

The Journey Beginnings to Walking by Faith (Num. 21, Deut. 2-3)

Intro.

Returning to the scene of Failure (21:1-3)

Repeating Sins of the Past (21:4-5)

Response of Discipline by God and Faith by the people (21:6-9, Jn 3:14,15)

Rapid Journey forward (21:10-20)

Ripping asunder doubts (unbelief) of the past (21:21-35, Deut. 2, 3)

Reflections and/or Applications

1. We all have situations or places like Kadesh Barnea or failures that God will take us back toward to see if we will trust Him this time. In His sovereignty and timing, He will take us back many times. He wants us to pass the tests so that we will mature in the faith.
2. In life, there will be many detours. What is our response in these detours? Do we fight it, do we grumble in it, do we rest in them, and do we see the good in them? Our inflexibility can lead to destruction in many ways.
3. Impatience breeds other sins, like dislike of God's servants and His ways, dissatisfaction with God's provisions and timing, and doubts about His sovereignty, His character, and His guidance. Confess this sin quickly since it is the root cause of many other sins, especially unbelief.
4. There was quick discipline in this case. Why?
5. The gaze of the soul at the brazen serpent is paralleled with the gaze of the soul at Jesus, our Savior, on the cross (Jn. 3:14, 15). Tozer suggests that this is the best definition of faith, the gaze of the soul at a saving God.
6. Three times (Exodus 17, Numbers 20, and Numbers 21) Israel had a need for water, but God met the need three different ways that we might learn quickly that our trust is not in God's methods but in God alone.
7. Finally, God will rip asunder our doubts of the past. If we respond to Him by faith, we will get to know Him more intimately. This may be difficult at first; but it does become easier if we look at Him, steadily, quietly, and without strain. He is the Author and Perfector of our faith.