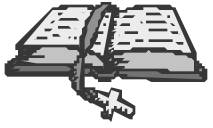


# The Bronze Snake

Numbers 21:4-9



## bible verse

COMMITTING TO MEMORY

# Ms

main street

May 16, 2010

## John 3:14-15

Just as Moses lifted up the snake in the desert, so the Son of Man must be lifted up, that everyone who believes in him may have eternal life.



## story lesson

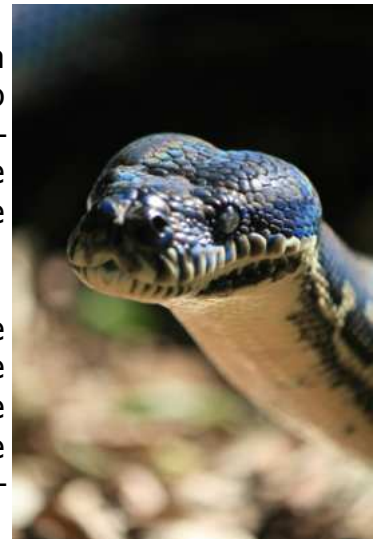
BIBLE STORY

The Israelites never learn. Then again, neither do we. Here we are again, reporting another complaining and grumbling Israel story. Does this sound like a broken record? They did not have records back then, but I'm sure that phrase would be in the Bible if there were.

As they were traveling, the Israelites got impatient (I wonder what they got impatient about?). The people spoke out against God and against Moses (uh-oh...here we go again). "Why have you brought us up out of Egypt to die in the desert? There is no bread! There is no water! And we detest this miserable food!" (Numbers 21:5).

Pause. What do you think comes next? There has always been a pattern to this, right? The people complain, the Lord begins to judge, Moses and Aaron pray to intercede, and then the judgment stops. Do you think the pattern has changed? (Note: we will see this again and again throughout the whole of Israelite history.)

The Lord sends "venomous snakes among them; they bit the people and many Israelites died" (Numbers 21:6). The people then acknowledge their sin saying: "We sinned when we spoke against the Lord and against you. Pray that the Lord will take the snakes away from us. So Moses prayed for the peo-



ple" (Numbers 21:7).

Now this is a little different than the previous patterns we have seen. This time the people actually acknowledged the sin that they committed and asked for the prayerful intervention of Moses. Interesting.

The remedy? "The Lord said to Moses, 'Make a snake and put it up on a pole; anyone who is bitten can look at it and live.' So Moses made a bronze snake and put it up on a pole. Then when anyone was bitten by a snake and looked at the bronze snake, he lived" (Numbers 21:8-9).

Later, in the New Testament, Jesus uses this story when he is talking with Nicodemus in John 3. "Just as Moses lifted up the snake in the desert, so the Son of Man must be lifted up, that everyone who believes in him may have eternal life" (John 3:14-15).



## life application

MAKING IT REAL

### The Theology of Looking

Faith and belief. What are they? Just *looking*. According to the Merriam-Webster Online Dictionary, *to believe* means: "a state or habit of mind in which trust or confidence is placed in some person or thing."

- What are you *looking* at?
- Where does your confidence lie?
- Where does your hope lie?

To have faith means: "the confident assurance that what we hope for is going to happen...the evidence of things we cannot yet see" (Heb 11:1 NLT). What are you *looking* at? Yourself? Or Jesus, high and lifted up, like that bronze serpent in the wilderness? The people were healed by *looking* at it.

Will you be healed by *looking* at Jesus?



## questions

REMEMBERING

### 1. What were the Israelites growing impatient about?

Not being in the Promised Land, not being in Egypt, not having bread or water, and they did not like the manna

### 2. How did the LORD God punish the Israelites?

"Then the LORD sent venomous snakes among them; they bit the people and many Israelites died" (Numbers 21:6).

### 3. What did the people ask Moses to do?

"We sinned when we spoke against the LORD and against you. Pray that the LORD will take the snakes away from us (Numbers 21:7).

### 4. What did the LORD God tell Moses to make?

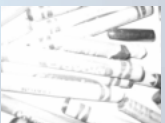
A high pole with a snake on it

### 5. How did the LORD God use this to help the Israelites?

"...when anyone was bitten by a snake and looked at the bronze snake, he lived" (Numbers 21:9).

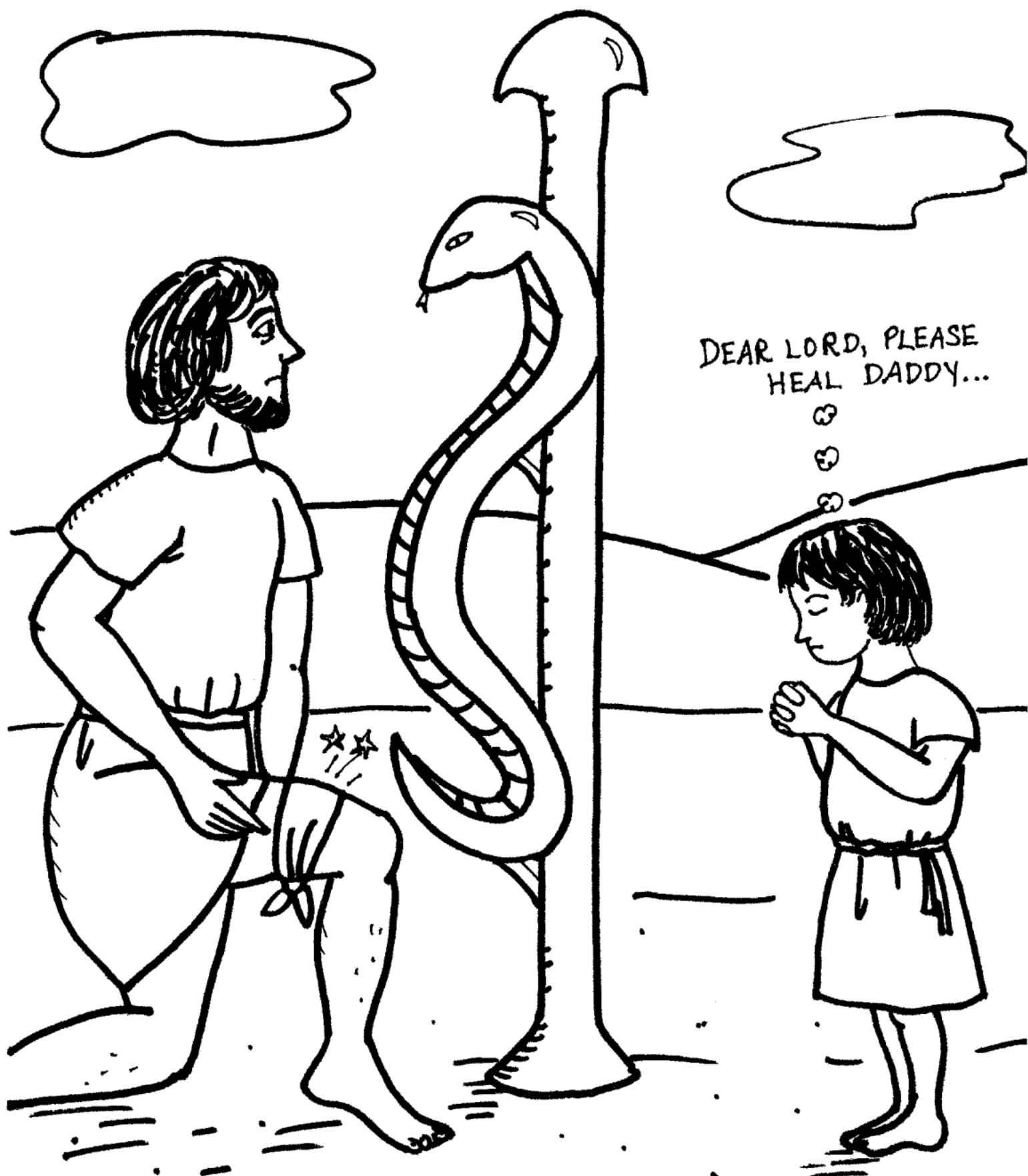
### 6. Where does Jesus talk about this story in the New Testament? And who is He talking to?

In John chapter 3 - to Nicodemus



## coloring sheet

ON THE NEXT PAGE



**The Bronze Snake**