



# CAPITOL COMMISSION™

## Promises Made

GENESIS 3:15

JANUARY 19, 2012

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It can be difficult to make sense of a movie if we begin watching in the middle and do not know what is going on. We have trouble understanding what is happening in a serial format television series if we begin watching later episodes and do not know what has taken place previously. In both cases, we annoy those watching with us by asking a lot of questions: “Who is that character? How did they get into that situation? Why are they doing that?” The story only makes sense if we can go back to the beginning and see what has taken place.

The same is true of the Bible. It is difficult, if not impossible, to understand the Bible if we do not go back to the beginning to see what has taken place. Although the Bible is made up of many different books by many different authors, there is one central theme or story, the story of the redemption of sinful people through the life, death, and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ. It is when we keep this story in view that we understand the whole Bible. And to really grasp the story, we have to go back to the beginning.

We again consider Jesus’ teaching in Luke 24 how, “...Beginning with Moses and with all the prophets, He explained to them the things concerning Himself in all the Scriptures.” “Beginning with Moses” takes us back to the very beginning, Genesis, the first book of the Bible, the “Book of Beginnings”. Here we have the beginning of the story. We are introduced to the main characters. We have laid out for us the plot. We even see the climax and conclusion. It is vital that we study and comprehend the beginning of the story, if we are to really understand the rest of God’s Word.

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**GENESIS 3 IS THE MOST IMPORTANT CHAPTER FOR UNDERSTANDING THE WHOLE BIBLE. WITHOUT IT, THE REST OF THE BIBLE IS MEANINGLESS.**

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Most of us are familiar with the story found in the early chapters of Genesis. God created the world, and it was very good. The culmination of His creation, Adam and Eve, lived in the garden in

perfect fellowship with God and with each other. Satan, who some time in the past had in pride fallen and rebelled against God, came and tempted Eve. God, as creator of the universe and of man, had rightfully given them one simple command, “**From the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat**” (Gen. 2:17). Of course we know the rest of the story:

*When the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was desirable to make one wise, she took from its fruit and ate; and she gave also to her husband with her, and he ate. (Gen. 3:6)*

In the following verses we see the tragic results of their disobedience. Their perfect fellowship with God and with each other is broken. In Genesis 3:14-19 we see the curse, the judgment for sin that God pronounces on the serpent, on Satan, on Eve, and on Adam. It is in the curse on Satan in Genesis 3:15 that we find the promise that helps us make sense of the whole rest of the Bible:

*15And 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.”*

You might remember from last week’s study that we can take for an overall theme of the Old Testament, “**Promises Made**”. Here, even in the midst of judgment, we have the promise made of one who would defeat Satan and set things right. Let us briefly consider this promise and how its theme runs throughout and helps us understand the rest of God’s Word.

### AN IMPORTANT EXPLANATION

We look around at our world and our society and wonder why things are the way they are. Why the wars, crime, poverty, and injustice. We see catastrophes of nature such as tsunamis and earthquakes which cause indescribable suffering and death. We wonder if such events are simply the result of random chance or fate. If there is a loving, all-powerful God, how can such things happen? We look at our own lives and, if we are honest with ourselves, wonder why there is such sinfulness and wickedness in our own thoughts, attitudes, and actions. We find the answer right here in Genesis 3. Paul helps us

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### BIBLE STUDIES

LOBBYIST / STAFF STUDY: **TUESDAYS, 12:00 NOON**, TREASURER’S CONFERENCE ROOM (EB 54)

LEGISLATOR / ELECTED OFFICIAL STUDIES: **THURSDAYS 8:00 A.M. & NOON** TREASURER’S CONFERENCE ROOM (EB 54)

# West Virginia

## Promises Made

understand more fully what took place when Adam and Eve fell in the garden:

***Therefore, just as through one man sin entered into the world, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men, because all sinned... (Romans 5:12)***

We inherit a sinful nature from our first parents. We express sinful thoughts, attitudes, and actions because we are sinful at heart. As sinful individuals we need a Savior. We must see that the expression of fallen, sinful human nature is obviously part of the story of the whole Bible. We also see that the problems we see around us in our state, our nation, and our world are ultimately due to sin and must be ultimately solved by the promised Savior.

### A PROMISE OF CONFLICT

We see God's promise here that there will be an ongoing conflict between the people who follow God and those who follow Satan. **"I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her seed..."** This is actually a wonderful promise because God is saying that He will not leave all mankind under the domination of Satan, but He will raise up a people who will be in conflict against him. The term "seed" refers to descendants. It refers collectively to the great number of descendants – both those who would follow God and those who would follow Satan. We see this conflict between individuals: Cain and Able (Gen. 4), Ishmael and Isaac (Gen. 16), Jacob and Esau (Gen. 27). We see it with the people of Israel and their conflicts with the nations around them. We see God raise up a people to follow Him in the New Testament (the Church). And we see the ongoing conflict in the promise that followers of Christ will endure persecution from those who do not know Him (Matt. 5:11-12; John 15:18-19; John 17:14).

Understanding the theme of God promising and keeping His promise to raise up a people to follow Him and the conflict they face will help us understand the rest of the Bible.

### A PROMISE OF MERCY AND GRACE IN THE MIDST OF JUDGMENT

Genesis 3 recounts for us the judgment of God upon the sinful rebellion of Adam and Eve. But even in the midst of God's judgment, we see Him extend mercy and grace to the sinful couple. Though they did indeed begin to die physically, God did not

immediately put them to death as they deserved. They tried to cover their shame by making themselves coverings of fig leaves. God made them garments of skin, which pointed to the need of sacrifice for the covering of sin. Throughout the rest of the Bible, we see this theme of mercy and grace in the midst of judgment. We see four great judgments recorded in Scripture: here in the garden; the great flood in Genesis 6-8; the final judgment of believers and unbelievers; and the greatest judgment of all, at the cross of Calvary. There Jesus bore the judgment for sin that each of us deserved. He who knew no sin was made sin on our behalf, that we might gain His righteousness when we repent and trust Him (2 Cor. 5:21). In all these judgments we see the holiness, righteousness, and justice of God expressed. Yet in all four we see His mercy and grace demonstrated as well.

### THE PROMISE OF A SAVIOR

In this great promise, God moves from speaking collectively of the descendants of the woman ("seed"), to a particular descendant ("He"). The ultimate expression of mercy and grace here is the promise of one who would ultimately conquer Satan (**bruising his head**). This would be done so by His own suffering (**Satan bruising His heel**). In this promise, given thousands of years before His coming, we see the promise of a Savior that was fulfilled in Jesus Christ. We do not have time or space to develop this fully, but let us quickly consider how this points to Him. We see the indication of His virgin birth. (The 'seed' of the woman). We see the indication that this promised one would suffer (Satan would bruise his heel). And we see that this promised one would ultimately overcome the evil one. Paul makes a further comparison between Adam and Jesus: **"For since by a man *came* death, by a man also *came* the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ all will be made alive."** (1 Corinthians 15:21-22). We need to see this theme or story throughout the scriptures, that of God raising up a people from whom the promised one would come, that this promised one would suffer and die to redeem us, and that He will ultimately overcome Satan. This will help us understand all of God's Word.

- **HAVE YOU TRUSTED THIS SAVIOR WHO WAS PROMISED SO LONG AGO?**
- **DO YOU FIND COMFORT AND PEACE IN THE FACT THAT CHRIST WILL ULTIMATELY CONQUER?**