

THE SEED OF THE WOMAN  
November 16, 1980

Genesis 3:8-15  
Pastor Custis

The first of the prophecies concerning the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ is found in our scripture reading this morning and especially in Genesis 3:15. If you have your Bibles opened I would like to read that verse for you again since we will be considering this verse this morning, "And I will put enmity between thee and the woman and between thy seed and her seed, it shall bruise thy head and thou shalt bruise his heel." Now in order for us to understand this prophesy correctly that the decision of our Lord Jesus Christ to come to the earth to give Himself as a sacrifice for sin was not a decision that was made here, in Genesis 3:15. And I would like to ask you to turn to First Peter 1: where we have a statement of salvation from the Apostle Peter and I would like to read from verses 18 through 21 of First Peter 1. First Peter 1:18, "Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things as silver and gold from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers but with the precious blood of Christ as of a lamb without blemish and without spot." Verse 20 and I want you to note this in particular, "Who, that is Christ verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, that is he was foreordained to be a sacrifice for sins before the foundation of the world but was manifest in these last times for you who by him do believe in God that raised him from the dead and gave him glory that your faith and hope might be in God." So Peter tells us something that we don't learn from the book of Genesis and that is that the decision that the seed of the woman would bruise of the head of the serpent and that the serpent would be successful in bruising the heel of the seed of the woman was a decision that was not made in the Garden of Eden. It was a decision that was made in eternity past. Now turn on to the book of Revelation if you will. The Revelation of Jesus Christ, the last book in the Bible and the 13th chapter, and the 8th verse and we have another passage which shows God's predetermined plan for His Son. And the verse reads in the King James "And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain

from the foundation of the world." Now it's talking about worshipping the beast. That's not our concern this morning but I want you to note the latter part of this verse, "Written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world." Now if you are reading the New American Standard you will see that there is a problem in the translation of this verse because some translators and the New American Standard translators have done this, link the phrase, "From the foundation of the world" to the expression, "whose names were not written in the book of life." So "whose names were not written in the book of life from the foundation of the world of the Lamb that was slain." It's the book of the Lamb that was slain. If you are using the New International Version you will see that the New International Version agrees with the King James Version and the NIV reads this way, "All whose names have not been written in the book of life belonging to the Lamb that was slain from the creation of the world." So whichever way you take it, whether the names were written before the foundation of the world, or the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world and personally I believe that's the proper translation of this verse it indicates in either way that something very determinative was done by God about salvation before creation. Now such passages as this help us to understand some points that the Apostle Peter made in his preaching on the day of Pentecost and after. We find his messages recorded in the book of Acts. And in Acts 2:23 for example you will find that he is speaking of the Lord Jesus Christ he says this, "Him being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God ye have taken and by wicked hands have crucified and slain." Now the point that I am making is this, the sin of Adam and Eve or the sins of Adam and Eve did not take God by surprise so that God's plan to redeem man originated in the Garden of Eden. The announcement of that plan was made as far as men were concerned for the first time in the Garden of Eden. But what we have in Genesis 3:15 is the beginning of the Revelation of a redemptive plan that was completely worked out by the members of the Godhead not only before creation but obviously even before sin had been committed by men or by angels. Now it is very important I believe to

understand this. God had already made provision for man's sin in His eternal counsel and plan. One of the important things about understanding the Scriptures is to see that God is not making up His mind as He goes along. We have to do this because we don't have control of circumstances and we don't have the wisdom to make the long range plans. Often we attempt to make long range plans and then circumstances force us to bring about some changes. But God who is sovereign and God who can foresee the sin of man made provision indeterminately that His Son would come and give His life as a ransom for sinners. And so this is the reason that Paul describes salvation in terms of "God's own purpose and grace which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began." Now when we look at Genesis 3:15 in particular there are some things that we need to notice about this passage of Scripture even before we get into some of the details of the verse. One is that as you read this and perhaps if this is a new verse to you this morning and you wondered as we read the Scripture together just what we would have to say about Christ from a passage like this. Your impression of verse 15 is probably like most people respond when they first read a verse like this. They will say well isn't this a verse that is rather vague. And when we look at it we have to admit that the Lord does not say in this verse who the seed of the woman would be nor does He say who the seed of the serpent would be, nor does He say how the serpent's seed would bruise the heel of the seed of the woman, nor does this verse tell us how the seed of the woman would bruise the serpent's head. Now Adam and Eve I am sure understood that this was a promise of redemption. But perhaps even they had to wait on the details that greater light would provide. The advantage that we have is that we can take the rest of Scripture and can look back upon this promise that was given to them in the Garden of Eden and know that it has to do with salvation and it has to do specifically with what happened to our Lord Jesus Christ. Now the second thing about this verse that ought to attract our attention with respect to any doctrine in Scripture is this. I believe you will find it is generally agreed among Bible teachers and Bible scholars that the

first time a doctrine is mentioned in the Bible this gives us basically the foundational truths of that doctrine. Now usually in unfolding a doctrine of Scripture that is just a brief reference to it and then as you go through Scripture you get more and more and more revelation on that particular subject until finally all that God has to reveal to us concerning that particular doctrine is completed. Now let me illustrate this for example with the doctrine of justification. In the book of Romans and in the book of Galatians when the Apostle Paul is seeking as he does in Romans to teach the doctrine of justification and in Galatians to defend the doctrine of justification one point that he is very intent on making is that justification is by faith and faith alone. So to establish that and to prove it what does he do? He goes back to the first time that justification as such is mentioned in the Bible. And that happens to be in the book of Genesis, the 15th chapter and the 6th verse where concerning Abraham it is said, "Abraham believed God and it was counted to him for righteousness." Now that lays the foundation and everything that is revealed about justification from Genesis 15:6 on through all of the rest of the Bible, Old Testament and New Testament is built upon that foundation, that truth in Scripture is never contradicted. Justification is always by faith, the Old Testament people of God may have had to look forward to a sacrifice that was going to be made, had to look forward to a redeemer who was going to come but they were not saved by their animal sacrifices, they were not saved by their good works, they were not saved by their observance of the law after it had been given, they were saved identically the same way that you and I are saved. They were justified by faith in the coming redeemer. So you see the first mention establishes, really the truth. Now though we may at our first reading of this verse not get a great deal out of it we must recognize that since this has to do with salvation as the rest of the Word of God indicates then this must be a very basic, a very important passage of Scripture and the details that are given in this verse are details that we cannot overlook where the whole doctrine of salvation is concerned. Now third thing that I want you to note about this verse and I will have to say that

I noticed this for the first time even though I have studied and taught the book of Genesis for many, many years, I just happened to notice this this time and I am sure that the Lord has shown me this. But you have an emphasis in this verse upon divine grace. You say where do you see grace in such a verse like this apart from the fact that it contains the promise of salvation. Well I was impressed with the fact that you have a revelation of the grace of God here because and you can see this from your own reading of the chapter, you have the promise of salvation before you have judgement announced for Eve and for Adam. And before that, judgement was partially executed by their expulsion from the garden of Eden. In other words God wanted them to have this promise of salvation before He spoke to them specifically of the other details of the judgement that was going to be there. Now it's true that He had warned them in chapter 2, "In the day that ye eat thereof ye shall surely die." But you see God delights in mercy and here is evidence that He delights in mercy so that before they could even ask for anything, before they could seek the mercy of God, before they could ask for deliverance from their sin, before they took any step whatsoever in the direction of God, you remember they foolishly tried to cover themselves with leaves and they hid themselves from the presence of the Lord so it indicates that they were headed in the opposite direction but God in His wonderful grace sought them and before He pronounced judgement upon them, gave them this marvelous promise of a Redeemer. So this is really the first illustration in Scripture of the fact that it by grace you are saved through faith. Now my final observation is this. A study of this verse in the light of all of Scripture gives us the right to say that we have in this verse four of the most important doctrines that you will find in all of Scripture. And if we wanted to get into all the details of these four doctrines I am sure that we could say that there are more than four but there are four in particular and I want to take these four as the outline for my message to you this morning. Now let's look at them and look at the verse again so that you can see what they are. The first is the doctrine of an age long conflict between

Satan and the human race or between Satan and the people of God or between Satan and the Lord Jesus Christ. Now I say that because this word seed is used in various ways in Scripture and while it seems that it applies primarily to the Lord Jesus Christ yet there are ways in which you can look upon this passage also as indicating that the seed of the woman would obviously have to be humanity, the seed of the woman thinking in respect of salvation would have to do with the people of God in particular and it has to do with the Lord Jesus Christ, but there is a conflict that is introduced here. A conflict that you and I are involved in this very day and a conflict which marks the beginning of history from the fall of man till the time when God makes all things new and creates a new heaven and a new earth. Regardless of what other things you might see throughout history this is always present, it prevails right through the Word of God and you see it throughout human history. And it is stated here "I will put enmity between thee and the woman and between thy seed and her seed."

The second great doctrine that you find here is the doctrine of the incarnation of Jesus Christ. Now that is a long word which simply means that Jesus Christ, the eternal Son of God came to earth as a man and when He became a man He did not cease to be God. He is the Seed of the woman and we will look at some passages that help us on that. The third doctrine that you see in this verse is the doctrine of the suffering and death of the Lord Jesus Christ. And that is stated in the last expression of the verse, "and thou shalt bruise his heel." Now the cross is described in many different ways in Scripture as you know. And we will be looking at a few of those verses this morning. But this is really the first description of it. That Satan is bruising the heel of the seed of the woman. The fourth and last doctrine that you have in this verse is the doctrine of the triumphant resurrection of Christ marking as it would the complete overthrow of Satan and all of his evil schemes. And you have that in the expression it shall bruise thy head. So you have these four great truths, the age long conflict of Satan against God and against the human family and against the people of God, the coming to the earth of the Lord Jesus

Christ as the seed of the woman, the way in which the Lord Jesus Christ died, bruising the head of the serpent and at the same time his heel was bruised by the serpent. So this shows you what an extremely important verse this is. Now I am not saying that Eve understood all of these details or that Adam did. I do believe from what you have stated in the New Testament about the Old Testament that they understood enough to realize that this was a promise of redemption. Now the details of it are details that we can see because the revelation of God now has been completed and we can look back and see all of the riches of this marvelous truth so that when this promise was given to Adam and Eve before they ever left the Garden of Eden and announced incidentally to Satan himself you see the riches of this salvation and how God was giving him a picture of the coming ages, the conflict that would continue throughout all of this time and yet the tremendous victory that would be granted through the seed of the woman. Now let's look for a moment at this first doctrine. The age long conflict between Satan and the human race. Our vision of Satan is one who is always causing trouble, always seeking to deceive and many of our difficulties are traceable to him. That is very true. But I was impressed in studying this verse again with the way this verse begins and I will acknowledge to you that I have been learning some things about this verse that I hadn't seen before as I mentioned a moment ago. You notice that God is the One Who says "I will put enmity between thee and the woman and between thy seed and her seed." God is the One Who is responsible for introducing the conflict that was going to follow the introduction of sin into the human family. Now do you see why this is the case? Satan as a result of man's sin became the lord over man. He's called in the New Testament, II Corinthians 4:4 "the god of this world." And if Satan had had his way as a result of man's sin and God had not done anything about it you would never have had this enmity, you never would have had this conflict. You see this conflict between Satan and the human race, between Satan and the seed of the woman, however you may see fit to interpret that but thinking especially this morning of the Lord Jesus this conflict was introduced

because God is now declaring that even though man is become a sinner and he has placed himself under the authority of Satan yet the promise of redemption is being brought about and all of the enmity and upheaval and the strife that you find in the world is due to this conflict that in the midst of what man is doing and all of man's designs and Satan purposes God has introduced His plan to redeem men which runs contrary to all that men want to do. And therefore God says very forcefully here, "I am the one who is going to put enmity between Satan and those who are upon the earth, all that are involved in the seed of the woman including the Lord Jesus Christ and most of all the Lord Jesus Christ because when you see the Lord Jesus Christ coming to the earth then Satan directs his temptation to the Lord Jesus, Satan actually fills one of His disciples, entered into one of His disciples, Satan did everything that he possibly could to disrupt that redemptive work which Jesus Christ came to accomplish and this is what the Lord had in mind when He said, "I will put enmity between thee and the woman and between thy seed and her seed."

Now secondly let's look at the doctrine of the incarnation of the Lord Jesus. There are lots of things about all of these that I could say and I am sure that some of you may ask well who is the seed of Satan and what is the reference here. Perhaps I ought to take just a moment with that before we go on to this second point. Satan was an angel, but a bad angel, a fallen angel. But by nature he was an angel. And the demons who set themselves against God and against man were also angels. And from our teaching of the Word of God which is the only place that we can get reliable information about angels we know that angels do not reproduce. There are never any little angels. All of the angels that were ever to be were created by God at creation and there were elect angels as they are called in Scripture and there are the fall angels who revolted with Satan against God. That is a story in itself. So we can't say about Satan as we can say about Eve that Satan would be able in some way to give birth to somebody as the woman was to give birth, the virgin Mary gave



birth eventually to the Lord Jesus. We can't say that. So we have to limit this to what Satan does and people that Satan may use. And you see various evidences of his work, he works through his demons, he works himself. But remember he's not omnipresent. Satan can't be in more than one place at one time. But he attacked Job and he attacked Job at the suggestion of God. He in the Gospels sought to tempt and did tempt the Lord Jesus Christ perhaps because even he did not understand if in becoming man something had happened to Jesus Christ that would make it possible for Him to sin. And he found that He would not and he found that He could not sin. I mentioned a moment ago that when the time came for the betrayal of the Lord Jesus John in John 13 tells us in the 27th verse that "Satan entered into Judas and before that he put in the heart of Judas" the things that Judas was going to do. And in the close of the age in the days to come the Scriptures talk about the activities of the antichrist and I was amused by one writer who rather facetiously called the antichrist, the devil's eldest son. He's not actually but he's closely related to the devil because of the purposes that he has. John 8:44, the Lord Jesus turned to the Pharisees of all people and he said to them "You are of your father the devil and the lusts of your father you will do, he was a murderer from the beginning and abode not in the truth because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie he speaketh of his own for he is a liar and the father of it." So all of these combined speak to us. I am sure of what God had in mind when He spoke of the seed of Abraham, or pardon me the seed of the serpent. The result of the things that the enemy was going to do and of course when you come into the New Testament at the end of the book of Ephesians you find the Apostle Paul talking about our conflict and the battle that we have in getting the Gospel out and doing the work of God and he says very frankly, "We wrestle not against flesh and blood, not against people but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places." So that there is this conflict that is going on and it involves basically the seed of the woman and the seed of the serpent. But now let's think for just a moment about

the seed of the woman and how this has to do with the incarnation of the Lord Jesus. This has to mean that whoever was to bruise the head of the serpent was to be a man. But it is interesting as you look at this passage that this one who is spoken of as the seed of the woman is not spoken of as the seed of the man. Now the meaning of this and the reason that the seed is not referred to as the seed of the man is made clear when hundreds of years later you come to the prophesy of Isaiah and Isaiah says amazingly, "Behold a virgin shall conceive and bear a son and shall his name Imanuel." Now the actual identity of this son is given by Matthew in Matthew 1 at the beginning of the Gospel when he quotes from Isaiah's prophesy given 700 years previously and links it with the birth of the Lord Jesus Christ. And then if we need added evidence we can go to the book of Galatians 4:4-5 and we read this interesting statement, "When the fullness of the time was come, now this indicates that just as God had a plan, God had the time worked out for the unfolding of this plan, and when the fullness of the time was come, God sent forth his son made of a woman" and of course I am sure that everyone here this morning is familiar with the teaching of Scripture that the Lord Jesus Christ was virgin born. He was the seed of the woman, not the seed of the man because while he was born of the virgin Mary and the virgin Mary was His mother yet Jesus Christ was conceived not by a man but by the Spirit of God so that He had no human father. And do you see how beautifully this fits in to the picture that is given to us in Genesis 3:15 about the One Who is coming as the seed of the woman. I hope you are amazed this morning and blessed in your own heart by the marvelous accuracy of the Word of God. But now let me call your attention to the third doctrine. And let me take the truths in the order in which they are mentioned here, not just as they occurred in time so that the third doctrine that is mentioned here, "it shall bruise thy head". And I have mentioned that the bruising of the head of the serpent came about as a result of the death of the Lord Jesus and as a result of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus. Now thinking of the head of the serpent for a moment one writer has said this. The head is the principle instrument both of the serpents fury and mischief.

And also of his defense. The principle seat of the serpents life, now in other words if you are ever around a snake be careful of the head. When Moses cast his rod down and it became a serpent and he was told to pick it up why he was very careful about the head. The head is the dangerous part, yet if you want to kill a serpent its the head that you hit. So that the Lord Jesus Christ is spoken of as bruising the serpents head, crushing the serpents head. Now this does not mean that by His death he annihilated Satan or you and I wouldn't be having any trouble from Satan today. But it meant his absolute and his final defeat, his doom was sealed by this prophesy but the work was actually done at the cross and yet we are not going to see it fully carried out until eventually Satan is cast into the Lake of Fire and incidentally you remember that the teaching of the Lord Jesus Christ in the Gospel according to Matthew is that hell was prepared for the devil and his angels. And we have an indication of that even in Genesis 3:15. But before the Lord ever went to the cross He said this in John 12:31, "~~Now is the judgement of this world~~" now shall the prince of this world be judged." And when he was talking about the convicting work of the Spirit of God in the world He said that when the Spirit is come he will reprove the world of sin, righteousness and judgement and then he says of judgement because the prince of this world is judged." Just a week or so ago in our study of Colossians on Wednesday night we had that passage speaking of salvation with reference to the Father "Who has delivered us from the power of darkness and he has translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son." Ephesians 4:8, "Wherefore he saith when he ascended up on high he led captivity captive and gave gifts unto men." Paul could say as he does in writing to the Roman church, "And the God of peace shall bruise satan under your feet shortly." So you see Christ work on the cross was a total victory over Satan, over demons, over sin, over all the affects of sin, which means over hell, over death, over the grave, but you see if Christ by His death had not taken care of Satan then you and I would be held in bondage by the submission that men granted to Him when they sinned against, then Adam sinned against God in the Garden of Eden. So nothing

stands in the way of the salvation of men. Now the fourth doctrine and this has to do with the suffering and death of the Lord Jesus Christ and it's expressed in the words, "Thou shalt bruise his heel." Now there is no comparison is there between what happened to Satan as compared to what happened to the Lord Jesus Christ at the cross, the serpent's head was crushed, the Lord Jesus Christ by way of contrast only had his heel bruised. But this is a word that describes the agony and the suffering of His death. Saturday mornings in our home I am meeting with some of our councilmen, as I have mentioned to you before and yesterday we had occasion to talk about the death of Christ and the suffering of Christ and we all just gather in, contribute to the discussion and one mentioned one verse, another would mention another verse and I don't know how the others were impressed as those verses began to hit my ears again and we were thinking about what the Lord Jesus Christ had to suffer in order to redeem us from our sins I confess to you that my heart was overwhelmed again with that truth. That Jesus Christ would go through that for me. And to see all these expressions of it. And when you take your Bible and you see what, see all of those that had a part in the death of Christ. The Father, we read of laid upon the Lord Jesus the iniquity of us all and it pleased the Lord to bruise Him. Can you understand that. I read of the Lord Jesus where he said, "No man takes my life from me, I have power to lay it down and I have power to take it again." Peter in one of his messages says, "Herod and Pontius Pilate with the Gentiles and the people of Israel were all responsible and all contributed to the death of the Lord Jesus Christ." The first thing that I read in the Bible is that Satan bruised the heel of the Son of God. Who can measure or describe what the cross meant to our dear Savior. Can you explain the words, "For he was made sin for us who knew no sin." Can you explain the words, "Who his own self bare our sins in his own body, by whose stripes ye were healed," "Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law being made a curse for us because it is written, cursed is everyone that hangeth on the tree." I trust that you will always remember my dear friends that this is where our hope is and that before judgement was announced upon men the remedy for sin was

proclaimed and we have it in the Word of God, we have it in the work of Christ, we have it in the defeat of satan, we have it in the putting away of sin, so that here and in no other place is there hope for us as guilty sinners under the judgement of God. If you believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, the seed of the woman who bruised the serpents head even though his heel was bruised in the process, if you believe in Him then you are saved. If you do not you are completely without any hope of salvation whatsoever. The writer of the book of Hebrews has given us in the New Testament a New Testament version of Genesis 3:15. And you will find it in Hebrews 2:14-15 and it reads like this, "Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood he speaking of our Lord also himself likewise took part of the same which meant he became the seed of the woman, that through death in which His heel was bruised and I am just inserting these expressions from Genesis, that through death he might crush the head of the serpent, he might destroy him that had the power of death that is the devil and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage." Back in the latter part of the year 500AD a man lived by the name of Fortunatus. He is remembered especially by a poem that he wrote, this poem has been set to music and I just want to read a part of it to you because he had Genesis 3:15 in mind as he wrote it. And he says this:

Man's work faileth, Christ availeth,  
 He is all our righteousness,  
 He our Savior has forever set us free from dire distress,  
 through His merit we inherit light and peace and happiness.  
 Sin's bonds severed, we're delivered,  
 Christ has bruised the serpents head.  
 Death no longer is the stronger,  
 Hell itself is captive led,  
 Christ has risen from death's prison, ore the tomb He light has shed.  
 For His favor praise forever unto God the Father sing,

Praise the Savior, praise Him ever,  
Son of God , our Lord and King,  
Praise the Spirit, through Christs merit,  
He doth us salvation bring.

I know this morning that if you are trusting in the Lord Jesus Christ as your personal Savior you have every reason to rejoice not only in the promise that God gave to Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden but in the fulfillment of that promise in the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ in His suffering and death but also in His triumphant resurrection and His ascension back to the Father. But if you do not know the Lord Jesus Christ as your Savior this morning, then let me urge you as strongly as I can to put your faith and your trust in Him, there is no other hope of salvation, there is no other way for your sins to be forgiven and the promise is that if we believe in the Lord Jesus Christ we shall be saved and therefore I trust this morning that your faith, your trust is not in what you are or what you can do but your trust is in the seed of the woman who bruised the head of the serpent and through His death and resurrection made it possible for your sins to be forgiven and for you to be set free.