

Numbers 21:21–35
Our Faithful, Powerful, Merciful Lord

Friday, September 20, 2024 • Read Numbers 21:21–35

Questions from the Scripture text: Who sent messengers to whom (v21)? What did they ask/offer (v22, cf. 20:16–17)? How did Sihon respond (v23)? With what result (v24–25)? Why was this so impressive (v26)? How had this been memorialized (v27–29)? But what new occurrence has surpassed Sihon's impressiveness (v30)? And what additional progress did this enable (v31–32)? Then where did they approach (v33)? Who came out against them? Where? Who spoke to whom in v34? What did He tell Moses not to do? What did He tell Moses that He had done? What was another occasion on which they had done that? What did Israel do (v35)? How completely? With what result?

What is the story of the conquest? Numbers 21:21–35 looks forward to the evening sermon on the coming Lord's Day. In these fifteen verses of Holy Scripture, the Holy Spirit teaches us that **the big story of the conquest of the land is the character of God.**

The Lord's faithfulness. Now that the forty years are over, God is beginning to give Israel bits of the promised land. Arad had been completely destroyed (v3), but now Israel takes all of the cities from the Arnon to the Jabbok (v24a), Heshbon and all its villages (v24b), Jazer and all its villages (v32), and all the land of Bashan (v35). God keeps His promises, even to sinners like you are, because He Who has promised is faithful!

The Lord's power. Sihon and Heshbon seemed undefeatable, as memorialized in Amorite parables/poetry (v27–29), but they end up being put to shame in Israelite parables/poetry instead (v30). When Israel comes up against Og, the last of the giants (cf. Deu 3:11), the Lord reassures them that they will dispatch him in the same way that they had dispatched Sihon (by God's own delivering him up, v34). God's power, which has always accomplished all His holy will for His people, is not going to suddenly run out in your case, dear Christian.

The Lord's mercy. There are a couple ways that the Lord's mercy appears here: one subtle and one strange to us. The subtle mercy is the command in v34, "Do not fear." The Lord could have just given Og over, but He offers His people not only victory but also comfort by His Word. God offers you comfort by His Word; receive that Word with a soft heart, and enjoy the comfort that He gives by it! The strange mercy is the completeness of the destruction in v35. This mercy seems "strange" to us, because we don't value God's holiness enough to understand either how offensive and wrath-demanding our sin is (cf. v2–3), or how dangerous it is for us to be affected by other sinners (cf. Deu 20:18). Even with respect to our own selves, it is the Lord's mercy to us that commands that we ruthlessly exterminate everything from within us that is opposed to Him.

What promises are you tempted to worry won't come true? What do you face that seems too big to overcome? To which exhortations to be comforted do you need to be more softhearted? What sin do you need to love yourself more like God loves you, in order to mortify it?

Sample prayer: Lord, we thank You for how Your faithfulness, power, and mercy express themselves in Your saving, sanctifying, and glorifying Your people. Give us to live by faith in You, we ask through Christ, AMEN!

Suggested songs: ARP23B "The Lord's My Shepherd" or TPH216 "Praise to the Lord, the Almighty"

"(The following is a machine-generated transcription. PLEASE BE AWARE of—and patient with—transcribing errors. If there is something confusing or obviously erroneous, you are invited to listen to the audio recording via hopewellarp.org)"

Numbers. 21 verses 21-35. These are God's words. Then Israel sent Messengers to see Han King the Emirates saying, let me pass through your land we will not turn aside into fields or Vineyards. We will not drink water from Wells. We will go by the King's Highway until we have passed through your territory.

But seahon would not allow Israel to pass through his territory. So sihan gathered all his people together and went out against Israel in the wilderness. They came to jahazha and fought against Israel, then, Israel defeated him. With the edge of the sword and took possession of his land from Arnon to the jaddock.

As far as the border of Ammon, for the border of the people of Ammon was fortified, So, Israel took all these cities and Israel dwelt. In all the cities of the amorites and heshbin and in all its Villages. For hushpin was the city of sihan King of the amorites who had fought against the former king of Moab and had taken.

All his land from his hand as far as the Arden. Therefore those who speak in Proverbs say. Come to heshman, let it be built. Let the city of sehan be repaired. For fire, went out from heshman a flame, from the city of seahon, it consumed. R of Moab, the Lords of the heights of the Arden woe to you.

Moab you have perished, a people of kamosh, he has given his sons as fugitives and his daughters into captivity to see Han King of the amrites. But we have shot at them hashman has perished. As far as dibon then we laid waste, as far as nofa Which reaches to mediba Thus Israel, dwelt in the land of the amorites.

Then Moses sent to Spire jazer. And they took its Villages and drove out the amorites who were there. When they turned and went up by the way, to Bashan. So all King of Bashan went out against them. He and all his people to battle at adre Then you always said to Moses do not fear Hind.

For, I have delivered him into your hand. With all his people and his land and you shall do to him as you did to see Han King of the amorites, who dwelt ashman. They defeated him, his sons and all his people. Until there was no Survivor left him. And they took possession.

Of his land. Amen. So far the reading of gods inspired and in Aaron toward Here, we see that God is faithful to his promises. For the first time since God promised. Abraham Abram the land. Back in Genesis 12, even For the first time they have possession of cities.

The children of Abraham, the children of Isaac, the children of Israel. Are now possessing and dwelling in cities. God keeps His promises. The 40 years. Of wandering or over the penalty has been paid. And now that the penalty has been paid God. Turning Israel from their sin. This reminds us of the interaction with Edom.

Just a few passages ago. even down to the sending to see Han and saying, Let's let us pass through your land. We will not Turn aside into fields or Vineyards or drink from your Wells Etc. We'll use the King's Highway. Is almost identical to what they said to eat them before.

And as we see also from Deuteronomy chapter 3, this is not done. Resistance against or tension with. what the Lord has promised and this is done in. interaction with the Lord. We'll see when we get to Deuteronomy 3. They are praying and the Lord is talking to them.

And so forth.

And so one of the big differences here, Is that they are able to take this land. And that's a pretty big deal. Because not only does the Lord Express faithfulness and giving them to walk with him and in keeping his promises to start. To give them to dwell, to dwell to possess.

We see That language in three different places. Israel dwelt in all the cities verse 25, Israel. Dwelt in the land of the amorites verse 31 Israel took possession of his land. Verse 35. Not only does the Lord display his faithfulness, he displaces power. There was this, Of.

Victories here. Those who spoke in Parables or poetry. New King James translates verse 27, using the word. Proverbs. But the poet historians really. saying of Moab as the

people of kamosh,

Being soundly defeated. By Sihon, who was headquartered in Heshbon. And so you have that. Amorite, poetry, that Amorite history in verses 28 to 29. And Israel now has adopted a couple of stanzas from the Amorite historical poem and then added their own. Because, The Heshbonites. Under Sihon who had soundly defeated Moab.

the Moabites, the people of Hamath. Have now been soundly defeated themselves. But we have shot at them has been has perished as far as De Bond, And it is, of course, the Lord who has done this. We'll see that more because more detail details are given about the defeat of Sihon when we get to Deuteronomy chapter 3.

So we'll see that more there but you can even see it here. Because verse 34 picks that up, we when he is faced with OG and Yahweh said to Moses, do not fear Him. I have delivered him into your hand with all his people and his land and you shall do to him as you did to see Han King of the Amorites, who dwelt at Hashphen And so one of the points here is not just that the Lord is faithful but that the Lord is powerful.

What is there that he brings you to as Yahweh the creator of Heaven and Earth? The Sovereign Lord over all things. What is there that he brings you to that? He cannot bring you through. Of course, the answer is nothing. And so he has power to defeat Sihon. Had previously crushed.

Moabites, he has power to defeat OG. Is famous in our household, is the tallest man that any of us know, of from the Bible because his bed was nine cubits. In order to fit him, it had to be 13 and a half feet long. And Deuteronomy 3, when it gives more details is going to identify him as the last of the Giants.

And so the Lord is not just faithful, but powerful. The greatest, most intimidating, men, men who are whose ability and power reach an almost mythical stature to other people, they are nothing. They are nothing. Before the Lord who has taken us as his own dear people, the Lord who has reversed our enmity against him by destroying the enmity, in Christ.

And who takes up our cause as his because he has joined us to himself. The Lord who rules over us. And is not just subdued them us to himself, but who defeats all of his and our enemies. We need to remember that today. There are not 13 and a half foot tall men.

But there are situations and there are people. that in our hearts and minds loom. Large undefeatable almost mythical in their power. And that's just rubbish. Before the truth of reality, the truth of reality. Is that they are nothing. Before the Lord. So the Lord is faithful, the Lord is powerful.

He's also merciful You know, they were going to end up in battle. Anyway, they had turned and gone up by the way to Bashan and OG has had brought all his people out. They could have just the Lord, could have just won the battle for them without talking to Moses.

He could have just kind of providentially. And granted that in the battle things went to Israel's way. gave them sustained them. With courage and ability, they knew not from where it came, but the Lord wanted them to know from where it came. And the Lord wanted them to have that courage as And strength of heart that came from, having the Lord, having his word, hearing his word, responding to his word.

And so there's this wonderful Mercy when Yahweh speaks to Moses he doesn't just give Moses. Information, I have delivered him and you will do to him as you did to see Han Etc, he gives him first a command. He always said to Moses, do not fear Him. The Lord cares.

About the strength of heart, the peace and joy of heart of his people. And so he comes to us And he says, do not fear. Comes to us. And he teaches us to be encouraged to remember who he is, and whom he has made us to be unto himself as his own people.

What he has planned to do. That the reason that there is a today is that it is one of the days that is written in his book for each of Our Lives and it is one of the days that is written in his book for his plan, about bringing many sons to glory in the Lord Jesus Christ.

That's why there is even a today, whatever is in today, whatever we have to do today, whatever we have to face today. He comes and he doesn't just give us information. He's working all things together for our good. He also gives us commands. Fear not. Be strong be courageous rejoice in the Lord.

Always The Lord in his Mercy cares. About The cheerfulness. Of our hearts to give us to live with peace and joy. So, Two big kings. One who had one big battles and one who is just a really big gang. go down. But the main point in the passage for us, Is that our Lord is faithful and that our Lord is powerful and that our Lord is merciful.

And he is ours. These things Came Upon them, but they were written down for our instruction upon whom The ends of the ages have come. So, praise God, that we get to live another day. In Covenant with belonging to our faithful and Powerful. And merciful Lord, let's pray. Our gracious.

God and our heavenly father, we pray that you would Help us by your spirit grant that we would internalize and meditate upon and benefit from, and live, according to the truths. Of this passage. And Grant that. That we would serve you well in this day. Help us, Lord. Until we come again, as a household to worship you the next time.

To live as a household as those who belong to you for we ask it in Christ's name. Amen.