

Guidelines for the Exercise of the Lord's day Prophesying
Message Seven : The Reality of the Sin Offering,
the Bronze Serpent, and the Destruction of the Devil

I. Overview :

As the reality of the sin offering, Christ was made sin on our behalf to be judged by God once for all; God laid our sins upon Him and considered Him the unique sinner. Christ was sent in the likeness of the flesh of sin and concerning sin so that God could condemn sin in the flesh. He had only the form of a fallen man but not the sinful nature of a fallen man, just as the bronze serpent had only the form of the serpent but not the serpent's poison; Christ was lifted up only as a serpent in form, for He did not have the poisonous nature of a serpent. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil and through death He might destroy him who has the might of death, that is, the devil. Hallelujah, through Christ as the reality of the sin offering, the devil has been destroyed!

II. Truth and Enlightenment :

Day 1 --

A. How was He made sin on our behalf to be judged by God that we may become God's righteousness in Him?

Sin came from Satan, who rebelled against God. This sin, which came out of the evil one, entered into man and made man not only a sinner but sin itself under God's judgment. Hence, when Christ became a man in the flesh, He was made sin (not sinful) on our behalf to be judged by God that we might become God's righteousness in Him.

B. Why was sin condemned by God when Christ was crucified on the cross?

That Christ became flesh means that Christ became sin. He became sin on our behalf in order to condemn sin. When Christ was crucified on the cross, sin was condemned. When He was crucified on the cross as sin, sin was crucified. When He was crucified on the cross as a bronze serpent, Satan was destroyed. During the last three hours He was on the cross, Christ was made sin in the sight of God. It was during that time that God condemned sin in the flesh.

Day 2 --

A. What is sin in the flesh? How did God condemn sin in the flesh?

The phrase sin in the flesh refers to the source of sin, the devil. For this reason, in Romans 6, 7, and 8 sin is personified as a living one. This living sin was condemned by God when Christ died on the cross as a man in the likeness of the flesh of sin. When the flesh that Christ put on through incarnation was crucified, God condemned the sin in the flesh of fallen mankind.

B. Why do we say Word becoming flesh means God and man joined as one?

The Word becoming flesh means that God and man were joined as one. The flesh refers not only to the physical body of fallen man but also to man after the fall. The Word becoming flesh means that the manifested God became a man of flesh in the likeness of a sinful man. By doing so, God entered into sinful man and became one with sinful man. However, He had only the likeness of sinful man and not the sin of sinful man. When the Word became flesh, God was manifested in the flesh.

Day 3 --

A. Explain the meaning and the application of the incarnation.

Sin dwells in our flesh, making our flesh the incarnation of sin. Incarnation refers to one thing which was formerly outside another thing entering into that thing and becoming one with it. The Lord, who is God, was incarnated. In this way man became Christ's incarnation. In the same principle, sin has become one with our flesh, making it the incarnation of sin.

B. How was it typified by the bronze serpent that Christ was sent in the likeness of the flesh of sin?

That God sent His own Son in the likeness of the flesh of sin was typified by the bronze serpent spoken of in Numbers 21:4-9. In John 3:14 the Lord Jesus Himself said, "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up." The Lord as the Son of Man was a serpent, but only a serpent in form, in likeness, not a serpent in poison.

Day 4 --

A. Explain the relationship between Rom. 8:3 and Num. 21:8-9.

Paul's word in Romans 8:3 about God condemning sin in the flesh indicates that the old serpent has been condemned so that the problem of sin may be solved. Now whoever believes in Christ as the One who was lifted up to be condemned in our place has eternal life. This is the significance of the type of the bronze serpent in Numbers 21:8 and 9 and its fulfillment in John 3:14.

B. Why do we say Lamb in John 1:29 is Bronze Serpent in 3:14?

The Lamb satisfies the requirements of God's righteousness, holiness, and glory, for the Lamb is pure, perfect, and without blemish. The bronze serpent represents us, for we are serpentine people, not lambs. As the Lord was speaking to Nicodemus, He indicated to him that He Himself would be lifted up as the bronze serpent to be Nicodemus's Substitute. Therefore, the Lamb of God satisfies God's requirements, and the bronze serpent represents us.

Day 5 --

A. What is the procedure and goal of the economy of God?"

The first step of God's plan is to save sinners, because 1 Timothy 1:15 says, 'Faithful is the word and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners.' The next step is to destroy the works of Satan, because 1 John 3:8 says, 'For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil.'" This is only the procedure to reach the goal of God's economy. The economy of God is that He wants to work Himself as the Triune God into us that we may become His house.

B. Expound the most profound aspect of the gospel.

God said, "For in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die". This death is punishment. But the Lord has another death. The second death is a way of salvation. Death can punish those who sin. Death can also save and deliver those who are in sin. Satan thought that death could only punish the sinner. He seized upon this fact and reigned through man's death. However, God saves and delivers man from sin through the death of the Lord Jesus. This is the most profound aspect of the gospel.

Day 6 --

A. We have another problem, the devil, how can he be destroyed?

Besides death and sin, we have another problem—the devil. In His crucifixion Christ also destroyed the devil. After the devil, the serpent, seduced man into the fall, God promised that the seed of woman would come to bruise the head of the serpent (Gen. 3:15). In the fullness of time, the Son of God came to become flesh (John 1:14; Rom. 8:3), by being born of a virgin (Gal. 4:4), that He might destroy the devil in man's flesh through His death in the flesh on the cross.

B. Why is it a lie to say that the devil is prevailing?

The Bible never says this. Do not believe in this lie. The Bible says that the devil has been bruised, destroyed. His head has been crushed. God's Word tells us that through His death on the cross Christ has destroyed the devil. This is an accomplished fact, a fact that is included in the holy Word as the testament bequeathed to us.

III. Conclusion :

The incident in Numbers 21 was sovereignly prepared by God to reveal a particular type of Christ. As a serpent in form, the bronze serpent lifted up on a pole is a type of Christ lifted up on the cross for us. As sinful human beings, we actually are serpentine; in our fallen nature we are children of the old serpent, the devil. Because we are such serpents, we needed a Substitute; we needed Christ to die for us in the form of a serpent but without the poisonous element of the serpent. No doubt, the Lord Jesus was crucified as the bronze serpent in order to deal with Satan, the devil, the old serpent. It was through being crucified as the bronze serpent that He crushed the head of the old serpent. In this way the Lord Jesus destroyed the devil, who had the power of death. In His humanity and through His work in His death Christ has destroyed Satan. Therefore, Christ died not only as the

Substitute of fallen men, who had been bitten by the serpent, but also to destroy the devil.