

14th March 2021

Sunday's Reading

Acts 16 :11-15.

Dan Fennell will bring us the word this week.

➤ **Some Prayers of the people**

- Please pray for God's love and strength to surround Dorothy Kester and the Kester family as they grieve the loss of John.
- Pray for the coming Easter presentation in the schools and give thanks that prayers were answered for this to happen.
- Pray that Ps. Andrew will have safe travel and a great time seeing family during his leave and that he will rest and return refreshed.
- Pray for those who are persecuted for their faith, for those who are hungry, homeless and live-in fear.

Notices

Funeral for John Kester will be held on Thursday 11th March at 1pm at the uniting Church.

Ps. Andrew will be on leave from the 27th of Feb, returning on the 16th of March.

Lost USB Please still keep an eye out for a purple/mauve USB thumb drive. Please get it back to the office. It contains Tracey and Wayne's photos and notes.

.

Men's Night on the 13th of March at 5.30pm at Becroft's, Lot 8 Jim Kelly Road. There will be a BBQ (BYO) and the speaker will be Dan Fennell.

Friendly Thursday is at 10am in Blackwell Hall. All are welcome to come and join in for fellowship. This week (11th March) they are going to the caves (meet at the church at 10am). Dot is always looking for people to join in, making a cuppa, playing games or just a cuppa and chat.

Name tags: Please let Lois or Teresa know if anyone requires a name tag.

Mid-Week Bible reading

Numbers 21:4-9 ⁴*They travelled from Mount Hor along the route to the Red Sea, to go around Edom. But the people grew impatient on the way; ⁵they spoke against God and against Moses, and said, "Why have you brought us up out of Egypt to die in the wilderness? There is no bread! There is no water! And we detest this miserable food!" ⁶Then the LORD sent venomous snakes among them; they bit the people and many Israelites died. ⁷The people came to Moses and said, "We sinned when we spoke against the LORD and against you. Pray that the LORD will take the snakes away from us." So, Moses prayed for the people. ⁸The LORD said to Moses, "Make a snake and put it up on a pole; anyone who is bitten can look at it and live." ⁹So Moses made a bronze snake and put it up on a pole. Then when anyone was bitten by a snake and looked at the bronze snake, they lived.*

This was not the first time the people had grumbled and complained. They had a history of voicing their difficulties. After all they were in the desert, they were hungry, and they were thirsty. This time however, they were speaking out against Moses and God. They had seen God move in power several times, but they lacked faith that He could provide all their needs.

If we think we can grumble and complain or become impatient without there being any consequences, we are sadly mistaken.

Hebrews 12:10-11 God disciplines us for our good, in order that we may share in his holiness. ¹¹No discipline seems pleasant at the time, but painful. Later on, however, it produces a harvest of righteousness and peace for those who have been trained by it.

They admitted their sin and called out to God through Moses. Sometimes we just have to confess our sins, without trying to justify or excuse them. And we can only cry out to God through Jesus. There is no other authority or being we can turn to, only God who has mercy and grace for all.

The people wanted God to take the snakes away and similarly we want to be taken out of the situation we are in or the problems we face to disappear. But God does not take the snakes away. Instead, he instructs Moses to make a bronze serpent and put it on a pole. Any who had been bitten would not die if they looked at the bronze serpent. They didn't have to; it was their choice.

In John 3:14 Jesus is talking to Nicodemus and he refers to the bronze snake. He tells Nicodemus that *Just as Moses lifted up the snake in the desert, so the son of Man must be lifted up, that everyone who believes in him may have eternal life.*

In the same way when we have snakes or problems that God does not take away; we have to look at Jesus on the cross for our salvation. And it is not just the cross that we become fixated on, we must see beyond to the resurrection.

O what a marvellous God we love and serve!

