

Jesus in Genesis: Prophecy

Last week we looked at direct references to Jesus in Genesis. This week we will examine some of the prophecies concerning Jesus the Messiah. There are many prophetic types that we will look at in coming weeks, but this study is limited to those prophecies that are directly referring to the Messiah.

The first is found in chapter 3 verse 15. This passage is known as *the proto-evangel*. Although the New Testament does not quote this passage, some believe Romans 16:20 is alluding to it. Iranaeus refers to it in the second century and may have been taught that by his mentor Polycarp, John the Beloved's disciple.

Genesis 3:15 NIV *"And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring (seed) and hers; he will crush your head, and you will bruise his heel."*

The Lord is speaking to the Serpent. Enmity can be translated hatred. Because Satan had seduced Eve into taking the forbidden fruit causing spiritual death, God pronounced this sentence upon Satan. His seed and the seed of woman would have hatred between them. The seed of the woman would crush the serpent's head, while he would bruise his heel.

Let's examine each piece of this forecast given by the Lord. *I will put hatred between you and the woman, and between your seed and hers...* God has placed hatred between the sons of Satan and Christ. I have used sons of Satan in place of 'your seed'. John 8:44 In the place of 'hers' – meaning her seed, I have put Christ. John 7:7 NIV "The world cannot hate you, but it hates me because I testify that what it does is evil." Children of the world hate Christ. To them He represents a loss of freedom and pleasure. What does the Truth really bring to our lives? John 8:32

...he will crush your head... The seed of the woman, Jesus, will crush the head (authority, rule) of Satan. There is a picture here, of a man's heel on the head of a snake, grinding it into the ground. Satan's seduction of Eve that resulted in disobedience to God brought about the curse of death. This was Satan's plan because his goal is to kill, steal and destroy. John 10:10 Jesus on the other hand came to bring life, and so he had to break the power of the curse on mankind. Hebrew 2:9-14 Man lost the right to life, communion with God, through disobedience. A man had to regain that right, but none were able. Man had the authority and title as Prince of the World, but there in the Garden, he gave it up to Satan. Man had to take the title back, the right to it back, but man was unable. So God clothed himself in flesh, becoming the God-man, Jesus, to take back the right to the Tree of Life. The curse of sin, the thorns, He wore on His head, as He became a curse for us by hanging on a tree (the cross). The Just took the punishment for the unjust. Because He did this for us, God the Father gave His only Son a place above all. Philippians 2:6-11, Colossians 2:13-15

...and you will bruise his heel. It was not without cost that the Christ was able to redeem us. It came at great personal sacrifice. *"They pierced my hands and my feet."*

The "he" in the prophecy was to crush the head of Satan and be wounded in the heel by him. This is the first direct prophecy of the coming of a Deliverer who would save us from the Deceiver.

The next prophecy we do have a New Testament affirmation of. *"In thy Seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed"* (Genesis 12:3, 17:7, 21:12, 22:18, 26:4, 28:14) finds a New Testament fulfillment in Galatians 3:16. The Apostle Paul was very specific in pointing out that these promises of blessing for the earth were not in the descendants of Abraham but in a descendant. This is the same Seed of the woman that would crush the head of Satan. This is the way He would bless the nations of the earth, by crushing the authority of the one who seeks to kill, steal and destroy.

Genesis 49:8-12 is the blessing of Jacob to his son Judah. Jesus descended from this line. Notice what is promised: brother's praise, hand on the neck of his enemy, brothers' worship, like a lion, ruling, until Shiloh comes (he to whom it belongs). We note that all of these things apply to the Seed of Judah, Jesus, the lion of the tribe of Judah. Revelation 5:5 He is praised and worshipped by His brothers. Shiloh can also be translated "him to whom tribute is due". The only One worthy of praise, the only One that has the right to rule, the One to Whom history is for, and to, and through, is Shiloh – Jesus! Luke 1:32

It is not only the Christians who see this as a prophecy of the Messiah, but the Rabbis of old did also. They placed particular emphasis on ruling, and in verse 11, tethering his donkey to a vine. The Talmud indicates the vine to be Israel and the donkey is a word very much like 'his city' in Hebrew. The Rabbis also equate the donkey with humility of the Messiah. Zechariah 9:9

We have one more prophetic word about Christ from this time period but not in the book of Genesis. We do not have the book from which this prophecy is taken, but we find the half-brother of Jesus, Jude, quoting from it. See verses 14,15. Enoch saw the second coming of the Messiah. What Jude was quoting was probably one of the first prophecies of the Second Coming of Jesus. There, in the time period early in Genesis, Enoch saw Jesus coming to judge the world.

This thread of prophecy throughout the book gave the patriarchs and the nation of Israel their first clues as to what to expect of this coming Messiah. If we put all these together we have a picture of One that is a man who is coming to destroy the Serpent but at a cost. He will bless the nations of the earth. He will reign forever in power even though he comes to Israel in humility. He will judge the world. Those were the first glimpses, but together they made a perfect outline. The types we will look at next week fill in many of the details.

What does it mean to you that the coming of Jesus is detailed from the beginning? Do you have the holy hunger – *'more than my necessary food'* - to know him. *"This is life eternal, that they may know Thee, the only true God and Jesus Christ whom Thou hast sent."* John 17:3