

Looking to Jesus.

LOOK TO JESUS—AS THE ANTOTYPE OF THE
BRAZEN SERPENT.

LOOK AND LIVE



As the Israelites were passing through the wilderness, on their way from Egypt to Canaan, they frequently rebelled against the Lord. And on one occasion, when they had grievously sinned by speaking against Himself, as well as against His servant Moses, He visited them with a plague of "fiery serpents," the bite of which was poisonous, and many of the people died. This sore judgment was the means of humbling the rebellious Israelites. In a subdued and penitent spirit, they besought Moses to pray to the Lord on their behalf. The Lord answered the prayer of His servant, and directed him to make a serpent of brass, and to set it upon a pole; and He gave him an assurance that every bitten one that looked to the brazen serpent should live. Moses did as he was directed; and doubtless, as he held up the brazen serpent to view, he encouraged all who were bitten to look that they might be healed, and told them that the Lord himself had declared that whoever looked should live.

This must have been a happy declaration in the ears of the dying Israelites; and doubtless the eyes of many a suffering one were speedily fixed on the brazen serpent. "And it came to pass, that if a serpent had bitten any man, when he beheld the serpent of brass, he lived." (Num. xxi. 9.)

Thus did the Lord, in His great mercy, provide a remedy for the serpent-bitten Israelites—a remedy without money and without price—a remedy so simple that the youngest or weakest might avail himself of it—and a remedy so efficacious that no one who looked, however desperate his case, failed to recover.

And He who was so gracious to the people of Israel, has manifested still more wondrous love in the provision He has made for our deliverance from the consequences of the bite of the old serpent the devil. He has so loved the world that He gave His only-begotten Son to suffer and to die on the cross, as an atoning sacrifice for sin, that whosoever looketh to Him in faith might not perish, but might have everlasting life. The great Redeemer himself declared before His death on the Cross—"As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have eternal life."

The whole human family have been bitten by the old serpent the devil. The effects of his venomous bite are more visible in some than in others, as in the

outwardly immoral and profane, but we all alike have the poison of sin within us: oftentimes it shows itself in the form of pride, envy, anger, covetousness, unbelief, and self-righteousness. Whatever form it takes, it is of the same malignant nature, and its end, unless prevented by divine grace, is death—"Sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death." (James i. 15.)

Beloved reader, do you feel the plague of your own heart. If you do not, the fact remains the same—the plague is there—the venom of the old serpent is doing its work, hastening your destruction—you are perishing in your sins! Your case is like that of an Israelite, bitten by a fiery serpent, rapidly approaching his death, and yet insensible to his danger. May the Holy Spirit enlighten your mind, and show you your true condition; may He make you sensible of your dire disease, that you may no longer slight the divine remedy.

Look, poor sinner, bitten by the old serpent the devil—look at Jesus—see Him suffering, bleeding, dying on the Cross. It was sin that nailed Him there. He suffered as the substitute of the guilty. He was fastened to the tree as the sin-atoning Lamb. He the just One died for the unjust.

' See from His head, His hands, His feet,
Sorrow and love flow mingled down;
Did e'er such love and sorrow meet,
Or thorns compose so rich a crown? "

Look at Him!—there is redemption for thee through His blood, even the forgiveness of sins. He suffered to save thee from the wrath to come. He died that thou mayest live!

The brazen serpent lifted up on the pole was the only remedy for the bite of a fiery serpent. If any man applied an ointment of his own making to his wounds, or took some medicine prepared by another, and persisted in refusing to look to the brazen serpent, he certainly died. The Lord Jesus Christ is the only Saviour from hell and from sin. Look, then, to Him, and not to your prayers, or to your penitence, for salvation. Look to Him *alone*—trust only in His sufferings and death for pardon and acceptance.

Perhaps you think that at present you are not fit to look to Christ. If so, will you consider what it was that fitted an Israelite to look to the brazen serpent?

Was it not that the poison of the fiery serpent was in his veins, and that he was dying from the bite? So that which fits you to look to Christ is your sin, your guilt, your helplessness. Just as disease would fit you for the physician, so your sinfulness fits you for Christ.

Sinner, behold thy Saviour! Lost one, behold thy Redeemer! You cannot look by faith to Christ crucified, and perish. Whoever looked at the brazen serpent was healed, and whoever believes with the heart to Christ is saved. "God so loved the world, that He gave His only-begotten Son, that *whosoever* believeth in Him, should not perish, but have everlasting life."

Dear Reader, mark the word "*Whosoever*." John