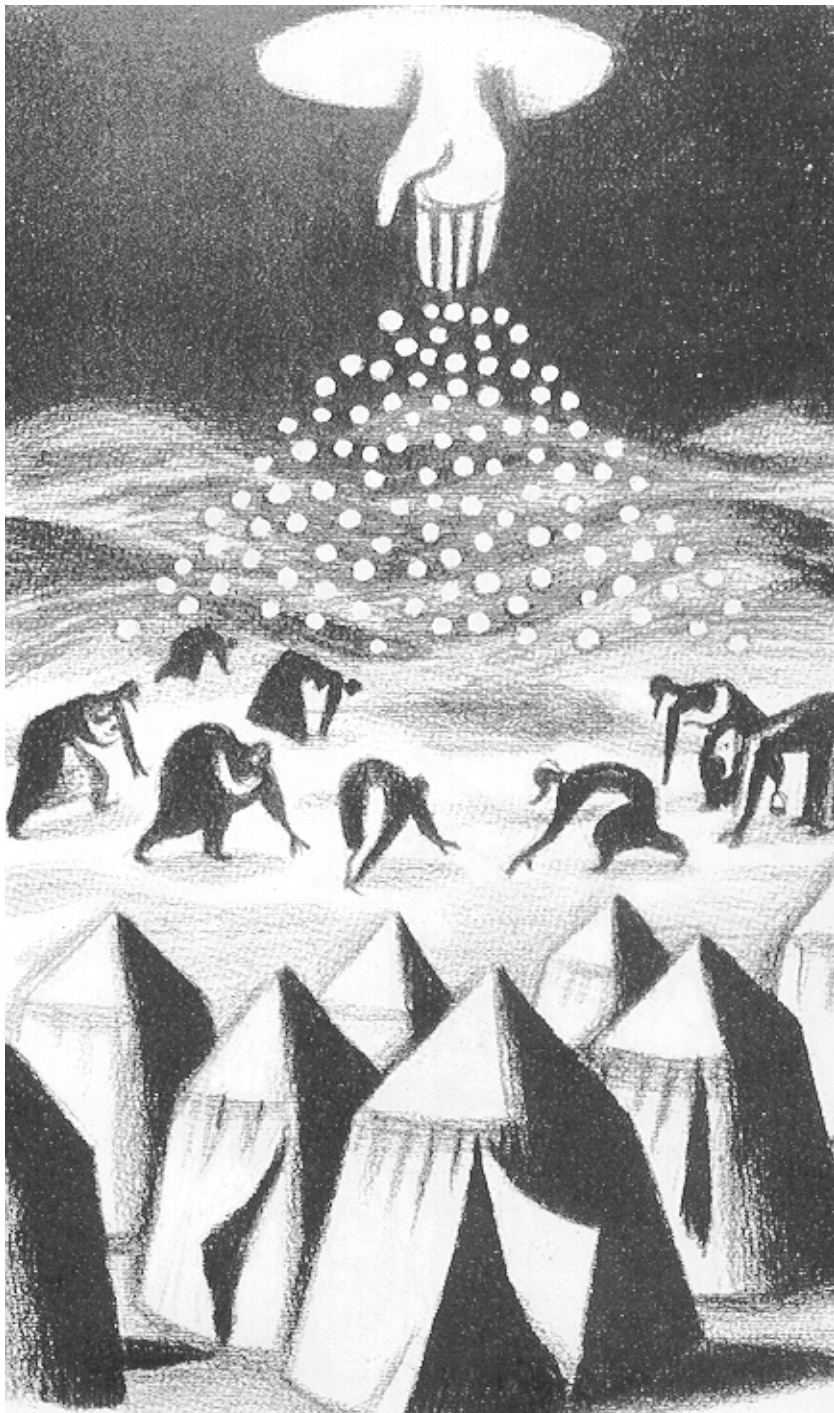


# 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Lent

- First Lesson Numbers 21:4-9 The bronze snake
- Gospel John 3:14-21

# Numbers 21:4-9—4<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Lent

- The people became impatient (their nephesh grew short or powerless) on the way—detour around Edom. Last of complaint/murmuring stories. They are stuck between promise and fulfillment.
- Why have you—**God and Moses**—brought us up out of Egypt to die in the wilderness?
- No bread, no water, and we hate this crummy food (manna)
- Yahweh sent poisonous (fiery) snakes—they bit the people and many Israelites died.



Do you begrudge my generosity?



# Num 21:4-9

- **We have sinned** by speaking against Yahweh and against you, Moses. They also had confessed sin after the incident with the spies. Num 14:40. Aaron and Miriam confessed in Num 12:11
- Pray for us.
- So Moses prayed
- Yahweh responds to Moses: make a poisonous serpent and put it on a standard.
- One combats snakes by enlisting a more powerful snake which can destroy the dangerous one. Modern serums of the same composition as the disease or virus.

# Num 21:4-9

- Anyone who is bitten and looks at this serpent will recover. (Did the snake look back and destroy the poison in the person's body?)
- We often think we have to control the means of how God heals/saves
- Moses made a serpent of bronze, put it on a pole. **Individuals who looked at that serpent lived.**
- **The means is effective only because of the promise.**
- Confession is both corporate (we have sinned) **and** individual (individuals look at the snake).
- Life is more than survival.

# The Afterlife of the Bronze Serpent

- Hezekiah broke in pieces the bronze serpent that Moses had made, for until those days the people of Israel had made offerings to it; it was called Nehushtan. **Nt#**\$xn 2 Kgs 18:4
- We must not put Christ to the test, as some of them did, and were destroyed by serpents. 1 Cor 10:9
- **Wisdom 16** <sup>5</sup> For when the terrible rage of wild animals came upon your people and they were being destroyed by the bites of writhing serpents, your wrath did not continue to the end;
- <sup>6</sup> they were troubled for a little while as a warning, and received a symbol of deliverance....
- <sup>7</sup> For the one who turned toward it was saved, not by the thing that was beheld, but by you, the Savior of all.





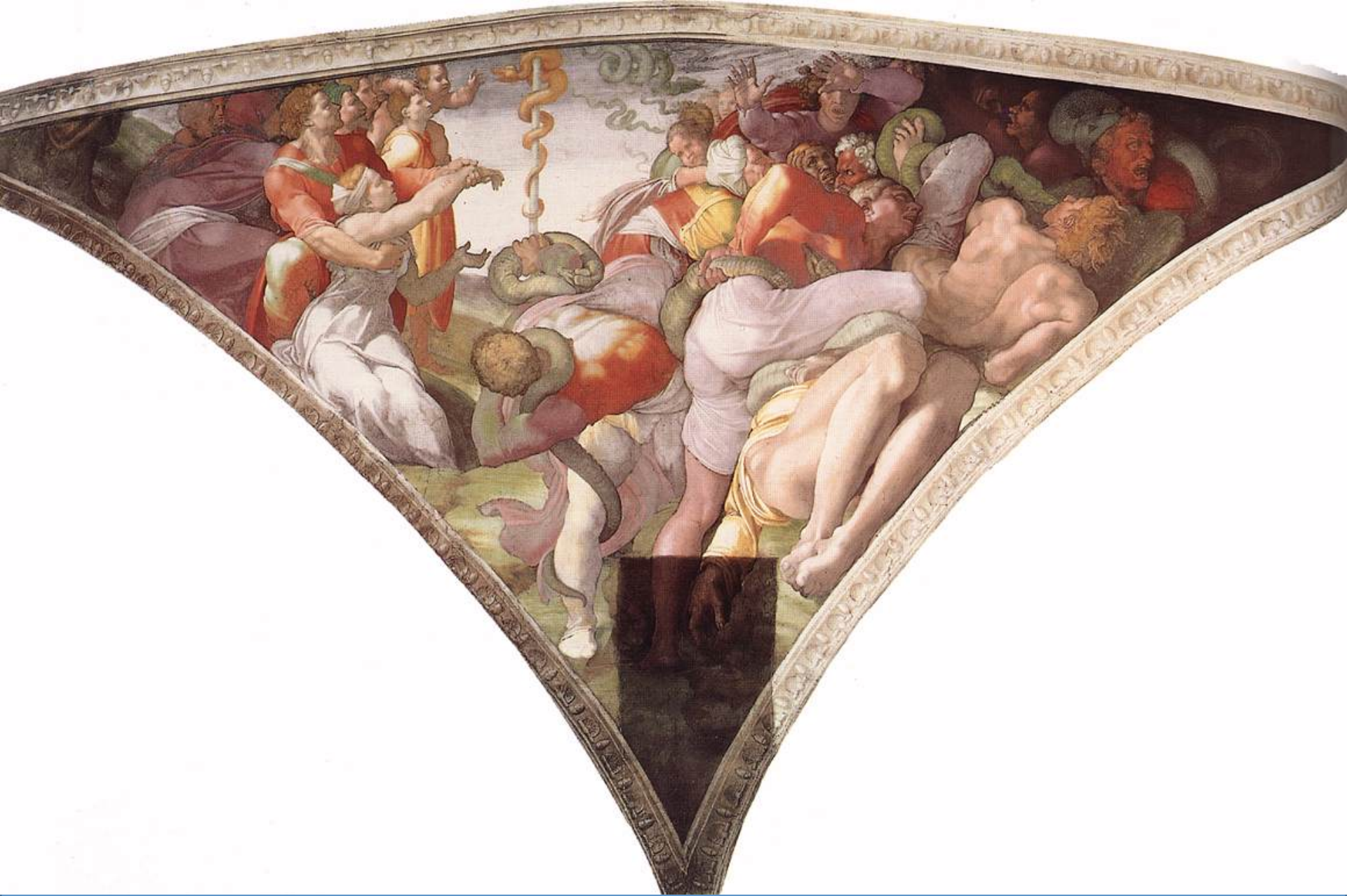


The German Bible before Luther 15c.



Orazio Riminaldi

1625



Brazen serpent  
Sistine chapel by Michelangelo



© JWONG • M







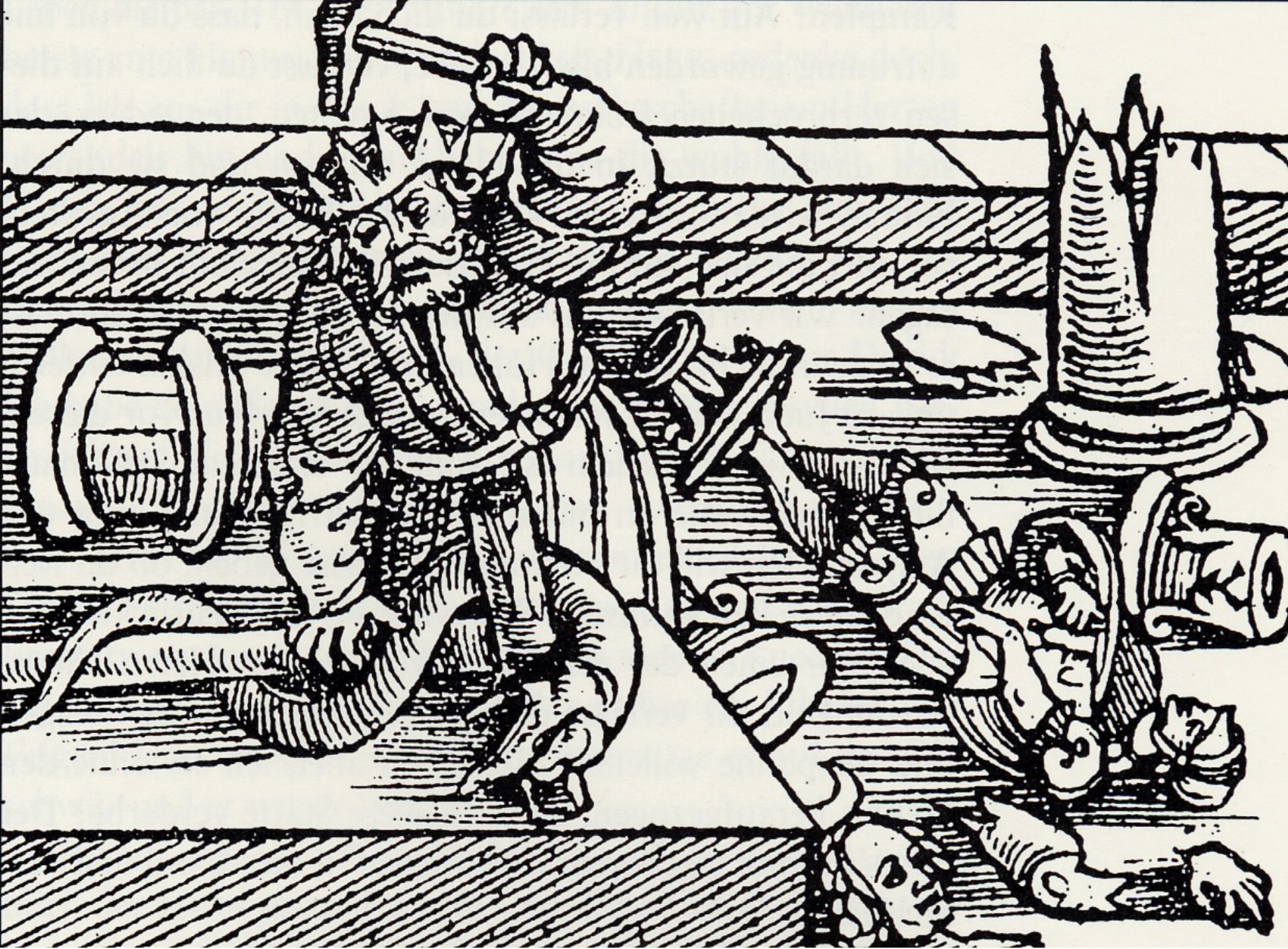
William Blake







Resurrection  
Cemetery









Hugo van der Goes

# John 3:14-21

- <sup>14</sup> And just as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so (οὕτως) must the Son of Man be lifted up, <sup>15</sup> **that whoever believes in him** may have eternal life. John 3:14-15.
- The self sacrifice of Jesus for others is the supreme manifestation of God's love for the world.
- He or she who looks on the serpent will live Num 21:8
- Eternal life: life lived in the unending presence of God
- <sup>28</sup> So Jesus said, "When you have lifted up the Son of Man, then you will realize that I am he, and that I do nothing on my own, but I speak these things as the Father instructed me. John 8:28

# John 3

- <sup>32</sup> And I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all people to myself.“ <sup>33</sup> He said this to indicate the kind of death he was to die.  
John 12:32-33
- Whoever **sees** Jesus **sees** the Father John 14:9
- Everyone who believes in the Son may not perish but have eternal life v. 16.
- Eternal life lasts forever. Eternal life = the depth, the meaning, the fullness of life. Eternal life = knowing God, knowing God = having an intimate relationship with God, fully revealed through the Son. Sin in John is the lack of intimate knowledge of God
- I give them eternal life, and they will never perish John 10:28
- The cross signifies the poison of death and the life-giving power of God

# John 3:16 God **so** loved...

- So = exceedingly, so much, **or** in that manner
- God loved the world **so much** or
- **This is the way** (οὕτως) God loved the world **κόσμον** (back to Genesis 9)
- God did it God's way
- God himself has taken to the pole
- So that all who know they are dying in the wilderness can be healed.