



When the Serpent Bites: Overcoming Spiritual Poison

In a dream, I stood surrounded by serpents. One—a cobra—struck again and again, yet no venom took hold. Even my friend who was bitten nearby lived. When I woke, I knew what it meant: the serpent still bites in our world, through betrayal, bitterness, and words that wound. But Christ, the lifted serpent, turns poison into healing. This reflection explores how overcoming spiritual poison begins when we stop fighting the bite and start fixing our gaze upward—trusting the One who drains venom from the soul and teaches us to live unpoisoned in a poisoned world.

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It began in a dream.

I was surrounded by serpents—copper, green, and mottled brown. They slithered over dry earth, coiling through tall grass, their movement almost silent except for the rustle that made my skin tighten. One serpent lifted its head higher than the rest, eyes fixed on me. The cobra. It lunged again and again, fangs finding my arm, my leg, my side. Yet there was no pain. No swelling. No death creeping through my veins.

Nearby, a friend was bitten too. I remember knowing—somehow—that he would live. I watched him breathe, steady and unharmed, even with the serpent's mark still on his skin. The fear that should have followed never came. Instead, I stood still, surrounded by all that should have destroyed me, and felt peace.

When I woke, the dream stayed like a parable whispered into my spirit: the serpent bites, but the venom doesn't have to define you.

Anchor in the Word

Key Scripture Verse

So Moses made a snake out of bronze and attached it to a pole. Then anyone who was bitten by a snake could look at the bronze snake and be healed

Numbers 21:9, NLT

Key Scripture Context

The people of Israel had grown weary on their journey. Complaining spread like poison through the camp—resentment toward God, bitterness toward Moses. Then came the serpents, fiery and relentless.

The people cried out for relief, and God gave an answer that must have seemed strange: look at the image of the very thing that wounded you.

When they lifted their eyes to the bronze serpent, they were healed. Not by avoiding the symbol of pain, but by facing it and trusting God to transform it.

What We're Facing

We live in a world teeming with serpents of a different kind. Words can pierce like fangs. Systems can constrict the life out of justice. Even friends and fellow believers can strike when fear or pride overtake love.

Spiritual poison is subtle. It's the bitterness that seeps in after betrayal. The exhaustion of endless arguments. The quiet cynicism that follows disappointment with the Church or with God's people. You don't always notice the bite until your peace begins to fade.

Every age has its venom. In ours, it flows through screens and headlines, through the relentless demand to choose sides and despise the other. It courses through resentment, unforgiveness, self-righteous certainty. It's possible to spend an entire life reacting—spitting venom back into a world already poisoned.

And yet, the gospel of Jesus calls us to something profoundly different.

Then and Now — Drawing Parallels

When Moses lifted the bronze serpent, it wasn't magic. It was mercy. It was a foreshadowing of something much greater: the moment when Christ would be lifted up on the cross, taking into Himself all the venom of sin and hatred that the world could produce.

Jesus became the place where the poison ends. “As Moses lifted up the bronze snake on a pole, so the Son of Man must be lifted up, so that everyone who believes in him will have eternal life” (John 3:14-15).

The ancient Israelites looked at the serpent and lived. We look at Christ and are made new.

The same spiritual principle still holds: whatever tries to destroy us loses its power when we fix our gaze upward. The bite may still come—the betrayal, the injustice, the slander—but it cannot claim us. The poison cannot reach the heart that looks to Christ for healing.

Theological Truth in Plain Language

Christ crucified is the lifted serpent—the paradox of redemption. What was meant to kill becomes the means of life. The world’s venom meets its cure in Him.

We are not asked to destroy every serpent, nor to avoid every sting. We are asked to live unpoisoned.

Faith is not the absence of attack; it’s the refusal to let fear and hatred become our blood’s rhythm.

God’s measure of blessing is not victory in argument, wealth, or dominance. It is freedom from the venom that corrodes compassion.

Every time we choose mercy over revenge, prayer over pride, truth over propaganda, we proclaim that the cross still heals.

Practical Moves of Faith

1. Identify the Serpent

What’s draining your soul? Maybe it’s a toxic workplace, a manipulative relationship, or a system that profits from fear. Naming the serpent

doesn't empower it—it reveals where healing must begin. Write it down. Pray over it. See it clearly, so you can see beyond it.

Prayer Prompt: Lord, show me the source of my unrest. Reveal the places where bitterness has begun to live unnoticed in my heart.

2. Resist the Reflex

Our instincts often scream, *Strike back*. But the way of Christ is slower, quieter, and infinitely stronger. Resisting the reflex doesn't mean staying silent in the face of injustice—it means refusing to let rage become your compass.

Even Jesus, when confronted by venomous accusations, answered not with insults but with truth and calm authority. He knew His worth was not determined by their words.

When the serpent bites, pause. Breathe. Pray before responding. The venom dies in stillness.

Prayer Prompt: God, when I'm tempted to lash out, hold my tongue until Your peace returns. Teach me the strength of holy restraint.

3. Look Upward

The Israelites had to lift their eyes to be healed. Healing comes not from staring at the wound, but from turning toward the One who redeems it.

Prayer and Scripture aren't escapism—they're antidotes. In prayer, we let God draw out the poison. In Scripture, we remember that every serpent is temporary, but the cross endures.

Let your eyes find the lifted Christ again. Fix your gaze there until your heartbeat slows, until the venom's whisper fades.

Prayer Prompt: Jesus, help me to look up when pain tries to pull me down. Let Your presence be the medicine my heart needs.

4. Protect Your Peace

Peace is not passivity; it's preservation. Guarding your peace is choosing life over rage, forgiveness over fixation.

This doesn't mean ignoring evil. It means confronting it with a steady heart. Peace allows you to see clearly, to act justly, to speak truth without poison in your words.

Forgive, not because they deserve it, but because you deserve freedom. Set boundaries without guilt. Pray without fear. Walk away without hate.

Prayer Prompt: Lord, keep my peace intact. Let nothing that strikes me turn my heart bitter. Make me a vessel of Your healing.

More Light for the Journey

Psalm 34:19 (NLT) – “The righteous person faces many troubles, but the Lord comes to the rescue each time.”

Even when the serpents surround, God's rescue is not delayed—it's unfolding in every heartbeat that still trusts.

Romans 12:21 (NLT) – “Don't let evil conquer you, but conquer evil by doing good.”

The truest victory is to stay uncorrupted by the fight.

2 Corinthians 4:8–9 (NLT) – “We are pressed on every side by troubles, but we are not crushed... We get knocked down, but we are not destroyed.”

The venom may strike, but it cannot consume the one held by grace.

James 4:7 (NLT) – “Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.”

Resistance is not rage—it’s refusal. The enemy cannot dwell where peace abides.

Let’s Walk This Out Together

Every follower of Christ will face serpents—some with fangs, some with words, some within our own thoughts. But the cross stands lifted above them all.

When the bite comes, remember that you are not helpless. You are not alone. You are already held by the One who bore every venom and turned it into healing.

So stand firm, even if trembling. Choose love that costs something. Let mercy be your defense. Keep your eyes lifted, even when the ground moves beneath you.

The world doesn’t need more venom. It needs more healed people—those who have looked upon the lifted Christ and lived.

Call to Action: Pray. Write. Speak. Share your story of overcoming spiritual poison with the hashtag **#FaithOverFactions** so others can find courage in your healing.

Journaling Prompts

Prayer Prompt Before Writing: Holy Spirit, guide me as I write. Show me where the venom has hidden in my heart, and teach me to look to Christ for healing.

1. What situations or people have “bitten” me lately? How have I responded to that pain?

2. In what ways have I allowed bitterness or anger to circulate like venom inside me?
3. What does “looking up” to Christ mean in the middle of my current struggle?
4. What would protecting my peace look like this week in practical, specific steps?
5. Who around me needs to see the evidence that healing is possible?
How might my story help them?

Intended Takeaway:

We can't stop the serpents from biting, but we can decide whether their venom defines us. Christ offers healing that turns every bite into a testimony of grace.