

## Forgiveness, Healing, and Consequences

"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 we loathe this worthless food.' Then the LORD sent fiery serpents among the people, and they bit the people, so that many people of Israel died." Numbers 21:5-6

When the children of Israel complained, God sent poisonous snakes: "And the people came to Moses, and said: 'We have sinned, because we have spoken against the LORD, and against thee; pray unto the LORD, that He take away the serpents from us.' And Moses prayed for the people. And the LORD said unto Moses: 'Make thee a fiery serpent, and set it upon a pole; and it shall come to pass, that every one that is bitten, when he seeth it, shall live'"<sup>1</sup> The people asked, "Take away the serpents from us." This, God refused to do. Instead, He gave them a source of healing after they were bitten.

Adam and Eve's sin resulted in man's fallen nature. When we repent of our sin, God does not remove the fallen nature; He provides a source of healing. A young couple loves passion more than virtue, resulting in a child out of wedlock. When they repent, God does not reverse the pregnancy, but He does offer healing. In a moment of road rage a man accidentally kills another. God does not reverse things by resurrecting the dead person, but if the man repents, God will heal him.

We cannot expect God to reverse the bad decisions we make. Generally, that is not His way. But if we come to Him in a spirit of brokenness and repentance, He will heal us. Still, we live forever with the consequences of our decisions.