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Font: Times New Rom..., 14.5, Bold, Italic, Underline, Text Color, Background Color

Paragraph: Bulleted List, Numbered List, Decrease Indent, Increase Indent, Paragraph Styles (Normal, No Spacing, Heading 1)

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Bible Reading Week 10 - Look and Live

By Joshua Kirk
Numbers 21:4-9; John 3:14-15

A People Dying in the Wilderness

The story in Numbers 21 is short. But you won't forget it. Israel's back on the move. The wilderness stretches out in front of them. The road is long. The conditions are brutal. And the people? They're done. They've had enough.

So they do what they always do: they complain. "Why have you brought us up out of Egypt to die in the wilderness? For there is no food and no water, and we loathe this worthless food" (Numbers 21:5). Catch that. The "worthless food" they're talking about? That's manna. Bread from heaven. Daily, miraculous provision straight from the hand of God.

Here's what I want you to see. When they despised the manna, they weren't just complaining about the menu. They were despising the God who gave it. When they resented the wilderness, they were questioning the wisdom of the One who led them there. And what happens next is sobering. God sends fiery serpents among the people. Many are bitten. Many die. Just like that, the camp is filled with suffering. Venom's spreading; pain's rising; death is closing in. This is what sin does, every single time. It promises you satisfaction and delivers poison. It starts as a complaint and ends in a coffin.

The Remedy God Provides

The people come to Moses. They confess. They beg him to pray. And God gives Moses one of the strangest commands in all of Scripture. "Make a fiery serpent and set it on a pole, and everyone who is bitten, when he sees it, shall live" (Numbers 21:8). That's it. That's the cure. So Moses obeys. He makes a bronze serpent and lifts it high above the camp. And anyone who looks at it lives. Now think about this for a second. No medicine. No ritual. No seven-step process. Just look. And that simplicity? That's the whole point. These people can't heal themselves. They can't suck the venom out. They can't outrun the judgment. Their only shot is to trust what God said and look where He told them to look.

The Hardest Part of the Cure