

God So Loved

Scripture Reading — Numbers 21:4-9; John 3:14-16

God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. — John 3:16

John 3:16 is one of Scripture's most famous passages, and it follows from Jesus' explanation about Moses lifting up "the snake in the wilderness." Jesus made a connection to that story to describe the effects of our poisonous, deadly sins.

Freed from slavery in Egypt but then having to live in the desert, God's people complained that the Lord didn't provide for them. So God sent poisonous snakes to punish their complaining, but he also provided a way to be spared. When bitten, the people could look at the image of a bronze snake set up by Moses and live.

That event in Israel's history pointed to Jesus' death on the cross for our sake. He died to save us from all the sin emerging from the snake pit in our souls.

Daily we confess our snakelike deadly sins, and we turn to Christ for forgiveness. God has so loved us since before creation (Ephesians 1:3-10) that he sent his Son to save us from all our venomous sins.

Someone has said God loves in 3D: in breadth, the whole world; in length, from eternity past to eternity to come; and from the depths of hell to the heights of heaven. As Jesus puts it, "Everyone who believes may *have* [present tense] eternal life." New life with God begins now—today! We're not the victims of our poisonous sins— "for God so loved . . .!"

Prayer

Lord, we confess our sins, like poisonous snakes bent on destroying us. We look to Jesus to save us and give us eternal life today! In his name, Amen.

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