

LESSON VI.—August 11th, 1896.

The Brazen Serpent. NUM 21: 4-9.

(Commit to memory verses 8 and 9.)

GOLDEN TEXT: "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up." John 3: 14.

PROVE THAT—Christ was also lifted up John 3: 14, 15.

SHORTER CATECHISM. Quest. 32. *What benefits do they that are effectually called partake of in this life?* A. They that are effectually called do in this life partake of justification, adoption, and sanctification, and the several benefits which, in this life, do either accompany or flow from them.

LESSON HYMNS. *Children's Hymnal*—Nos. 27, 86, 98, 43.

DAILY PORTIONS. *Monday.* The Brazen Serpent. Num. 21: 4-9. *Tuesday.* Returning to God. Hos. 14. *Wednesday.* The serpent destroyed. 2 Kings 18: 1-7. *Thursday.* Look, and be saved. Isa. 45: 20-25. *Friday.* "Behold the Lamb of God." John 1: 29-36. *Saturday.* Christ's drawing power. John 12: 23-33. *Sabbath.* The Son of Man lifted up. John 3: 5-15. (*The I. B. R. A. Selections*)

HELPS IN STUDYING.

INTRODUCTORY. The Israelites remained at Kadesh more than thirty-eight years. (Deut. 1: 46.) With this as a centre, they spread themselves over the desert as do the wandering Arabs of to-day. When the incident narrated in our lesson occurred, the people had left Kadesh, and, receiving a churlish answer to their courteous request to be permitted to pass through Edom, they were compelled to march southward and pass around by the head of the Red Sea to the country east of the Jordan.

LESSON PLAN. I. The Sin. vs. 4, 5. II. The Punishment. vs. 6, 7. III. The Cure. vs. 8, 9.

4. **Mount Hor**—About half way between the Dead and Red Seas. One of the mountains of Edom. On this mountain Aaron died and was buried (ch. 20: 23-29). By way of the Red Sea—The eastern arm of the sea, the Atlantic gulf, or gulf of Akaba. To compass Edom—The Edomites were descendants of Esau (Gen. 25: 30; Num. 20: 14; Deut. 2: 4, 5). Their country was called Mount Seir. Much discouraged—They were apparently marching away from the promised land. The road was long and difficult. They were exposed to enemies. Their older men and leaders were dead. They were tired of the sameness of food and scarceness of water. But it was God's way and God's provision, and that should have contented them. 5. **This light bread**—"This vile, mean bread," no strength or taste in it (11: 6). Yet they had lived upon it for nearly 40 years, and poets have called it "angel's food" (Ps. 78: 25). This murmuring is called a tempting of Christ (1 Cor. 10: 9). The same complaint was uttered on former occasions (Ex. 10: 3; 17: 3). 6. **Fiery Serpents**—So called either from their color or the effects of their bite. The portion of the desert in which the Israelites then were abounds in venomous reptiles. Isaiah (14: 29) speaks of fiery flying serpents, but not in ref-

erence to this plague. Satan, our arch-enemy, is called a serpent (Rev. 12: 9; 2 Cor. 11: 3). 7. **We have sinned**—The terrible punishment shewed them how deeply they had offended God. Only when we sincerely repent can we venture to pray for forgiveness (Ps. 78: 34; Lev. 26: 40-42; Prov. 28: 13; Isa. 55: 6; Ezek. 33: 11, 12; 1 John 1: 9). **Pray unto the Lord**—We ought to pray with and for others (1 Sam. 12: 19, 23; 1 Kings 13: 6; Job 42: 8, 10; Jas. 5: 16; 1 John 5: 16). Moses was always glad to do this. 8. **A fiery serpent**—An image of those that had bitten them. **A pole**—R. V. "a standard." In order that it might be visible from all parts of the camp. **When he looketh upon it, shall live**—The healing power could not lie in the serpent, but in God's response to the faith of him who looked at it. The condition of healing was submission to, and faith in, God. 9. **Brass**—Properly copper or bronze. It was destroyed by Hezekiah when it became an object of superstitious veneration (2 Kings 18: 4). Our Saviour uses this serpent as a type of himself. He came in the form of sinful men to save them. He was lifted up upon the cross, and heals all who will look to him in penitence and faith.

LESSONS. 1. It is wrong to murmur at God's providence. 2. Sincere prayers for pardon are always heard. 3. Faith in Christ is the only way of salvation. 4. The excuses which are made for not coming to Christ are foolish. 5. Each one must look and believe for himself.