guilty of such a crime, God provided cities of refuge where the man, guilty of the killing, might flee for safety and not have to die. These were called cities of refuge and they were given to provide shelter, safety, and life for people who justly deserved to die. A person might be anywhere in the land of Israel, on either side of Jordan, and easily flee to one of these cities within just a half-a-day. The way to these cities of refuge was always kept clear, regularly repaired, so that the roads could be easily traveled and the cities of refuge always easily accessible. These cities of refuge were a picture of Christ, and even though we deserve to die because we have broken God's law, in Christ we have shelter, safety, and life. He is the only refuge for sinners who justly deserve to die.
9. Do you see the major theme of this book? What did each of these stories have in common? The Israelites did not believe God. There is nothing more sinful or horrible than not believing God. God never lies and to not believe Him is saying He does lie. God always keeps His promises and to not believe Him is saying that He does not keep His promises. There is nothing so dishonoring to our God and so harmful to us in this world as unbelief. We see this clearly in the major theme of the Book of Numbers; yet, as God corrected Israel for their unbelief, he chastens us for ours - in order to teach us to believe Him. Our unbelief causes us much grief and trouble, and yet in spite of our unbelief, He keeps His promises.
10. What is God's promise to His people? Let's look at our stories and see. (hold up each picture as you go over this to remind them of the story) In the story of Aaron and the rod that budded we learn that 1. God provides a savior, of his own choosing, who will die for the sins of His people, and through his death He will bring life to His people. 2. In the story of water from the rock we learn God will smite His Son with our punishment, and from Him will flow living waters to wash away the sins of His people. 3. In the story of the

brazen serpent we learn that God Himself will hold up His Son. He will be proclaimed to all who hear and all those that look on Him in faith, will live. Lastly, 4. In the story of the cities of refuge we learn that even though we deserve to die under the law, we have a refuge in Christ Jesus.

Lesson Activities

- Word Trace
- Coloring Sheet



Take Home Lesson Overview

Through the Bible Series: Numbers

Scripture Reference:

Book of Numbers

Lesson Overview:

The Israelites did not believe God. There is nothing more sinful or horrible than not believing God. God never lies and to not believe Him is saying He does. God always keeps His promises and to not believe Him is saying He does not keep His promises. There is nothing so dishonoring to our God and so harmful to us in this world as unbelief. We see this clearly in the major theme of the Book of Numbers. Yet, as God corrected Israel for their unbelief, he chastens us for ours - in order to teach us to believe Him. Our unbelief causes us much grief and trouble, and yet in spite of our unbelief, He keeps His promises.

What is God's promise to His people? Let's look at our stories told to us in Numbers and see. In the story of Aaron and the rod that budded we learn that: 1. God provides a savior of His own choosing, who will die for the sins of His people, and through His death He will bring life to His people. 2. In the story of water from the rock we learn that God will smite His Son with our punishment, and from Him will flow living waters to wash away the sins of His people. 3. In the story of the brazen serpent we learn that God Himself will hold up His Son,

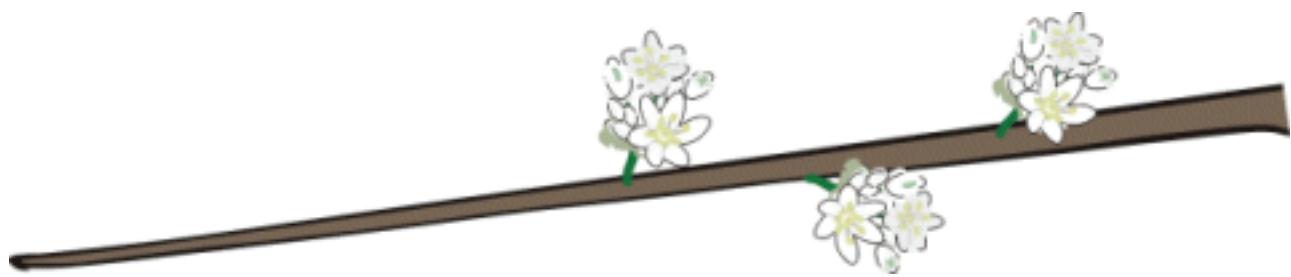
and He will be proclaimed to all who hear and all those that look to Him in faith, will live. Lastly, 4. In the story of the cities of refuge we learn that even though we deserve to die under the law, we have a refuge in Christ Jesus.



Winderness



Budding of Aaron's Rod





Die von aiftiaen Schlangen gebissenen Israeliten genesen beim Anblick der ebernen Schlange.

CITY OF REFUGE



AARON'S ROD BLOSSOMS

Numbers 17:8 ...and behold, the rod of Aaron, of the house of Levi, had sprouted and put forth buds, had produced blossoms, and yielded ripe almonds.



Student Name _____

Date _____

Handwriting Practice Basic Print - Large Letters - 13/16 inch

To print worksheet widest side horizontal click "File" - "Page Setup" and "Landscape"

Numbers

Numbers

Numbers

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Numbers

Numbers

Chapter 4

NUMBERS **Our Failure and God's Faithfulness**

If you read the Old Testament as nothing more than a history of ancient events concerning people who lived a long, long time ago, it is just about as boring as a textbook on mathematics. If you read it as nothing more than a book of hidden prophetic mysteries, it may be more interesting, but it is still a book with no meaning to you personally. However, if you read the Old Testament as a picture of what is happening in your own life experience of redemption and grace, it becomes lively and fascinating. If you see in the Old Testament pictures of Christ and his great work of redemption, pictures of his love for and grace to your soul, it becomes precious beyond description.

So, when we read about and study the history of the nation of Israel in the Old Testament, we must constantly remind ourselves that the Lord our God is not here giving us the history of a quaint little nation in a remote part of the world. God's interest in and purpose for the nation of Israel was singular. He raised up and used that nation as a vehicle for the accomplishment of his purpose of grace and redemption in Christ, no more and no less.

The Pentateuch (the first five books of the Bible) and the Book of Joshua symbolically display every believer's experience of grace and salvation in and by the Lord Jesus Christ. In these first six Books of Inspiration we see how that the Lord our God brings us from the bondage and curse of sin and death sin into "*the glorious liberty of the sons of God.*" The whole Old Testament was written so that we might see in vivid types and shadows and pictures what the New Testament declares to be true. All those things that happened to Israel in the Old Testament came to pass and were written down in the Book of God for our comfort and edification. This is precisely what the Holy Spirit tells us in Romans 15:4 and 1 Corinthians 10:11.

- Genesis, the Book of Beginnings, shows us our great need of redemption and grace.
- Exodus, the Book of Deliverance, displays our experience of grace in redemption.
- Leviticus, the Book of the Priesthood, typifies our atonement by Christ, which is the basis and effectual cause of deliverance.
- Numbers, the Book of Numbering, displays our (the believer's) weakness, unbelief, and failure in this world.
- Deuteronomy, the Book of the Law, shows us God's immutability and his faithfulness to his covenant people in the second giving of his law.
- Joshua, the Book of Deliverance, displays our entrance into and everlasting possession of all the blessings of grace and glory in eternal, resurrection glory with and by our Lord Jesus Christ.

The fourth Book of Moses is called "Numbers" because it opens with the numbering of the children of Israel (1:1-4:49) and concludes with the numbering of the people again (26:1-65). Both numberings were done, not as acts of pride and presumption (2 Samuel 24), but by the express command of God.

If you read through the first five Books of the Bible at one sitting, it appears that Leviticus might be out of sync with the others, because it interrupts the historic narrative. That is because the Book of Leviticus is a parenthetical explanation of God's work with his people. Genesis shows us our great need of redemption and grace. Exodus displays our experience of salvation in time. Leviticus shows us, in type and picture, that God deals with us in grace upon the basis of Christ's finished work of atonement as our Substitute. Then, the Book of Numbers picks up the historic narrative, a narrative portraying our struggles as believers in this world with the world, the flesh, and the devil, assuring us that God still continues to deal with his covenant people in grace upon the basis of Christ's finished work, not upon the basis of our experience.

The Book of Numbers covers most of the period of Israel's forty years in the wilderness and the events connected with their wilderness journey. It begins with the numbering of the children of Israel. It describes the divine order by which the camp of Israel was arranged and the order of their movement from one place to another, as they marched through the wilderness toward Canaan for forty years, until all the adults (those twenty years old and upward) who came out of Egypt died. (Someone suggested that Israel's wilderness journey was the longest funeral procession in history.)

Those forty years in the wilderness were the result of the nation's unbelief, specifically their refusal to believe the report of Joshua and Caleb after the twelve spies had spied out the land of Canaan. Because they chose to follow the lead of the unbelieving spies, God judged the nation, and that generation entered not into the land of promise, but died in the wilderness, because of unbelief. The only adults who left Egypt and entered the land of Canaan were Joshua and Caleb. Once the old generation was dead, God commanded that the new generation, that generation to be led by Joshua into the land of promise, be numbered. So, we have the second numbering of Israel at the close of the Book.

Our Unbelief

Now, let's see what the message of this Book of Numbers is. I don't mean, Let's see what we can use in Numbers to teach the Gospel of Christ. I mean, Let's see what the message of the Book of Numbers is. How does God the Holy Spirit here teach us the Gospel?

In these thirty-five chapters we are confronted with that which may be the most difficult thing for us to learn as God's people in this world. We are confronted head-on with that which causes us more trouble than anything else in this life—our own unbelief! It is ever the tendency of our fallen nature to lean unto our own understanding, if not our own to someone else's. The Book of Numbers teaches us that we must believe our God, that we must trust and follow Christ in all things (Pro. 3:5-6), not human reason, our own or someone else's!

This is where I struggle most. I suspect it is the same with you. How we dishonor our God by unbelief! We all foolishly imagine that what we want to do and the way we want to do it is the right way. Oh, we say, "The Lord knows best." But rarely do we act like he does. Like these ancient Jews, you and I must learn that God really does know best. He knows what he is doing when he acts. He knows what he is talking about when he speaks. What he tells us is the truth.

All that he says, all that he does, and all that he requires of us is always for our good and his glory.

How I wish I could learn to live as a man who really believes that! God's way is always right. Our way is always wrong. With regard to all things, Solomon's word is true, no matter what friends, family, the world, and our own proud flesh may think to the contrary. "*There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death*" (Pro. 14:12). The book of Numbers is a picture of that experience in the believer.

Here we have a picture of a people It is a picture of people who have come out of Egypt and have crossed the Red Sea believing God. They have seen Pharaoh and his armies drowned in the sea. They are going to the land of Canaan, believing God's promise to give them the land for their inheritance as his covenant people. But they have not yet reached the land. They are pressing toward the mark; but they have not yet attained the prize. They had the faith to follow God out of the bondage and slavery and darkness; but they have not yet come into the fullness of liberty and rest in Christ.

How much like them we are! We believe on the Lord Jesus Christ. We trust him for the forgiveness of our sins. We have seen Satan cast out and our sins drowned beneath the blood of Christ. We are moving toward heavenly glory. But we have great trouble trusting our Savior to provide for, protect, and guide us in our daily lives and through our daily struggles.

Our Faithful God

But, blessed be his name, our God is faithful still! His faithfulness, his mercy, his grace, his provision is never altered by our experience. He deals with us upon the basis of his covenant and the accomplished redemption of our souls by the sacrifice of his dear Son (@ Tim. 2:13, 19: Ps. 103:8-14; Isa. 43:1-7). Let every ransomed soul, proclaim with Jeremiah, "*Great is thy faithfulness!*"

We see this fact of God's faithfulness, faithfulness in spite of our horrid unbelief, when we get to the latter part of the Book of Numbers (chapters 21-35). Here we see Israel triumphing over their enemies by the hand of God. Their many enemies surround them. The outward forces of Kings Arad, Sihon, and Og, the King of Bashan, and the attempts of Balaam, the false prophet to try to undermine the purpose of God, all resulted only in greater blessedness of Israel.

The Book of Numbers tells us, in the clearest terms God himself can find, that though we are disobedient, though we are rebellious, though we are so full of unbelief and sin, though we live, it seems, in utter barrenness and emptiness of soul year after year after year in this waste and howling wilderness, our great God will never leave us nor forsake us (Heb. 13:5). Even in the midst of our weakness, he is our Strength. Even when we fall, he protects us, lifts us up, and holds us in the hands of his omnipotent mercy and immutable grace!

Pictures of Christ

There are four distinct and direct pictures of our Lord Jesus Christ in this Book. Aaron's rod that budded (17:1-13) was a picture of life out of death by which God identified Aaron as his servant. As Aaron was, by the budding of his rod, publicly declared to be God's servant and priest, the Lord Jesus Christ was publicly owned as and declared to be the Son of God with power by his resurrection from the dead (Rom. 1:3-4).

The water that flowed from the smitten rock (20:1-13 and 1 Cor. 10:4) was a vivid picture of Christ and our salvation by him. As the rock brought forth water, only after it was smitten by Moses, so the Son of God yields the water of life to chosen sinners only by being smitten to death, to the full satisfaction of divine justice, by the rod of God's holy law.

The brazen serpent (21:1-9) was another clear type and picture of our great Savior (John 3:14-16). Because the children of Israel murmured against him, in judgment the Lord God sent fiery serpents upon them. The poisonous venom from those fiery serpents killed many. When Moses prayed for the people the Lord commanded him to make a serpent of brass and lift it up upon a pole, promising, "*everyone that is bitten, when he looketh upon it, shall live...And it came to pass that if a serpent had bitten any man, when he beheld the serpent of brass, he lived.*"

Gospel preachers are like the pole to which Moses fastened the brazen serpent. Our only function is to hold up Christ crucified before sinners. The gospel we preach is Jesus Christ. We do not merely preach a Christ centered gospel. Christ is the gospel we preach. There is a huge difference.

Pastor Roger Ellsworth, in his excellent book, *The Guide*, suggests that the brazen serpent (God's remedy for Israel's ruin) typified the Lord Jesus in six ways. He wrote...

1. The remedy was not Moses' idea but God's. Salvation from sin is not produced by men but only by God.
2. The remedy consisted of Moses making a serpent in the form of the poisonous serpents. The Lord Jesus Christ was made in the form of sinful men (Phil. 2:8).
3. As the serpent of brass had no venom, so Christ had no sin (2 Cor. 5:21).
4. As the serpent of brass was lifted up on a pole, so Christ was lifted up on the cross (John 3:14).
5. All that was necessary for the people to be healed was to look at the brass serpent., and all that is necessary for healing of sin is to look at Christ.
6. As there was only one remedy for the people of Israel, the serpent on the pole, so there is only one way of eternal salvation, Jesus Christ.

Many other important points of similarity between Christ and the brazen serpent have been made by others. (John Gill, in his commentaries on Numbers and John, gave many excellent comparisons.) There is one other comparison that must be added. It is very important, but often overlooked. – All who looked upon the brazen serpent were immediately healed of their plague, and every sinner who looks to Christ by faith is immediately made whole.

The cities of refuge (35:9-34) were also typical of our Lord Jesus Christ, the refuge of our souls, the refuge of salvation. Believers are men and women who have fled for refuge unto him,

like the man-slayer in the Old Testament fled for refuge to one of the cities of refuge. Even the names of the cities were typically significant and instructive (Ex. 21:13; Num. 35:6, 11, 14; Deut. 21:2, 9; Jos. 20:1-9). – *Kedesh* means, "holy." Christ is holy, both as God and man, and is our holiness before God, that "*holiness without which no man shall see the Lord.*" – *Shechem* means, "the shoulder." Christ not only bore our sins in his own body on the tree, he bears and carries their persons; and the government of his church and kingdom is on his shoulders. There, on his omnipotent shoulders, we are safe and secure. – *Hebron* means, "fellowship." Believers have fellowship with Christ and with the Father in him; and in him we have fellowship with one another. – *Bezer* means, "a fortified place." Christ is our stronghold, our high tower, and our place of defense. To him we run; and in him we are safe. – *Ramoth* means, "exaltations." Our Lord Jesus Christ is exalted at God's right hand, and in due time he will exalt those that trust in him. – *Golan* means "manifested." Christ is God "*manifest in the flesh.*" The Son of God was manifest to take away our sins and destroy the works of the devil; and he will be gloriously manifest and revealed at the last day.

In addition to these types, our Lord Jesus Christ is clearly spoken of prophetically by the false prophet Balaam (24:17-19 - Compare John 11:47-52). So great is our God that he uses both Balaam's ass and false prophets like Balaam (men far beneath Balaam's ass) to deliver his message when he is pleased to do so. Christ is that Star coming out of Judah and that Scepter (Law Giver) out of Israel. His birth was announced by a star put in the sky by God's hand (Matt. 2:2). He is called "*the Bright and Morning Star*" (Rev. 22:16). And he is the Deliverer (the Scepter) who comes out of Zion for the salvation of his people (Rom. 11:26).

The Lessons

Now, let me show you some of the lessons the Spirit of God would have us learn from this Book. *First*, There is nothing so dishonoring to our God and so harmful to us in this world as unbelief. We see this clearly in the major theme of the Book of Numbers. God sent Israel in to spy out the land of Canaan, but they believed not God (chapters 13 and 14). Therefore, the Lord God set upon them forty years of judgment, forty years (one year for every day the spies were in the land of Canaan) of wandering from place to place in the wilderness.

I have emphasized the fact that God's favor is never determined by our experience. Divine favor is altogether gracious, free, and unconditional. Yet, as God judged Israel for their unbelief, he chastens us for ours, to teach us to believe him. That is a great blessing. Still, the Word of God is crystal clear. We rob ourselves of much blessedness in this world by our unbelief Isa. 48:17-19; John 11:40; Matt. 23:37-38).

Second, God almighty demands that those who speak for him be heard and obeyed (11:1-17:13). The lessons of God's judgment upon the sons of Korah need to be learned. God's ambassadors are God's ambassadors. Hear them, and you hear God. Refuge and disobey them, and you refuse and disobey God.

Third, multitudes, like the sons of Korah and the mixed multitude in Israel, have a barren familiarity with the things of God. J. C. Ryle wrote, "Nothing so hardens the hearts of men as a

barren familiarity with the things of God.” A barren familiarity with Christ and his gospel is damning and will ultimately bring God’s most severe wrath to eternity.

Fourth, the most deadly thing in this world is the error of Balaam (Jude 11;14). What was Balaam’s error? He served God (or pretended to) for hire (Num. 22:7). He was a man motivated by covetousness. Being such a man, Balaam taught Israel to mix the worship of God with the worship of idols (Num. 25:1-3). He did not teach them to abandon the worship of God, or even to alter it. He simply taught them that the way to get along with the heathen among whom they sojourned was to compromise with them, accepting their gods as God. That is idolatry of the worst kind.

Fifth, there is but one remedy for human sin, but one way of salvation and eternal life. The only way Israel could be saved from the fiery serpents was by looking to that brazen serpent Moses lifted up before them. And the only way you and I can be saved is by looking to Christ, our crucified Savior (John 12:32; 14:6; Isa. 45:20-22).