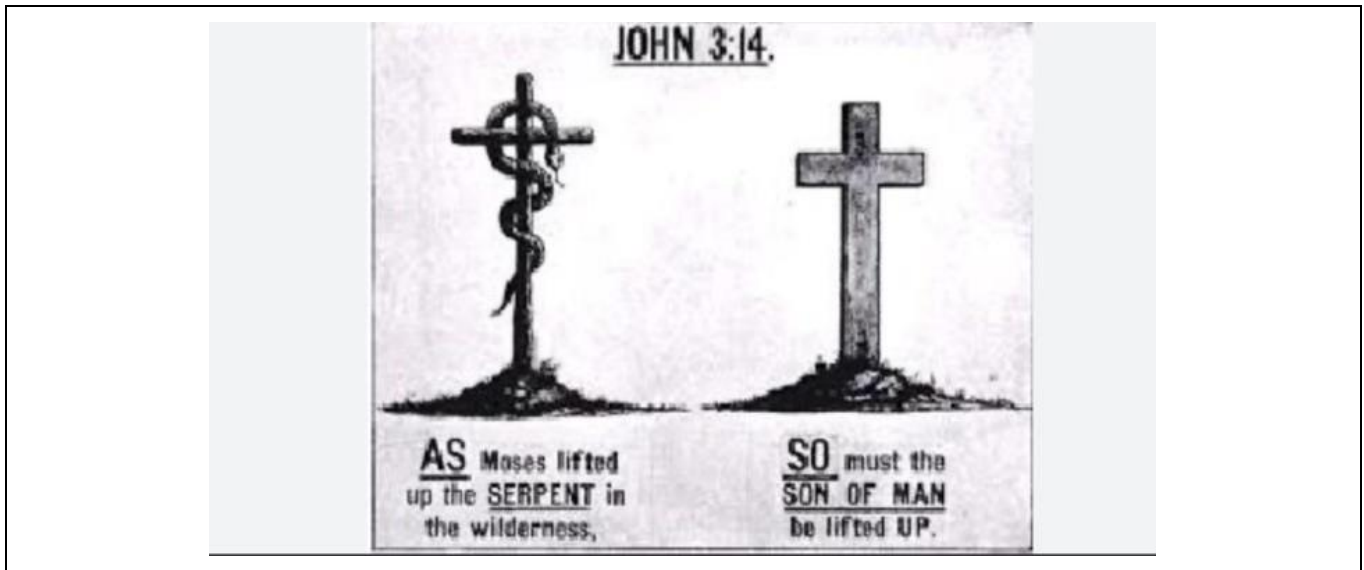


Jesus said . . . ***“Search the Scriptures . . . they are they which testify of me”*** (John 5:39)



**Title:** Lifted Up

## INTRODUCTION

Tonight, we are going to continue our study of finding Jesus through the Old Testament. Remember that the lessons we are going through during this study are not exhaustive, but they are key truths that will help **unlock** the New Testament and who Jesus is. Tonight, we are looking at another passage Jesus referenced in relation to himself but this time in a prophetic statement. John 3:14.

### 1. Jesus Speaks in John 3:14

- Jesus is talking about his coming sacrifice.
- Jesus is using the example of Moses' serpent which he "lifted up" in the wilderness.

### 2. Historical Context – Numbers 21.

- Chapter 20 opens with Myriam's death and closes with Aaron's death. Eleazar is the new High Priest, and a new **generation** begins taking the place of the old generation.
- Chapter 21 opens with a skirmish leading to the imprisonment of some Israelites and a **vow** to conquer the enemy.
- The LORD fulfills his promise and leads the Israelites to victory! And then they "murmur" (again).
  - It is one thing to be discouraged. Maybe they were **justified** in discouragement?
  - It is never ok to turn that discouragement into bitterness against God or God's man, to "take out" your frustrations on God or his people.

Jesus said . . . ***“Search the Scriptures . . . they are they which testify of me”*** (John 5:39)

- The Israelites acknowledge this when they confess to Moses their sins, saying they had “spoken against the LORD, and against thee” in verse 7.
- The LORD tells Moses to make a fiery serpent and put it on the pole.
- Death brought on by murmuring was stayed by the **miracle** of the brasen serpent by God’s command and promise.
- Eventually the Children of Israel worshipped the serpent as an **idol**. 2 Kings 18:4
  - They named it Nehushtan. There are many other tales of snakes on poles throughout the cultures of the Near East, Babylon, and ancient Greece and Rome. The motif is also seen today in our culture. Why?

### 3. Doctrinal Application

- First mention of “serpent” is Genesis 3:1
- Serpent is a direct link with sin.
- It is a picture of sin on the cross – Galatians 3:13; 2 Corinthians 5:21
- Jesus did not stay on the cross, nor did he stay in the tomb. What did stay was our sin. Romans 6:22 and Hebrews 9:26

### 4. Devotional Application

- General
  - A prophetic picture of our Lord Jesus Christ, the cure to the plague of sin through the miracle of the crucifixion and resurrection of the Savior.
  - Look upon Jesus for the personal cure of your sin. It is up to you to obey the simple **command** to put your faith in Christ even as it was up to the individual Jew to obey the simple command to look upon the brasen serpent to be healed from the death-causing plague.
- Personal
  - God has brought you through much and given you untold **victories**, and do you think it is good to complain? Take a lesson from these people – do not be stiff-necked or hard-hearted when God brings trials your way. Repent from the sin of murmuring, Jesus still offers forgiveness.

### 5. The Aftermath

- All who looked upon the serpent were saved from death to eventually conquer the Promised Land. Today, anyone who looks on the Cross in belief has the opportunity to be saved for eternity. The Bible says that “if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.” Romans 10:9.

It is by faith alone that we are saved, just as it was simply by looking at the brasen serpent on the pole that the children of Israel were healed.