

## Exegetical Notes, Numbers 21:4-9

### "Only Those Who Believe"

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## NUMBERS 21:4-9

### Verse 1-5

*They traveled from Mount Hor along the route to the Red Sea, to go around Edom. But the people grew impatient on the way; <sup>5</sup> they spoke against God and against Moses, and said, "Why have you brought us up out of Egypt to die in the wilderness? There is no bread! There is no water! And we detest this miserable food!"*

- As the Hebrews were bypassing the Kingdom of Edom on their journey through the wilderness, they, once again, began to complain.
- As at other times, their complaints are against God and the leadership God has placed over them.
- The specific nature of their complaints remains the same. They are unhappy with the food and the water. They insist that God and Moses have brought them out into the wilderness to die.

### Verse 6-7

*<sup>6</sup> Then the LORD sent venomous snakes among them; they bit the people and many Israelites died. <sup>7</sup> The people came to Moses and said, "We sinned when we spoke against the LORD and against you. Pray that the LORD will take the snakes away from us." So Moses prayed for the people.*

- God punished their rebellion by sending venomous snakes into the camp which bit the people causing them to die. Sin always has consequences.
- However, this time, perhaps remembering the past, they realize that their behavior was wrong more quickly. So they come to Moses asking him to intercede for them with God; which Moses does.

### Verse 8-9

*The LORD said to Moses, "Make a snake and put it up on a pole; anyone who is bitten can look at it and live."<sup>9</sup> So Moses made a bronze snake and*

***put it up on a pole. Then when anyone was bitten by a snake and looked at the bronze snake, they lived.***

- Moses was told to make an image of a snake and to put it on a pole. He made a bronze snake and affixed it to a pole.
- When the Hebrews who were bitten by snakes looked at the snake on the pole, they were cured. But those who refused to do things according to God's instructions, died.

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