

THE BRONZE SERPENT

By Keith Greer

"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 no water, and our soul loathes this worthless bread. "{Numbers 21:5} God's people were constantly complaining about one thing or another. This time God sent a quick response to their murmuring!

"So the LORD sent fiery serpents among the people, and they bit the people; and many of the people of Israel died." {Numbers 21:6} Once again the people realized they were wrong to speak against God and Moses. Israel sought Moses to pray to God to take away the serpents. What was His reply?

"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. ' So Moses made a bronze serpent, and put it on a pole; and so it was, if a serpent had bitten anyone, when he looked at the bronze serpent, he lived. "{Numbers 21:8,9} The only way for those bitten to live was to look upon that bronze serpent. Two choices-death or life!

It just seems that Israel was constantly testing the longsuffering and patience of God.

Beginning in Egypt they had witnessed first hand the awesome power of God. Crossing the Red Sea, water and manna in the wilderness and last, but not least-wandering forty years for their unbelief that God would give them the promised land! Once again God provided an out for them that their lives might continue through the prayer of Moses.

We too are forgetful people. Christ made reference to this Himself during His public ministry. (John 3:14,15) How many of us need to remember to look up to the cross daily? Do we fully understand what a great sacrifice was made and the cost paid for our salvation? God did not leave us a bronze serpent to remember what He did for us. Our memorial is the Lord's Supper. On each first day of the week we partake of the unleavened bread- His body, and the fruit of the vine-His blood. Why? So we would never forget what was involved in our salvation. I hope, brethren, that the Lord's Day is not the only time we remember that cross. Maybe we need some fiery serpents! ***