

“ADAM: THE PROMISE OF REDEMPTION.”

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First Christian Reformed Church

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Scripture Texts: Genesis 3:15; Isaiah 46:9-10

The Covenant Highway: The Road from Eden to Bethlehem.

If you set out to build a road one of the most important details you must consider is the destination, where you are building to. The destination is going to determine where you buy land for right-a-ways, where you cut trees, what equipment you will need to deal with mountains, valleys, rivers and other obstacles.

Everything you do at the beginning of your project will be determined by the goal, the destination. The end determines the beginning.

God is the God of all history and God has a goal in all of history. History is going somewhere and it has always been going somewhere from day one. 6,000 years ago God had an end in mind to build a road from Eden to Bethlehem.

God is the state highway commissioner, the chief engineer and the head foreman. He is the planner, the overseer and the builder. When history started God already had the end in mind.

Isaiah 46:9-10 I am God and there is no other; I am God and there is none like me, declaring the end from the beginning and from ancient times things not yet done, saying, “My counsel shall stand, and I will accomplish all my purpose.”

Christ in the Covenants.

Our advent series will be a journey on the grand redemptive road from Eden to Bethlehem. We will look at four major mile markers or vista points as we look at Christ in God’s covenants with Adam, Abraham, Moses, and David and how they prepared the way for Christ and how

Christ fulfills all the covenant promises of God. Everything in the OT is building toward the NT.

As we look at the continuity of God's covenant faithfulness from creation to Christ, I hope you will marvel at God's wisdom and strategic planning and engineering expertise. I hope you will be strengthened in your faith, hope and love toward God and encouraged in your own journey on your path of redemption, that you will see all of your history is beautifully designed by a sovereign and good God.

One word about covenants. A covenant is more than a contract or an agreement. It is a binding, permanent relationship between two parties. Covenants are characterized by solemn commitments, promises, and obligations.

God is a covenant-making and covenant-keeping God. He intentionally enters into formal, oath-bound, binding relationships with His people. Again and again we will hear Him say, "I will be your God and you will be my people."

God's covenant with Adam: The Promise of Redemption.

Some people think you shouldn't put up Christmas before Thanksgiving. It's too early. Well God didn't get that memo. He put up the first hint of Christmas in Genesis. The road to Bethlehem starts in the Garden of Eden. Every promise, every prophecy, every covenant flows from this promise of a covenant of redemption.

Genesis 3

If ever there was historical train wreck, a disaster of cosmic proportions and cosmic implications it was the fall in Genesis 3. The granddaddy of all sins. The sin that begat every other sin.

One might be tempted to say this is the end of history even before it had a chance to start. God should have wadded up that plan and start over. But this is actually the beginning of history, of salvation history.

The moment sin and death entered the world, something else entered the world. The fall is precisely the point at which God begins the Gospel of grace. God was not caught off guard, He was prepared with a plan of restoration. What we forfeited, God intends to restore.

God foresaw the coming of sin into the world, that Adam and Eve would bring utter ruin on all creation. In that moment God set in motion His purpose to begin the work of redemption that would lead to the suffering of His Son and the triumph of grace over sin and evil, and the revelation of the Gospel of the glory of Christ. This is God's ultimate purpose in purposefully permitting the fall.

What Adam and Eve meant for evil, God meant for good. They had one intention, God had another intention. Theirs was sinful, God's was saving.

Genesis 3:15

Genesis 3:15 is the first time the Gospel is preached in the Bible. With these words God announces to the world His plan for human history. After John 3:16 there may be no more history defining, Gospel proclaiming verse in the Bible.

Genesis 3:15 I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and her offspring; he shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise his heel.”

There are three things foretold, predicted, promised in this verse. Conflict, Redeemer, Victory.

Conflict Announced.

Notice the first two words: I will. Who is in control? Who directs events, what will happen, how it will happen, when it will happen?

This is divine initiative. Everything is from God, by God, for God. Everything is grace. This is how salvation begins. All the covenant promises take place by divine initiative, God's acts.

Furthermore, there is divine initiative in the enmity and animosity. God starts the war. Why? One reason may be to make sure the conflict is between mankind and Satan, and not mankind and Satan teamed up against God. After all, by sinning man sided with the serpent and put himself in opposition to God.

Humanity is divided into two tribes, those who hate God and are against God, and those who love God and are with God.

If you want the most basic explanation of what is wrong with our world, here it is. In one sentence you have the content of every history book ever written. Through Satan's temptation, Adam and Eve sinned, and God's judgment on sin is that there will be conflict, strife, division, separation. In this world and in all our lives there will be trouble, trial, tribulation, testing and temptation.

Every story of conflict or battle in the Bible is just a reflection of this ongoing battle between the seed of woman and the seed of the serpent. Every day the news announces the enmity and strife between the seed of the serpent and the seed of woman.

We live in a war zone, in war-torn territory. It is like living in The Ukraine, in a state of constant attack.

All of creation and all of the animal kingdom is caught up. All creation groans under the effects of sin.

Romans 8:20-23 For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of him who subjected it, ... 22 For we know that the whole creation has been groaning together in the pains of childbirth until now. 23 And not only the creation, but we ourselves.

This is a cosmic drama as well.

Ephesians 6:12 For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places.

God teaches Adam and Eve that contrary to their first impression or first encounter, Satan is not a friend. He is the enemy and God is their friend. This is the mark of salvation and a person who is saved. They must turn from seeing Satan and sin as a friend to seeing Satan and sin as mortal enemies.

The Christian life is a battle. Ephesians 6:10-20 describes the participants, the powers of darkness and it describes the Christians armor, being fit for battle.

A Redeemer Promised.

There will arise from the seed of woman, meaning from the human race One who will deliver the decisive blow to crush and destroy the serpent.

This is the first Messianic promise in the OT and it is given in the first weeks after creation, at the beginning of time. The first promise of the gospel is a promise that Christ will come to deliver us from the powers of darkness. From this fountain flow all the rest.

Genesis 3:15 plants the seed, and Matthew 16:18 is the reality—when Jesus says, “I will build my church, and the gates of hell will not be able to prevail against it.”

I John 3:8 The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the works of the devil.

Victory Guaranteed.

Finally, this redeemer *shall* crush his head. Not may or might. Not if all goes well and according to plan. He shall. Absolute certainty.

The story of the OT is not one of those page-turner cliff-hanger novels we enjoy reading, where outcome is uncertain until the last page.

Genesis 3:15 should have a little spoiler alert before it. Don't read this verse if you don't want to know what happens in the end, if you don't want to know if the good guys win or not.

Into the seemingly hopeless and helpless chaos and destruction of the fall of all creation, God immediately announces His presence, His plan, His purpose and His victory.

The serpent will bite the heel of a human, but a human will crush the head of the serpent. The seed of woman will suffer a great wound, but the head of the serpent will be crushed.

The battle for grace is costly, the Savior will be severely bruised and wounded and afflicted, there will be the shedding of blood, but in the end a mortal blow will strike the serpent.

Romans 16:20 The God of peace will soon crush Satan under your feet.

Colossians 2:14-15 By canceling the record of debt that stood against us with its legal demands. This he set aside, nailing it to the cross. 15 He disarmed the rulers and authorities and put them to open shame, by triumphing over them in him.

God promises a Redeemer who will defeat evil and restore creation. The outcome is guaranteed. At the dawn of sin, grace shines.

Notice these words are not spoken for the benefit of the serpent or Satan. They are spoken for the benefit of the seed of woman, for the benefit of our hearing. God purposes for us to know the outcome, of His plan and purpose.

This is God's covenant promise of redemption made to Adam. In one verse everything that is wrong with the world and everything that is right with the world is explained.

Implications and application.

1. Read the Scriptures christologically.

The OT is a decidedly Christian book. It proclaims Christ from beginning to end. It is meant to lead us to Christ. It is not just the history of a people but the story of God's redemptive plan, ultimately fulfilled in Jesus Christ.

The entire Bible from Genesis to Revelation is the unfolding of Genesis 3:15. Every covenant, every promise, every prophecy, every shadow, every story points to Christ's victory and Satan's defeat.

As you read your Bible from beginning to end, watch what God is doing. Watch the story of the Gospel of the glory of Christ and His salvation worked out in perfect detail.

Christ is the fulfillment of all God's promises to Israel, and the blessings promised to them are ours in Him. Trace that path all the way to your life and soul.

2. Expect conflict as a normal part of Christian life.

The "enmity" is not accidental. Spiritual warfare is real. Pray to not grow weary in battle, rely on the Lord's armor.

From this God means us to take away two lessons. First, sin is the most destructive force to our souls and to mankind. Satan is a most fierce and deadly enemy to be resisted and fled from at all costs. Second, while he is a great enemy, we will not forever be slaves to sin and Satan. He can be fought against with the assurance and confidence of victory. Christ is our victor.

3. Live under the banner of Christ's victory.

You must know the Redeemer in order to live your Christian life in confidence against sin and Satan. Fight the sin in you knowing Satan's power is broken. Fight the enemies doubts and lies, knowing his defeat is final.

Christ has faithfully accomplished all the redeeming work the Father gave to Him to do. And His inheritance is kept in heaven for you, where Christ even now praying for you. Do you think that what He asks of the Father for you will not be answered yes? Impossible.

How long has the grace of God been moving through history to you? How old is the love of God for you? Consider what an ancient friend we have in heaven. For thousands of years He has loved us and provided for us

and our salvation and our eternal joy. His love and grace toward us have been from before the world began, rest in His grace and peace.

4. Persevere with patience and hope.

Be patient in your sanctification, God begins with seeds. His promises unfold slowly, wait on the Lord and trust in God's deliberate providence. Persevere when He delays.

Be patient in your suffering, have courage in the face of discouragement, while Satan may bruise your heel, remember Christ has already crushed his head. The weakest believer has the same hope as the strongest. Advent is the dawn of victory, reminding us our hope is Christ.

Take your eyes off of your fears and failures and weaknesses and defective spiritual progress and look to the fullness and completeness of Christ's obedience for you.

As we strive to live out our Christian faith, as we struggle against our flesh and temptation, we do it in the context not of fear of defeat or failure but with the assurance of victory. The decisive battle with the enemy has already taken place and has been won!

Finally, given all that He has done and for how long He has done it. What will you withhold, what will you not do for Him, what obedience will you joyfully give, what worship?

II Timothy 1:9 We are saved according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Jesus Christ before the world began.

This is the Gospel according to Genesis 3:15.