He Made His African Mother Proud October 4, 2020

*Numbers 25:1-13 Series: Is God Racist?*

I said, “Momma, when we die, do we go to heaven?” She said, “Naturally we go to heaven.” I said, “Well, what happened to all the black angels when they took the pictures?” – Muhammad Ali

Intro: The shadow of Warner Sallman’s, “Head of Christ.”

1. When the front door is locked, Satan comes in the side.
2. God’s blessing on His people is irreversible.

Numbers 23:8 *How can I curse whom God has not cursed?*

Numbers 23:20 *Behold, I received a command to bless: he has blessed, and I cannot revoke it.*

1. Satan’s attacks on God’s people are relentless.

1 Peter 5:8 *Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour.*

Revelation 2:14 *you have some there who hold the teaching of Balaam, who taught Balak to put a stumbling block before the sons of Israel, so that they might eat food sacrificed to idols and practice sexual immorality*

1. Sexual sin leads to religious sin.

v. 1 *the people began to whore with the daughters of Moab*

v. 2 *These invited the people to the sacrifices of their gods …*

v. 2 *the people ate and bowed down to their gods*

v. 3 *So Israel yoked himself to Baal of Peor.*

* What’s the big deal with portraying Jesus and the rest of the biblical characters as white Europeans? Does it really matter?
* How did sexual sin lead the Israelites to idolatry?
* What does it mean that “Israel yoked himself to Baal”?
1. God’s anger isn’t turned back by half-measures.
2. God wanted the leaders publicly hanged for refusing to confront the people’s sin.

v. 4 *Take all the chiefs of the people and hang them in the sun before the LORD …*

1. Moses decided God was only worthy of half-measures.

v. 5 *Moses said to the judges of Israel, “Each of you kill those of his men who have yoked themselves to Baal of Peor.”*

1. The people cry for mercy, imagining God to be too harsh.

v. 6 *they were weeping in the entrance of the tent of meeting*

* Why did God want the leaders of the people publicly hanged? Wasn’t that overly harsh?
* How did Moses’ actions differ from God’s command? Why didn’t he do what God said?
* What are some half-measures that we take in dealing with sin in our lives? What are some half-measures we take as parents?
* What do you imagine the people saying to God as they’re weeping at the entrance of the tent of meeting? What should they be saying instead?
1. Only someone as jealous for God’s honour as He is can turn away His wrath.
2. A man proudly parades his sin for all to see.

v. 6 *one of the people of Israel came and brought a Midianite woman to his family*

v. 6 *in the sight of Moses and in the sight of the whole congregation of the people of Israel*

1. Phinehas was as jealous for God’s glory as God is.

v. 7 *he rose and left the congregation and took a spear*

v. 8 *went after the man of Israel into the chamber and pierced both of them*

1. As Phinehas reflected God’s hatred of sin, God turned away His wrath.

v. 8 *Thus the plague on the people of Israel was stopped.*

v. 9 *Nevertheless, those who died by the plague were twenty-four thousand.*

v. 11 *Phinehas … has turned back my wrath*

v. 11 *he was jealous with my jealousy among them*

1. Phinehas demonstrates how diverse Israel really was.

Exodus 6:25 *Eleazar, Aaron's son, took as his wife one of the daughters of Putiel, and she bore him Phinehas.*

Putiel is an Egyptian name. Phinehas was an Egyptian name which meant “the Cushite.”

1. We need a Saviour as jealous for God’s honour as He is to turn away His wrath.

John 2:17 *His disciples remembered that it was written, “Zeal for your house will consume me.”*

Jesus’ hatred of sin didn’t move Him to spear someone else as a sinner, but to be speared Himself on our behalf.

* How is what Phinehas did righteous? Would we be justified in doing something similar today? Why/why not?
* How might it have affected a North American slave-owner or segregationist to read that all legitimate Israelite priests had to be descended from a man named “the Sudanese”?
* How is Jesus similar to Phinehas? How is He different?

Study ahead: Next week, we’ll study Psalm 87.

Notes