

Communion Meditation – In the Wilderness

Numbers 25.1-13

The Church Judges Sin

April 19th, 2015

Transitioning to Personal Responsibility

- Two messages ago Moses shifted blame for his sin to the people
- Last time (*bronze serpent*) people admitted sin when confronted
- Moses had been larger than life for Israelites / He was “the” mediator
 - But he’d fallen from that pedestal / They acknowledged their sin
 - They recognized Moses’ role but they also accepted responsibility

In the Wilderness / In the World

- Israelites had just bypassed Edom and Moab
 - But Balak wouldn’t let them pass / He feared them / Sent for Balaam
 - Story of Balaam / Angel opposes him / Talking donkey / Blesses 3 times
 - Months later Balaam killed in Joshua’s war against Midianites
- **Rev 2.14** against church of Pergamos, “you have there those who hold the doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balak to put a stumbling block before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed to idols, and to commit sexual immorality.”

Apostasy Judged Harshly

- **v1** ~ “the people began to commit harlotry with the women of Moab”
- **v2** ~ “the people ate and bowed down to their gods”
- God directs them to “hang the offenders before the Lord” (**v4**)
- Moses says to judges, “kill .. men who were joined to Baal of Peor” (**v5**)
- Phineas thrusts javelin through couple ending plague (**v8**) – 24k die (**v9**)

Church Must Address Sin & Apostasy

- God was pleased with what Phineas did / Ended horrible plague
- God expected the Israelite leaders to address this rampant sin
- God expects the same from the Church today
 - The Church “in the spirit of Phineas” must act to call sin, sin
 - Periodically we excommunicate people from Church (*refuse to repent*)

Coming to the Table admits a need of God’s wisdom

Coming to the Table admits an embrace of God’s rules

Coming to the Table admits an acceptance of God’s forgiveness