

The Bronze Serpent

As the children of Israel traveled toward the Promised Land, they “became _____ on the way” (Num 21:4).

“Why have you brought us up out of Egypt to die in the wilderness? For there is no food and no water, and we _____ this _____ food.” (Num 21:5)

In response? The LORD sent “_____” that bit and killed many. In Numbers 21:7, the people confessed their sin and pleaded with Moses to pray for them.

And the LORD said to Moses, “Make a fiery serpent and set it on a _____, and everyone who is bitten, when he sees it, shall live.” So Moses made a bronze serpent and set it on a pole. And if a serpent bit anyone, he would _____ at the bronze serpent and _____.” (Num 21:8-9)

A fascinating story, but **what does it have to do with our search for our King?**

In John 3, Jesus had a long conversation with a Pharisee named **Nicodemus**, a ruler of the Jews. After telling him, “unless one is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God,” Jesus made a clear connection from the Old Testament to himself.

“And as _____ lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the _____ of Man be lifted up, that whoever believes in him may have _____ life.” (John 3:14-15)

Our King knew exactly why he had come—to be “lifted up from the earth” (John 12:27, 32-33). What a blessing to be able to “look to Jesus” as the “founder and perfecter of our faith” (Heb 12:1-2)!



For Class & Family Discussion:

- At the root of this ugly episode in Numbers 21 is the “impatience” of the people and the complaining that followed. How can impatience and grumbling be absolutely deadly, even for us?
- God offers a number of solutions to the people’s problems throughout the Old Testament, but never anything quite like the bronze serpent. What do you think he was teaching the people?
- What did Jesus mean in John 3:3-5 by his talk of being “born again”?
- What’s the connection between being “born of water and the Spirit” (John 3:5) and believing in the Son of Man that I may have eternal life (John 3:14-15)?
- There’s really good news in John 3:16-17. Why must we be sure to respect its context?
- Practically speaking, what does it mean to “look to Jesus” (Heb 12:1-2)?

