

Moses & the Bronze Serpent

Numbers 21:4-9

Old
Testament
Story Time

For over 400 years, God's people lived as slaves in Egypt. The Israelites cried out to their Lord God for help, and God sent them Moses to set them free. When the Israelites finally began their journey out of Egypt, led by Moses, they traveled for 40 days through the desert and arrived at the Promised Land. But the Israelites didn't trust God when he told them they were strong enough to conquer the people who were living in the Promised Land. So the Lord God sent them back into the desert to wander for 40 years!

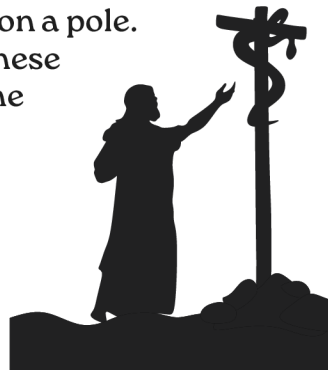
During these 40 years of wandering in the desert, the Lord wanted the people to learn to trust Him. The Lord God provided the Israelites food and water, protected them against their enemies, and kept the people from getting sick. But the Israelites continued to complain and were ungrateful to God for all that he provided! Because they sinned by turning away from God, the Lord allowed desert snakes, called seraph serpents, to enter their camps. The snakes bit the people and many died.



The Israelite people then went to Moses to repent of their sins against God. The people cried out to Moses: "We have sinned in complaining against the Lord and you. Pray to the Lord to take the serpents from us."

So Moses prayed to the Lord, and the Lord instructed Moses to make a seraph serpent and mount it on a pole. Then, if anyone who was bit by one of these snakes looked at the one mounted on the pole, they would live.

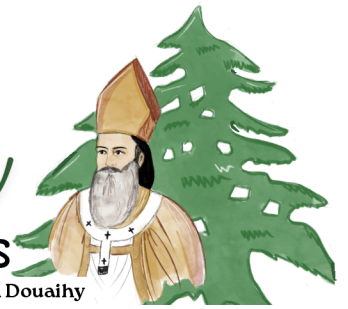
Moses obeyed God and made a bronze serpent and mounted it on a pole. Everyone who was bit by a serpent and then looked upon the bronze serpent recovered and was saved.



Cedar

Kids

The Way of Blessed Estephan Douaihy



3rd Sunday after Epiphany, Vol 1, No.17



"Amen, amen, I say to you, no one can enter the kingdom of God without being born of water and spirit."





Gospel Corner

John
3:1-16

Nicodemus was a leader of the Jews called a Pharisee. Based on what Nicodemus had seen and heard from Jesus, he believed that Jesus came from God, but he wanted to understand more of Jesus' teachings.



When Jesus told Nicodemus that if someone wants to see the kingdom of God, they must be born from above, Nicodemus thought Jesus was talking literally. Nicodemus replied, "How can a person once grown old be born again? Surely he cannot reenter his mother's womb and be born again, can he?"

Of course Jesus didn't mean for us to literally be born again! Jesus explained, "No one can enter the kingdom of God without being born of water and Spirit."

Jesus often taught in parables and analogies. This means that He used stories and examples that we can understand to explain the mysteries of heaven.

As a Jewish teacher and leader, Nicodemus was familiar with the stories of the Old Testament, so after much explaining, Jesus used this to help Nicodemus understand. Jesus said that just as the serpent was lifted up in the desert, the Son of Man would be lifted up.




Here is another type from the Old Testament! The raised serpent in the desert was to be viewed by someone bitten by a snake, and through their faith, God healed them. As Jesus explained this, He was hinting at the time when He would be raised on a cross to save anyone who would look to Him to heal them and save them from the punishment for their sins.

In this way, we can be born again through baptism and look forward to entering the Kingdom of Heaven!


Did you know?

Who were the PHARISEES?

In the Jewish community during the time of Jesus, there was a distinct religious group called the Pharisees. They were well known legal experts who were devoted to the law. The Pharisees believed in strictly following the Jewish laws and traditions.



What you can do

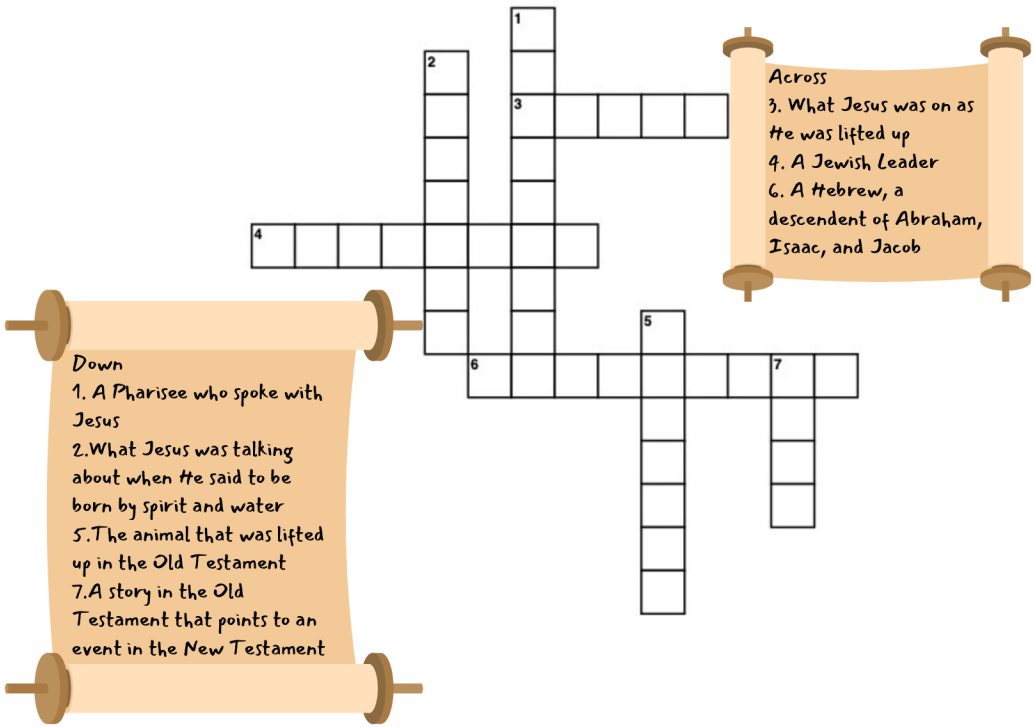


If your parish has Adoration, spend some time sitting before Jesus, speaking with Him in your heart, and looking up at Him in the monstrance.

Be sure to bless yourself with holy water on the way into and out of your Church to remind yourself of your baptism.

Crossword Puzzle

Use the information in today's issue to figure out the answers to this crossword puzzle.



Across

3. What Jesus was on as He was lifted up
4. A Jewish Leader
6. A Hebrew, a descendent of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob

Down

1. A Pharisee who spoke with Jesus
2. What Jesus was talking about when He said to be born by spirit and water
5. The animal that was lifted up in the Old Testament
7. A story in the Old Testament that points to an event in the New Testament