



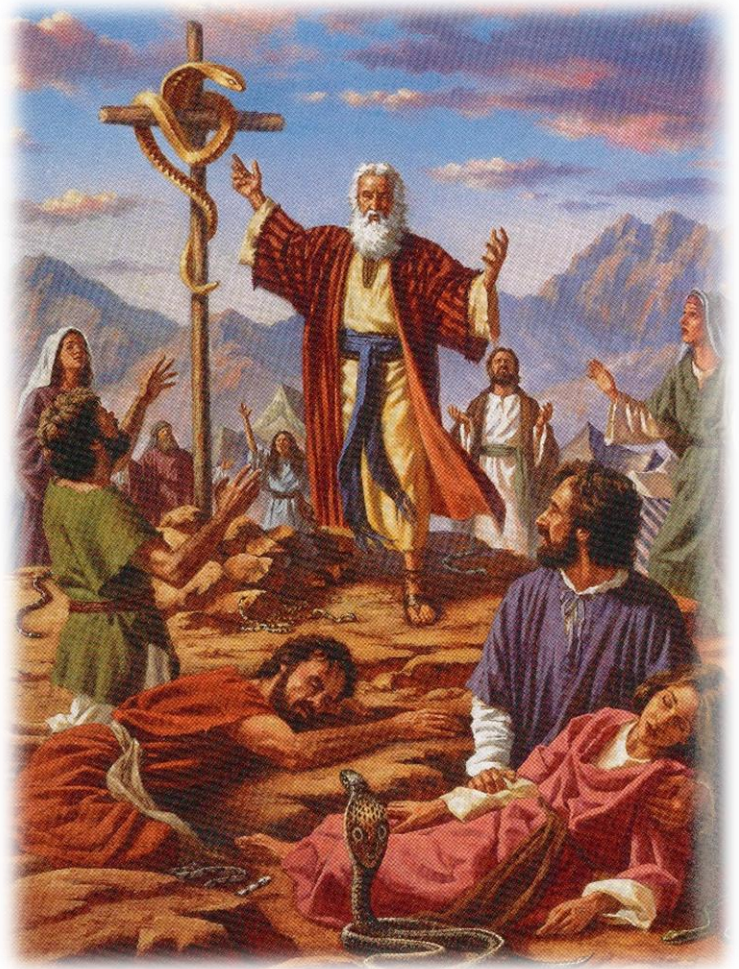
Lesson 12

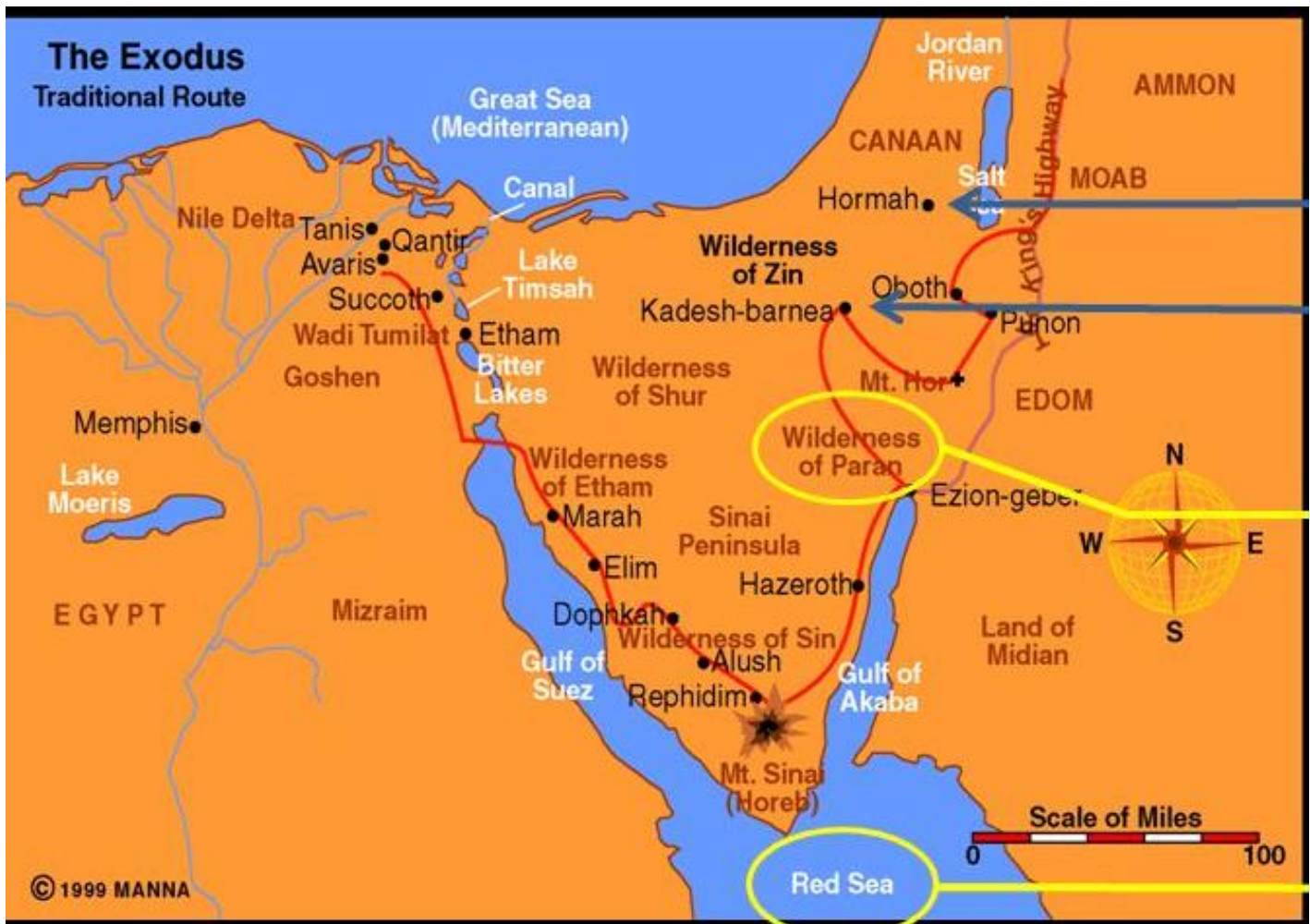
# The Bronze Snake

*Numbers 20:1-21:9*

## Numbers 20

And the people of Israel, the whole congregation, came into the wilderness of Zin in the first month, and the people stayed in Kadesh. And Miriam died there and was buried there.





<sup>2</sup> Now there was no water for the congregation. And they assembled themselves together against Moses and against Aaron. <sup>3</sup> And the people quarreled with Moses and said, “**Would that we had perished when our brothers perished before the LORD!**” <sup>4</sup> Why have you brought the assembly of the LORD into this wilderness, that we should die here, both we and our cattle? <sup>5</sup> And why have you made us come up out of Egypt to bring us to this evil place? It is no place for grain or figs or vines or pomegranates, and there is no water to drink.” <sup>6</sup> Then Moses and Aaron went from the presence of the assembly to the entrance of the tent of meeting and fell on their faces. And the glory of the LORD appeared to them, <sup>7</sup> and the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, <sup>8</sup> “Take the staff, and assemble the congregation, you and Aaron your brother, and **tell the rock before their eyes to yield its water.** So you shall bring water out of the rock for them and give drink to the congregation and their cattle.” <sup>9</sup> And Moses took the staff from before the LORD, as he commanded him.

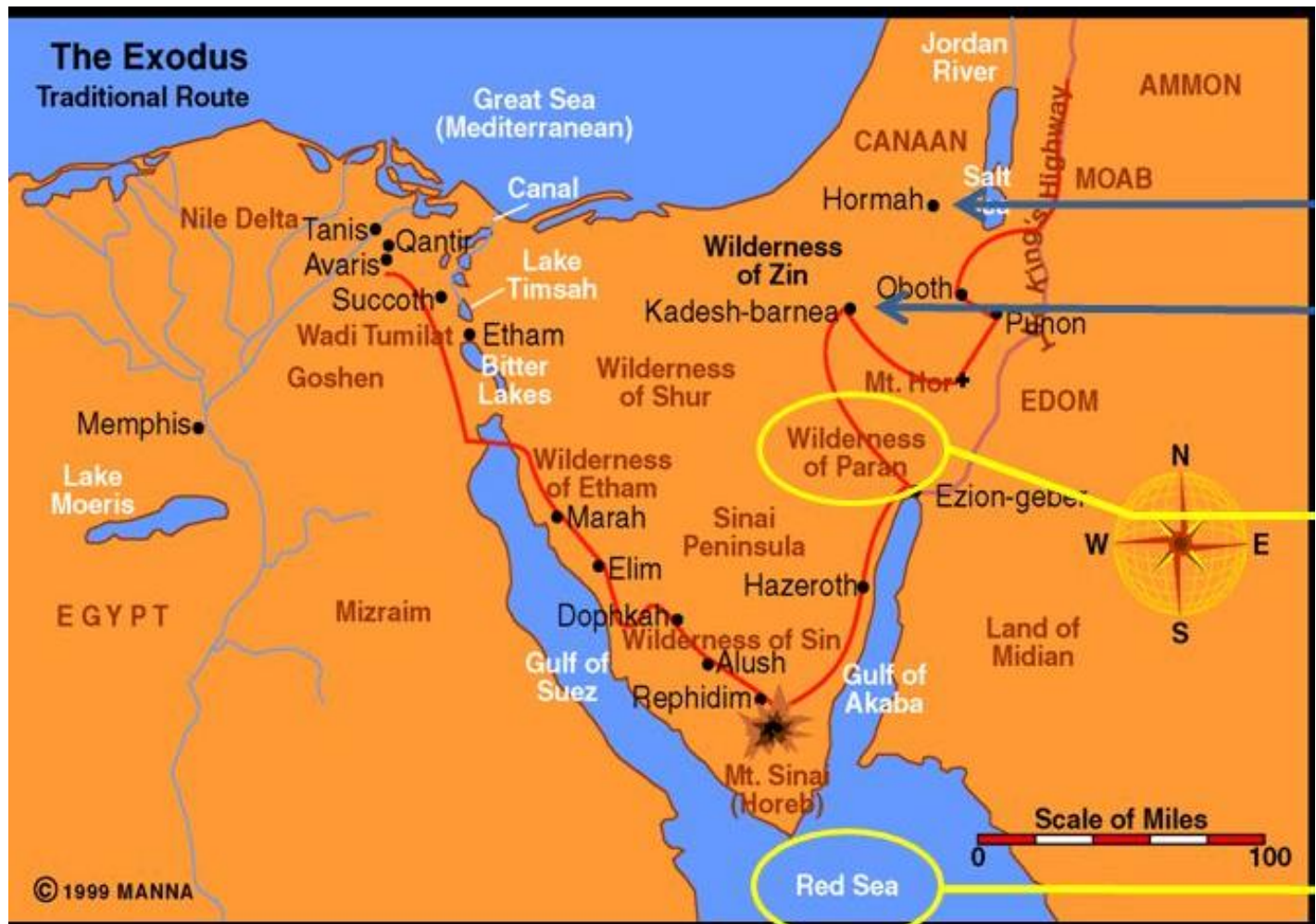
<sup>10</sup> Then Moses and Aaron gathered the assembly together before the rock, and he said to them, “Hear now, **you rebels**: shall we bring water for you out of this rock?” <sup>11</sup> And Moses lifted up his hand and struck the rock with his staff twice, and water came out abundantly, and the congregation drank, and their livestock. <sup>12</sup> And the LORD said to Moses and Aaron, “Because you did not believe in me, to uphold me as holy in the eyes of the people of Israel, therefore you shall not bring this assembly into the land that I have given them.” <sup>13</sup> These are the waters of Meribah, where the people of Israel *quarreled* with the LORD, and through them he showed himself holy.

<sup>14</sup> Moses sent messengers from Kadesh to the king of **Edom**: “Thus says your brother Israel: You know all the hardship that we have met: <sup>15</sup> how our fathers went down to Egypt, and we lived in Egypt a long time. And the Egyptians dealt harshly with us and our fathers. <sup>16</sup> And when we cried to the LORD, he heard our voice and sent an angel and brought us out of Egypt. And here we are in Kadesh, a city on the edge of your territory. <sup>17</sup> **Please let us pass through your land. We will not pass through field or vineyard, or drink water from a well. We will go along the King's Highway. We will not turn aside to the right hand or to the left until we have passed through your territory.**” <sup>18</sup> But Edom said to him, “You shall not pass through, lest I come out with the sword against you.” <sup>19</sup> And the people of Israel said to him, “We will go up by the highway, and if we drink of your water, I and my livestock, then I will pay for it. Let me only pass through on foot, nothing more.” <sup>20</sup> But he said, “You shall not pass through.” And Edom came out against them with a large army and with a strong force. <sup>21</sup> Thus Edom refused to give Israel passage through his territory, so Israel turned away from him.

<sup>22</sup> And they journeyed from Kadesh, and the people of Israel, the whole congregation, came to Mount Hor. <sup>23</sup> And the LORD said to Moses and Aaron at Mount Hor, on the border of the land of Edom, <sup>24</sup> “Let Aaron be gathered to his people, for he shall not enter the land that I have given to the people of Israel, because you rebelled against my command at the waters

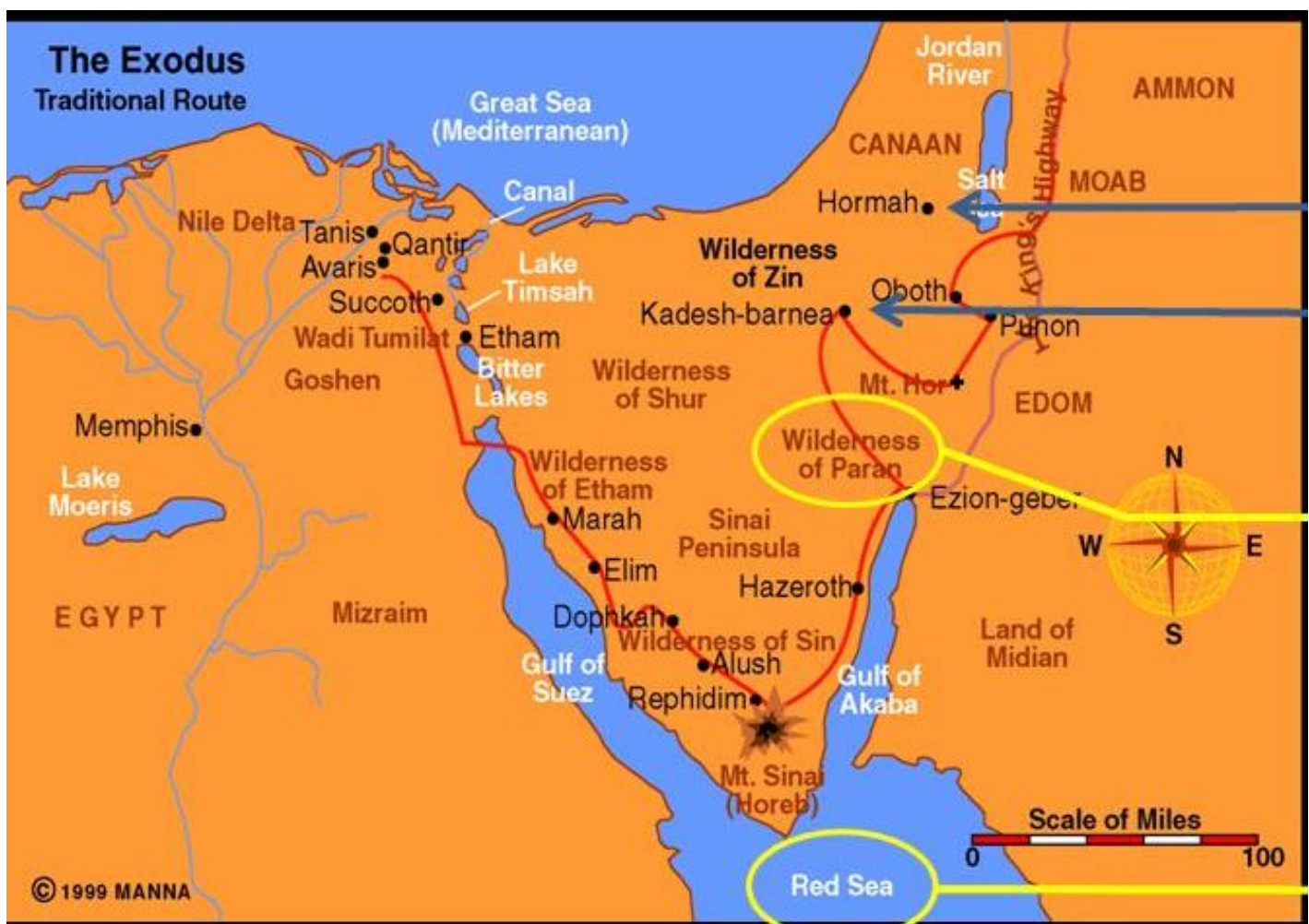


of Meribah. <sup>25</sup> Take Aaron and Eleazar his son and bring them up to Mount Hor. <sup>26</sup> And strip Aaron of his garments and put them on Eleazar his son. And Aaron shall be gathered to his people and shall die there.” <sup>27</sup> Moses did as the LORD commanded. And they went up Mount Hor in the sight of all the congregation. <sup>28</sup> And Moses stripped Aaron of his garments and put them on Eleazar his son. And Aaron died there on the top of the mountain. Then Moses and Eleazar came down from the mountain. <sup>29</sup> And when all the congregation saw that Aaron had perished, all the house of Israel wept for Aaron thirty days.



# Numbers 21

When the Canaanite, the king of Arad, who lived in the Negeb, heard that Israel was coming by the way of Atharim, he fought against Israel, and took some of them captive. <sup>2</sup> And Israel vowed a vow to the LORD and said, "If you will indeed give this people into my hand, then I will devote their cities to destruction." <sup>3</sup> And the LORD heeded the voice of Israel and gave over the Canaanites, and they devoted them and their cities to destruction. So the name of the place was called Hormah (*destruction*)



<sup>4</sup> From Mount Hor they set out by the way to the Red Sea, to go around the land of Edom. And the people became impatient on the way. <sup>5</sup> 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." <sup>6</sup> Then the LORD sent fiery serpents among the people, and they bit the people, so that many people of Israel

died. <sup>7</sup> And the people came to Moses and said, “We have sinned, for we have spoken against the LORD and against you. Pray to the LORD, that he take away the serpents from us.” So Moses prayed for the people. <sup>8</sup> And the LORD said to Moses, “Make a fiery serpent and set it on a pole, and everyone who is bitten, when he sees it, shall live.” <sup>9</sup> So Moses made a bronze serpent and set it on a pole. And if a serpent bit anyone, he would look at the bronze serpent and live.

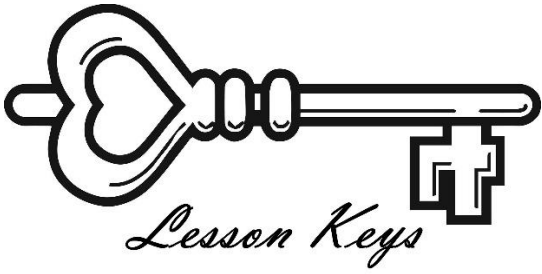
## Type of Christ

And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man **be lifted up**, <sup>15</sup> that whoever **believes in him** may have **eternal** life. (John 3:14-15).

- An “image” of what was causing death was lifted up.
- Looking in faith to the image gave life
- The Anti-Type (fulfillment) always exceeds the type in quality, meaning.

## Idolatry

In the third year of Hoshea son of Elah, king of Israel, Hezekiah the son of Ahaz, king of Judah, began to reign. <sup>2</sup> He was twenty-five years old when he began to reign, and he reigned twenty-nine years in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Abi the daughter of Zechariah. <sup>3</sup> And he did what was right in the eyes of the LORD, according to all that David his father had done. <sup>4</sup> He removed the high places and broke the pillars and cut down the Asherah. **And he broke in pieces the bronze serpent that Moses had made, for until those days the people of Israel had made offerings to it (it was called Nehushtan)** (2 Kings 18:1-4)



1. The new generation of Israel had the same sins as their forefathers and the same complaints (cf. after the Flood)
2. God sent snakes to chastise Israel, they listened and repented.
3. God provided salvation which is a type of Christ.
4. See how human sinfulness can take a gift from God and turn it into an idol.