

Reading: Genesis 3

Theme: The Seed of the Woman.

Last week in v14-19 we began to look at the **Sentences Passed** on those involved in the first sin on earth. Last time we noted **1. The Tempter's Sentences** and in verse 14 we saw the one primarily addressed was the snake, which was in the forefront of the sentence passed and it is put into a degraded position. Yet at the same time the devil was also addressed. We are to remember the devil is only a created being in spite of all his ideas and plans of grandeur and he too is put in a degraded position. Once he was the most glorious of angels, but in his fall he was cast out of heaven and now is under the curse of God and a degraded being. The devil knows his doom is fixed and we are not to imagine that the devil and God slug it out in some unseen cosmic battle as equals. The devil is a powerful, supernatural, but created being; but God is all-powerful, is Divine and has no beginning or end; He is eternal and everlasting.

We are to realise the devil is too wise and too powerful for us and he can terrorise and harm us like a roaring lion seeking to devour his prey; or he could deceive us in such a glorious way - like an angel of light, but he is still a fallen, doomed and limited creature. Our God rules and is in such control that He judges and passes sentence on the snake and the devil in v14. Yet as we move on into v15 the emphasis glides, slides from the snake to primarily address and deal with the evil one who used the snake; note we are still under the heading of **Sentences Passed** (v14-19) move on to see:

2. The Hope Given.

Our God is an amazing God. He is passing sentence on those involved in the first sin on earth, yet as He does so, He gives a clear reason for hope. We can so easily overlook this hope and

focus on the sentence, but it is clearly there and we will develop this hope more fully later in the sermon. I want to use 3 headings to open up this verse to help us see more fully the wonder and awesomeness of the hope given.

A. The False Friend: the devil pretended to be such a good friend to Eve, making out he wanted her best - for her eyes to be opened and for her to be like God. Yet all the time he wanted to bring about her doom and downfall. He was her enemy and he used a line of attack he has used so often since then to get influence over people throughout history - new ideas, new ideals, new morality and new philosophy. He still makes out the old ways were restrictive, spoiled our enjoyment, fun and potential, were outdated and old hat and what we need for our day is freedom, self-expression, self-fulfilment and enjoyment. Sadly mankind in Eden and ever since have been all too ready to listen and to think the devil is their friend and that his ideas, notions are true, but God and His word are false and to be dismissed.

Here, as God sentences and addresses the devil, we see the devil is, was and ever will be, a false friend to men and women, to young people, to boys and girls. The devil does not and cannot argue back as his sentence is passed on him and as he hears of his doom. Please note and note well what I said earlier and it is worth repeating here - that Satan, the devil is not equal with God, but is a being created by God and who rebelled against his Creator. The devil is much wiser than us, but only God is **all wise**; the devil is powerful, but only God is **all-powerful**; the devil may go here and there and be active here and there with his demons, but only God is **everywhere, at all times, in the fullness of his person**. As Christians we are to remember, realise we are on the victory side. It may not seem so, it may not feel like it as wickedness and wicked people seem to get the upper

hand, but the ultimate victory is God's. Adam and Eve are shown the devil for who he really is - their enemy, their false friend and he can do nothing, but to listen silently to God and hear of his own doom. Let's see more of his sentence:

B. The Forceful Declaration: the devil had deceived mankind, had pretended to be their friend, but now God says He will place enmity - a hatred, a state of being enemies between the devil and the woman, between her seed and the devil's seed i.e. all the devil will lead and control. God says this most forcefully. It is not "*It would be great if there was...*" Nor was it "*I command you have enmity*", but "*I will place enmity...*" Yes on one level it is between humans and snakes - as they are not the best of friends and do not get on well together! Yet it is also specifically and primarily referring to the devil and mankind.

Yet in this forceful declaration God was not only confirming that the devil hated mankind and that mankind should hate the devil, but there would be something more! By looking around we see that as a whole mankind has a disregard of the devil and God; people live to please themselves, yet moved by common humanity people can respond generously in times of disaster and tragedy. Yes we know mankind is not as bad as they could be and all are not murderers, cruel robbers, vile and nasty etc.

We are to realise that sadly mankind, since Adam and Eve's fall have a wrong view of God and the devil and the ways they would have them live. Mankind wants to do what they want to do. Our generation and time has been called the Nike generation "*Just do it!*" Modern philosophies advocate that - do what you want, be what you want, let others do and be what they want; do not judge or criticise and if it feels good and doesn't harm others just do it. People object to being told there is a right and a wrong,

that there are ultimate standards. Toleration is the word and the worst sin is being intolerant or restrictive!

Adam and Eve were duped into feeling that God was spoiling their lives, restricting them and their potential and they went and did what had been put to them as beneficial - so God's command was ignored and His way of living was hated. By this the devil was viewed as a friend and his ways were fine and right. Since then all people have been captivated and captured by this inclination, this attraction to the devil's ways and we are reluctant, unable to go in God's ways as there is within us bondage of our wills and we are inclined, magnetically, gravitationally attracted to sin and evil.

Adam needed to see and learn there should be a hatred of the devil and his ways and there be a love for God and His ways. Adam could not do this for himself. Even in our modern society people still cannot. Becoming a Christian is more than doing our best, being religious, as it needs, involves a dramatic change of life that we cannot bring about. In NT terms it is so radical that it is called a new birth. Adam needed a work of God within him to make him love God and God's ways. Adam's descendants need that same work for we cannot do anything to bring it about of ourselves.

That is why we need to see this declaration as such a forceful declaration, for here God says what he will do "*I will...*" In this declaration there is a note of certainty, and note of God taking the initiative and doing so powerfully, forcefully. Here God says **He will** do something that will place an enmity, hatred between mankind and the devil. God will do that in such a powerful, forceful way that when this is done, people will see and realise that the devil is their enemy and they will be against him and all

he stands for. Yet at the same time they will then love God and all He stands for.

The situation could never exist unless God did something and He worked as God in mankind's situation - mankind was snared, trapped and in bondage to the devil and his ways, mankind was afflicted and infected by sin. What God says He would do is linked to the offspring or seed of the woman.

C. The Fantastic Seed: there would be this ongoing hatred and enmity between the seed of the woman (mankind) and the seed of the snake - all snakes. They may be kept as pets by some, but on the whole there is an enmity between mankind (*most animals also*) and snakes. There is this war - where snakes will strike people - usually on legs or feet as that is the part most accessible to snakes and people will seek to kill snakes, usually going for the head. There is this war and when a snake's head is crushed, it dies. The words crush and strike in NIV is the same Hebrew word and means bruise or crush and is the word used for grinding corn, wheat and grain - the grain is bruised, crushed, broken, struck by the grinding instruments.

While it does refer to the state of enmity between mankind and snakes, yet it has a more important and significant meaning here. For in this verse both the snake and then primarily the devil are addressed. The word "offspring" in NIV and other versions, is also translated as "seed" in AV, NKJV and NASB. This word is a singular word, definitely not a plural word referring to devils, demons or peoples. Here the Lord is referring to the devil himself and his kingdom; and then to THE Seed of the woman, a specific, particular seed of the woman and it is emphasised "*he will crush, bruise your head and you will strike, bruise his heel.*"

Realise that we have moved on from the generality of mankind to One specific person, to the One who would destroy the devil and all his works, to the One who would bring about the enmity between the devil and people, who would bring about the great work of placing this enmity in the lives of people towards the devil, He would turn them back to God, to love God and give them this new life as He brings about this change in them.

Here is the message of hope given. It speaks of God achieving and doing something remarkable by using One who was a human being and yet someone remarkable. He says this One would be of the seed of the woman - not merely a descendant, but the One who would be born of a woman and intimates that no male, man would be involved in the conception process as the emphasis is the seed of the woman, not a seed descendant of a man and woman! This promise has been called the “protevangelium” = the first preaching of the gospel, the good news. We can read it and may leave it at crushing the heads of snakes, but as we read and understand OT, then move on into NT we begin to realise this has a special place in showing, revealing what God would and did do.

We have noted that mankind was tricked into sin from outside of them. Yes they were guilty, fell and deserved God sentences on them - especially death at its 3 levels - physical, spiritual and eternal. Yet as I hinted at last time, mankind was pardonable and could be rescued because they were brought into sin from outside of them. Because of this they could be rescued by another because they were brought into sin by another. As we read OT, even Genesis, we see coming into focus the One who would rescue people from their sin and we learn of the amazing way He would do it.

In NT we learn of this One as He comes fully into focus - Jesus Christ. He was born of a virgin, conceived in her by the Almighty working of God the Spirit and He was the seed of the woman. He was kept clean, pure and without any wrong in this life. He showed He had power over this world - turning water into wine, calming storms, healing the sick, raising the dead and casting out the devil and his demons. He lived an amazing life and yet He voluntarily and determinedly went to the cross.

The Lord Jesus Christ would suffer and suffer greatly on the cross and He entered into death. This was his heel being struck, bruised by the devil as the devil would do his worst against Him. The Lord Jesus, as a sinless and perfect man, did not have to die, but in God's plan to rescue mankind, rescue us from our sin and its consequences, Jesus would enter physical death, spiritual and eternal death. The Rescuer, the Saviour had to die physically, but He would take our sin upon Himself and take our punishment in our place as He died. Something of His agony is revealed as He cries out "*My God, my God why hast thou forsaken me?*" This awesome agony is "*only*" the bruising of His heel and as He died, He crushed the devil's head and destroyed his power and the devil's rule, reign and kingdom began to crumble away as he was a defeated and destroyed enemy.

It may have seemed the devil won that day, but as we will sing in a short while "*though two had wounds, there conquered One – and Jesus was His name.*" To show, demonstrate, evidence His victory, Jesus rose from the dead, has ascended into heaven and is there ruling and reigning until He comes back to earth and the total defeat of the devil will be seen by all.

The Bible says that when we trust the Lord Jesus as our Saviour all our sin is removed from us, God makes us brand-new in His

sight and we are always acceptable to Him; we know we have a new life given us that makes us more and more love God and His ways and more and more hate the devil and his ways. There is to be a growing enmity between us and the devil. Not only that, but we know God's help and care and one day He will take us to be with Him in heaven, yet even more, there is a time coming when He will make a new heaven and earth and we will all live in a perfect creation.

I've tried to just open up something on the hope given us here in v15. If we have this hope, then realise it is an amazing and thrilling hope and it is to affect the way we live and think as we go through our ups and downs in life. All this is because by God's grace, we have recognised the One God spoke of in Eden was the Rescuer who came so that we could be right with God. With the Lord Jesus as our Saviour we have this living hope, but we are to pray for those who do not have Him, for without Him they have no hope. We are to pray for opportunities to tell of Him by the way we live and that these give us opportunities to speak of Him and others will be drawn to Him even through our failing and faltering witness.

We are to realise that through the Lord Jesus we have blessings that yet we do not understand or value, but in Him we have more than Adam and Eve lost, as our being in God's presence for ever is guaranteed by all that the Lord Jesus accomplished on our behalf. We should get to know more of our Saviour and all He has done for us and delight more and more in the riches of God's grace which have been lavished on us in and through Him and especially as His heel was struck there on Calvary.