

The First Prophecy of the Savior

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Bible Text: Genesis 3:15

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The next couple of weeks I was planning on bringing a short series of messages on some of the Old Testament prophecies that point forward to the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ. They are really fascinating, very, very special. And the one we are going to be looking at today is the first prediction that we find in the Bible of the coming of the Savior and of the salvation that he is going to provide.

It was read to you this morning and it is a little bit cryptic. As we read it, sometimes it is difficult for us to recognize the fact that this is a messianic prediction, but it really is. I am going to read, again, Genesis chapter three and verse 15 and then we are going to look at the background and hopefully understand the context and what this is all about.

“And I will put enmity between you and the woman, And between your seed and her seed; He shall bruise you on the head, And you shall bruise him on the heel.”¹

You will remember that God in a wonderful and gracious manner placed the man and the woman, Adam and Eve in the midst of a beautiful garden. It was a place that was an ideal environment, a place that we might enjoy today. Can you imagine a garden where there are no thorns, where there are no weeds, a garden where when you plant something only it grows and when you plant something that will yield that you can eat, the food grows in abundance and you have plenty of food to eat? Adam and Eve were given some responsibility. They had to over see the garden. They had to take care of it and yet it provided all of their needs, everything they needed was there and they could enjoy it.

There was only one requirement that God laid upon them. It is kind of interesting when we think of it. You know, sometimes we are a lot like Adam and Eve. God said to Adam and to Eve, “You are allowed to eat from every single tree in the garden except that one.”

Let me ask you a question. When you were a child, a couple of us here already are children, but when you were a child your mom and dad said, “You are allowed to touch everything except that.” What did you do? Now you don’t have to answer the question because you were all good kids. I know that. And none of you would have touched a one thing that mom and dad said you are not allowed to touch.

¹ Genesis 3:15

I think most of us can understand the temptation. It is not as if God had said to Adam and Eve, "Now, look. You are highly restricted. You stay away from everything. You are only allowed this one little thing."

It was the exact opposite. "You can everything, everything here. Just this one tree you are not allowed to touch."

Well, we find out that Satan, taking on the form of a serpent and we do not know what the serpent was like in that day because when we read the passage we find that the punishment that came upon the serpent was that he would crawl on his belly. So we have to assume that before he was punished he didn't crawl on his belly. He was an upright animal. I don't know what he looked like. He obviously was one that was reasonably attractive to people because he was able to beguile Eve. She was attracted to him enough that she would listen to him.

Now let's face facts. The way serpents are today most ladies would not be attracted to them to have a conversation with them if they were able to talk.

How many of you ladies really love snakes? You are a snake lover? We have one snake lover. You know, there is one in every crowd. Anyway, there is one snake lover. That's ok. You are allowed to love snakes.

We visited my daughter in Arizona and my daughter does not have snakes. She has dog, she has fish, she has a bird and she has chickens, but no snakes. But they have a neighbor and we went to visit the neighbor and they have a private room for their 16 foot boa constrictor.

Now, you know, that would not be my style living. But, anyway, that is what they have.

Most ladies that I know do not like snakes. In fact, most men don't like snakes, to tell you the truth. If we had a snake that crawled in the house what would...well, what do you think, Nancy? I think it would be time for you to get out of the house or climb up on a chair or something like that to get away from that snake.

Well, the snake was not like that. The serpent was not like that in that day. It was an upright animal. Apparently a very attractive animal.

And that serpent went to Eve and beguiled her. The Word of God makes it very clear that Eve was taken in by the snake, she was fooled by the snake, it was a snake that could talk. It was obviously Satan behind the snake. And convinced her that she should take the fruit of this tree.

We don't know what the fruit was like. I am sure it was not an apple. We don't know what it was. We do know that it was nothing significantly different from all of the other trees. I mean it was just a fruit tree. But she took of that and she gave it to her husband.

The Bible tells us that Eve was fooled by the serpent, but Adam was not. Adam went into it understanding exactly what he was doing, knowing that he was rebelling against God. He took it anyway. And taking it he sinned against the Lord.

Now God laid certain punishments upon those who were there that day. The punishments are very interesting as we read of them in God's Word. He says, first of all that he...he approaches Adam. Adam and Eve put clothing on. They had not worn clothing before that. They were embarrassed to be naked. Before that there was no embarrassment. There was nothing inappropriate about their being around the garden without clothing. And as God approached them and recognized the fact that they had sinned against him, God says to Adam:

“Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree of which I commanded you not to eat?” And the man said, “The woman whom Thou gavest to be with me, she gave me from the tree, and I ate.”²

Now, I want you to notice something. The man blames the woman. I don't know. Do men still do that today? I am not going to ask the ladies that. But, anyway, the man blamed the woman. But do you notice something else? The man also blamed God. The wording in here is very interesting.

It says, “The woman that you, God, gave me, she gave it to me and I ate. I'll blame her, but I am also going to blame God.” That is Adam's approach.

“Then the LORD God said to the woman, ‘What is this you have done?’ And the woman said, ‘The serpent deceived me, and I ate.’”³

You know, nobody takes responsibility for anything. Do you notice that? And so here the responsibility is passed from the man to the woman to the serpent. And I am not going to say “the poor serpent,” because that is Satan, but, you know, the serpent didn't have anyone to pass it on to. He was the final one who had sinned against God.

“And the LORD God said to the serpent...”⁴ Didn't even ask, “Why did you do it?”

“And the LORD God said to the serpent, ‘Because you have done this, Cursed are you more than all cattle, And more than every beast of the field; On your belly shall you go, And dust shall you eat All the days of your life.’”⁵

So the serpent was punished. We find out later that there was a punishment that came upon the woman and it was the pain of childbirth. I don't know anything about what child birth would have been like had there been no sin, but there is an indication here it says in verse 16. “To the woman He said, ‘ will greatly multiply Your pain in childbirth, In pain

² Genesis 3:11-12

³ Genesis 3:13

⁴ Genesis 3:14

⁵ Ibid.

you shall bring forth children; Yet your desire shall be for your husband, And he shall rule over you.”⁶

Do you see, the punishment was the additional pain that was added? So, you ladies, you can blame Eve for that because of...and Adam for that. Because of the sin, this was a punishment that came upon not only Eve herself, but all the other women.

And then to Adam there was a punishment. And that punishment was that living in the garden wasn't going to be easy anymore

It says:

Then to Adam He said, "Because you have listened to the voice of your wife, and have eaten from the tree about which I commanded you, saying, 'You shall not eat from it'; Cursed is the ground because of you; In toil you shall eat of it All the days of your life. Both thorns and thistles it shall grow for you; And you shall eat the plants of the field; By the sweat of your face You shall eat bread, Till you return to the ground, Because from it you were taken; For you are dust, And to dust you shall return."⁷

It is interesting that man was created not to die, but to live. But because of the sin of Adam death came to the human race.

One of the most exciting things and before we get into Genesis 3:15 I want you to notice a statement that Adam makes or a statement that is made here. It says in verse 20, "Now the man called his wife's name Eve, because she was the mother of all the living."⁸

The word "Eve" is from a Hebrew word חַוָּה (khav-vaw') and it means life. And what we have here is Adam choosing a word to be the name of his wife and God has just said, "You are going to die." God is pronouncing a pronouncement of death upon the human race and upon Adam and upon Eve and then Adam says, "I am going to call my wife Life." He had an understanding that God was going to provide a redemption. He had an understanding that although death was coming upon the human race, that there was a way in which there would be life. What a wonderful thought.

Well, let's take a look, now, at the passage that we are considering, Genesis chapter three and verse 15.

"I will put enmity Between you and the woman."⁹

Now I want you to understand, first of all, that there are two levels on which we can look at this passage. First of all is the natural level. It says, "I will put enmity between you and

⁶ Genesis 3:16

⁷ Genesis 3:17-19

⁸ Genesis 3:20

⁹ Genesis 3:15

the woman.”¹⁰ And except for one lady in this congregation, all the rest of the ladies said you don’t like snakes.

There is an enmity between the woman and the snake. Most women don’t like snakes. Now, it is not universal, but this is generally the way it is. And I can remember going to a special event that was being held on post at Hunter Army Airfield. And they had many, many displays there. And my wife was walking with me and one of the displays was a display of snakes.

You didn’t like...You are making a face. My wife is making a face right now.

Anyway, and as we walked by they would show people the snakes. And one of the most interesting phenomena that I experienced that day was that most of the men who walked by went up and looked at the snakes. They were very interesting animals. Most of the women couldn’t get away fast enough. They were not there because God had placed an enmity, a hatred between the snake and the woman.

Also in this passage it says that, “He shall bruise you on the head.”¹¹ In other words, the seed of the woman is going to bruise the snake on the head. Now, a snake crawls on the ground. If you step down and by mistake you step on one, you bruise its head. And this is a literal fulfillment of what this says. And it says, “And you shall bruise him on the heel.”¹² Snakes, in general, of course, are on the ground. If they are going to bruise you it is going to be on the lower part of the body, the heel, the leg, the foot.

And so that is the natural understanding of this passage. But we know that it goes way beyond that. This is talking about the ultimate reality of the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ and what he was going to do in order that men and women, boys and girls, might have everlasting life.

“I will put enmity between you, Satan, and the woman,” that there would be an enmity between the devil and the human race, that there would be a conflict going on all the time between the evil one and human beings.

But he goes on to say, “And between your seed and her seed.”¹³

What I find to be very interesting here is that when it talks about the seed of the woman, this is very unusual terminology in the Bible. If you read any of the genealogies in the Bible you find that they always come through the man, don’t they? I mean all you have to do is look at any genealogy and I can just give you an example.

If you were to continue in the book of Genesis in Genesis chapter five you find a genealogy and it says:

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Ibid.

¹³ Ibid.

This is the book of the generations of Adam. In the day when God created man, He made him in the likeness of God. He created them male and female, and He blessed them and named them Man in the day when they were created. When Adam had lived one hundred and thirty years, he became the father of a son.¹⁴

Nothing is mentioned about the woman. The genealogy comes through the man. If you keep on reading that it is consistent. You get to verse nine.

Enosh lived ninety years, and became the father of Kenan. Then Enosh lived eight hundred and fifteen years after he became the father of Kenan, and he had other sons and daughters.¹⁵

And so on and so forth. You go through that whole genealogy and you find it is always through the man. All you have to do is turn to the New Testament and you find in the book of Matthew where you have the genealogy of the Lord Jesus Christ. It is through the man. There are some women mentioned, but it is through the man that the genealogy is counted.

Well, here it talks about the seed of the woman. There is something distinct about this concept of the seed of the woman. And I believe it is a special way of God saying early in the Bible that somehow the Savior was going to be uniquely the seed of a woman and not the seed of a man. The Lord Jesus Christ was born without a human father. He was born of Mary, but she conceived by the Holy Spirit and not by a man.

Isn't that what we read of in Isaiah chapter seven and verse 14 where it says, "Therefore the Lord Himself will give you a sign: Behold, a virgin will be with child and bear a son, and she will call His name Immanuel."¹⁶

We read in Luke chapter one the wonderful story where it says, "And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall name Him Jesus."¹⁷ And so on and so forth.

In Galatians chapter four we read, "But when the fullness of the time came, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the Law."¹⁸

The Lord Jesus Christ was uniquely the seed of a woman and that is what it is saying here, that there would be enmity between the seed of Satan and the seed of the woman who is the Lord Jesus Christ.

¹⁴ Genesis 5:1-3

¹⁵ Genesis 5:9-10

¹⁶ Isaiah 7:14

¹⁷ Luke 1:31

¹⁸ Galatians 4:4

Well, who is the seed of Satan? What does it mean here when it talks about the seed of Satan?

Do you know that people who do not know the Lord Jesus Christ are under the authority of the devil? The Word of God tells us this. And there are those who in Scripture are actually called the sons of the devil, who are actually called his offspring. Listen to what it says here. It says in Matthew chapter 13 and verse 38, “And the field is the world; and as for the good seed...”¹⁹ Notice the word seed. “...as for the good seed, these are the sons of the kingdom; and the tares are the sons of the evil one.”²⁰ They are the sons of the devil, the sons of the evil one.

Matthew chapter 23 and verse 33. “You serpents, you brood of vipers, how will you escape the sentence of hell?”²¹

You see, these are the seed of Satan. Isn't that what the Lord was talking about in John chapter eight and verse 44 where he says to the people who were there that day, “You are of your father the devil.”²² Boy that's pretty strong, isn't it, pretty clear, isn't it?

We read in Acts chapter 13 and verse 10, “And he said, ‘You who are full of all deceit and fraud, you son of the devil.’”²³

In 1 John chapter eight, excuse me chapter three and verse eight the one who practices sin is of the devil.

And 1 John chapter three and verse 10. “By this the children of God and the children of the devil are obvious.”²⁴

So clear as it is presented here in the Word of God.

So the passage is telling us, first of all, and let's just go back and see. It says that God is going to put enmity between the woman—meaning, of course, the descendants, mankind—and Satan and between your seed and her seed, the seed of the woman meaning the Lord Jesus Christ and the seed of Satan, those who don't know him, those who don't honor him.

Well, what does it say about what will happen in this relationship? It is a very interesting passage. It says, “And you will bruise him.” Excuse me. “He shall bruise you on the head.”²⁵

¹⁹ Matthew 13:38

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ Matthew 23:33

²² John 8:44

²³ Acts 13:10

²⁴ 1 John 3:10

²⁵ Genesis 3:15

You know, there is a big difference between being bruised on the head and being bruised on the heel. Think of that. You know, I could get a bruise on my heel and I will live. I mean usually that will be healed. There won't be a problem. I can go and put some medicine on it and it is ok. But what about a crushing wound to the head?

I remember working as an on call chaplain at Memorial Hospital and I would be called in every time there was a trauma. I mean ever single trauma they had in the emergency room I was called in to deal with the family and to see what I could do for them. And I can remember the instances of head traumas and how few of the people lived. I mean there as the swelling in the brain and all of the blood that was involved and so many died.

The crushing blow to the head was fatal. The bruise to the heel was just an inconvenience. It required some medicine.

Here is the difference. You see, the Lord Jesus Christ was simply bruised in the heel. And, as I described that I think in terms of his crucifixion where there was the nail that went through the foot as he was nailed to the cross. There was that bruise to the heel. Oh, yes, he died. But it was oddly enough what I would call a non fatal death, for he died to rise again.

But the Word of God makes it very clear that Satan will be crushed in the head, that he will be destroyed, that there is no hope for him. The Word of God tells us this. Listen to Romans chapter 16 and verse 20. "The God of peace will soon crush Satan under your feet."²⁶ The Word of God tells us over and over again.

In 1 John chapter three and verse eight, "The one who practices sin is of the devil; for the devil has sinned from the beginning. The Son of God appeared for this purpose, to destroy the works of the devil."²⁷

And in Revelation the picture is so very clear.

And there was war in heaven, Michael and his angels waging war with the dragon. The dragon and his angels waged war, and they were not strong enough, and there was no longer a place found for them in heaven.²⁸

Over and over again the destruction of Satan we read in Revelation chapter 20 that wonderful passage of the future and the glorious kingdom that will come to God's people.

Then I saw an angel coming down from heaven, holding the key of the abyss and a great chain in his hand. And he laid hold of the dragon, the serpent of old, who is the devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand

²⁶ Romans 16:20

²⁷ 1 John 3:8

²⁸ Revelation 12:7-8

years; and he threw him into the abyss, and shut it and sealed it over him, so that he would not deceive the nations any longer²⁹

I have this picture of the devil being thrown into this abyss and a cap being placed on it as it presses and crushes the head of Satan. And, finally, in that same chapter in verse 10 where it says, “And the devil who deceived them was thrown into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are also; and they will be tormented day and night forever and ever.”³⁰

This is a picture of God’s punishment that will come upon Satan, the one who is evil, the one who tempted Adam and Eve in that day, the one who is against the children of God even in this day, the one who bruised the Lord Jesus Christ and in so doing fulfilled the great predictions of God’s Word that the Lord Jesus would die for the sins of his people.

And so Satan unwittingly trying to destroy the Lord, in effect, enabled the salvation which has come upon all people.

Some may ask the question: Isn’t this a little bit...isn’t this stretching things a little bit when we look at Genesis chapter three and verse 15? You read it and you read it and, yeah, you can see some of this in it. You can see some of the prediction that I have talked about. And yet as you read through it, it just seems to be describing a snake and a woman. It seems to be describing how snakes can be stepped on and how snakes can bite the heel of a person. But everything in the Word of God is meant to point to the Lord Jesus Christ. And this is the first of those wonderful predictions that we have in God’s Word that point forward to the Lord Jesus Christ.

And one of the things we will find—we are going to look at a couple of others in the days ahead—we are going to find that as we examine these passages they become more and more specific. This is one that is very general. It gives us a picture, but it is a vague picture. It is as if we are looking through a glass that is tinted and we can’t see everything. But as we go through the Word we find more and more the wonderful picture of God’s glorious salvation through the death, burial and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ is presented to us.

The questions that we need to ask ourselves are this. Where do we fit into the scheme of things? How do we fit in here? There are some people, it can...this can be describing some who may attend church, but who have never come to know the Lord Jesus Christ where the Word of God is saying here, “You are of your father the devil.”³¹

Do you know when the Lord Jesus Christ spoke those words he was talking to religious people? An interesting story.

²⁹ Revelation 20:1-3

³⁰ Revelation 20:10

³¹ John 8:44

Turn to...when you get a chance turn to John chapter eight and you will find he was talking to the religious people of his day. And he said to the religious people of the day, "You are of your father the devil."³² These were people who attended worship. These are people who went to the temple and went to the synagogue. These are people who by their outward appearance were people who loved God. They were the children of the devil.

Why was that so? Because they had never come into a personal relationship with the Lord. They had a merely external religion. They went through all of the ceremonies. They did all of the things that were required. They didn't work on the sabbath. They were faithful to this and faithful to that, but they had never come to know the Lord. There was not that deep, abiding and personal relationship that is required that we might be believers.

It is for each of us to look into our own hearts and to ask the question: Have we come to know the Savior? Do we know him as our Lord?

I have met people who have told me the story of their lives and have told me about the fact that they attended church from the time that they were little children until the time that they were adults and never had come to know Christ as Savior and Lord.

And when I speak to any congregation, whether it be a congregation of people that I know pretty well and trust that they know the Lord Jesus, there are times that I just want to say, "Search your hearts."

Each one of us must and ask the question: Have we really come to know Christ? Have we confessed our sins and thrown ourselves upon the mercy of the court of heaven asking him for the salvation that only he can provide?

And then we need to ask another question. If, in fact, we are in a world where there are those who are the sons of the devil, we know that also out there, there are the people of God waiting to hear the Word of God that they might respond. And I ask the question of those of us who are true believers. Have we been among those who share the gospel with others? Is it our desire to tell somebody else about the Lord Jesus Christ knowing the fact that the devil will do everything in his power to dissuade people that they will not turn to him, that the devil will do everything to destroy the message of the gospel? Are we as the children of God going out into this world and sharing that wonderful and glorious message of salvation?

Remember that Adam named his wife Eve חַוָּה (khav-vav'), life and that life is the marvellous gift of the Savior. Have we trusted in him? And have we turned to him in faith believing? And are we sharing that message with others who, as yet, know him not?

Let's pray together.

³² Ibid.

Our Father, you have given to us the glorious message of your wonderful salvation. It is in Christ and it is nowhere else. And, Lord, we pray that if there is anyone here who knows not the Savior that this one man or woman, boy or girl might turn to you in faith and have eternal life.

For those of us who are your children, give us the blessing of being able to be effective witnesses in the world in which we live. Use us, we pray, in Jesus' name. Amen.