

**Read: Numbers 21:4-9**

## Rejoice and Look to Jesus in Faith

### **Numbers 21:4b-9**

But the people grew impatient on the way; they spoke against God and against Moses, and said, "Why have you brought us up out of Egypt to die in the wilderness? There is no bread! There is no water! And we detest this miserable food!"

Then the Lord sent venomous snakes among them; they bit the people and many Israelites died. The people came to Moses and said, "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 people.

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, they lived.

*In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.*

Did you know that a one-dollar bill does not cost one dollar? The Bureau of Engraving and Printing (or B.E.P. for short) makes one-dollar bills in Texas and Washington D.C. The workers at the B.E.P. weave linen and cotton into paper. Then they use special ink to color the paper, so it looks like a dollar bill. If you add up the cost of the linen, the cost of the cotton, and the cost of the ink, can you guess how much it costs? A one-dollar bill costs 7.7 cents.

Of course, if you take a one-dollar bill to the store you can buy more than 7 cents worth of candy. That's because a dollar is worth more than the paper and ink that are used to make it. A one-dollar bill is a promise. It says, "I promise you can trade this paper for one dollar's worth of something you want."

Imagine somebody who doesn't believe that promise. He might say, "This is only worth seven cents. I'll throw it away." That would be crazy! He would miss out on some good things.

A dollar bill is like what God did for the Israelites one time. God loved the Israelites as his special people. But they began to complain about God. The Lord sent venomous snakes into their land so they would learn to not complain. God's lesson worked. The people stopped complaining and asked for help. So God made a promise. He told them to make a statue of a snake and hang it from a pole. Then God promised, "anyone who is bitten can look at it and live" (Numbers 21:8). A metal statue cannot heal a snake bite. But just like a one-dollar bill, the snake wasn't important because of what it was made of. The snake was important because of God's promise. People who looked at the snake were trusting God's promise. "Then when anyone was bitten by a snake and looked at the bronze snake, they lived" (Numbers 21:9).

God saved your life with a promise too. "God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life" (John 3:16).

Money and statues can't save sinners, but Jesus can! That's God's promise. Rejoice, and look to Jesus in faith.

*The questions below are to help families discuss this devotion. The questions are divided by age group as suggestions, but anyone could reflect on any of the questions as they desire.*

### **Questions for the Younger Children**

- What bad thing happened to the Israelites?
- What did God do to save them?

### **Questions for Elementary Age Children**

- What was God teaching the Israelites when he told them to look at a bronze snake?
- What are some ways that Jesus is like the bronze snake? What are some ways he is different?

### **Questions for Middle School and Above**

- How can God use bad things, like snakes, to help people trust him? List some modern-day examples.
- Explain this statement: *Christian faith trusts God's promise even when it doesn't make sense.*

### **Closing Prayer:**

Lord, thank you for your lifesaving promise to take us to heaven. Help us trust in Jesus today and always. Amen.

### **Hymn: CWS 747:1,2 – There Is a Redeemer**

There is a Redeemer, Jesus God's own Son,  
Precious Lamb of God, Messiah, Holy One.  
Thank you, O my Father, for giving us your Son  
and leaving your Spirit till the work on earth is done.

Jesus, my Redeemer, Name above all names,  
Precious Lamb of God, Messiah, Hope for sinners slain.  
Thank you, O my Father, for giving us your Son  
and leaving your Spirit till the work on earth is done.