

Prequels to Calvary — Part 1

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Prequels to Calvary — a three-week study

Prequel — there is something in the Old Testament that points toward what happens later in the New Testament

1) Serpent 2) Sheep 3) Ram 4) Scapegoat

Serpent and the sin

- **John 3:16**

For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

- **Numbers 21:4-9**

And they journeyed from mount Hor by the way of the Red sea, to compass the land of Edom: and the soul of the people was much discouraged because of the way. And the people spake against God, and against Moses, Wherefore have ye brought us up out of Egypt to die in the wilderness? for there is no bread, neither is there any water; and our soul loatheth this light bread. And the Lord sent fiery serpents among the people, and they bit the people; and much people of Israel died. Therefore the people came to Moses, and said, We have sinned, for we have spoken against the Lord, and against thee; pray unto the Lord, that he take away the serpents from us. And Moses prayed for the people. And the Lord said unto Moses, Make thee a fiery serpent, and set it upon a pole: and it shall come to pass, that every one that is bitten, when he looketh upon it, shall live. And Moses made a serpent of brass, and put it upon a pole, and it came to pass, that if a serpent had bitten any man, when he beheld the serpent of brass, he lived.

- curse of the snakes is judgement of God on sin of the people
- judgement was death
- sin was rejecting the grace of God — murmuring — “loathed” the manna — fed supernaturally

- **Romans 3:23**

For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God

- we murmur against the dominion of God

Serpent of brass on pole

- brass serpent on pole was symbol of rebellion; not to be worshipped
- symbol of their sin and death
- look up on judgement; be healed, curse is broken

The cure is God-wrought

- Jesus became as our sin and death on the cross
- the work of the cross is God's idea
- Satan's desire is "deicide" — to kill God
- by Christ's dying on the cross — Satan thought he had won — he had really lost
- Who the Father is — God was in Christ reconciling us to Himself

The cure is absolutely miraculous

- why would it work?
- wonder of the cross is 100% supernatural

The cure is unalloyed

- unalloyed — the poison of sin and death relieved
- nothing else the children of Israel could do — except look up at the serpent on the pole
- nothing we can add to the finished work of the cross — no works, no prayers

The cure is open to all

- the cure is open to all — but not openly applied
- whoever looked on the serpent was healed — who did not look, was not healed
- for the cross to be come effective — we have to know that we deserve to die, and look at the cross — it does not become effective if we do not

How do we know the serpent is the prequel to the cross

- **John 3:14**
And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up
- Jesus identified himself as the serpent — as sin on the cross — He became our sin and death
- not just a picture of grace — but also of judgement, sin, and death

All we have to do is look up — it is not that we have asked too much of God — we have asked too little.

Discussion Questions

- I. Does death by serpents seem too harsh for the sin of murmuring? Why or why not?

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2. How do you murmur against God's grace in your life?
 3. Why would some people choose not to look at the brass serpent to be healed?
 4. Is it the same reason some people choose not to look at Christ on the cross for healing?
 5. Does God's grace, through Christ's death on the cross, cover everyone? Explain why or why not.