

Looking at the Bronze Serpent

Numbers 21:4~9

The Israelites had a very hard time living in the wilderness. It was so difficult that they started complaining to God about it. They spoke against Moses, saying,

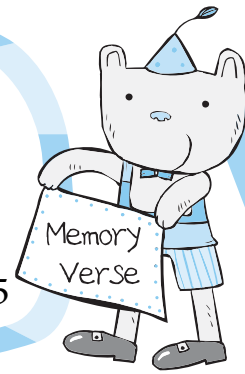
"Why have you brought us out of Egypt just to die in the wilderness? There is no food and no water, and we hate this worthless bread."

But the Lord got angry at their complaining and sent fiery serpents to the people of Israel. Many of them were bitten by them, and because of this, many of the Israelites died. Seeing this, the Israelites realized that they sinned against God and asked Moses to ask for forgiveness, saying,



And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life.

John 3:14~15



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"We have sinned, for we have spoken against the Lord and against you. Please pray to the Lord that He take away the serpents from us!"

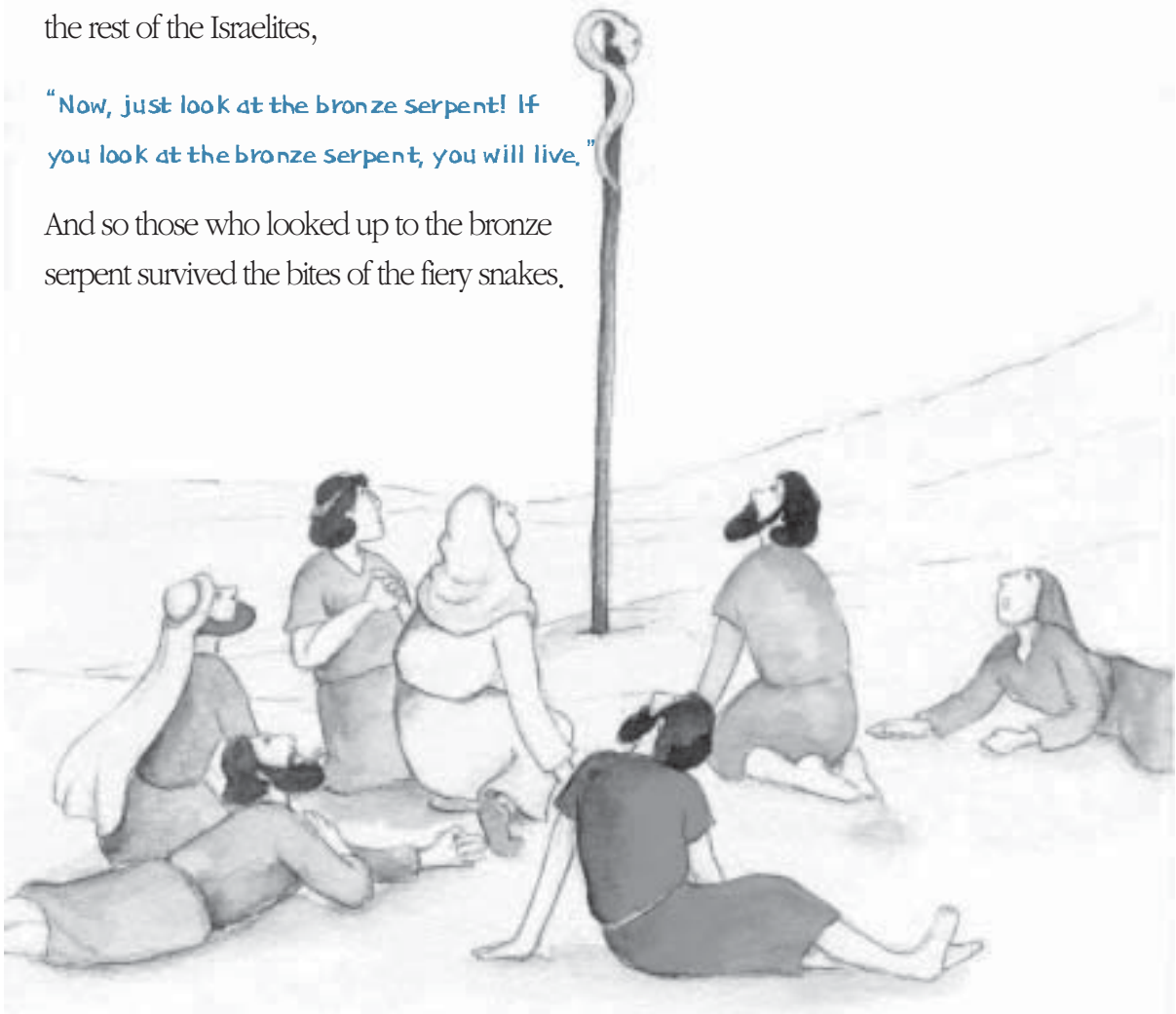
So Moses prayed for the people. Then the Lord said to Moses,

"Make a fiery serpent and set it on a pole. It shall be that whoever looks onto it shall live."

So Moses made a bronze serpent, set it on top of a pole so that everyone could see it, and told the rest of the Israelites,

"Now, just look at the bronze serpent! If you look at the bronze serpent, you will live."

And so those who looked up to the bronze serpent survived the bites of the fiery snakes.





Today's Study

1. Let's Look at the Bronze Serpent

Why did the Lord send the fiery serpents to bite the Israelites?

The Lord still provided the Israelites with a way to live. What was it?



“Then the LORD said to Moses, “make a fiery serpent, and set it on a pole; and it shall be that everyone who is bitten, when he looks at it, shall live.” (Number 21:8)

2. Let's Believe in Jesus



Every person in the world must go to hell if they receive judgment from God. What is the reason?

How can a person, like you or any of your classmates, who is supposed to go to hell instead go to heaven?

As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up; so that whoever will in Him have . (John 3:14-15)

In the same way as how the bronze serpent was set on the pole to save the Israelites of deadly snake bites, Jesus Christ was put on a cross to save us. Those who were bitten by the snakes and believed that the bronze snake could save them looked up at the bronze serpent and ended up living. Likewise, those who believe that Jesus Christ can save them from their deadly sins will be saved and have eternal life.



Today's Lesson

The Way of God

Who among the following victims of the fiery snake bites would be able to live?

Don't be ridiculous! How can people survive deadly snake bites like these just by looking at some bronze statue?



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Ah! God has provided me with a way to survive! I will look at the bronze serpent and live!



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I don't know about the bronze serpent, but maybe I should get some medicine first.



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Who among the following children have the proper heart to be saved?

I'm not an idiot! How on earth is Jesus supposed to "save me?"



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Oh, my heart is in misery. I know I am sinful and unworthy to go to heaven. There's nothing I can do to make things better! But Jesus! He can save me! Please help me, God, to be forgiven of my sins!



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Yeah, Jesus was a good guy. But anyways, I live a good life compared to everyone else, so I'm sure I'll be going to heaven. No problem here!



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God provided the Israelites with a way for them to survive the deadly bites of the serpents. To the Israelites, it didn't make sense and seemed impossible, but it was the easiest, only way they could survive the bites. There is a way God provides for people to be saved. Man can only be saved by obeying the way that God provided, which is in believing that Jesus Christ died in place of us, because of all of our sins.

"He who believes in the Son has eternal life; but he who does not obey the Son will not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him" (John 3:36)



Did you know?

* The Worshippers of the Bronze Serpent

After the incident of the fiery serpents, the people of Israel had kept the bronze serpent that Moses made and started worshipping it as an idol. The worshipping of the bronze serpent had gone on for about 700 years until King Hezekiah, the 12th king of Israel, made them stop (2 King 18:4). The Israelites had misunderstood, thinking that it was the power of the bronze serpent that saved their lives in the desert.

Of course, the bronze serpent had no power in itself. It was simply the power of the promise of the word of God that could let the Israelites live. Today, many people want to and try to believe in things they can see rather than just the words of God. Unfortunately, that is idolatry. Only when we believe in the words of God can His power be unleashed.

Teacher

Parents