

Bitten By Snakes

The Israelites were not very smart. That's because they were people, and people aren't very smart, especially when it comes to things pertaining to God. For example, there is a short story you can read in *Numbers 21*. At this point in Israel's history, they had experienced many awesome examples of God's power and deliverance (*10 plagues in Egypt; the parting of the Red Sea; manna from heaven; water from a rock, etc.*). The immediate context of the story in *Numbers 21* is the total defeat and destruction of the king of Arad, his people and towns, by the Israelites.

God had answered their prayers for help (*21.1-3*). Evidently, they had very short memories. As they traveled on from Arad, skirting around the nation of Edom, they became impatient with Moses and God and began voicing their negative opinions against them (*21.4-5*). They must have had the "what-have-you-done-for-me-lately" syndrome. They asked dumb questions like, "Why have you brought us up out of Egypt to die in the desert?" They complained, "There is no bread! There is no water! We detest this miserable food!" Sounds a lot like some of us when God doesn't do for us what we think He should, doesn't it? How quickly we forget the blessings of God.

Most of the time, thankfully, God is patient with people (*2 Peter 3.9*). However, this wasn't one of those times. God sent venomous snakes among them, and the snakes did what the snakes were sent to do – bite people. Many of the Israelites died (*21.6*). The people learned the hard way that complaining against God is not a good idea. Never has been, never will be. They also learned that confessing their sins to God is a good idea. So, when they confessed their sin, Moses prayed for the people, and God answered his prayer (*21.7*).

But instead of sending the venomous snakes away from the Israelites, he had Moses make a bronze snake and mount it on a pole. God said, "anyone who is bitten can look at it and live" (*21.8*). The snakes still did what snakes do, but the people learned to trust God for deliverance from death by doing what God told them to do. Anyone who looked at the bronze snake lived. Surely there weren't people stubborn enough to refuse to look at it!

There's more to the story, but it's not about the Israelites, it's about us. Their story has become our story. We, too, sin against God, all of us (*Romans 3.23*). The old serpent, Satan (*Revelation 12.9*), "bites" us with temptations which leads us to die spiritually (due to our sins). Yet, like them, God offers us hope. He doesn't take away the temptations, but He does provide us a way to avoid death. "Just as Moses lifted up the snake in the desert, so the Son of Man must be lifted up, that everyone who believes in him may have eternal life" (*John 3.14-15*). Jesus is our only hope when bitten by Satan. Jesus was lifted up on the cross so that we can look to him (*John 12.32*) to overcome the deaths Satan

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SPIRITUAL FOOD SOURCES

TV Programs

"In Search of the Lord's Way" with Phil Sanders at 7:00 a.m. Sundays
"Good News Today" at 7:30 a.m. Sundays
"A Bible Answer" at 8:00 a.m. Sundays – WQQQ-CW

Internet

Capechurchofchrist.org (<https://www.facebook.com/CapeChurchofChrist/>)
Sundays at 10:00 a.m., Sundays at 5:00 p.m. and Wednesdays at 7:00 p.m.

From Harding University: Collegechurchofchrist.org
(<https://www.facebook.com/CollegeChurchofChrist/>) Sundays at 8 a.m.

CHILDREN'S HOME

The new list of items includes Chocolate Chips, Instant Potatoes, Canned Mushrooms, Powdered Sugar, Snack Crackers and Rotel. The next pick up will be in April.

THANK YOU: We received a message of thanks for the \$1200 donated to the program "A Bible Answer" which airs at 8 a.m. on Sundays on WQWQ-CW. There is a letter with more information about this program posted on the bulletin board and also some cards and posters to hand out if you'd like to tell your friends about this program.

INSPIRATION 2021: The elders at the Dexter congregation have decided, although apprehensively but excitedly, to go ahead with their 41st annual Mid-America youth rally. They will be the hosts on March 12-13 with Eric Lyons from Apologetics Press speaking. Those spending the night are offered accommodations. Breakfast and lunch on Saturday is provided. Registration is requested by March 3. If you're interested, see the flyer posted on the bulletin board.

WORLD VIDEO BIBLE SCHOOL: If you're interested in donating to World Video Bible School, see the letter posted on the bulletin board.

HAPPY VALENTINE'S DAY!

Let love and faithfulness never leave you;
bind them around your neck,
write them on the tablet of your heart.
Then you will win favor and a good name
in the sight of God and man.

Proverbs 3:3-4

Upcoming Birthdays and Anniversaries	
Feb. 14 – Lyndell Pugh	Feb. 24 – Zoey Bishop
Feb. 22 – Jim Ferretti	

SPECIAL PRAYER REQUESTS

Continue to remember Mark McAllister, all of our shut-ins and those who are not yet congregating because of COVID-19.

Pray for the Hardestys' granddaughter, Anisa. She is pregnant but has an unknown source of extreme pain and has been in the hospital last week.

The doctors were not able to pinpoint the cause of the pain.

Pray for the Tanners who are travelling for the next couple of weeks.

Pray that our contribution picks up! We're not making our budget.

<u>OUR MEMBERS</u>	<u>FAMILY & FRIENDS</u>	<u>WEEKLY REPORT</u>
Jennis Benefield	Betty Allen (hospice)	Sunday a.m. Worship: 36
Helen Coburn	Donna Barnes (cancer)	Contributions: \$1,221.00
Joan England (Life Care Ctr)	Tom & Mary Bollman	Budget: \$3,059.12
David Mattingly (rm 308 Life Care Ctr)	Michele Campbell (back)	Family First: \$0
Mark McAllister (glioblastoma)	Liam Clark	
Pat Smart (stroke/fall)	Angie Northern Fabing	
Betty Tanner (shut-in)	Scott Hartline	Please remember to leave
Richard & Jane Volkerding (shut-in)	Karen Hubbs (brain cancer)	your contribution in the tray
	Chris Hutson	on the table at the back of the
	Suzanne Meert (cancer)	auditorium.
	Kevin Plemons (brain tumor)	
	Barry Tate (stroke)	
	Scott Taylor (cancer)	
	Donna Thieman (cancer)	
	Tony Wells	

SMILE

Teacher: "If I gave you 2 cats and another 2 cats and another 2, how many would you have?"

Johnny: "Seven."

Teacher: "No, listen carefully... If I gave you two cats, and another two cats and another two, how many would you have?"

Johnny: "Seven."

Teacher: "Let me put it to you differently. If I gave you two apples, and another two apples and another two, how many would you have?"

Johnny: "Six."

Teacher: "Good. Now if I gave you two cats, and another two cats and another two, how many would you have?"

Johnny: "Seven!"

Teacher: "Johnny, how do you figure that?!"

Johnny: "Because I've already got a cat!"