

# **Christmas: Redemption provided**

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The second Person of the triune God added a human nature to His divine nature a little more than 2,000 years ago. This stupendous and miraculous event was revealed to God's people from the beginning of the world. God announced to Satan not long after the creation of Adam and Eve (which occurred "at the beginning," Matt. 19:4): "I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed (the unbelieving community of mankind) and her seed (all true believers represented by their Savior); (He) shall bruise thy head (a fatal, judicial blow delivered to Satan at the cross - John 12:31), and thou shalt bruise His heel (the crucifixion of Christ)" (Gen. 3:15).

Especially noteworthy is the emphasis on "the woman" (rather than "the man" or even "the man and the woman"). If Adam was the responsible head of that family unit ("by one man sin entered into the world," Rom. 5:12; and "by man came death," 1 Cor. 15:21), what function was Eve to have in the light of this prophetic announcement? Adam perceived that his wife, though instrumental in the fall (1 Tim. 2:14), would, by the amazing grace of God, be instrumental in bringing their Savior into the world. Therefore he named her Eve (i.e., "life" or "living") "because she was the mother of all living" (Gen. 3:20).

Our first parents could not, of course, have understood when or how this wonderful seed would accomplish their delivery from the power of Satan. Eve may have thought that her first son would be that person ("I have gotten a man from the LORD," Gen. 4:1). And the name Adam gave to her ("life") shows that he also believed God's promise. This is confirmed by the fact that "the LORD God made coats of skin, and clothed them" (Gen. 3:21).

By shedding the blood of innocent beings in order to symbolically provide coverings to protect them in their sinful state from His holy wrath, God demonstrated to Adam and Eve that their sin was atoned for – temporarily covered or passed over.

However, it still had to be completely expiated (taken away) by the blood of the seed, "to declare His righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God" (Rom. 3:25). Adam and Eve, therefore, are now in heaven.

Eve's part in our redemption was to be "the mother of all living." She would become the mother (or ancestress of the mother) of the seed through whom alone sinful people can be saved. Thus, absolutely true to the ancient promise – even though thousands of years would intervene – "when the fullness of the time was come, God sent forth His Son, made of a woman...that we might receive the adoption of sons" (Gal. 4:4, 5).

God is never in a rush to do His perfect work. He is always perfectly on time. But when the perfect time for the seed to appear finally came, a virgin woman was told by God that she would become the mother of "the Son of God" (Luke 1:35). Realizing that the angel Gabriel was speaking of a virgin conception, Mary was deeply perplexed and asked: "How shall this be, seeing I know not a man?" (Luke 1:34).

God's answer to her legitimate question is astounding: "The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee; therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God" (Luke 1:35).

By means of this totally miraculous overshadowing, the Son – the seed – would be protected, not only from the sinful nature of a human father, but also from the sinful nature of a human mother. He would have a perfect and complete human nature through Mary (which she inherited from Adam and Eve) but without the sin nature she also inherited from Adam and Eve. In this way, He could be our genuine human representative on the cross and also our sinless substitute.

Only one who was fully human and fully divine – the God-man – could pay the price we could never pay. Only the Son of God, who became by virgin conception the Son of Man, could crush the serpent's head and rescue us from the awful penalty our sin deserves. This is the true message of Christmas which was announced in cryptic (but adequate) words to our first parents at the beginning of the world.

May you have a merry Christmas as you contemplate these truths!

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Scripture taken from the King James Version.