

SEPTEMBER 14, 2014



FEAST OF THE EXALTATION OF THE HOLY CROSS



NUMBERS 21:4B-9

PSALM 78:1-2, 34-35, 36-37, 38

PHILIPPIANS 2:6-11

JOHN 3:13-17

REFLECTION

The Lectionary readings for the Feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross show a link between the passage from Numbers and the Gospel—the Gospel references the passage from Numbers. Moses and the healing power of the seraph on the staff are recalled as a way of drawing a parallel to the healing, life-giving power of Christ's cross. This ancient Egyptian or Midianite remedy for snakebites serves as a metaphor as Jesus describes to his friend Nicodemus what his life will be all about—healing. The well-known Bible verse John 3:16 is included in this reading: "For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, / so that everyone who believes in him may have eternal life." Unfortunately this verse has been used too often by some Christians to try to close the door to heaven and to limit God's saving action to a select few who say the right words. However, the very next verse reopens the door, "God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world." Remember Jesus heals us!



"GOD SO LOVED
THE WORLD"

PAUL A. TATE

Available on the CD *Let
All Creation Sing!*
World Library
Publications
www.wlp.jspaluch.com/1446.htm

ACTION

Interested in Biblical archaeology? Check out the picture of a copper snake at (www.bible.ca/archeology/bible-archeology-timna-ha-thor-serpent-naos-beno-rothenberg-1969ad.jpg). It was made by the ancient Midianites in Timna, a region famous for copper mining. This snake is similar to the one Moses would have made.

JOURNALING QUESTIONS

- Do a Google search for images using "John 3:16 sport." You'll see some pictures of people holding up signs at sporting events or other large gatherings. Do you think this is an effective way to spread the Gospel? Why or why not?
- What metaphor would you use to describe the healing power of God's love and Jesus's life? Probably *not* a metal snake raised up on a stick. Imagine a modern-day Jesus describing to a modern-day Nicodemus what the healing power of his sacrifice is like.