

LOOK AND LIVE

If you received a deadly snake bite, what would you do, submit to the prescribed treatment or question and doubt it? Would you first have to have all of your medical questions answered about the treatment? Would you rely on your own ability to provide the needed cure? Or would you do what common sense tells you to do, realize that you are in a serious condition and about to die, and without further delay accept the offered cure for what it is, the only remedy, your only hope.

In the Old Testament portion of the Bible we read where the people of Israel faced just a situation. In Numbers, chapter 21, the people of Israel rebelled against God and Moses, and as retribution God sent poisonous serpents among the people, and as they were bitten they died. In God's mercy He provided a cure for the snake bite by instructing Moses to make a brass serpent like the ones biting the people. After the brass serpent was made, Moses put it on a pole and lifted it up, and those who were bitten by a snake, if they would **look** to the uplifted brass serpent they would live. This was an act of obedience and faith by the one bitten.

The New Testament tells us that Jesus was lifted up for all to behold and to be healed. This healing, however, is not from a snake bite but rather from the ravages of sin. You see, we all inherited Adam's sin nature (Ro. 5:12) and because of that sin nature we commit the acts of sin. None of us are exempt - we are all sinners because of the acts of sin (Ro. 3:10-18), the wages of which are physical and spiritual death (Ro. 6:23), judgment (He. 10:27), and eternal damnation in hell for those who die without receiving Jesus Christ as personal Saviour. Our problem is similar to the one that the people in Numbers 21 had - we can't do anything to save ourselves. We are like two men in quicksand - neither can save the other, and the more self-effort struggle is applied, the deeper we sink. So what are we to do then? Hear the Word of God in John 3:14-16, "And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up: That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life. For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." This simply means that any person who will repent of his sins and believe that Jesus Christ shed His blood and died on the Cross of Calvary as the full and final payment for the sin debt that we owe, and receive Him as personal Saviour, that person will be saved for all eternity. Spiritual healing and deliverance from the grasp of sin is possible, today, right now - but only through salvation in Jesus Christ. The "old" way of life and habits are to be let go, because the repentant sinner has become a new creation in Christ. Hear again God's Word, "Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away: behold, all things are become new." (2 Co. 5:17) Once a person receives Jesus Christ as personal Saviour, he is not perfect, just forgiven, having the responsibility to live for Christ (2 Co. 5:15; 1 Co. 6:19-20).

The people in Numbers 21 were to look upon the brass serpent that Moses had made on God's directions for their deliverance. No other substitute would do, no other birds - only that which God provided was acceptable. The same is true today my friend. For our deliverance we are "Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith: ..." (He. 12:2). We are not looking to good works, people, moral living, the church, baptism, the Mass or anything else. We are looking to Jesus Christ, and He alone. Will you do that today, my friend? Will you repent of your sin and look to Jesus Christ, putting your faith and trust in Him alone? If you do, you will be forgiven and saved today, and for all eternity. Those who come to Christ for salvation will be saved (Ro. 10:13), having life eternal in Him (I Jn. 5:11-13). Then seek out a good, independent, fundamental Baptist, Bible believing and Bible preaching church. Attend it regularly that you might be spiritually fed from God's Word to help you grow spiritually strong.

~Richard A. Ciarrocca