

Study Guide Numbers 25

Big Idea: The greatest threat to closeness with God is not from the outside but from the inside.

1. List 3 -5 ways that has God provided for Israel up to this point. What has he given them?
2. What has been the nature of Israel's rebellion up to this point? (prior to Chapter 25)
3. Why doesn't God just give up on them after many their cycles of failure? How is his patience rooted in a promise?

Read Numbers 25

4. What is the existential threat to Israel in Chapter 5? How would you summarize their problem?

Read God's warning Exodus 34:10-12

5. How is idolatry a type of seduction?
6. How is God's anger connected to his holiness?
7. How do we, as followers of Jesus, identify and detach ourselves from false idols? (what Tim Keller calls "Counterfeit Gods").

Read Romans 8:1-13 aloud together as a reminder of our true identity in Christ.

Pray Together

Slide # 1

Title Slide

Slide #2

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Slide # 3

God is Keeping His Promise

"I will make you into a great nation,
and I will bless you;
I will make your name great,
and you will be a blessing.
I will bless those who bless you,
and whoever curses you I will curse;
and all peoples on earth
will be blessed through you." Genesis 12:1-3

Slide # 3

Numbers 25, Israel Switches Teams

While Israel was staying in Shittim, the men began to indulge in sexual immorality with Moabite women, who invited them to the sacrifices to their gods. The people ate the sacrificial meal and bowed down before these gods. So Israel yoked themselves to the Baal of Peor. And the LORD's anger burned against them.

The LORD said to Moses, "Take all the leaders of these people, kill them and expose them in broad daylight before the LORD, so that the LORD's fierce anger may turn away from Israel."

So Moses said to Israel's judges, "Each of you must put to death those of your people who have yoked themselves to the Baal of Peor."

Then an Israelite man brought into the camp a Midianite woman right before the eyes of Moses and the whole assembly of Israel while they were weeping at the entrance to the tent of meeting. When Phinehas son of Eleazar, the son of Aaron, the priest, saw this, he left the assembly, took a spear in his hand and followed the Israelite into the

tent. He drove the spear into both of them, right through the Israelite man and into the woman's stomach. Then the plague against the Israelites was stopped; but those who died in the plague numbered 24,000.

The LORD said to Moses, "Phinehas son of Eleazar, the son of Aaron, the priest, has turned my anger away from the Israelites. Since he was as zealous for my honor among them as I am, I did not put an end to them in my zeal. Therefore tell him I am making my covenant of peace with him. He and his descendants will have a covenant of a lasting priesthood, because he was zealous for the honor of his God and made atonement for the Israelites." (NIV)

Slides #4

Israel Switches Teams

1. Not about race, it's about righteousness

Slides # 5

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Slides # 6-8

Israel Switches Teams

1. Not about race, it's about righteousness
2. Not an overnight transformation, but a slow seduction
3. God does not hate people, he hates sin

Slide #9-12

"Idolatry is not just a failure to obey God, it's a setting of the whole heart on something besides God." - Tim Keller

1. Idols can take many different forms in our lives
2. Idols are often hidden or disguised
3. Worshipping idols is dangerous

Slide #13

Big Idea: The greatest threat to closeness with God is not from the outside but from the inside.

Slides #14-16

How do we prevent a modern-day Midian?

1. Be vulnerable and invite people into your blind spots.
2. Idols need to be flushed out with God's love.
3. Prayer is a powerful first step