

Seeds of Hope: The First Gospel (Genesis 3:14-15)

Preached by Pastor Phil Layton at Gold Country Baptist Church on November 18, 2007

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It was a day that affected the entire universe and course of history for the worse. Every day we feel the effects of Genesis 3 and sin and the Fall. The fact that we are all dying, and have diseases and difficulties is all because of what happened in this chapter. Few places in the Bible have a more pervasive and profound impact on everything you do, think, and say. Every time you turn on the news, you see the effects of Genesis 3. Every time you open the newspaper, you read of things that are only explained adequately by Genesis 3. The reason our nation will have an election next year and the reason we have government at all and policemen is because of this chapter. The source of suffering and struggles and in your life, in your marriage, in your children, in your job, is all in these few verses. The rest of the Bible would not make sense without Genesis 3. The world would not make sense without this chapter.

In some ways, it is one of the saddest chapters in scripture – how mankind has fallen from the original perfect and good state God created us in and is now in a hopeless state. But it is precisely at this point that God in His marvelous grace planted seeds of hope. These seeds would grow and blossom through progressive revelation revealing the main character in the drama of redemption, the seed of the woman, Jesus Christ who would defeat the devil and his seed. Christ is pictured in this chapter, He is promised in this chapter, and He is present in this chapter as we saw last week.

The day that would live in infamy for Adam and Eve was also the day God allowed them to live in infinitely great promises of grace. God is by nature a Savior, and right in the midst of curses, we will see the eye of the storm; God's sovereign saving mercy toward those who were yet sinners. The darkest day in human history would be used by a merciful and Mighty God to make the glory of the light of the gospel shine brightly on its backdrop. There is bad news, but there is also good news here. It is right in the midst of the first judgment, that we see THE FIRST GOSPEL.

Genesis 3:14-15 (NASB95) **“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 you will go, And dust you will eat All the days of your life; 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.””**

The gospel is in Genesis – not in the full N.T. understanding, but clearly the seeds are planted here that grow throughout the O.T.

1. The Immediate Consequences – v. 14

14 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;

There are always consequences for sin, and this is where the gospel starts. Not only are there immediate consequences, but ultimately there is eternal consequences for our rebellion against God, which we will see prophesied to Satan a little later. This is where the gospel starts – our personal sin brings personal judgment.

The serpent is cursed “more than” other animals – this implies that the curse and the fall effected all creatures, and we will see later in this chapter that animal death takes place.

“Curse” has the idea of banishment of blessing. Cursed was a word for judgment of God because of sin.

On your belly you will go, And dust you will eat All the days of your life;

Notice in v. 14 after giving Adam and Eve a chance to explain what happened, that God doesn't give the serpent a chance to confess or repent, He immediately begins to speak curses and judgment to the serpent in verses 14-15 that he would have to crawl on his belly from now on. As one old preacher has said, “Adam blamed the woman, the woman blamed the snake, but the snake didn't have a leg to stand on”

The text doesn't actually explicitly say snakes used to have legs, and I don't think it's teaching snakes literally eat dust. The Hebrew phrase refers to defeat and humiliation. Satan who spoke through the serpent tempted Eve with his own desire to be like the Most High, but now he will now be the most low. The one who tempted her to eat is now going to have the dust to eat, i.e., agony of defeat.

Psalms 72:9 “let their enemies lick the dust” (in our vernacular “another one bites the dust”)

This curse is “for all the days” and will never be undone:

Isaiah 65:25 (NASB95) 25 *“The wolf and the lamb will graze together, and the lion will eat straw like the ox; and dust **will be the serpent's food**. They will do no evil or harm in all My holy mountain,” says the Lord.*

Sometimes people will refer to this whole section in Genesis 3 as the “curse” but it's worth noting that Adam and Eve are not cursed, it is the serpent here in v. 14 that God uses the word “curse” for. God *does* curse some humans later in Genesis (Cain, Noah's son Canaan through Ham, God curses any who curse Abraham, etc.) but I want to show you next week that to Adam and Eve, God actually *extends grace* rather than cursing them personally as He does with the serpent and as He could have done with them here.

Moses not only wrote Genesis, he wrote the whole Torah or Pentateuch, where there is a familiar story of the serpent and how it epitomized death and curses. The original readers of Genesis may not have missed the connection here with the cursedness of the serpents in a vivid experience in their lifetimes in Numbers 21.

Because of sin God had sent venomous serpents into their midst who were biting the people and causing widespread death as part of God's judgment and curse on sin.

Numbers 21:8-9 (NASB95) 8 Then the Lord said to Moses, “Make a fiery serpent, and set it on a standard; and it shall come about, that everyone who is bitten, when he looks at it, he will live.” 9 And Moses made a bronze serpent and set it on the standard; and it came about, that if a serpent bit any man, when he looked to the bronze serpent, he lived.

Kent Hughes points out:

‘The snakes were the result of sin – in fact, the perfect expression of sin because it was the serpent who tempted Adam and Eve in the garden, thereby bringing sin into the world. Our very natures have been polluted by the serpent’s venom ... (Rom. 3:10). Above the dying people we see the likeness of a serpent lifted up on a pole, foreshadowing Christ who was “made ... to be sin for us” (2 Corinthians 5:21) ... Our Lord became sin (or [like what was deserved by the] serpent) for us. Romans 8:3 says, “... his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin. Second Corinthians 5:21 adds, “For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.”

‘And Galatians 3:13 states, “Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us.” With all the animal realm from which to choose, God chose the perfect representation – the serpent. On the cross our Lord took the sins of the world upon himself as symbolized by the writhing serpent.

... The command to look to that uplifted serpent was a gracious foreshadowing of looking to the crucified Christ for our salvation. No wonder our Lord said, “And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up” (John 3:14)

15 so that whoever believes will in Him have eternal life.

16 “For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life.

He continues: ‘... Moses raised that serpent up high in the camp, and all the dying Israelites had to do was look to that pole and be saved. No matter how horribly they were bitten, no matter how many times they had been bitten or how sick they were, the opportunity for salvation was there.

Even the most degraded and miserable sinner who looks to Christ alone for salvation will be saved. This great grace had its origins and image in the “first gospel” in the garden. There was hope in paradise lost!’¹

Moses wrote a lot about curses for sin and sinners. For example, he wrote in the law “cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree” which N.T. applies to Christ who was nailed to a tree for us and bore the curse and judgment deserving of all humanity, but in a particular and special way He was an actual substitute for all He would save, taking their guilt upon him. It was an atonement that satisfied the demands of God’s wrath, a definite atonement that actually averts God’s judgment for His elect and allows Him to be Just and to justify those who are of themselves ungodly.

God imputed their sins to Christ’s account, and for all who are redeemed and regenerated and who repent and receive Christ alone by saving faith, God justifies them at a point in time, a judicial and forensic declaring them righteous by imputing a real and perfect righteousness to their account. The judge of the universe not only acquits them of their curse and crimes, He counts them righteous in Christ and views them not merely “just as if I’d never sinned” but He views them just as if they’d lived the perfect life of Christ.

*Because the sinless Savior died, my sinful soul is counted free
For God the Just is satisfied to look on Him and pardon me*

This is the abounding astounding grace of God toward depraved sinners who not only don't deserve it, but who deserve the exact opposite! Marvelous, infinite, matchless grace freely bestowed on all who believe!

2. The Incessant Conflict – v. 15a

v. 15 I will put enmity between you and the woman

When God addresses the serpent in this passage, conservative scholars generally agree that God is addressing more than the reptile, he addressing what's behind this temptation, the satanic forces as well (as N.T. calls the devil “the serpent of old”)

The emphatic position² of *enmity* highlights the struggle that will ensue, which has more in mind than simply explaining “why women don't like snakes.” It's certainly true that snakes repulse *most* humans. Most people fear snakes and have an enmity against these slithering sinister creatures (even Indiana Jones feared snakes when he feared little else!)

When I was growing up in the Philippines we had a couple occasions where we had Cobras in our house (Cebu, Davao) and on our property, which was greatly alarming to us.

While certainly the passage involves a real animal and real antipathy between it and physical humanity, the language suggests more is going on in this verse and more than a mere reptile is spoken to here. There is debate as to whether only a physical snake is being addressed in verse 14 (or both), but clearly the shift in 3:15a moves beyond the animal kingdom:

- *Enmity* is a term limited to persons and moral agents rather than mere beasts.³
- The phrase “days of your life” in v. 14 is similarly never used of animals.
- When God says to the serpent “your seed” – that Hebrew word for “seed” is almost never used of animals (only twice out of 200+ uses in O.T.).
- The 2nd person pronoun (“you”), in moral issues, indicates a being with moral sense and responsibility.⁴
- The early part of Genesis 3 certainly portrays a being with supernatural intelligence and access, and the future offspring of the woman (however interpreted) would certainly live longer than the individual snake in Eden, yet God says to the snake “*You* [masculine singular] will bruise the heel” of the future offspring of humanity.

So it seems evident that God's discourse is directed beyond this temporal reptile.

And [enmity] between your seed and her seed

This enmity will continue beyond the garden to the children and children's children of the original two characters. There will from now on be a deep-seated enmity and hostility that will continually take place throughout history for two classes of people.

There's a lot of discussion about what "her seed" refers to, but a question that doesn't get as much attention in commentaries is who the seed of the serpent is. If God is addressing Satan here, how can Satan reproduce himself? Angels do not marry and are not corporeal beings, only God can create new beings. This question is not directly or explicitly answered in Genesis 3, it's only raised, but we have more in our Bible than this chapter.

Matthew 23:33 (NASB95)

33 **"You serpents, you brood of vipers,** how will you escape the sentence of hell?

Even in the O.T., the word can be used of spiritual children:

Isaiah 57:3-4 (NASB95)

3 "But come here, you sons of a sorceress, **Offspring** of an adulterer and a prostitute.

4 "Against whom do you jest? Against whom do you open wide your mouth And stick out your tongue? Are you not children of rebellion, **Offspring** of deceit,

In Biblical language, to be "the son of" describes your nature.

That's why Jesus claim to be "the son of" God and calling God His Father infuriated the Pharisees because He was making Himself to be equal with God, of the very same nature as the Almighty.

Speaking of spiritually dead sinners, Ephesians 2:3 says they are of "the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is working in the sons of disobedience" and "they are by nature children of wrath" - That is their very nature, that's what characterizes them, disobedience, the spirit of the power the air - Satan himself.

Acts 13:8-10 (NASB95)

8 But Elymas the magician (for so his name is translated) was opposing them, seeking to turn the proconsul away from the faith.

9 But Saul, who was also known as Paul, filled with the Holy Spirit, fixed his gaze on him,

10 and said, "You who are full of all deceit and fraud, **you son of the devil,** you enemy of all righteousness, will you not cease to make crooked the straight ways of the Lord?"

When Jesus taught on the wheat and the tares, he said "the tares are **sons of the evil one**" (Matt. 13:38)

John 8:44 (NASB95)

44 "You are of **your father the devil,** and you want to do the desires of your father. He was a murderer **from the beginning,** and does not stand in the truth because there is no truth in him. Whenever he speaks a lie, **he speaks from his own nature,** for he is a liar and the father of lies.

It is popular in our sentimental Hallmark lovey-dovey world to say "we're all children of God" but Jesus clearly called even these religious Jews who had the right Scriptures, he calls them children of the devil. He even references "from the beginning" perhaps alluding to our Genesis passage on the seed of Satan.

The Scriptures are clear we must be adopted into God's family (Eph. 1:4-6) and it is only those who believe and receive Christ who have the right to be called children of God (John 1:12-13)

It's not just false religious leaders / magicians who are of the devil

1 John 3:8-12 (NASB95)

8 **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.**

9 No one who is born of God practices sin, because **His seed** abides in him; and he cannot sin, because he is born of God.

10 By this the children of God and **the children of the devil** are obvious: anyone who does not practice righteousness is not of God, nor the one who does not love his brother.

11 For this is the message which you have heard from the beginning, that we should love one another;

12 **not as Cain, who was of the evil one** and slew his brother. And for what reason did he slay him? Because his deeds were evil, and his brother's were righteous.

*Notice the connection with Genesis 3-4 and Eve's literal offspring who Genesis 4:1 suggests she thought this might be the one but who was really a child of the devil, the evil one. Verse 9 talks about those who are born of God, God's children, who have God's seed abiding in them, helping them not to sin habitually as they did before.

So, the conflict would not be just between satanic forces and humanity, but in particular God's children vs. the devil's children, all who are not in the seed of the woman (ultimately Christ).

NASB translates the Hebrew word "seed" (*zerah*) as child(1), children(3), descendant(3), descendants(105), descent(1), family(6), line(1), nation(1), offspring(38), posterity(1), race(1), seed(48), son(1), and others related to agricultural seed.

The ESV tried more consistently to use "offspring" each time, which is perhaps the best translation. Offspring can refer to multiples or a singular offspring just like the Hebrew word can, and you have to look at the context and language to determine in each use whether it's referring to a group of children or even descendants or posterity (physical or spiritual) or an individual that could represent the whole. Biblically speaking, all of us in this room are the offspring or seed of Adam and Eve in a physical sense. That same Hebrew word "seed" is used of Abraham, not only for his physical descendants – the Jews – but also for his spiritual seed or children, which would include only those of us in this room who have trusted in Jesus as Lord and Savior.

King David was promised a seed of his, a literal descendant, who would be on the throne and his kingdom and rule would never end (2 Sam 7:12f, Ps 89:4), and I believe that has a still future fulfillment aspect.

In Revelation 12, we have an important cross-reference with unmistakable connection to Genesis 3:15. It shows the serpent's desire to destroy this son, this seed of the woman. Revelation 12:9 describes this character as "the great dragon ... the serpent of old who is called the devil and Satan" just to be clear

Revelation 12:1-5 (NASB95)

1 A great sign appeared in heaven: a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and on her head a crown of twelve stars;

2 and **she was with child**; and she cried out, being in labor and in pain to give birth.

3 Then another sign appeared in heaven: and behold, a great red dragon having seven heads and ten horns, and on his heads were seven diadems.

4 And his tail swept away a third of the stars of heaven and threw them to the earth. And the dragon stood before the woman who was about to give birth, so that **when she gave birth he might devour her child.**

5 And she gave birth to a son, **a male child, who is to rule all the nations** with a rod of iron; and her child was caught up to God and to His throne.

Revelation 12:13-14 (NASB95)

13 And when the dragon saw that he was thrown down to the earth, **he persecuted the woman** who gave birth to the male child.

14 But the two wings of the great eagle were given to the woman, so that she could fly into the wilderness to her place, where she was nourished for a time and times and half a time [see v. 6 timeframe], from the presence of the serpent.

... 17 So the dragon was enraged with the woman, and **went off to make war with the rest of her children**, who keep the commandments of God and hold to the testimony of Jesus.

James Montgomery Boice writes that ‘we see God calling out Israel as a special nation through whom he would work, and we see the animosity of Satan (who heard and well understood the prophecy) directed particularly against the Jews. Here is the birth of anti-Semitism ... In this [Revelation 12] passage the dragon is certainly Satan, the woman Israel, and her child the Lord Jesus Christ. Satan’s strategy is to destroy Israel in order to destroy Christ. This is the reason for anti-Semitism, and also the reason why no Christian should ever have a part in it.’⁵

3. The **Invincible Christ** – v. 15c

He will bruise you on the head and you will bruise him on the heel

The Immediate Consequences and Incessant Conflict could only be ended by the Invincible Christ – the Coming Triumphant Messiah. It’s here that the word “seed” in Genesis takes on a singular meaning rather than merely referring to a whole group of offspring or descendants. In an ultimate sense, Jesus Christ is the singular seed that makes any of God’s covenants and promises possible.

The N.T. reveals Jesus in Luke’s genealogy as “son of Adam” and as the “seed of the woman” or “born of a woman” (Gal. 4:4), born of a virgin (Matthew 1), as well as the seed of Abraham, through whom all families of the earth would be blessed if they have faith in Christ. Jesus is also over and over referred to as the direct descendant, seed, and son of David.

It’s frankly annoying to read the liberal and critical commentators who say this Hebrew word “seed” in our passage can only refer to descendants or posterity in general, not a singular seed or individual. Like Jesus, I want to say “Have you not read ...”

Have they not read that Eve used the exact same word “seed” personally of her *only* remaining son just one chapter later in Genesis 4:25? The word is also used of an *individual* in Genesis 21:13, 38:9a, I Samuel 1:11, II Samuel 7:12-14, I Chronicles 17:13, and Isaiah 41:8,⁶ as opposed to a collective sense. Surely Eve’s understanding and other use of ‘seed’ should not be overlooked, nor should God’s inspired interpretation in Galatians 3:16, which indicates that Abraham’s *zera* was an explicit prophecy of Christ the individual. God knows more than all so-called scholars.

Galatians 3:16 (NASB95)

16 Now the promises were spoken to Abraham and to his seed. **He does not say, “And to seeds,” as referring to many, but rather to one, “And to your seed,” that is, Christ.**

To argue that *zera* (“seed”) can only refer to the entire lineage without possibility of special reference to an individual representative also ignores other biblical statements that most of humanity actually falls in the other class of “children of the evil one.” Even when used of plural descendants, such as Abraham’s “seed,” there can be a narrower referent than the whole (such as excluding lines of Ishmael, Esau, etc.), and the term does not rule out one qualified to represent the whole.

Most important is the actual pronouns in the last phrase of Genesis 3:15: **He shall bruise you on the head, And you shall bruise him on the heel.**”

This last phrase cannot be referring to a big group of children or it would have plural nouns and verbs, ex: “they shall bruise” or “bruise them on their heel.” A line of children cannot have 1 heel. And God uses the Hebrew singular “you” in referring to Satan – it’s not a bunch of children here throughout history, it is you, Satan, who will have your head crushed or bruised

Thus the word [*zerah*] designates the whole line of descendants as a unit, yet it is deliberately flexible enough to denote either one person who epitomizes the whole group (i.e. the man of promise and ultimately Christ), or the many persons in that whole line of natural and/or spiritual descendants. Precisely so in Gen 3:15. One such seed is the line of the woman as contrasted with the opposing seed which is the line of Satan’s followers. And then surprisingly the text announces a male descendant who will ultimately win a crushing victory over Satan himself.⁷

The question not directly answered by our text is who this “he” would be – perhaps through the centuries some wondered if any human would be able to end this conflict against a supernatural arch-adversary. If taken as collective for the whole race, it is certainly difficult to see how all of humanity throughout history could be described as crushing Satan’s head, but clearly the “you / your” addressed singularly refers to an individual and not the seed of Satan. If the contrast was only between the two seeds, we might have expected “will crush your *seed’s* head, and your *seed* will crush the heel of [the woman’s seed], yet instead we have “he” and “you.”

Genesis 49:17 speaks of the intent of attacking the heel by “a serpent in the way, A horned snake in the path, That bites the horse’s heels, So that his rider falls backward.”

This is a blow, a bruising, a crushing with deadly intent – it is intended to be a fatal blow by the venomous serpent.

The NIV has “you will strike him on his heel.” Ironically, it is in this moment when the snake thinks he has overcome the Messiah by death, that the snake will get his most bitter mouthful of dust yet at the resurrection. Christ was bruised, but He was bruised for our iniquities, by His stripes we’re saved.

This serpent has always wanted to destroy or devour this seed of the woman, but this prophecy says clearly Satan will be destroyed.

‘this was a guarantee of Satan’s ultimate destruction. It spoke of the final triumph of God over all that is evil. It was another reason for Adam and Eve to hope. The one who had destroyed paradise would himself be destroyed.

The prophecy is echoed in Paul’s words of encouragement to the church at Rome: “The God of peace will crush Satan under your feet shortly” (Romans 16:20). Satan’s destruction gives all believers reason to hope. His downfall not only signifies God’s final triumph over all the devil’s works, but in particular it represents the full reversal of Adam’s fall. In other words, the promise of salvation from the curse of sin was implied in the prophecy about the serpent’s destruction.

Hebrews 2:14 says this is the very reason Christ became human: “That through death He might destroy him who had the power of death, that is, the devil.” First John 3:8 says, “For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil.”⁸

It’s not only the early church and church as a whole that believed this was a prophecy of the coming Messiah, the early Jews believed this as well (Christians did not invent this interpretation).

- R. Levi connected this verse with the Holy One’s millennium work of finally casting the slanderer(s) into Gehenna and the healing in the Messianic age which would exclude the serpent.⁹
- The midrash Tanhuma has very similar wording.
- The Fragmentary Targum and Targum Pseudo-Jonathan interpreted the enmity not being resolved until the end “in the days of King Messiah.”¹⁰
- The Jerusalem Targum and Maimonides interpreted how Jews in the days of Messiah will vanquish Sammael. [devil]¹¹
- The Targum Neofiti also draws a Messianic connection.¹²
- The Palestinian Targum has been compared strikingly with the language of Revelation 12:7, and moves to a singular son of the woman, adding “you will aim at him and wound him on the heel and make him ill. To her son, however, there will be an antidote, but to you, the snake, there will be no antidote.”¹³
- Although the above differ somewhat from the later understanding, perhaps most striking is *Bereshit Rabba* 23, a rabbinic commentary: “Eve had respect to that seed which is coming from another place. And who is this? This is Messiah the King.”¹⁴
- Kaiser notes that the Aramaic Targumim also limits itself to the singular form of “offspring” although it pluralizes in other places not clearly directed to the promised line.¹⁵
- More than 200 years before Christ, the LXX translators produced the strongest case for a pre-Christian Jewish understanding of an individual in 3:15b.

I also think that not only could the original readers in Genesis get this, but the original characters in Genesis 3 understood it better than we may give them credit for. There’s good evidence in scripture that Adam and Eve believed this promise and how Satan understood this promise and the people in the early chapters of Genesis began looking for this promised One. In fact, “seed” is one of the key words in Genesis, a theme that runs through the book:

- It is notable that Genesis 4 immediately opens with a birth account (vs 1-2), reaches the middle with another birth account (17), concludes with another birth account (25-26).
- Indeed the language of naming Abel in contrast to Cain's birth supports the view that a promised "man" was anticipated by the original hearer of Genesis 3:15. A linguistic comparison with 4:25 and 3:15 further gives support to this hope.¹⁶
- The language of 4:26 and chapter 5 may indeed develop deeper the contrast between two kinds of seed.
- The use of linear genealogy also may provide credence supporting this, along with the repeated phrase "and then he died" for all except Enoch – could it be that some wondered whether he was the one, since death had no sting for him?
- It is interesting that Noah is born and named as the comforter – a Messianic-like term.
- The phrase in 5:28 "a son" is different than the rest, and may continue expectation of a promised seed, which verse 29 says "This one shall bring us relief." The implication of what Moses records here is that people are looking for deliverance from the curse, which is yet another suggestion that the early patriarchs understood 3:15 as a promise for a seed to deliver them.
- It may even be noteworthy that the text only gives names of firstborn (presumed) sons – could it be that they were expecting a "he" who would fulfill the promise?
- "Seed" promises are reiterated to Noah, Abraham, Isaac, etc.
- The clearest link and elucidation of this individual is found in *Shiloh* in Genesis 49:10, which was interpreted as Messianic by the Targums.

When Genesis 3:15 uses the word "bruise" we have the first hint that this Coming Man would suffer, as the servant who was "bruised" and "pierced" for the sins of His people in Isaiah 53.

The word can also be translated "crush" for the serpent's head as well as the Messiah's heel. Crushing Satan's head is his fatal and final blow in Revelation and this verse in Genesis might even be the first hint or veiled prophecy of the crucifixion (Psalm 22:16) where spikes could actually crush the heel. Interestingly, in the burial remains found in Palestine, the nails went through what the Hebrew language called "heel." The antichrist would be wounded in the head (Rev. 13), Satan's head would be crushed by God in the church, the body of Christ (Rom. 16:20), and Christ in a real sense would be crushed or wounded in his heel.

"[It's] retributive irony ... that as Satan had meted out, so in fatal measure it is returned to him again." the most crafty of creatures (Gen 3:1) becomes the most accursed ... so Herod would arrogate to himself the glory of God, but the worm is appointed for his destruction (Acts 12:20-23) ... Thus the pharaoh of Egypt hurls the sons of Israel into the river (Exod 1:22), but God hurls the pharaoh of Egypt into the sea (Exod 15:4). Likewise the Philistines make sport with Samson on the temple (Judg 16:30), the wicked prepare a pit for David (Ps 9:15-16), Haman prepares gallows for Mordecai (Esth 7:10), and Satan erects a cross for Christ (1 Cor 2:8) ... It was by the death of the last Adam that the serpent of old encountered death and the first Adam found life. The nails that pierced the feet of Christ would bruise the heel, but they would crush the head of the serpent (1 Cor 2:8).¹⁷

In the celebrated hymn “Hark the Herald Angels Sing” we read this theology:

*“Late in time behold him come, Offspring of a virgin’s womb ...
Rise the woman’s conq’ring seed, Bruise in us the serpent’s head.
Adam’s likeness now efface, Stamp thine image in its place.
Second Adam from above, Reinstat us in Thy love.
Hark! The herald angels sing, “Glory to the newborn King!”*

In one of the lesser known lines of “the Battle Hymn of the Republic”

(see www.cyberhymnal.org) one of the lines says:

I have read a fiery Gospel writ in burnished rows of steel; “As ye deal with My contemnners, so with you My grace shall deal”; Let the Hero, born of woman, crush the serpent with His heel, Since God is marching on. Glory! Glory! Hallelujah! Glory! Glory! Hallelujah! Glory! Glory! Hallelujah! Since God is marching on.

Our Sovereign God is marching on. May we be faithful in spreading His glorious gospel this holiday season to our unsaved friends, coworkers, family members, and those we come in contact with.

¹ Kent Hughes, *Genesis*, p. 87.

² H. C. Leupold, *Genesis* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker 1970), 164.

³ *Ibid.*, 164.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 167.

⁵ Boice, *Genesis 1-11*, p. 202.

⁶ Collins, 144.

⁷ *TWOT*, 252.

⁸ MacArthur, J. (2001). *The battle for the beginning : The Bible on creation and the fall of Adam* (218). Nashville, TN: W Pub. Group.

⁹ *Midrash Rabba*, XX:1, 5; p. 159.

¹⁰ Ruger, 108-9, who rightly notes they saw this passage as Messianic but not in the same way later Christians did.

¹¹ Lange, 234.

¹² Collins, 141.

¹³ As cited by A.B. du Toit, A.B., *The New Testament Milieu* (Halfway House: Orion, 1998).

¹⁴ As cited by William Varner, *The Messiah* (Indiana: AuthorHouse, 2004), 21.

¹⁵ *TWOT*, 252.

¹⁶ Cf. Alan J. Hauser, “Linguistic and Thematic Links Between Genesis 4:1-16 and Genesis 2-3,” *JETS* 23/4 (Dec 1980): 297-305.

¹⁷ Warren Gage, *The Gospel in Genesis* (Winona Lake, Ind.: Carpenter Books, 1984), 46.