

(This sermon will reference the Cookeville Primitive Baptist Church covenant for the final time, focusing upon the last section which states: "We also agree, with God's assistance to pray in our families, attend our church meetings, observe the Lord's day and keep it holy, and not absent ourselves from the communion of the Lord's supper and feet washing without a lawful excuse, to be ready to communicate to the defraying of the church's expenses, not irregularly depart from the fellowship of the church, nor to remove to distance churches without a regular dismissal." We have covered the other sections in other sermons spanning from December 4<sup>th</sup>, 2022 to June 25<sup>th</sup>, 2023: "To pray in our families" was covered in five of the sermons on wives, husbands, fathers, and children. "And not absent ourselves from the communion of the Lord's supper and feet washing without a lawful excuse" was covered on July 30<sup>th</sup> and on October 29<sup>th</sup>, 2023. "To be ready to communicate to the defraying of the church's expenses, and for the support of the ministry" was covered on June 4<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup>, and July 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2023. "Nor to remove to distance churches without a regular dismissal" has not been covered, nor does it need to be, given that it is based upon church tradition rather than scripture. "A regular dismissal" references sending letters of recommendation and acceptance to and from one congregation to another when members choose to change their membership church to church. In this sermon and those that may follow, we will look to the scriptures to expound upon and to understand the truth of what it means to "attend our church meetings, observe the Lord's day and keep it holy".)

We will begin learning about the Lord's Day (the first-day-of-the-week church service) by learning about the covenants, for what we are to do on the first day of the week, Sunday, as the church cannot be understood without first understanding covenants.

We will start at the beginning. From Genesis 1-2:

1. Man (Adam) and woman (Eve) are in the *very good* (1:31) state of being in the garden of Eden (2:8), having been made in the *image of God* as *male* and *female* (1:26-27), as *living souls* (2:7), and having been given the commandment (mandate) to have *dominion* as God's stewards of creation: to be *fruitful*, to *multiply*, to *replenish*, and to *subdue* (1:28).
2. The man and woman are surrounded by God's very goodness and *abundance* with every tree in the garden given for *beauty* and for *nourishment*, including two special trees: the *tree of life* and the *tree of the knowledge of good and evil* (2:9).
3. Prior to the woman's creation, the man is given the *command* to *abstain from eating* from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil (2:16-17).

The pattern of God's relationship with mankind by covenants is established in these first chapters: (1) *God takes hold* of the dust of the ground; (2) *God separates the (old) dust* from the ground, *unites it* with the breath of life *to make the (new) man* whom he names Adam; (3) *God speaks* to Adam about the garden and the trees; (4) *God grants the ritual signs/seals and visible/tangible memorials* in the two special trees as food *with attendant blessings for obedience* (life) and *cursings for disobedience* (death); and (5) *God arranges for the succession (continuation/expansion) of the covenant* by creating Eve as Adam's wife who would bear him children. (Thanks to Jeffrey Meyers for the pattern from "The Lord's Service). The covenant established here is known as the creation covenant or the covenant of works. God is the first cause of this covenant, but Adam and Eve's obedience and blessings from God in the covenant are short-lived.

4. The serpent *deceives* Eve (3:1-5) and she usurps (*disobeys*) the authority (*command*) of her husband, Eve gives Adam the fruit and he *usurps* (disobeys) the *authority* (command) of God (3:6).
5. *Adam and Eve clothe themselves* with fig leaves (*fragile covering*) and hide themselves. (3:7)
6. God finds them and questions them (man then woman 3:9-13).
7. God pronounces curses upon both them and the serpent (serpent, woman, then man 3:14-19).

8. *God clothes Adam and Eve* with animal skins (*durable covering*) (3:20).
9. Adam names Eve (3:21).
10. God drives them out of the garden (3:22-24).

God makes a promise (a covenant) in his curse upon the serpent:

**Genesis 3:15** *And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.*

In his book titled “Divine Covenants: a 20<sup>th</sup> century treatment of covenant theology”, A. W. Pink calls this “the first germinal publication of the everlasting covenant”. This verse describes God’s covenant of grace, established between God the Father and God the Son “Who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you” (1 Peter 1:20), to redeem mankind from their fall into sin and to establish a new and final order of things until the final return of Jesus Christ. Every other covenant in the scriptures points to the everlasting covenant of grace in pattern, type, and signs/seals.

Pink writes, “Thus, immediately after the Fall, God announced to the serpent his ultimate doom through the work of the Mediator, and revealed unto sinners the channel through whom alone salvation could flow to them. The continual additions which God subsequently made to the revelation He gave in Genesis 3:15 were, for a considerable time, largely through covenants He made with the fathers, covenants which were both the fruit of His eternal plan of mercy and the gradual revealing of the same unto the faithful.” Let us break this down a bit so that we might grasp this, the most important of covenants.

**Genesis 3:15a** *And I will* put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.

“And I will” cannot be overlooked. It is God, “with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning” (James 1:17), who wills this promise to be fulfilled. It is not the serpent, nor the man, nor the woman. It is God who proclaims:

**Isaiah 46:9-10** 9 Remember the former things of old: for **I am God**, and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like me, 10 **Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done**, saying, **My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure:**

We must understand that *no covenant given in scripture is not initiated by and secured by God* and His sovereign actions in relationship with mankind. John Owen defines covenant in this manner: “An absolute agreement between distinct persons, about the order and dispensing of things in their power, unto their mutual concern and advantage.” Since all things are in God’s power, God may establish absolute agreements with whomsoever He pleases. He may do all His pleasure.

**Genesis 3:15b** *And I will put enmity between thee and the woman*, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.

The first phrase in God’s declaration is that He will “put enmity” between two parties, beginning with “thee and the woman”. This part of the covenantal pattern where *God takes hold* and *God separates the old* (enmity with the serpent) and *unites it* (Adam with Eve) *to make the new* (seed). Since He is making this proclamation to the serpent, we must define who the serpent represents.

**Revelation 12:9** And the **great dragon** was cast out, that **old serpent**, called the **Devil**, and **Satan, which deceiveth the whole world**: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him.

The serpent then represents Satan. The enmity (hatred) is between him and “the woman”, who is Eve whom Adam had named in faith in the covenant God had established as “the mother of all living” (3:20). All of mankind would originate with Eve, culminating as regarding the covenant with Jesus Christ, born of the virgin Mary. And all of mankind would be repulsed by serpents unto this day, but there is more to this than that. Eve is the wife of the first Adam. The church is the wife of the second Adam. There is enmity between Satan and the church unto this day.

**Revelation 12:17** And the **dragon** was wroth with **the woman**, and went to make war with **the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ**.

Some have said that worship is warfare and here we see the reason behind that saying: when we gather on the Lord's Day, we remember the everlasting covenant and its fulfillment, declaring to God, ourselves, and God's and our enemies that Jesus Christ is victorious over death and Satan. We gather at the Lord's Table in the Lord's Supper to dine together with God in the presence of our enemies. The enmity remains, revealed in the church before the world.

**Genesis 3:15c** And *I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed*; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.

Again, we must understand that it is God who “will put enmity” between Satan and Eve. It is God who “will put enmity” between Satan's seed and Eve's seed. It is God who establishes and secures the covenant between the parties. What or who are the seeds whom God references?

**Galatians 3:16** Now to Abraham and **his seed** were the promises made. **He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ**.

Eve, as the “mother of all living”, bore *seeds* by which the earth would be populated mankind, yet “in the fulness of times” (Ephesians 1:9) a *seed* would be born “which is Christ”. (We will consider the Abrahamic covenant in a later lesson).

**Matthew 1:23** Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth **a son**, and they shall call his name **Emmanuel**, which being interpreted is, **God with us**.

The language of “seed” is consistently used in God's covenantal relationships with mankind throughout the scriptures.

(Noah) **Genesis 9:9** And I, behold, I establish my covenant with you, and with **your seed** after you;

(Abram) **Genesis 13:16** And I will make **thy seed** as the dust of the earth: so that if a man can number the dust of the earth, then shall thy seed also be numbered.

(Hagar) **Genesis 16:10** And the angel of the LORD said unto her, I will multiply **thy seed** exceedingly, that it shall not be numbered for multitude.

(Abraham) **Genesis 17:7** And I will establish my covenant between me and thee and **thy seed** after thee in their generations for **an everlasting covenant**, to be a God unto thee, and to **thy seed** after thee.

“Seed” language is an important expression in the covenantal pattern where *God arranges for the succession (continuation/expansion) of the covenant*. In this verse in Genesis, it is pointing to Jesus Christ, in whom it was (“bruise his heel”) fulfilled and in whom it was and is (“bruise thy head”) being fulfilled.

**Genesis 3:15d** And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; *it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.*

The bruising of head and heel are the results of the promise God makes. These may be considered in the pattern of God's covenantal relationship with mankind where *God grants the ritual signs/seals and visible/tangible memorials with attendant blessings for obedience and cursings for disobedience*. The blessing upon Jesus Christ (and us in him) and the cursing upon Satan being “it shall bruise thy head”. The blessing upon us and the cursing upon Jesus Christ being “thou shalt bruise his heel”.

**Galatians 3:13** Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, **Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree:**

In case we fall into the error of believing that God was somehow surprised by this turn of events in this chapter of Genesis, consider how in this covenant he is “declaring the end from the beginning” to us and how in the end of the scriptures he declares the beginning to us, referring to Jesus Christ in Revelation 13:8 as “the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world”. While His heel was bruised for us, He has bruised, through his death, burial, resurrection, ascension and reign, Satan's head. And we, as God has promised, are redeemed from the curse, are in Jesus Christ, in his bride the church.

**Ephesians 1:3-6** 3 Blessed be the God and Father of **our Lord Jesus Christ**, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places *in Christ*: 4 According **as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world**, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: 5 Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children **by Jesus Christ** to himself, **according to the good pleasure of his will**, 6 To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted *in the beloved*.

And because we are “in the beloved” we are members of His body of which He is the head, we are the church, His bride, continuing as we are commissioned to fulfill the covenant in Him, through Him, and by Him by discipling, baptizing, and teaching all mankind to be obedient unto him, with His promise that “the gates of hell shall not prevail against” us, His church (Matthew 28:18).

**Romans 16:20** And the God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you. Amen.

**AMEN**