

The First Prophecy and Gospel of Christ Genesis 3:15

*And I will put enmity between you and the woman,
and between your seed and her Seed;
He shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise His heel.*

In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth in six days, then rested on the seventh day (Genesis 1:1-2:3). The last thing God created was the man Adam, who was made in God's image and given mastery over the rest of God's creation (1:26-30; 2:7). God then planted a garden, and appointed Adam to tend and keep it (2:8-15). God told Adam "Of every tree of the garden you may freely eat; but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die" (2:16f). Then God in kindness made a companion for Adam (2:18-24), whom Adam called "Woman [literally *Maness*], because she was taken out of Man". (Note that Woman did not receive the name *Eve* until the end of ch.3.)

In this garden was "the serpent [that] was more cunning than any beast of the field which the LORD God [Jehovah Elohim] had made" (3:1). It approached the woman and deceived her into eating the forbidden fruit (3:1b-6a). She then gave the forbidden fruit to Adam, and he also ate it (3:6b). Then their eyes were opened to behold their sin and shame (3:7). They therefore hid from God (3:8), which is evidence that they had experienced the spiritual death resulting from their sin. But God found them (3:9f), elicited from Adam the confession of his sin (3:11f), and from Eve her confession of having been deceived by the serpent (3:13).

Now we read in verses 14-15: "14 So the LORD God [Jehovah Elohim] said to the serpent: 'Because you have done this, you are cursed more than all cattle, and more than every beast of the field; on your belly you shall go, and you shall eat dust all the days of your life. 15 And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her Seed; He shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise His heel.'"

We take for the text of this message verse 15. At first glance, this verse may not appear to be very important. But it is distinguished for many things, including the fact that here is the first Messianic prophecy, the first gospel message, the beginning of progressive revelation, and the introduction of God's grace to sinners. Consider these in detail:

Our text is the first Messianic prophecy. Here is the first time Jesus Christ is *promised*.

Christ is here prophesied as the woman's Seed – "*her Seed*", not the *man's* seed. Although Christ is later prophesied as the Seed of *men* (e.g., Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, David), the emphasis here is on Him descending from a *woman*. By woman came the first sin, for "the woman ... fell into transgression" before Adam did (1 Timothy 2:14); but through woman came the Savior from sin. This prophecy was fulfilled (Galatians 4:4f): "4 But when the fullness of the time had come, God sent forth His Son, *born of a woman*, ... 5 to redeem those who were under the law, that we might receive the adoption as sons." (More on "her Seed" is below.)

And Christ is here prophesied as the victor over the serpent, for the serpent was told "He shall bruise your head." (More on this is also below.)

Our text is the first gospel message. Here is the first time the good news of Jesus Christ is *preached*. (This first gospel message is known as the *protevangelium*, from Greek prefix *proto* meaning "first" and *euangelion* meaning "gospel" or "good news".) Regarding this first gospel message, consider:

First, note that this was the *first* occasion in which there was a necessity for preaching the gospel. There had been no sinners in need of the gospel or good news of salvation prior to this occasion. But now, in the first man and woman, the necessity had arisen.

Second, note that the first preacher of the gospel was *Jehovah Elohim* (according to the Hebrew text) – not a *man*, for there was no mortal preacher at that time. We therefore know that the *first* gospel message was the *true* gospel message.

This was not the only occasion in which God preached the gospel. We here will cite two other instances.

- God preached the gospel to Noah about fifteen hundred years later (c.2500), for there was no righteous man in his day until he found grace in God's sight and believed the gospel he heard (Genesis ch.6; Hebrews 11:6f).
- God preached the gospel to Abraham about two thousand years later (c.2000 BC), at which time Abraham was justified by faith in Jesus Christ (Galatians 3:6-9; cp. Genesis 12:3; 22:18; also Acts 7:2).

But the divine preacher of the gospel to these individuals was not God the Father nor the Holy Spirit. Rather, the divine gospel preacher in all three instances was the pre-incarnate Jesus Christ. This should not surprise us, since He was a gospel preacher during His incarnation.

Third, note that the first gospel message was about *Jesus*

Christ – the woman’s Seed who would crush the serpent’s head. If God preaches Christ, surely His ministers will! He who preaches other things is not a gospel preacher nor a minister of God.

Fourth, note that the first gospel message was *summary* – presenting the substance in a condensed form. It did not give information or details regarding how the woman’s Seed would conquer the serpent. We here should learn that salvation is not found in how much you know about Jesus Christ, but rather in believing the revelation God has given to you regarding Him.

Fifth, note that the first gospel message was *both believed and rejected*.

The first gospel message was *believed* by the man and the woman. This we know because God afterward sacrificed an animal in their place and stead, shed its blood and clothed them in its skin (v.21). Here is the gospel typified: Christ is the Lamb of God slain vicariously for believing sinners, who are saved through His blood shed for them, and clothed in His righteousness imputed to them.

But the first gospel message was *rejected* by the serpent. Consequently, Christ was not slain in its place and stead, His blood was not shed for its salvation, His righteousness will never be imputed to it, and it will perish in its sin.

The gospel receives the same responses today. All God’s people believe the gospel, and are saved like Adam and Eve were. All the serpent’s seed reject the gospel, and perish with it.

Are you a *believer* or a *rejecter* of the gospel?

Our text is the beginning of progressive revelation. At first glance, you may not see Jesus Christ in this text. But He is certainly in it – as surely as an oak is in an acorn.

The revelation given to the first man and woman was, like the first gospel message, *summary* – presenting the substance in a condensed form.

- They knew God was gracious to them, for they would continue to live and not suffer the eternal death they deserved.
- They knew the woman would have a descendant – “her Seed”. (They knew also that the woman would have other descendants, for later on this occasion, in v.20, “Adam called his wife’s name Eve, because she was the mother of all living.”)
- They knew her Seed would be triumphant over the serpent, for He would bruise the serpent’s head.
- But they had no idea how all this would happen.

God revealed how all this would happen through progressive revelation. As we read further in the Scriptures, more and more is revealed about the woman’s Seed and their Savior. But all the increasing and progressive revelation regarding Him will be founded upon this text.

We may compare progressive revelation to an oak tree coming forth from an acorn. When one sees the acorn, he does not see the oak, although the oak is in the acorn. The acorn bursts. From the acorn emerges a sprout. The sprout becomes a stem. From the stem emerge limbs. From the limbs emerge leaves and acorns. Now we see the fullness of an oak tree from the acorn.

Jesus Christ has been progressively revealed in this manner. Here in Genesis 3:15 we have the revelation that Christ will be the Seed of woman and the bruiser of the serpent’s head. But we do not see how this will be. Now observe the progress of this revelation afterward:

- Christ will be the Seed of Abraham (Genesis 22:18), and of Abraham’s son Isaac (Genesis 26:4), and of Isaac’s son Jacob (Genesis 28:14), in order that through their Seed “all nations will be blessed” (cp. Galatians 3:16).
- Christ will be the Seed of Jacob’s son Judah – and also a king (Genesis 49:10).
- Christ will be the Seed of Judah’s descendant David – and also God’s Son (2 Samuel 7:12, 14).
- Christ will be not only God’s Son, but also His Anointed who will rule over the earth (Psalm 2).
- Christ will be born of a virgin (Isaiah 7:14) in Bethlehem (Micah 5:2).
- Christ will die in the place and stead of God’s people in order to save and justify them (Isaiah ch.53).
- Christ will be raised from the dead and enthroned in glory (Psalm 16:10f).

At last we see all these prophecies (and many others) fulfilled in the present manifestation of Jesus Christ. Now we see, in a manner of speaking, the oak that was in the acorn. Christ’s heel has been bruised by the serpent, but His heel has crushed the serpent’s head, and all His people are saved through Him.

Our text is the introduction of God’s grace to sinners. God would have been just if He had left the first man and woman in their sin and shame and death, and to suffer the everlasting condemnation and punishment they deserved. But God here for the first time manifested to sinners His free and sovereign grace. He graciously came to them when they were fleeing from Him, and graciously found them when they were hiding from Him (vv.8f). He graciously promised to them their Savior, and graciously

declared His gospel to them, and graciously provided a sacrifice for their sins, and graciously clothed them in righteous garments, and graciously raised them from their fall.

It is no wonder that many from the time of Augustine (early 5th-century) speak of the *felix culpa*, the Latin phrase meaning “blessed fall”. This “fall” was that of Adam when he sinned. It was catastrophic to him and all our race, for it plunged us all into condemnation and spiritual death and separation from God (Romans 5:12ff). But if Adam had not fallen, we would not have known of God’s grace, and never heard the gospel of Christ, and never experienced redemption and salvation, holiness and righteousness, through faith in Him.

And we who believe God’s gospel realize that we gain more in Christ than we lost in Adam. Truly “where sin abounded, grace abounded much more” (Romans 5:20).

Having *introduced* our text (v.15), let us now *expound* it.

Note first that our text commences with the conjunctive “And”. Therefore, our text (v.15) is joined to the preceding verse (v.14), which is addressed to “the serpent” who deceived “the woman”, who also is present (see v.16), along with her husband Adam (see vv.17-19).

This was a judgment day for all three parties! And a curse was placed upon them all.

- The serpent was cursed above all other creatures.
- The woman was cursed to suffer travail in childbirth, and to subjection to her husband.
- The man was cursed to toil and labor until the day he dies.
- And the ground of the earth was cursed for man’s sake, to bring forth thorns and thistles to make his life wearisome (see Romans 8:20-22).

But out of this dreadful curse comes the greatest blessing: salvation for the man and woman through Jesus Christ.

In our text are four parties: (1) “you” – the serpent, (2) “the woman”, (3) “your seed” – that of the serpent, and (4) “her Seed” – that of the woman.

And in what transpires between them we have the war of the ages.

I. “And I will put enmity between you and the woman.”

This “enmity” is hatred. But not *mere* hatred! Rather, it is *intense* hatred. We know this from the other three instances in which the Hebrew word here translated

enmity (’êybâh) is found (Numbers 35:21; Ezekiel 25:15; 35:5). This “enmity” is that which desires the destruction of its object.

This hatred will be “between the serpent and the woman”. Some aver that God here prophesied of all serpents and all women hating each other. But we know that this is not the case. Not all women hate serpents, for some have serpents for pets, and treat them lovingly. Not all serpents hate women, for some serpents are content to be women’s pets, and hug women’s arms with their bodies. And enmity is not found between other serpents and woman, for they generally flee from each other, and do not go out of their ways to harm the other. (See Moses fleeing from a serpent in Exodus 4:3.)

This “enmity between the serpent and the woman” is not between this *physical* serpent and this *physical* woman. Rather, this hatred is between the *spiritual* serpent and the *spiritual* woman represented by this physical serpent and this physical woman.

Therefore, God here spoke to the *spiritual* serpent represented by this *physical* serpent. Who is he? This spiritual serpent is “that serpent of old [even from the Garden of Eden in the beginning], called the Devil and Satan” (Revelation 12:9; 20:2).

This *spiritual* serpent, Satan, is typified by this *physical* serpent in every regard cited in this passage.

- Satan is, like this serpent in verse 1, “more cunning than any beast of the field which the LORD God [Jehovah Elohim] had made.” For example: “Satan himself transforms himself into an angel of light” (2 Corinthians 11:14); and Satan is “that serpent ... who deceives the whole world” (Revelation 12:9).
- Satan is, like this serpent in verses 1-6, speaking to people and deceiving them to do what God forbids. For example, Satan convinced Judas Iscariot to betray Jesus Christ (Luke 22:3), and convinced Ananias (Sapphira’s husband) to lie to God the Holy Spirit (Acts 5:1-4).
- Satan is, like this serpent in verse 14, made to slither on the ground. The phrase “on your belly you shall go” was fulfilled when “that serpent of old ... was cast to the earth” (Revelation 12:9) and rendered unable to stand apart from divine permission.
- Satan is, like this serpent in verse 14, made to eat dust. The phrase “you shall eat dust” is not to be applied to Satan physically. Rather, it means to be greatly humbled and suffer defeat (Psalm 72:9; Isaiah 29:4; Micah 7:17). This prophecy also is fulfilled, for in God’s kingdom “dust shall be the serpent’s [i.e., Satan’s] food” (Isaiah 65:25).

Likewise, God here spoke to the *spiritual* woman represented by the *physical* woman. Who is she? You will know her identity when you find the woman who is the victim of Satan's enmity. She is found in Revelation chapter 12. She there is introduced as the woman who was about to give birth (vv.1f). Standing before her was a "dragon", intending to devour her Child as soon as He was born (vv.3f). This "dragon" is "that serpent of old, called the Devil and Satan" (v.9). This woman's Child is Jesus Christ, for "She bore a male Child who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron" (v.5a). Satan failed to defeat Christ, the woman's Child, for "her Child was caught up to God and His throne" (v.5b). Since Satan could no longer persecute Christ, "he persecuted the woman who gave birth to [Christ]" (v.13). Furthermore, "[Satan] was enraged with the woman, and he went to make war with the rest of her offspring, who keep the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus Christ" (v.17).

This woman is the spiritual mother of Jesus Christ – her "male Child who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron". She also is the spiritual mother of all His spiritual brothers and sisters – "the rest of her offspring". She is God's wife. She is the woman to whom He says "your Maker is your husband, Jehovah of hosts is His name" (Isaiah 54:5). She is the woman to whom He says "I will betroth you to Me forever; yes, I will betroth you to Me in righteousness and justice, in lovingkindness and mercy; I will betroth you to Me in faithfulness, and you shall know Jehovah" (Hosea 2:19f).

God's wife is His church, His congregation, the assembly of all His people. She has been on this earth ever since God has had children on this earth. Adam and Eve were her first members, and Abel was the first of her offspring (although Christ is her Firstborn). And Satan has always been at enmity against her.

Notice that God "put" enmity between Satan and the woman. The hatred that the woman has for Satan and his ways is not naturally in her. Rather, it is divinely "put" in her. And this enmity against Satan and his ways is virtuous, not sinful. It is the holy hatred of Satan and his seed and their unholy ways. It is the sinless hatred that moves the children of this woman to say "Do I not hate them, O Jehovah, who hate You? And do I not loathe those who rise up against You? I hate them with perfect hatred; I count them my enemies" (Psalm 139:21f – note the two sets of parallel statements).

There is no need for God to put enmity in Satan against the woman, for it naturally is there. And it is unholy hatred, manifesting itself in lying, malice, violence, and murder. Let us here remember that God is not the author of sin.

Satan has been at war against this woman from the time of the prophecy of Genesis 3:15, from the time God's church was first found on earth. And he has had good reason for doing so. If he could destroy this woman before her prophesied Child was born, there would be no redeemer and no savior, and God's purpose for the salvation of His people would be thwarted.

Here are some examples of Satan's war against this woman:

- Satan moved wicked Cain to murder the church's first child, righteous Abel (Genesis 4:1-8). But God raised righteous Seth to replace Abel (4:25).
- Satan attempted to destroy this woman by enticing God's sons – Seth's descendants, to marry men's daughters – Cain's descendants (Genesis 6:1-7). But God gave grace to Noah, by whom God's church was saved (6:8ff).
- Satan afflicted this woman while she was in Egyptian bondage (Exodus 1:8ff). But God raised Moses to be her deliverer in The Exodus (ch.3). (Moses the deliverer is here a type of Christ the Savior.)
- Satan moved Pharaoh to recapture this woman and bring her back into bondage (Exodus 14:5ff). But God saved her by delivering her through the Red Sea and drowning Pharaoh and his army therein (14:13ff).
- Satan attempted to destroy this woman by causing her to worship a golden calf (Exodus 32:1ff). But God saved her when Moses interceded for her (32:11ff). (Moses the interceder is here a type of Christ the Interceder.)
- Satan afflicted this woman while she was in the wilderness by causing her to be attacked by nations including Amorites (Numbers 21:21ff) and Bashanites (Numbers 21:33ff). But God delivered her and brought her to the Promised Land. (This is typical of God delivering His church from present enemies and bringing her to heaven.)
- Satan attempted to have this woman annihilated when she was in Persia (Esther 3:8ff). But God raised Esther to be His instrument in His church's deliverance (chs.4ff).
- Satan persecuted this woman through Antiochus Epiphanes during the times of the Maccabees in the years between the Old and the New Testaments. But God brought her through these trials also.
- Satan persecutes this woman throughout this New Testament age. It is with good reason that she is exhorted "Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour" (1 Peter 5:8).

Satan will not defeat God's church, for Jesus promised "the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it" (Matthew 16:18). And God's church will be victorious over Satan,

for she confesses “we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us” (Romans 8:37).

II. “*And I will put enmity ... between your seed and her Seed.*”

The “seed” of the *serpent, Satan*, are his *spiritual* descendants.

- They are of those to whom Jesus says “You are of your father the devil, and the desires [or *lusts*] of your father you want to do” (John 8:44).
- They are of those to whom Jesus says “Brood of vipers! How can you, being evil, speak good things?” (Matthew 12:34) and “Serpents, brood of vipers! How can you escape the condemnation of hell?” (Matthew 23:33).
- They are all whom the Holy Spirit calls “children of the devil”, and describes as always sinning and incapable of doing righteousness (1 John 3:8, 10).
- They are like Elymas the sorcerer, to whom Paul the apostle said “O full of all deceit and all fraud, you son of the devil, you enemy of all righteousness, will you not cease perverting the straight ways of the Lord?” (Acts 13:10).
- They are those of whom we read “They sharpen their tongues like a serpent; the poison of asps is under their lips” (Psalm 140:3).

The “Seed” of the *woman* is *one Person*. This we know from the singular pronoun in the subsequent phrase “*He* shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise *His* heel.” The *serpent’s* seed are *many*; but the *woman’s* seed is *One*.

And this “Seed” of the woman is *Jesus Christ*. We noted this fact in the previous point. But let us here expand upon it.

It was necessary that the Savior of sinners be “born of a woman” (Galatians 4:4). God could not merely overlook their sin or erase it from them. Divine justice against their sin must be satisfied! Justice cannot be satisfied by any work the sinners do, for they are incapable of any such meritorious work because of their spiritual death. Justice cannot be satisfied by angels acting in sinners’ behalf, because angels and sinners are of two different natures. Neither could justice be satisfied by God the Father, for He does not possess the human nature. Rather, God’s divine Son, Jesus Christ, must assume the humanity of sinners, taking upon Himself their nature (but not their sin), in order to save them. “Inasmuch then as the children have partaken of flesh and blood, He Himself likewise shared in the same, that through death He might destroy him who had the power of death, that is, the devil, and release those who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage” (Hebrews 2:14f).

Therefore, in our text is introduced the *humanity* of Jesus Christ.

And in our text is introduced the *virgin birth* of Jesus Christ. He here is introduced as “*her* Seed” – *woman’s*, not *man’s*. Christ would have no *natural* father. How can this be? The answer is found in a subsequent prophecy (Isaiah 7:14): “Behold, the *virgin* shall conceive and bear a Son, and shall call His name Immanuel [literally *With Us Is God*].” Both these prophecies – Genesis 3:15 and Isaiah 7:14 – were fulfilled when Jesus Christ was born of the virgin Mary and named *Immanuel* (Matthew 1:18-25).

Note also that Jesus Christ is the woman’s “Seed” in a *three-fold sense*.

- *Representatively*, the first woman (Eve) is Jesus’ mother, for she represents both His *physical* and *spiritual* mothers.
- *Physically*, the virgin Mary is Jesus’ mother, for He was physically born of her.
- *Spiritually*, the woman described in Revelation chapter 12 is Jesus’ mother.

The “enmity” of Satan’s seed against Christ is portrayed many times – both *before* and *after* His birth.

Before Christ’s birth, Satan’s seed, who do the will of their father (John 8:44), tried to prevent Him from being born.

- Cain slew Abel (Genesis 4:1-8), who was assumed to be either the woman’s promised Seed or the one through whom He would be born. But God raised Seth to replace Abel (v.25). (Seth’s name is thought to mean “substituted” [*Strong’s Hebrew Dictionary*]. Pause and think about that in relationship to Jesus Christ.)
- Pharaoh required Israelite midwives to kill all newborn Israelite males (Exodus 1:15f). This would have prevented Christ from being the promised Seed of Abraham. But the midwives ignored Pharaoh (v.17).
- Pharaoh required all his people to kill all newborn Israelite males (Exodus 1:22) – still hoping to prevent Christ from being the promised Seed of Abraham. But God spared Moses (2:1-10), who would deliver Israel from the Egyptians.
- Queen Athaliah of Judah (the only queen to occupy Judah’s throne) attempted to kill all the royal heirs (2 Kings 11:1 / 2 Chronicles 22:10). This would have prevented Christ from being the promised Seed of Judah and David. But Jehosheba, the king’s daughter and the wife of the priest Jehoiada, hid Joash/Jehoash (2 Kings 11:2f / 2 Chronicles 22:11f), who later was crowned king (2 Kings 11:4ff / 2 Chronicles ch.23) and continued the royal line of David (see Matthew 6:1-17). (Interestingly: the name *Joash* means “Jehovah Has

Bestowed”; *Jehosheba* means “Jehovah Has Sworn”; *Jehoiada* means “Jehovah Knows”; and *Athaliah*, who was killed when Joash was crowned, means “Afflicted Of The Lord”.)

- Wicked Haman (meaning “Magnificent”) beguiled King Ahasuerus of Persia to have all Jews killed (Esther ch.3). This would have prevented Jesus Christ from being born. But God used Queen Esther and godly Mordecai to spare the Jews (as related in the rest of this book).

Satan’s seed, having failed in their murderous attempts to thwart the birth of Jesus Christ, vented their enmity against Him personally during His earthly days, both *verbally* and *physically*.

Verbally:

- They accused Him of being self-absorbed and of being a liar (John 8:13).
- They denied His ability to liberate those in bondage (John 8:31-33).
- They intimated that He was a bastard born of an immoral woman (John 8:41).
- They slandered Him as being a despised Samaritan (John 8:48).
- They accused Him of being demon-possessed (John 7:20; 8:48, 52; 10:20).
- They said “He is out of His mind” (Mark 3:21).
- They at least twice accused Him of being an instrument of Beelzebub, the ruler of the demons (Matthew 9:34 & 12:24).
- They attempted to publicly confound Jesus with questions from their leading theologians (Matthew 22:15).
- They called Him “that deceiver” (Matthew 27:63).

Physically:

- They attempted to kill Jesus when He was an infant, by having all male infants in Bethlehem two years old and younger massacred (Matthew 2:16-18).
- They attempted to kill Jesus by throwing Him over a cliff the first time He preached in Nazareth (Luke 4:16-30, especially vv.28f).
- They became enraged against Jesus, and discussed what harm they should do to Him, when He healed a man on the Sabbath (Luke 6:6-11, especially vv.11).
- They assailed Jesus vehemently, and sought to catch Him making a mistake, when He exposed their hypocrisy, murderous hands, and ignorance (Luke 11:37-54, especially vv.53f).
- They attempted to kill Jesus when He exposed them as slaves of sin (John 8:33-40, especially vv.37, 40).
- They attempted to stone Jesus when He asserted Himself to be the divine “I AM” (John (John 8:57-59)).
- They sought to kill Jesus because He healed a man on the

Sabbath and declared His equality with God the Father (John 5:1-18, especially vv.16, 18).

- They attempted to stone Jesus when He acknowledged His deity in saying “I and My Father are one” (John 10:30-33).
- They attempted to seize Jesus when He acknowledged His union with God in saying “the Father is in Me, and I in Him” (John 10:37-39).
- They conspired with Judas Iscariot to betray Jesus (Mark 14:10f).
- They demanded that Jesus be put to death for blasphemy when He confessed to being the Christ, God’s Son – and then they spat on Him and smote Him (Matthew 26:63-68 / Mark 14:61-65 / Luke 22:67-71).
- They repeatedly demanded the Roman governor to crucify Jesus (Matthew 27:22f / Mark 15:12-14 / Luke 23:20-23 / John 19:16).
- They crucified Jesus and put Him to death (Acts 2:22f).

Note well the identity of these spawn of Satan! They were religionists claiming to be God’s people and keepers of Moses’ law, especially its Sabbath.

And even today, Satan’s seed continues to express their enmity against Jesus Christ. Some are like those we just observed: religionists claiming to be law-keepers and Sabbath-observers, but in reality are members of “the synagogue of Satan” (Revelation 2:9 & 3:9). Some deny His deity, His virgin birth, His miracles, His substitutionary atonement, His resurrection, His lordship and sovereignty, His second advent.

I hope you are not one of Satan’s seed! I hope you can assure me that there is *love* between you and the woman’s Seed, not *enmity*.

III. “He shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise His heel.” Having observed the enmity between Satan and the woman, and between Satan’s seed and Christ, we here observe the conflict between Satan and Christ.

The prophecy declared that Christ will bruise Satan’s *head*; and Satan will bruise Christ’s *heel*. That is, Satan will bruise Christ’s *lower* or *inferior* part, where the bruise is not fatal; but Christ will bruise Satan’s *higher* and *vital* part, where the bruise will indeed be fatal. Satan is too low a creature to bruise Christ’s head; and Satan is so low that it is with relative ease for Christ to bruise his head. Christ will be the victor; Satan will be the loser.

The conflict between Christ and Satan may be observed in these four instances.

In the *first* conflict, Christ bruised Satan’s head when

Satan tempted Him in the wilderness (Matthew 4:1-11 / Luke 4:1-13; also Mark 1:12f). This temptation occurred at the beginning of Jesus' ministry, immediately after He was baptized, and after He had fasted forty days and nights, and was very hungry and weak. Satan slyly and stealthily slithered to Christ, and made three attempts to bruise Christ's heel with three temptations.

Satan had good reason to tempt Christ to sin. If Christ sinned, He would be disqualified from being the redeemer and savior of His people, and they would perish in their sins.

Before we consider these three temptations, consider that Satan here used the same temptations that had worked against Eve in the Garden of Eden. These temptations involve what God's Word calls (in 1 John 2:16) "all that is in the world –

- "the lust of the flesh" – desiring to gratify the body with things contrary to God's law, rather than being content with what God supplies
- "the lust of the eyes" – desiring things seen and imagined that are contrary to God's law, rather than desiring the things of God that are invisible to the world
- "and the pride of life" – desiring vainglory in the eyes of men, rather than desiring God's glory

These three temptations from the serpent to Eve had succeeded:

- Satan tempted Eve with "the lust of the flesh" when he deceived her into thinking "that the [forbidden] tree was good for food".
- Satan tempted Eve with "the lust of the eyes" when he convinced her "that [the forbidden tree] was pleasant to the eyes".
- Satan tempted Eve with "the pride of life" when he told her "You will not surely die. For God knows that in the day you eat of [the forbidden tree] your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil."

Satan used these same three worldly things when he thrice tempted Christ.

The serpent made his *first* strike, employing "the lust of the flesh". Satan tempted Christ to use His divine power to satisfy His earthly needs: "If You are the Son of God, command that these stones become bread." The strike fell short. Christ's heel bruised Satan's head when He replied "It is written [in Deuteronomy 8:3], 'Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God.'"

The serpent recoiled and made his *second* strike,

employing "the lust of the eyes". Satan tempted Christ to win people through an astounding feat before their eyes: "Then the devil took Him up into the holy city, set Him on the pinnacle of the temple [where were many worshipers], and said to Him, 'If You are the Son of God, throw Yourself down. For it is written [in Psalm 91:11f]: 'He [Jehovah] shall give His angels charge over you,' and, 'In their hands they shall bear you up, lest you dash your foot against a stone.'"

What an impressive sight that would have been! Surely the onlookers would have flocked to Jesus. But this second strike also fell short. Christ's heel again bruised Satan's head when He replied "It is written again [in Deuteronomy 6:16], 'You shall not tempt Jehovah your God.'"

The serpent recoiled and made his *third* strike, employing "the pride of life". Satan tempted Christ with authority over all the world: "Again, the devil took Him up on an exceedingly high mountain, and showed Him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory. And he said to Him, 'All these things I will give You if You will fall down and worship me.'" But this third strike also fell short. And Christ's heel bruised Satan's head the third time when He replied "Away with you, Satan! For it is written [in Deuteronomy 6:13], 'You shall worship Jehovah your God, and Him only you shall serve.'"

Satan was too bruised to strike again. The serpent shamedly and sullenly slithered away from the battlefield to lick his wounds and to prepare for his next attack. It would occur about three and a half years later.

In the *second* conflict, Satan succeeded in bruising Christ's heel at Mount Calvary. The heel he bruised was Christ's lower part, His humanity. (For Satan could not bruise Christ's higher part, His deity.) As you see the cruel spikes being driven into Christ's hands and feet, see Satan's venomous fangs piercing His body and causing Him to be killed. See Satan gleefully gloating as Christ's life slowly leaves His body.

But Satan celebrates too soon! For Christ in His death shouts victoriously "It is finished!" (John 19:30). He then stomps the head that bit Him, and fulfills the Scripture "that through death He might destroy [or *render useless* (Greek *katargeō*)] him who had the power of death, that is, the devil, and release those who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to [Satan's] bondage" (Hebrews 2:14f). And "Having disarmed [Satan's] principalities and powers, Christ made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them in it" (Colossians 2:15). The conflict that began in the Garden of Eden was effectively ended on Mount Calvary. Satan received a mortal wound that would eventually prove to be fatal.

But the serpent still had some fight on him. And he had to prevent Christ from ascending into glory, where He would be enthroned at God's right hand as King of kings and Lord of lords. If this occurred, Christ would rightfully receive from God that which Satan had deceitfully offered to Him in his second temptation – "all the kingdoms of the world and their glory". If Christ ascended into glory, then would be fulfilled Jehovah's promise to Him in Psalm 2:8, "Ask of Me, and I will give You the nations for Your inheritance, and the ends of the earth for Your possession." So, Satan assembled all his demons and waited for Christ in the sky after He had been raised from His tomb.

In the *third* conflict, Christ as Michael the archangel bruised Satan's head when He ascended into heaven. This battle is described in Revelation 12:7-10: "7 And war broke out in heaven: Michael and his angels fought with the dragon [i.e., Christ and His angels took the fight to Satan and his demons]; and the dragon and his angels fought, 8 but they did not prevail, nor was a place found for them in heaven any longer. 9 So the great dragon was cast out, that serpent of old, called the Devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world; he was cast to the earth, and his angels were cast out with him. 10 Then I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, 'Now salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of His Christ have come, for the accuser of our brethren, who accused them before our God day and night, has been cast down.'"

Note well the rejoicing in heaven resulting from "the accuser of our brethren, who accused them before our God day and night, has been cast down." Prior to Christ's ascension into glory, Satan could appear in God's presence to accuse God's people. For example, Satan had accused Job (Job 1:6; 2:1) and Joshua the high priest (Zechariah 3:2). But now Christ appears in God's presence, and Satan is cast to the ground, no longer able to accuse God's people.

And since Christ is now in heaven and the serpent is now confined to the earth, the serpent can no longer battle against Christ personally. Satan therefore concentrates his attacks against Christ's spiritual mother and Christ's spiritual brothers and sisters still on this earth (Revelation 12:13-17).

Therefore, there will be one final battle between Christ and Satan.

In the *fourth* conflict, the final time Christ bruises Satan's head will be at the end of this age, the millennial reign of Christ (Revelation 20:7-10). Satan will then deceive the nations and lead them in besieging Christ's people in the

hope of annihilating them. But Christ will return to save His people, crush the serpent's head with a fatal blow, and send him to the everlasting Lake of Fire.

"For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil" (1 John 3:8). The woman's Seed has succeeded.

In conclusion, let us look again at these four victories of Jesus Christ over Satan, and consider the blessings that have come to believers in Christ through them.

First, when believers consider Christ's victory over Satan in His temptation, let them remember that "we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need" (Hebrews 4:15f).

Second, when believers consider Christ's victory over Satan at Mount Calvary, let them remember that, when Satan wounded Christ, he shed the blood that delivered us from our bondage to him (Hebrews 2:14f).

Third, when believers consider Christ's victory over Satan in His ascension into glory, let them remember that Satan can no longer accuse them before God. If we sin, Satan cannot accuse us before God, because "we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous" (1 John 2:1). "Who shall bring a charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies. Who is he who condemns? It is Christ who died, and furthermore is also risen, who is even at the right hand of God, who also makes intercession for us" (Romans 8:33f).

Fourth, when believers consider Christ's victory over Satan at the last day, let them know that they shall participate in that victory. For they are assured that "the God of peace will crush Satan under your feet shortly" (Romans 16:20). Child of God, think of it – your feet will soon do a victory dance on Satan's head!

– Daniel E. Parks (February 26-March 26, 2017; #970)