

#74 *FORUM POST ON MOSES LIFTING UP THE BRONZE SERPENT

Dear all,

“And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me. This he said, signifying what death he should die.” John 12:32-33

In the twelfth chapter of John, Jesus is trying to prepare his disciples for his upcoming death. He explains that the work he was sent to do as the man Christ Jesus was coming to an end, and for that work to be fruitful, he must die (John 12:24).

He also tells them that he is a light that was sent into the world and was about to leave the world in darkness. But those who believe in him would not be in the dark but children of light (John 12:35-36).

In verse 32 Jesus speaks of being “lifted up.” This signified that he was to be hung on a cross. Remember Jesus’s words in John 3:14-15 (NKJV), “And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life.” Jesus was referencing the time when Moses put a copper serpent on a pole and lifted it up so that anyone who had been bitten by a serpent could look upon it and be cured. (Numbers 21:8-9)

How could the perfect man Jesus be symbolized by a serpent? 2 Corinthians 5:21 (CSB), “He (God) made the one who did not know sin to be sin (pictured by the serpent) for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.” Thus, Jesus’s death on the cross would be enough to bring all of humanity unto him and to be a cure from the power of the serpent (Satan).

R

Dear R_____,

Nowhere in scripture is Christ ever symbolized by a “serpent”.

Paul says that to understand the “spirit” words of Christ, we are to “compare spiritual things with spiritual” (1Cor 2:13). When we compare the spirit word “serpent” with how it is used elsewhere in scripture, it always means Satan and/or his fallen angels. There is not even one instance where the spirit word “serpent” is used to represent Christ.

Also, the verse you used to support your claim about Christ being represented by the bronze serpent is improperly translated. Here is how it should be translated:

2Cor 5:21 For the One not knowing sin, He makes to be a sin offering for our sakes that we may be becoming God’s righteousness in Him. (Concordant New Testament)

Christ was not made “sin”. How could that even be possible since sin is a transgression against God? The verse can only be saying that Christ was made a sin offering. This truth is supported by other scripture, whereas, the translation you use is not.

Below is my understanding of the true spiritual message that is being taught by the story of the bronze serpent.

Here is the scripture:

Num 21:4 Then they journeyed from Mount Hor by the Way of the Red Sea, to go around the land of Edom; and the soul of the people became very discouraged on the way. 5 And the people spoke against God and against Moses: “Why have you brought us up out of Egypt to die in the wilderness? For there is no food and no water, and our soul loathes this worthless bread.” 6 So the LORD sent fiery serpents among the people, and they bit the people; and many of the people of Israel died. 7 Therefore the people came to Moses, and said, “We have sinned, for we have spoken against the LORD and against you; pray to the LORD that He take away the serpents from us.” So Moses prayed for the people. 8 Then the LORD said to Moses, “Make a fiery serpent, and set it on a pole; and it shall be that everyone who is bitten, when he looks at it, shall live.” 9 So Moses made a bronze serpent, and put it on a pole; and so it was, if a serpent had bitten anyone, when he looked at the bronze serpent, he lived.

The story above is a “type” which teaches its message through spiritual symbols (spirit words, **John 6:63**).

The primary concept used in the story is “first comes the natural, then comes the spiritual” (**1Cor 15:46**).

The setting of the story is Israel’s 40 years of wandering in the wilderness.

During Israel’s time of wandering, the nation was lacking spiritual food and water (v.5) which would have spiritually satisfied them. Instead, the Lord provided the nation with natural food and water which left them hungering for truth and thirsting for righteousness.

Neh 9:15 And gave them bread from heaven (manna) for their hunger, and brought forth water for them out of the rock for their thirst, and promised them that they should go in to possess the land (salvation) which thou had sworn to give them.

Manna is a spiritual symbol for the truth of God’s Word when it is received carnally. It represents the "natural". It will provide nourishment to the carnal man (Old Man). The true bread from heaven (the "spiritual") is Christ and He is a symbol for the truth of God’s Word when it is received spiritually. It will provide nourishment to the spiritual man (New Man).

John 6:32 Then Jesus said to them, “Most assuredly, I say to you, Moses did not give you the bread from heaven, but My Father gives you the true bread from heaven. 33 “For the bread of God is He who comes down from heaven and gives life to the world.”

Water is a spiritual symbol for the Holy Spirit. When the Spirit guides a person externally, the

person will remain carnal. This was the case with the Nation of Israel.

With the church, when the Early Rain of the Spirit indwells a person, the person will also remain carnal (the "natural"). When the person is baptized by the Holy Spirit (Latter Rain), the person will become spiritual and will then be guided by the Holy Spirit.

In verses 4 and 5 of Numbers chapter 21, it says that the people of Israel had lost faith in the Lord. As a result of their loss of faith, the Lord sent “fiery serpents” into the camp. When a serpent bit a person, it would cause them to physically die.

This portion of the story is a “type” for the judgment (represented by symbol “fiery”) that a called out believer in the church receives for their loss of faith when they turn to their own works for salvation. The fiery serpents are a type for the spirit of anti-Christ which comes from Satan and devours the faithless church. When Satan’s spirit enters a believer, it will cause them to spiritually die and lose their salvation. This is the Abomination of Desolation mentioned by Christ in **Mat 24:15**. And like the Nation of Israel, this death results from a person’s loss of faith.

When the Israelites realized that the serpents came into the camp as a result of their loss of faith, they repented and asked for mercy. In response, the Lord told Moses to set up a pole with a bronze serpent upon it. This event represents the temporary spiritual life which the Nation of Israel would receive from the blood sacrifice of animals established under the Old Covenant of Law.

The temporary life received from the Old Covenant of Law was based upon the works of man and did not require any faith to receive it.

Scripture calls the way of approaching God by a person’s own works the “crooked way”.

Lam 3:9 He has blocked my ways with hewn stone (man’s works); He has made my paths crooked.

Isa 59:8 The way of peace they have not known, And there is no justice in their ways; They have made themselves crooked paths; Whoever takes that way shall not know peace.

Mankind calls this way “**religion**”.

Note: Approaching God by faith alone is called the “straight way” (**Psa 5:8, Mat 3:3 & Acts 13:10**).

Since the crooked way is also the way of Satan, Satan is called the “crooked serpent”:

Job 26:13 By his spirit he hath garnished the heavens; his hand hath formed the crooked serpent.

Isa 27:1 In that day the LORD with his sore and great and strong sword shall punish leviathan the piercing serpent, even leviathan that crooked serpent; and he shall slay the dragon that is in the sea.

Because Satan is the crooked serpent, the Lord instructed Moses to setup a bronze serpent upon a pole. Then, when anyone was bitten, all they needed to do was to look up at the bronze serpent and they would live. This is symbolic of the temporary spiritual life which the blood sacrifice of animals would provide the Nation of Israel under the Old Covenant of Law.

Note: The Old Covenant of Law is based on the works of man. The New Covenant is based upon the works of Christ. Faith is what makes the pathway straight for Christ to come to a believer and convert them.

The bronze serpent is a precursor of Christ's death on the cross. In other words, the Old Covenant of Law is our schoolmaster to lead us to Christ and the New Covenant.

Gal 3:24 Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith.

Christ made this statement about it:

John 3:12 "If I have told you earthly things and you do not believe, how will you believe if I tell you heavenly things? 13 "No one has ascended to heaven but He who came down from heaven, that is, the Son of Man who is in heaven. 14 "And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up, 15 "that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life.

John 12:32 And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me. 33 This he said, signifying what death he should die.

To further show that the bronze serpent was only a precursor which was to lead us to Christ, we have this supporting scripture:

2Kings 18:1 Now it came to pass in the third year of Hoshea the son of Elah, king of Israel, that Hezekiah the son of Ahaz, king of Judah, began to reign. 2 He was twenty-five years old when he became king, and he reigned twenty-nine years in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Abi the daughter of Zechariah. 3 And he did what was right in the sight of the LORD, according to all that his ancestor David had done (approaching God by faith). 4 He

removed the high places and broke the sacred pillars, cut down the wooden image **and broke in pieces the bronze serpent that Moses had made**; for until those days the children of Israel burned incense to it, and called it Nehushtan. **5 He trusted in the LORD God of Israel**, so that after him was none like him among all the kings of Judah, nor who were before him.

Hezekiah was a man of faith just as David was. It is by faith that a person will move from the Old Covenant of Law (man's works) to the New Covenant of Grace through Faith (Christ's works). When a believer makes this transition, they will break into pieces the bronze serpent and replace it with Christ.

The Old Covenant is the "natural" and it is man's attempt to make themselves righteous by their own "works". However, it cannot change man from within. It only works "outwardly" to make man appear to be righteous. This is the crooked way of Satan.

In contrast, the New Covenant is the "spiritual" and is based upon the works of Christ. Christ's spiritual work "within" mankind will make mankind truly righteous. This is the straight way of Christ.

Joe

Another reader responded:

Dear FaithWillDo,

wow,

where do you get this from? What church do you go to?

The people realized they had sinned. So they asked Moses to pray

Moses prayed

God told Moses to put the serpent on a pole and look up

Those who had faith and looked up lived

those who in unbelief did not die.

That's where the serpent is a type of Christ. as Jesus said.. He must be hung on a pole in the same way, we all are dead. those who have faith and look up, we will live forever.

those in unbelief who do not look to the cross. Will die.

E

Dear E _____,

It came from my own personal study of God's Word. I do not have any teachers nor do I attend any churches. As I have been saying, all the churches are apostate and have been since the deaths of the Apostles. The apostate churches follow another Jesus and have another spirit and teach another gospel.

You said:

That's where the serpent is a type of Christ.

You can't use the same scripture that uses a certain symbol and then say that it witnesses to itself. Paul says to understand the meanings of Christ's spirit words, we must "compare spiritual things with spiritual". Plus, for a thing to be proven true, there must be two or three witnesses which testify to it.

You have NO witnesses of scripture which testify that the symbol "serpent" is a symbol for Christ. You have not presented even one. I presented you three witnesses of scripture which testify to the symbol's true meaning and they all show that the symbol "serpent" represents Satan.

I gave you a detailed witness of scripture in my previous post as to the true meaning of the bronze serpent. If you won't accept those scriptures, then there is nothing more I can do.

Joe

Dear FaithWillDo,

Well there is the problem.

it all makes sense now. And why what you're saying makes no sense. Because you're the only one who thinks this. It is YOUR view.

E _____

Dear E _____,

Being in the group of "many" is not the place to be. Only a "few" of the many are chosen for salvation in this age.

Joe

Dear FaithWillDo,

Who said anything about being in a place of many?

You appear to be in a group of 1.

Your make it up as you go.

That's not the way to go. that is not even the few..

Once again, I highly recommend you find a good bible believing body of Christ to become a part of. and let them teach you.

E _____

Dear E _____,

You have not heard the words of Paul when he said:

Acts 20:29 For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. 30 Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them. 31 Therefore watch, and remember, that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears.

Though Paul did not warn of the coming apostasy very often in his letters, he did verbally warn his churches "with tears" for three years.

2Thes chapter 2 is Paul's main teaching on the coming apostasy. It applied to the churches shortly after Paul's death. It is not a future end-time event that many in the apostate church believe. The man of sin is what Paul calls a fallen away believer who has the spirit of anti-Christ. That term comes from the "Old Man" being made spiritually "worse than the first" because of Satan's spirit indwelling them.

Christ said this about the coming spirit of anti-Christ and how powerful its deception will be:

Mat 24:24 For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if *it were* possible, they shall deceive the very elect.

The "very Elect" (the Apostles) were all converted prior to the coming of the spirit of anti-Christ. If they had not been converted, they, too, would have been deceived and would have fallen away from faith.

After Christ comes to an unbeliever and gives them the Early Rain, they remain spiritually blind and cannot "see" Christ (God's Word). Paul "typed" the receiving of the Early Rain when Christ came to him on the Damascus Road. It is there that Paul was "called out" and first called Jesus "Lord". It is after this Early Rain event that a person will enter the church.

Also, at that time, Paul became blind which was a "type" for his spiritual blindness. Paul could hear the voice but had to ask who it was that was speaking to him. Christ remained veiled from Paul's understanding. Paul was then "led by the hand" (the blind leading the blind) into Damascus where he remained blind and unable to eat or drink for "three days". The number

"three" is a symbol for a spiritual process. Paul's inability to eat or drink represents Paul's inability to receive the truth of God's Word (bread) or to drink Christ's blood of the New Covenant. It is at that time that Paul "typed" falling away and becoming a man of sin. Paul was no longer saved.

After Paul's three days of great tribulation had been fulfilled, Paul is shown to be praying. Paul's prayer represents his repentance from "works". It is the same repentance that John the Baptist called for with the Nation of Israel. Repentance from works is what causes a fallen away believer to make the pathway "straight" for Christ to "come again" to them with the Latter Rain.

As Paul prayed, Ananias (type for Christ) was told to go to Paul who will living at a house owned by Judas. Judas is a "type" for the man of sin who Paul had become. The house was located on a street called "straight" which represents that Paul repented of his works and that the pathway for Christ was made "straight". Ananias then travelled to straight street and gave Paul the Latter Rain. Immediately Paul's scales fell off his eyes and he was able to "see". This represented that Paul's spiritual blindness was healed. Paul was then baptized in water to represent his receiving of the Latter Rain (Baptism of the Holy Spirit). After these events, Paul was told to "eat meat" (the strongest and deepest truth of God's Word).

Paul later made this statement to Timothy to reinforce that his conversion experience is a "type" (pattern) that all the Elect will experience from that point going forward.

1Tim 1:16 Howbeit for this cause, I obtained mercy, that in me first Jesus Christ might shew forth all longsuffering, for a pattern to them which should hereafter believe on him to life everlasting.

Christ said this about how a new believer becomes a man of sin:

Mat 12:43 When the unclean spirit is gone out of a man, he walketh through dry places, seeking rest, and findeth none. 44 Then he saith, I will return into my house from whence I came out; and when he is come, he findeth it empty, swept, and garnished. 45 Then goeth he, and taketh with himself SEVEN other spirits more wicked than himself, and they enter in and dwell there: and the last state of that man is worse than the first. Even so shall it be also unto this wicked generation.

The spiritual symbol of an unclean spirit represents a spirit which teaches Satan's false truth through lies and deceptions.

Since a new believer remains spiritually blind (**Mark 8:21-25**) after receiving the Early Rain of the Spirit, they cannot replace their worldly false beliefs with the truth of Christ. ONE unclean spirit leaves but comes back with SEVEN more. The number "seven" represents perfection. In this case, the number seven represents the perfection of Satan's lies/deceptions which come to a believer by the indwelling of the spirit of anti-Christ. Now, instead of ONE unclean spirit within

the believer, they now have EIGHT. The number eight is a spiritual symbol which represents a new spiritual condition. In this case, the new spiritual condition is **worse than the first**.

This "worse than the first" spiritual condition causes the believer to become a False Prophet, a Man of Sin, a Minister of Satan and a Seven Headed Beast with Ten Horns & Crowns.

In the parable of the Ten Virgins, the ten virgins represent called out believers who have received the Early Rain. It is at that time a person is betrothed to Christ and must wait for him to return for the marriage (the Second Coming for salvation). Paul made this statement which is related to a called out believer's time of waiting:

Heb 9:28 So Christ was sacrificed once to take away the sins of many; and he will appear a second time, not to bear sin, but to bring salvation to those who are waiting for him.

When Christ first comes to a person and gives them the Early Rain, they will remain spiritually blind. Because of this, they can only see Christ in the flesh (carnally). When He comes a second time to "those who are waiting for Him", He will appear spiritually and will bring them salvation. This is what happens at the Marriage of the Lamb.

Also, in the parable of the Ten Virgins, notice that ALL ten virgins fall asleep at night while waiting for the Bridegroom to return. Their "sleeping" represents that they have spiritually died and the night represents their spiritual blindness. All believers (including the Elect) will experience a time of falling away and losing their salvation. Then at "midnight" (the deepest part of a fallen away believer blindness when they have become a man of sin), the call will go out that the Bridegroom is returning. This represents the call of Elijah to repent from works. Those who have the extra flask of oil (represents the Latter Rain) are made ready for the Bridegroom's return. Those without the extra oil (the called but NOT chosen) have to turn back from where they came.

The parable of the Wheat and the Tares teaches the same truths using the farming analogy. After Christ plants His seed (the Early Rain) with a person, Satan will come at night (represents the person's spiritual blindness) and plants his seed, too (the spirit of anti-Christ). At the time of the harvest (Latter Rain and Second Coming), the tares (man of sin) is burned (judged). The wheat (child of God) is then harvested into the barn (Kingdom of Heaven).

There are more examples of the apostasy that the church must experience prior to their salvation. The "many" who are not chosen will not experience Christ's return before they die. For the Elect "few" though, Christ will shorten their days as a man of sin and will come "quickly" to them before they die.

Below is a verse which supports the truth that all the Elect and those not chosen must experience a time of great tribulation:

Mat 4:4 But he answered and said, it is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.

Man's does not live (salvation) just by consuming the true bread from heaven, we must also eat Satan's leavened bread (**Mat 13:33**).

Consider this:

When Christ came to the Jewish Nation, out of the whole nation (100's of thousands of people), only 120 people were chosen and saved. As I said, remaining with the "many" is not a good place to be.

Joe

Dear FaithWillDo,

Find a church!

E