THE SIN THAT HAS FOUND US OUT

Numbers 32:23 “But if you fail to do this, you will be sinning against the LORD; and you may be sure your sin will find you out.”

Can We Apply This?

I Corinthians 10:11These things happened to them as examples and were written down as warnings for us, on whom the culmination of the ages has come.

Setting

Two Amorite Kings, who lived on the east side of the Jordan, Sihon and Og, have been defeated and their territory taken (Numbers 21:21-35).

Balaam has been hired to curse Israel but has blessed them instead. He has then told the Midianites how to defeat Israel, by luring them into idolatry (Numbers chapters 22-24, 30:15).

God has punished the Jewish men who got involved in idolatry at Baal-peor and 24,000 people have died in a plague (Numbers 25:1-9). A census taken after the plague reveals that every man 20 years and older who was numbered in the first census (Numbers 1:45&46) has now died (Numbers 26:63-65) except for Caleb and Joshua.

The Midianites and Balaam have been punished for what they did at Baal-peor (Numbers 31:1-12).

The Request of the Beubenites and Gadites

Numbers 32:1-5 The Reubenites and Gadites, who had very large herds and flocks, saw that the lands of Jazer and Gilead were suitable for livestock. So they came to Moses and Eleazar the priest and to the leaders of the community, and said,…” – the lands the LORD subdued before the people of Israel- are suitable for livestock, and your servants have livestock. If we have found favor in your eyes,” they said, “let this land be given to your servants as our possession. Do not make us cross the Jordan.”

The Response of Moses

Numbers 32:6&7 Moses said to the Gadites and Reubenites, “Shall your countrymen go to war while you sit here? Why do you discourage the Israelites from going over into the land the LORD has given them?

Numbers 32:8&9 “This is what your fathers did when I sent them from Kadesh Barnea to look over the land. After they went up to the Valley of Eshcol and viewed the land, they discouraged the Israelites from entering the land the LORD had given them.”

Numbers 32:10-13 “The LORD’s anger was aroused that day and he swore this oath: ‘Because they have not followed me wholeheartedly, not one of the men twenty years old or more who came up out of Egypt will see the land I promised on oath to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob – not one except Caleb son of Jephunneh the Kenizzite and Joshua son of Nun, for they followed the LORD wholeheartedly.’ The LORD’s anger burned against Israel and he made them wander in the desert forty years, until the whole generation of those who had done evil in his sight was gone.”

Numbers 32:14&15 “And here you are, a brood of sinners, standing in the place of your fathers and making the LORD even more angry with Israel. If you turn away from following him, he will again leave all this people in the desert, and you will be the cause of their destruction.”

The Reubenites and Gadites Respond

Numbers 32:16-19 Then they came to him and said, “We would like to build pens here for our livestock and cities for our women and children. But we are ready to arm ourselves and go ahead of the Israelites until we have brought them to their place. Meanwhile our women and children will live in fortified cities, for protection from the inhabitants of the land. We will not return to our homes until every Israelite has received his inheritance. We will not receive any inheritance with them on the other side of the Jordan, because our inheritance has come to us on the east side of the Jordan.”

Moses Next Reply

Numbers 32:20-22 Then Moses said to them, “If you will do this – if you will arm yourselves before the LORD for battle, and if all of you will go armed over the Jordan before the LORD until he has driven his enemies out before him – then when the land is subdued before the LORD, you may return and be free from your obligation to the LORD and to Israel. And this land will be your possession before the LORD.”

Numbers 32:23 “But if you fail to do this, you will be sinning against the LORD; and you may be sure that your sin will find you out.

The Sin That Will Find You Out

Choosing to not participate in what God has called His people to do, and thereby discouraging others from doing what God has called His people to do.

Choosing to enjoy what has already been achieved, instead of continuing on until the job is done.

2 Samuel 11:1-2 In the spring, at the time when kings go off to war, David sent Joab out with the king’s men and the whole Israelite army. They destroyed the Ammonites and besieged Rabbah. But David remained in Jerusalem. One evening David got up from his bed and walked around on the roof of his palace. From the roof he saw a woman bathing. The woman was very beautiful and David sent someone to find out about her. The man said, “Isn’t this Bathsheba, the daughter of Eliam and the wife of Uriah the Hittite?”

Application

American Christians have sat and enjoyed the freedom and prosperity we have because of the sacrifices and hard labor of others. This is true both in the political and the spiritual realm.

We watch occasionally with detached interest the struggles of God’s people elsewhere to spread the Gospel and the suffering they endure for the cause of Christ. We SIT while they FIGHT.

Our lack of participation discourages those around us in the church, in our community, in our nation and around the world.

And the influence of the church has dwindled in our nation as the result of so many choosing to not participate in what God has called His people to do, to evangelize and make disciples.

And now we want God to do something about a situation that is largely a result of our failure to be salt and light to the world around us.

We need to accept the responsibility that is ours for the situation we are in, humbly ask God to forgive us and then change what needs to be changed.