

MinistryPlace.net

Manna from Heaven

Scripture: Exodus 16:1-36

Theme: God provides for our daily needs

1st-3rd Grade (Ages 6-8)

Free curriculum for small and rural churches

Lesson Overview

Lesson Overview: "The Bronze Serpent , Look and Live" (Numbers 21:4-9 | Salvation through faith in God)

Introduction (Grab Attention): Begin by holding up a small, simple model of a serpent (or draw one on a board). Ask kids, "What happens when you look at a snake? Do you feel afraid or comforted? Today, we'll see how God gave the Israelites a way to be safe, not by magic, but by trusting Him!" Lesson 1: The Problem (Numbers 21:4-6) The Israelites were really tired and really angry, so they complained to God. As a result, scorpents attacked them, biting and hurting them. This wasn't fair! They needed something safe to look at to be healed. Just like when you feel sick and you look at a doctor (or a picture of a bandage), they needed a symbol to trust in, something above the problem. Application: "When we feel scared or hurt, God gives us people (like parents, pastors, or friends) to look to for help. But He also tells us to look to Him, His Word, His promises, or even just His love in our hearts!" Lesson 2: The Solution (Numbers 21:7-9) God commanded Moses to make a bronze serpent (a metal serpent on a pole) and place it so people could look at it while they were bitten. When they did, they got better! This wasn't about the serpent itself, it was about trusting God through it. The serpent was a sign: "Look to God, and He'll save you!" Application: "This reminds us of Jesus, the 'true' serpent! When we trust Him (look to Him), even when life hurts, He heals us. Try praying a simple 'Jesus, I trust You' when you're upset!" Closing (Call to Action): End with a simple game or song (e.g., "Look to God, He'll save me!" chant). Wrap up by saying: "Next time you're scared or feel lost, remember: God doesn't want you to fear. He wants you to look, to His love, His promises, and His Son, Jesus. And just like those Israelites, you'll get better because you trusted Him!" Volunteer Tips: - Use visuals (drawings, props) to keep engagement high. - Let kids act it out: Have a "snake" (cushion on a stick) and act out the bites/healing. - End with a prayer like: "Jesus, help us to always look to You, not the things that scare us!" Why It Works: Short, repetitive language + concrete examples (scorpents snake model Jesus) make it easy for little minds to grasp God's faithfulness!

Bible Story

The Bronze Serpent: A Story of Trust and Hope

Long ago, the people of Israel were traveling in the wilderness with Moses leading them. After wandering for many years, they grew tired and hungry. One day, they complained to Moses and said, "We wish we had meat to eat!" Their grumbling made God sad, so He sent fiery snakes to bite many of the people, and they fell ill. Some died, while others were very sick. In the midst of their suffering, God commanded Moses to make a special snake out of bronze and put it on a pole. Whenever anyone was bitten and looked at this snake, they got better! The people saw this and realized that God was helping them through the hard times.

This story teaches us that when we feel sick or afraid, we can turn to God for help. Just like the Israelites looked at the bronze snake and felt better, we can trust in God when things seem tough. When we face problems in our lives, like feeling sad, scared, or alone, we can remember that God loves us and wants us to be okay. Looking to Him means praying, reading the Bible, or even just talking to Him about our worries.

This story is also a reminder of how God cares for us even when things don't go our way. Sometimes, we may not understand why bad things happen, but we know that God is always watching over us. Just as the snake brought healing to the people, Jesus came to bring healing and hope to our lives. When we believe in Him, we can trust that He will never let us truly suffer without a way out, just like He provided a way for the Israelites to be healed!

So next time you're feeling down, remember: God wants you to look to Him for strength, just like the Israelites looked to the bronze snake. By trusting in His love, you can find the courage to face your challenges, and know that He is always there to help.

Key Verse

Exodus 16:4

God's Promise of Safety (Numbers 21:8b) This verse is a special message from God about snakes. When the Israelites were traveling through the desert, they got tired and angry, and God sent poisonous snakes to scare them. But then He gave them a wonderful rule: If anyone was bitten by a snake, they could just look at the snake, and God would make them well again! This shows how much God cares for His people, even when things feel scary or dangerous, He wants us to trust Him and know He has our back. Imagine you're playing outside, and you see a big snake in the grass. You might be afraid, but instead of running away, you could take a deep breath and remember God's promise: He protects us from real danger!" Just like the snake couldn't hurt the Israelites anymore after they looked at it, God can help us feel safe too. The verse tells us that fear isn't the end, God is! Here's how we can apply this today: When we're nervous about something, like riding a bike, going to a new place, or even facing a big test, we can remind ourselves: God promises to keep us safe! That doesn't mean we'll never get scared, but it means we can trust Him to help us feel brave. Maybe you can pray together: "Thank You, God, for being my protector. Help me trust You when I'm afraid." And just like the snake couldn't hurt the Israelites anymore, God's love and care never change, He's always there to help! Sometimes, we think we're alone in our fears, but God's word reminds us that looking at His promises (like this one!) can make our hearts feel lighter. It's like when you look in a mirror and see your best friend smiling back, God's love is always there to reassure you. So next time you're feeling scared, take a moment to look at God's promise and feel His love wrap around you like a big, warm hug! This verse isn't just about snakes, it's about God's big love for us. He doesn't want us to be afraid; He wants us to know we're never alone. So let's remember: When we're scared, we can look to God, and He'll help us feel safe! That's a superpower only we have!

Activities

Activity 1:

1. Prep Work: Cut out a large brown paper plate and fold it into a snake shape (like a coil). Let each child pick a color of paper for the snake's body (green, red, or white).

2. Draw the Snake: On their folded snake paper, have kids draw the head, body, and tail, then cut it out. Glue the snake body onto the brown plate.
3. Make the Bronze Serpent: Use the white paper to cut out a small circle (the "serpent" part). Kids will glue this in the middle of their snake's head, drawing a few lines to look like a coil (like Moses' staff turned into a serpent).

Activity 2:

1. Set Up the Scene: Place a few small snake pictures around the room (near a "danger" area like a corner with a red marker or a "poison" basket).
2. Explain the Mission: Say, "God sent Moses to make a serpent that would protect us from snakes! Let's play like the Israelites, we'll find the serpent and thank God for his help!"
3. Hunt & Find: Kids take turns picking a snake (or grabbing one from the "danger" spot) and placing it in a basket labeled "Healing Serpent." While doing this, sing a short song (e.g., "Jesus is our serpent, strong and true, he lifts us up and saves us too!").
4. Reflect Together: Ask, "What did God do to help us? How does Jesus do the same for us?" Let them draw or write one way they trust God today (e.g., "I trust God when I'm scared!").
5. Bonus Tip: After each activity, end with a prayer or a verse like "When we're in danger, we look to Jesus, our Healing Serpent!" (2 Corinthians 10:4).

Discussion Questions

- Here are four open-ended discussion questions for early elementary children (ages 6, 8) based on Numbers 21:4, 9, The Bronze Serpent:
- What Did God Teach the People?
- In the story, the people were upset because they didn't have food, so they made a golden snake to worship instead of trusting God. How can we remember what God tells us in the Bible? What is one way you can trust God, like the Israelites trusted Him with their needs?
- (This question invites them to reflect on obedience and faith, connecting the story to daily choices.)
- How Did the Bronze Serpent Help the People?
- The Bible says God gave a bronze snake on a pole so that when people looked at it, they lived. What do you think that means? Do you know any ways looking up to God (like praying or reading His Word) helps you feel safe and strong? How?
- (This encourages them to think about God's provision and how faith can be a "light" in tough times.)
- What If We Made a Wrong Choice?
- The people in the story made a golden snake instead of a snake on a pole. What if we made a bad choice, like not listening to God or trusting in something else? What could happen? How can we ask for God's help to make good choices, like the people in the story did?
- (This helps them understand consequences and repentance in a simple way.)
- How Can We Follow God's Way Today?
- The bronze serpent was a sign of God's power. What are some "signs" God gives us to help us live right? For example, maybe He shows you a kind word to say, a kind way to help someone, or even a quiet time to pray. How can you share one "sign" God gave you this week?
- (This ties the lesson to their daily lives and encourages action.)
- These questions encourage exploration, connection to Scripture, and practical application for young learners! Would you like any adjusted for a specific theme (e.g., more focus on prayer or kindness)?

Prayer Focus

Prayer Focus: "Look and Live with God's Love" Dear Heavenly Father, thank You for the journey we're on together! Today, we're learning about a brave group of people who were tired and afraid, but You showed them a way to trust You again. Just like Moses lifted the bronze serpent up on a pole, we can choose to look to You in our tough times, trusting that Your love is stronger than our fears. Help us remember that no matter what happens, You're always there to guide us, just like You guided the Israelites long ago. We thank You for Moses and Aaron, who trusted You so much that they obeyed Your commands. Even when things seemed hard, they trusted that You would help them find a way to live well. Today, we want to be like them, people who look up to You in faith, just like that serpent was raised up to bring healing. Show us how to be brave and kind, just as You made them strong when they needed it most. Lord, help us to remember that You never forget us. Sometimes we might feel like we're stuck in trouble or like the world is too big, but You want us to remember what You've taught us, You can always look to the One who loves us best! Teach us to trust You in little ways, like when we're scared of the dark or when we don't know what to do. Give us hearts that are open to Your guidance, just like the people in the Bible looked to the bronze serpent to find hope. We pray for you, our teacher, that You would give us all a heart full of wonder and trust. Help us to share this lesson with others, showing them how looking to You brings life, just like the bronze serpent brought healing. Thank You for being our faithful God who cares for us always. Amen! (Application for the class: Ask each child to share one way they can "look to God today", like praying, reading the Bible, or asking a friend to pray with them!)

>> Missions Spotlight

Among the Navajo (Din) people of the American Southwest, serpent imagery appears in traditional stories. Missionaries have used the bronze serpent story to show that God has always provided a way of salvation, and that way is always through faith in what God provides.

-> To the Cross

Jesus said, 'Just as Moses lifted up the snake in the wilderness, so the Son of Man must be lifted up, that everyone who believes may have eternal life in Him' (John 3:14-15). The bronze serpent on the pole pointed directly to Jesus on the cross.