

THE SERPENT

NUM 21:4-9 – SERPENT

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.

GEN. 3:7

Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they knew that they *were* naked; and they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves coverings.

“Serpent” (*nāḥāš*) is the general term for “snake.” This reptile had a significant role in the ancient world, where it was both an object of reverence and of disdain. It commonly is found in ancient myths and is represented by religious objects. It conveyed the ambivalent meanings of life/recurring youth, death/chaos, and wisdom. NEW AMERICAN COMMENTARY

The serpent was something made by God, but under an influence of another entity talking through it.

Martin Luther explained: “The devil was permitted to enter beasts, as he here entered the serpent. For there is no doubt that it was a real serpent in which Satan was and in which he conversed with Eve”

THEY DID KNOW WHO WAS TALKING.

The serpent’s bite, whether literal or suggestive, causes self-conscienceness and death.

Poison (venom) can be of substance or suggestive (deception, lies, seduction, enchantment).

5175 נָחָשׁ [*nachash /naw-khawsh/*] n m. From 5172; TWOT 1347a; GK 5729; 31 occurrences; AV translates as “serpent” 31 times. **1** serpent, snake. **1A** serpent. **1B** image (of serpent). **1C** fleeing serpent (mythological).

5172 נָחַשׁ [*nachash /naw-khash/*] v. A primitive root; TWOT 1348; GK 5727; 11 occurrences; AV translates as “enchantment” four times, “divine” twice, “enchanter” once, “indeed” once, “certainly” once, “learn by experience” once, and “diligently observe” once. **1** to practice divination, divine, observe signs, learn by experience, diligently observe, practice fortunetelling, take as an omen. **1A** (Piel). **1A1** to practice divination. **1A2** to observe the signs or omens.

5727 נִחַשׁ (*nā·ḥāš*): v.; ≡ Str 5172; TWOT 1348—**1**. LN 53.96–53.101 (piel) **practice divination**, i.e., interpret omens and signs, as a way to learn the will of God, or the gods, known for future contingencies (Ge 30:27; 44:5,15; Lev 19:26; Dt 18:10; 2Ki 17:17; 21:6; 2Ch 33:6+), see also domain LN 27.34–27.47; **2**. LN 53.96–53.101 (piel) take something as an omen or sign (1Ki 20:33+)

Most of the biblical references to serpents or snakes allude (in figurative application) to the ability of the snake to bite and to poison with venom (e.g., Gn 49:17; Eccl 10:8, 11; Is 14:29; Am 5:19; Rv 9:19) - Tyndale Bible Dictionary

SUGGESTIONS OF THE SERPENT

- FORGETTING THE DELIVERANCE
- DISCOURAGEMENT
- SPOKE AGAINST GOD
- SPOKE AGAINST MOSES/LEADERSHIP
- COMPLAINED ABOUT PROVISION
- LOATHED GOD'S FOOD/WORD – CALLED IT WORTHLESS/CONTEMPTIBLE
- THE SERPENT'S VENOM WAS FATAL UNLESS ONE LOOKED AT ITS LIKENESS
- BRONZE REPRESENTS JUDGEMENT.

TO LOOK AT THE SERPENT IS TO ADMIT:

- being deceived,
- listening to the liar (demons) and believing the lies,
- being foolish in thinking that God and His leadership is wrong,
- not liking where He has put or positioned me,
- not being thankful for what He has supplied,
- resenting His provision,
- denying sin and error of thoughts of the mind,
- developing a negative attitude,
- being blinded by personal pride.

THE DELIVERANCE AND HEALING

- LOOK AT AND ADMIT THE SOURCE AND MISPLACED FAITH AND BELIEF
- ADMIT THE SIN OF BEING ENCHANTED BY THE LIES (THE VENOM)
- HUMBLE YOURSELF UNTO THE LORD
- DECIDE IN ALL YOUR WAYS TRUST HIM (Even in keeping you in the truth).
- JOHN 3:14 - And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up. JOHN 12:32 - ³² And I, if I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all *peoples* to Myself." ³³ This He said, signifying by what death He would die.