

**Wednesday, September 9, 2020**  
**Devotional Thoughts from Pastor Jim Murr...**

**"Then the Lord sent fiery serpents among the people, and they bit the people, so that many people of Israel died. And the people came to Moses and said, 'We have sinned, for we have spoken against the Lord and against you.**

**Pray to the Lord, that he take away the serpents from us.'**

**So Moses prayed for the people. And the Lord said to Moses, 'Make a fiery serpent and set it on a pole, 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 look at the bronze serpent and live."**

*Numbers 21: 6-9*

I say, at least it's easier to see a snake coming at you than it is to see COVID-19 floating in the air toward you. But then again, we often think we have it worse than other people do. The poisonous snakes were sent among the Israelites because they were complaining so much about their hardships in the wilderness after they left slavery in Egypt. They had even begun to say that slavery in Egypt was better than freedom in the wilderness. I guess the snakes were supposed to help the Israelites become thankful again after the snakes were gone, or at least after there was a remedy/vaccine for the snake bites. It's a little bit like the person who keeps hitting his finger with a hammer and his friend asks him why he is doing that, and the person with the hammer responds, "Because it feels so good when I stop."

I know I had very little, if any, appreciation for a non-pandemic world when we were living in a non-pandemic world. I still managed to find other things to complain about. However, once this COVID-19 pandemic is over, I will be done complaining forever!! I have learned my lesson! Do you believe me? Me neither. But I do hope I will have learned SOMETHING about being grateful for the little things in life once the pandemic is over. Things like: no mask-wearing, not stopping someone from getting so close to me, not scrubbing my hands raw all day. Remember those days? Will those days be back? I pray they will. It will be up to the mercy of God.

What if someone made a large COVID-19 virus, maybe 5 feet by 7 feet and put it up on a pole, and you were told that if you get COVID-19, all you had to do was look at the facsimile of the virus, and you would immediately get better. Would you believe it? Would you try it? That was what the Israelites were told to do if they were bitten by a snake. Just look at the bronze snake and you will get better. I wonder how many scoffed at such an idea and just died instead.

By the way, God put Jesus up on a "pole," otherwise known as a cross, and He has said, "Anyone who is a sinner" (that's all of us) "can just put their faith in Jesus, and they will be completely forgiven, and they will go to heaven." I wonder how many people in history have scoffed at such an idea and just went to hell instead. Sadly, many millions (or even billions) have. But this is God's plan of salvation for you and me. Just look upon Jesus and you will be saved. Trust in Him for what He has done for your salvation and you will live with God forever in heaven.

Jesus said, "And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whoever believes in him may have eternal life." (*John 3: 14-15*)

God's Peace!  
Pastor Jim