

Light and Life

A Bronze Serpent

Under the reign of King Hezekiah great reforms were put in motion to expel the stain of idolatry that had become normal practice in Judah, and to restore proper worship practice to the one true God. The first step towards true worship was to destroy the places and items associated with idolatry. Hezekiah “removed the high places and broke the sacred pillars, cut down the wooden image and broke in pieces the bronze serpent that Moses had made; for until those days the children of Israel burned incense to it, and called it Nehushtan” (II Ki. 18:4).

This bronze serpent that Judah had made into an idol was intended by God to be a blessing to them. As the Israelites wandered in the wilderness, they began to complain, “so the Lord sent fiery serpents among the people, and they bit the people; and many of the people died” (Num. 21:6). Upon the peoples’ repentance, Moses was told to construct a bronze serpent and to lift it high upon a pole. God said, “it shall be that everyone who is bitten, when he looks at it, shall live” (Num. 21:8).

Even beyond the physical healing of those Israelites who repented of their complaining, the bronze serpent had a deeper, much more important spiritual lesson to teach as well. Jesus told Nicodemus, “As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whoever believes in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life” (Jn. 3:14-15).

Good was intended by God in giving this serpent, but His people chose to use it for evil. Is it possible that we may sometimes misuse the blessings that God bestows on us for selfish or even idolatrous purposes? We should be thankful to God for our blessings – every good and perfect thing comes from Him (Jas. 1:17)! But we must keep them in their proper place!

- Sam Bunyard

Another Perspective

Promises to Abraham - & Us

Among the promises given to Abraham, we often stress land, nation, and seed as the driving promises that tell the story of Israel (Gen 12:1-7; 15; 17:1-8; 22:15-18). Indeed, they tell the story of all of us, and we make a mistake in thinking that these promises were completely finalized in physical Israel. The typological significance needs stressed now:

- 1. Nation:** In Christ, we are the “holy nation, a people for his own possession” (1 Pet 2:9).
- 2. Land:** In Christ, we receive the promise of the inheritance (1 Pet 1:3-5). Note that the language of inheritance is the language of the land promise (Num 26:53-56; 33:54, etc.).
- 3. Seed:** In Christ, we are the seed (the seed is Christ, but when we are in Him, we then become the seed, Gal 3:16-29). Because we are the seed of Abraham, then as we live and teach the gospel, we become a blessing to all nations.

There are more, and I want to include this one: **Kingship**. Abraham was promised that kings would come from him (Gen 17:6). While the kings of Israel, particularly David and his descendants, fulfilled this, the greater fulfillment is found in Jesus. Then, by extension, because we are in Him, we reign with Him (2 Tim 2:12; Rev 5:10). This connects back to the fact that we are made in God’s image and given dominion (Gen 1:26-28).

The promises of God are sure and steadfast. In these we place our faith and therefore have the hope that serves as the anchor of the soul (Heb 6:13-20).

Let this encourage you today.

- Doy Moyer

ASSEMBLY TIMES

Sunday

Bible Class 9:30
Morning Assembly 10:30
Evening Assembly 5:00

Wednesday

Evening Bible Class 6:30

RADIO PROGRAM

The Bible Speaks



Sunday 9:00-9:30a.m.
KURM 790AM

Downtown Church of Christ

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VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL

with
Brett Hogland

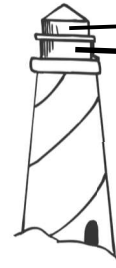
**Starts Next
SUNDAY!**

ELDERS:

Otis Hardin
Perry Johnson
Ken Parker
Alan Revier
GW Walsh

DEACONS:

TJ Burleson
Scott Hale
Joel Heiligenthal
Jason Hill
Chris Johnson
Brock McKeel
Randy Potter
Tim Roberts
Randy Shell



DOWNTOWN GOSPEL BEACON

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Pick a Flavor, Any Flavor

“...at Athens, his spirit was provoked within him when he saw that the city was given over to idols.” - Ac 17:16

When I was a kid, ‘Neapolitan’ ice cream contained the ‘big three’ – vanilla, chocolate, and strawberry – all in the same carton. I preferred the strawberry, so that part was usually the first to go.

Some folks choose a religion (or a church) the same way.

Like the pagan Greeks of Athens, our society worships at the altar of many ‘gods’. From plain-vanilla Amish to glitzy, metropolitan mega-churches, the religious flavors out there cover the spectrum of human

preferences. You prefer this flavor? It’s out there! You would rather have that flavor? It’s out there, too!

But isn’t that the problem? When we choose religion like we choose ice cream (because it’s the flavor we prefer), then **God’s** preference is ignored. Paul put it like this, “*Am I now seeking the approval of man, or of God?*” (Ga 1:10). His underlying assumption is that we should seek the approval of God – and God has only one flavor (Mt 16:18). Above all else, we should strive to learn about **that church** that Jesus built; and we should strive to make **His** preference **our** preference, too!

- *WKing*

FAMILY NEWS

PRAYER LIST –

Preachers we support: Japan, Philippines, Vietnam, Canada, Mexico, Peru, & U.S.

Sick: G&K Fletcher, J&M Swim, J Marshall, S Shell, L&T Deen, Rai Starr

Shut-ins: Betty Jo Young, Billie Pennington, Shirley Cole, Mary Lou Lewis, V Carter

Military: Kyler Sullins, Sean Potter

WE REJOICE – We rejoice with Bailee Miller, who was recently baptized into Christ! Remember to be an encouragement to all our new converts!

SENTENCE SERMON – What takes moments to wound can take years to heal – so mind your tongue.