

A Reading from the Book of Numbers

From Mount Hor the Israelites set out by the way to the Red Sea, to go around the land of Edom; but the people became impatient on the way. 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 no water, and we detest this miserable food." Then the Lord sent poisonous serpents among the people, and they bit the people, so that many Israelites died. The people came to Moses and said, "We have sinned by speaking against the Lord and against you; pray to the Lord to take away the serpents from us." So Moses prayed for the people. And the Lord said to Moses, "Make a poisonous serpent, and set it on a pole; and everyone who is bitten shall look at it and live." So Moses made a serpent of bronze, and put it upon a pole; and whenever a serpent bit someone, that person would look at the serpent of bronze and live.

The Word of the Lord

Please join me in the Psalm

- 1 Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good, *
and his mercy endures for ever.

- 2 Let all those whom the Lord has redeemed proclaim *
that he redeemed them from the hand of the foe.

- 3 He gathered them out of the lands; *
from the east and from the west, from the north and
from the south.

- 17 Some were fools and took to rebellious ways; *
they were afflicted because of their sins.

- 18 They abhorred all manner of food *
and drew near to death's door.

- 19 Then they cried to the Lord in their trouble, *
and he delivered them from their distress.

- 20 He sent forth his word and healed them *
and saved them from the grave.

- 21 Let them give thanks to the Lord for his mercy *
and the wonders he does for his children.

- 22 Let them offer a sacrifice of thanksgiving *
and tell of his acts with shouts of joy.

A Reading from the Book of Ephesians

You were dead through the trespasses and sins in which you once lived, following the course of this world, following the ruler of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work among those who are disobedient. All of us once lived among them in the passions of our flesh, following the desires of flesh and senses, and we were by nature children of wrath, like everyone else. But God, who is rich in mercy, out of the great love with which he loved us even when we were dead through our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ-- by grace you have been saved-- and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, so that in the ages to come he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. For by grace you have been saved through faith, and this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God-- not the result of works, so that no one may boast. For we are what he has made us, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand to be our way of life.

The Word of the Lord