

Look and Live!

Scripture Reading: Num.21:4-9; John 3:14-15; 12:31-34; 8:24, 28; 1 Peter 2:24; Acts 5:30

John 3:14-15: "And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that every one who believes into Him may have eternal life."

I. The following account of the Israel people in their journey in the wilderness reveals God's particular way of saving fallen men who have been poisoned by the Devil Satan and whose destiny is to die in their sins—Num. 21:4-9:

"Then they journeyed from Mount Hor by the way of the Red Sea, to go around the land of Edom; and the people became impatient on the way. And the people spoke against God and against Moses, Why have you brought us up out of Egypt to die in the wilderness? For there is no food and there is no water and our souls loathes this light bread. Then Jehovah sent fiery serpents among the people, and they bit the people, so that many people of Israel died. And the people came to Moses and said, we have sinned, because we have spoken against Jehovah and against you; pray to Jehovah, that He may take away the serpents from us. So Moses prayed for the people. The Jehovah said to Moses, Make a fiery serpent, and set it on a pole; and everyone who is bitten, when he sees it, shall live. And Moses made a bronze serpent and set it on the pole; and if a serpent had bitten any man, when he looked at the bronze serpent, he lived."

II. As the children of Israel sinned against Jehovah in their day, so the people in the world today have committed evil towards God with their contempt and unbelief:

- A. The despise of God is wickedness and the disdain of His word is rebellion—Psa. 10:13; 107:11
- B. Unbelief is evil and the factor of eternal destruction and disobedience is abominable and the cause of God's wrath—Heb. 3:12; Rev. 21:8; Eph. 5:6; Titus 1:16.

III. As the Israel people were bitten by fiery serpents and died as a result of the their transgression against God, so mankind was stung by the old serpent Satan and injected with the poison of its evil nature in his flesh through the disobedience of the first man Adam, the ultimate result of which fall is spiritual and physical death—1 Cor. 15:55-56; Rom. 5:12; Cf. Gen. 3:1-7; Rev. 12:9; 20:2:

- A. When the Israelites sinned, the serpents came and stung them with venomous bites and killed them.
- B. People commit sins because they have been poisoned by the serpentine nature of the Devil, and they are dying and will die because of their sins—Rom. 6:23; James 1:15:
 1. The sting of death is sin—1 Cor. 15:56.
 2. Death entered into the world through sin—Rom. 5:12a.
 3. Death was passed on to all men because all have sinned—Rom. 5:12b.
 4. Death reigned through sin and sin reigned in death—Rom. 5:14.
 5. The wages of sin is death—Rom. 6:23.

IV. As God instructed Moses to set a bronze serpent on a pole so that every Israelite who was bitten would live upon seeing that serpent, so God's way of salvation for today's sinful and dying people was the lifting up His own Son Jesus Christ on the cross so that everyone who believes into Him would not perish but have eternal life—Luke 23:33; John 3:14-15:

- A. When Christ was in the flesh, He was only in the likeness of the flesh of sin, and that semblance is equal to the form of the bronze serpent—John 1:14; Rom. 8:3:
 1. That bronze serpent has the form of an actual serpent yet without its venom.

2. Christ shared in flesh and blood but did not participate in the sin of the flesh—2 Cor. 5:21; Heb. 4:15.
- B. The lifted-up bronze serpent is a type of the Lord Jesus who was hung on the cross to bear God's judgment (bronze signifies judgment) for the sin-poisoned people—Gal. 3:13; 1 Peter 2:24:
1. As our Savior Christ bore up our sins in His body on the cross for our propitiation—Rom. 3:25; Heb. 2:17.
 2. As our Substitute Christ became a curse for us on the cross for our redemption—Rom. 3:24; Titus 2:14.
 3. Christ was even made sin—not sinful—on our behalf to be judged by God that we might become God's righteousness in Him—2 Cor. 5:21.
- C. The bronze serpent also indicates that Christ was lifted up in the flesh on the cross to deal with Satan who is the source of sin, who is the ruler of the world, and who has the power of death—John 8:24, 28; 12:32.
1. The lifted-up Son of Man—the I am—in the form of the serpent can save sinners not only from sin but from the source of sin, the devil—Heb. 2:14
 2. Through His death in the likeness of the flesh of sin, Christ destroyed the devil who is in man's flesh—Heb. 2:14.
 3. The Lord as the Son of Man was lifted up for the casting out of Satan, the ruler of the world—John 12:31-33; 16:11.
 4. By judging Satan in this way, the Lord also judged the world which is hanging on Satan—John 12:31.
- D. The bronze serpent on the pole as a type of the crucified Christ further signifies that His death annulled the serpentine nature within fallen mankind, thus delivering them from the slavery of sin and of death—Rom. 8:3; Heb. 2:14-15.
1. God sent His own Son in the likeness of the flesh of sin and by putting Him on the cross condemned sin in the flesh—Rom. 8:3.

2. Because sin has been annulled and the devil has been abolished through Christ's crucifixion, death is nullified and no longer reigns—2 Tim. 1:10; Rom. 5:17; 1 Cor. 15:26, 55.

V. Just as those children of Israel who were bitten by the fiery serpents looked at the bronze serpent and lived, today we can "look at" the Lord Jesus—the crucified Christ—by believing into Him and be born anew—John 3:14-15, 6-7:

- A. We who are descendants of Adam, who has been poisoned by Satan with the serpentine nature of sin, whose destiny is to die forever, can now receive the Son of God so that we would not perish but have eternal life—John 3:15-16; 1:12.
- B. "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men to Myself." Dear friends, Jesus Christ our Savior has died on the cross for your sins! There is no need for you to die from the poison of sin! Just LOOK and LIVE!—John 12:32.

VI. A sinner's prayer:

"Lord Jesus, I am a sinner who has been bitten by the devil with the poison of sin and who is dying. But you have been lifted up and are drawing me to yourself. I am now at the foot of the cross to behold you as the real bronze serpent. Lord Jesus, thank you as the all-inclusive one who has died for me that I as the sinful one may live. My Savior and Redeemer, heal me and give life to me now! Your word says, "when he looked...he lived." I trust in those words. I want also to look and live. I confess my sinfulness and ask you to forgive me of my transgressions. Do cleanse me with your precious blood. Lord Jesus, I believe into you. Lord Jesus, I receive you into my heart. Thank you for listening to my prayer. Thank you for coming into me. I praise you for the gift of eternal life, for making me a child of God. Amen."