

Numbers 21:9

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.

A little background on what's going on here. The children of Israel were wandering the wilderness, and during that time the following happened.

† ***Then they journeyed from Mount Hor by the Way of the Red Sea, to go around the land of Edom; and the soul of the people became very discouraged on the way. 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." So the LORD sent fiery serpents among the people, and they bit the people; and many of the people of Israel died. Numbers 21:4-6***

Wow, talk about not bad mouthing God and our leader. It's a good thing God doesn't do this today, because I know a lot of people who are quick to bad mouth the one God has put in charge here in the USA, and even the Pastor and Leaders in the church.

But this is not about that. The story goes on with:

† ***Therefore 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. 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." Numbers 21:7-8***

Which bring us to today's devotional verse.

† ***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.***

But one thing I noticed when I read this account. Notice that God did not take away the serpents (snakes) but rather made a way to deal with the people being bitten. If it was me (which shows why I am not God) I would had just killed all the snakes, case closed let's move on to the Promised Land. But God didn't do that, because if He did, it would not had shown who the true believers and followers of God where.

God allows us to go through trials and He does not always take them away, but rather God will give us a way to go through the trial, which shows how faithful we really are. And if you think about it, it's not to show God how faithful we are, but rather to ourselves how faithful we are to God, because God already knows how faithful we are. Yet, sometimes we need to see how faithful we are, or that we are not to God.

Think of the parable of the sower that Jesus told about:

† *“The sower sows the word. And these are the ones by the wayside where the word is sown. When they hear, Satan comes immediately and takes away the word that was sown in their hearts. These likewise are the ones sown on stony ground who, when they hear the word, immediately receive it with gladness; and they have no root in themselves, and so endure only for a time. Afterward, when tribulation or persecution arises for the word's sake, immediately they stumble. Now these are the ones sown among thorns; they are the ones who hear the word, and the cares of this world, the deceitfulness of riches, and the desires for other things entering in choke the word, and it becomes unfruitful. But these are the ones sown on good ground, those who hear the word, accept it, and bear fruit: some thirtyfold, some sixty, and some a hundred.”*
Mark 4:14-20 (underlined for emphasis)

Notice Jesus said in this parable: *“Afterward, when tribulation or persecution arises for the word's sake, immediately they stumble.”* Which would speak of those who are not truly faithful to the Lord.

Or what about what James says:

† *My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into various trials, knowing that the testing of your faith produces patience. But let patience have its perfect work, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking nothing. If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all liberally and without reproach, and it will be given to him. James 1:2-5*

Things happen in our lives to show us our true selves, not to show God our true selves, because God already knows us better than we know ourselves.

† *LORD, You have searched me and known me.
You know my sitting down and my rising up;
You understand my thought afar off.
You comprehend my path and my lying down,
And are acquainted with all my ways.
For there is not a word on my tongue,
But behold, O LORD,
You know it altogether.
Psalm 139:1-4*

† *Psalm 139:23-24 Search me, O God, and know my heart; Try me, and know my anxieties; And see if there is any wicked way in me, And lead me in the way everlasting.*