



Hung Bronze Serpent

John 3:14

*And as Moses lifted the bronze snake on a pole in the wilderness,
so the Son of Man must be lifted up.*

This story of the bronze snake is written in OT Numbers 21. The Israelites rebelled against God again and again. God sent fiery serpents that bit the people. And many people died. So Moses interceded for the people, and God provided a remedy. It was to make a bronze serpent and lift it up on a pole for all to see. Any stricken person who looked at the bronze serpent would immediately be healed.

This history is very symbolic. The serpent poisoned our whole world. The poison from the snake oozes out from human self-centeredness and prejudice, which we cannot be easily aware of. It isolates the self from others, it hurts the self and others, and the cost is death. You might think, "I do not have any prejudice; I am a fairly righteous person." Let's listen to this story.

One day the sun and the moon fought each other. Sun said, "the leaves have a green color." The moon said, "No, the leaves have a silver color." This time the moon said, "People always sleep. The sun opposed the moon, "No, people always move around." The moon laughed, "why then is the Earth so quiet?" The sun said, "No, they are always so loud." So the wind came and said, "You are fighting unnecessarily. I always blow night and day. I know both worlds. I speak the truth. So far as the sun shows up, the people, and the color of the leaves, all things are just as the sun said. But when night comes, all things are changed. All things are just as the moon said. You only know a part, not all!"

The Wind Spirit will tell us all the truth when we are humble and open to the Spirit. Otherwise, there is isolation, conflict, sadness, fear, anxiety, and violence on the Earth because of self-centeredness. When you lift your eyes in faith and look to Jesus, the serpent's poison melts away. It is changed into the stream of life; the sweet, refreshing, and life-giving power.

I want to share a famous story that I like. In the winter of 1850, a teenage boy could not get to the church he used to attend because of a snowstorm. So he went to the closest church, where the pastor could not come because of the snowstorm. As a young man, he was deeply convicted; for many months, he was very miserable.

A lay leader stood up as a preacher; he didn't prepare for the service. He didn't have much to say, so he kept repeating a part of the scripture: "A man need not go to college to learn to look." He shouted. "Anyone can look - a child can look!"... About that time.. the lay leader looked at the boy sitting in the pew and said, "Young man, you look very miserable. Young man, Look to Jesus Christ!" The Young man did look to Jesus by faith... and the boy's world changed. That was how the great preacher Charles Spurgeon was converted.

It is, for me, the truth too. Daily I can apply this word to my life. Whenever a negative emotion (fear, subtle uneasiness, restlessness, etc.) takes me, I take a deep breath and look to Jesus with my mind's eye. I sing hymnals focusing on Jesus. Then mysteriously, the poison that hurts me starts to be changed into a very sweet, calm, refreshing, clean, and holy stream of energy.

When you focus on Jesus, your focused heart becomes a channel through which the power of healing flows. You can live and stand up again. If it doesn't come immediately, then wait until it comes. For me, it could sometimes take 20 min or 30 min. It works for me always.

Watch your heart right now. How is it?

Grace and love,

Pastor Hae-Jeong