

MESSIAH IN THE OT JROC

Week 8 – Genesis 3:15

March 3, 2019

In Genesis 1 & 2 we read of a perfect creation with unfallen man as God's representative on earth, ruling over and nurturing God's creation. And then in chapter 4 of Genesis we find jealousy and murder; in the following chapters in the book of Genesis mankind goes from bad to worse.

WHAT HAPPENED? Genesis 3 answers this question. . . .

Gen. 3:1 - *Now the serpent was more cunning than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said to the woman, "Has God indeed said, 'You shall not eat of every tree of the garden'?"* A serpent suddenly appears in the Garden of God - uninvited! The serpent is said to be one of God's creatures, therefore, we must take this creature literally. This creation of God is a serpent...a snake. (Keep in mind, if we've never read the Bible, we do not know the identity of the serpent at this point)

Isa. 14:12-15 – Lucifer – *I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God; I will also sit on the mount of the congregation... I will ascend above the heights of the clouds, I will be like the Most High.*

Rev. 12:9 - *So the great dragon was cast out, that serpent of old, called the Devil (accuser) and Satan (adversary), who deceives the whole world; he was cast to the earth, and his angels were cast out with him.*

We will call this creature "the serpent" as that's what this entity is called in the text. And, he is noted as adversarial. And, the pronoun "he" describes this creation of God. Notice the serpent's approach. The serpent is more than a mere serpent. He speaks. We really don't know if this was common. Scripture tells us that the serpent was "more cunning than any beast of the field." Something is noticeably different about this "beast."

Observations

The serpent recognizes God.

We note intelligence and knowledge.

The serpent speaks as if he has a connection to God.

Gen. 3:1 - *Has God indeed said, 'You shall not eat of every tree of the garden'?* The serpent is essentially saying to Eve, "Surely, most certainly God could not have said this, could He?" The serpent wants to cause doubt in Eve's mind. He wants to deceive.

According to Genesis 1, all of creation came into existence in response to the Word of God. God created through His Word. The key words of chapter one are, "God said..." When the serpent approached Eve, the Word of God is precisely what Satan first questioned, and then denied!

The serpent didn't mention either the "tree of life" or the "tree of the knowledge of good and evil." But his question brought up the forbidden tree in Eve's thinking and Eve spoke of the forbidden tree. The serpent took Eve's eyes off God's MOST GENEROUS BLESSINGS! Eve is now only thinking of God's limitations on their lives.

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God told them, "...but from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat from it you shall surely die" (2:17). Interesting that God doesn't say "if" you eat from it. God knows the end from the beginning.

In answering the serpent's question, *Has God indeed said, 'You shall not eat of every tree of the garden'?* (Gen. 3:1), Eve told the serpent, *We may eat the fruit of the trees of the garden; ³ but of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God has said, 'You shall not eat it, nor shall you touch it, lest you die.'* " (3:2-3). Eve ADDED to God's word! Eve exaggerated. But, Eve forgot what God had told them re: the judgment that would come about should they eat – "...in the day that you eat from it you shall surely die"!

The serpent was creating doubts in Eve's mind regarding the goodness of God – focusing her on what was forbidden rather than on ALL that God had freely given to Adam and Eve. Is this the adversary's approach with us?

The second attack - "*And the serpent said to the woman, 'You surely shall not die!'*" (Gen. 3:4) The serpent slandered God's character! The serpent is labeling God as a liar! Gen. 3:5 – *For God knows that in the day you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.* The serpent is insinuating that Adam and Eve were incomplete without the knowledge of evil. And the serpent is suggesting that as one eating of the forbidden fruit, she would enter into a new and higher level of existence. She would become like God. At that moment, she snatched the fruit and ate it. Gen. 3:6 - *She also gave to her husband with her, and he ate.* Adam was with Eve, listening to the serpent, or so it seems. AND, Gen. 2:16-17 tells us that God had given the command NOT to eat of the fruit of this particular tree – TO ADAM! It was Adam's responsibility to communicate God's words correctly to his wife. When Eve extended the fruit to Adam, he ate without hesitation!

Immediately there was separation from God. Adam and Eve hid from God. Gen. 3:8 - *And they heard the sound/voice of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God....* In the original Aramaic text, the word for sound/voice is MEMRA – which means "Word." The Rabbis have taught that the Memra is the same as God yet distinct! (John 1:1) And God sought them out! While the serpent's question was designed to bring about the fall of man, God's questions seek reconciliation and restoration with man. Notice that no

questions are asked of the serpent. There is no intention of restoration for this creature. His doom is sealed.

Gen. 3:9-10 - *Then the LORD God called to Adam and said to him, 'Where are you?' ¹⁰ So he said, 'I heard Your voice in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked; and I hid myself.'* Adam didn't offer God much in the way of confession of sin. God probed more deeply, seeking an admission of wrongdoing.

Gen. 3:11 - *Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree of which I commanded you that you should not eat?*

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Gen. 3:12-13 - *Then the man said, 'The woman whom You gave to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I ate.' ¹³ And the LORD God said to the woman, 'What is this you have done?' The woman said, 'The serpent deceived me, and I ate.'* Adam blames God and Eve...Eve blames the serpent!

Regarding judgment, God FIRST speaks out against the serpent.

Gen. 3:14 - *So the LORD God said to the serpent: Because you have done this, you are cursed more than all cattle, and more than every beast of the field; on your belly you shall go, and you shall eat dust all the days of your life.* The serpent was demoted from an upright position, perhaps, to that of crawling on his belly and eating dust.

God then speaks to the power behind the serpent who, as Lucifer, exercised his will against God. And so, God tells the adversary...

Gen. 3:15 - *And **I will** put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her Seed; He shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise His heel.*

What do we understand re: Gen. 3:15?

- This is a verse of judgment and promise! God curses the physical serpent and then the adversary, Satan, which provides hope for Adam and Eve!
- "Enmity" is used several times in Scripture as a blood feud (Num. 35:21-22; Eze. 25:15) which is a long lasting bitter conflict.
- The hatred will be between the seed (descendants) of the serpent ("many" seed), followers of Satan, and the Seed of the woman, followers of God. Conflict enters the world between the two distinct groups. Spiritual warfare.

- The context then moves to the future.
- The word “seed” in Hebrew (*zarah*) is a masculine noun. Regarding the woman, we need to note that a woman does not have a seed. “Seed” in Hebrew means semen! A woman has an egg. The influence of a man is not noted in this verse. Adam is not brought into this equation.
 - Could this be speaking of a supernatural human birth?
 - Is there a hinting of a virgin birth?
- The hatred/enmity extends in the future to the “Seed” of the woman and the seed of the serpent. The “Seed of the woman” is noted as “He.” We definitely see an individual.
- The actions of the “He” in the future are the result of the bruising.
- The serpent will receive a head wound – a mortal wound – death/destruction.
- The Seed of the woman will receive a wound on His heel; this is not a death wound. But, the Seed of the woman will experience suffering. To what is this pointing?
- In the midst of the context of SIN, IMMEDIATELY God provides THE resolution for sin. In the midst of judgment there is a promise. This is the first promise we see in Scripture about an individual Who appears to be the resolution for sin. Gen. 3:15 has been called *protoevangelium* which means the “first gospel”. “Gospel” is good news! What is the good news from God? Against the backdrop of sin and judgment, God promised hope in the provision of “the” resolution of sin.

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- The first Messianic prophecy declares that “the” resolution, the Messiah, will be born of a woman, not a man. This runs contrary to the Biblical norm. Male descendants, exclusively, are recorded in the Biblical genealogies – other than in Matthew 1.
- AND the first Messianic prophecy clearly teaches us that the Messiah would SUFFER. The first Messianic prophecy doesn’t tell us He would first come as a conquering King. He would SUFFER. He would be one of us – He would be human. AND the first Messianic prophecy seems to suggest that this would be a supernatural birth (virgin birth) because a woman does not have a seed (*zarah* - masculine noun meaning semen!)
- God’s judgment begins with “I will”! We read in Isa. 14:13-14 that Lucifer had expressed his desires through five “I will’s” – the fifth one: “I will be like the Most

High”! We see conflict ensuing between the will of Almighty God and the will of a defeated foe!!! Spiritual warfare has begun!

Regarding God’s plan, we need to know that God CREATED – He revealed Himself. Man responded in rebellion. Man sinned against God! The first two events of the 4-word plan/design/pattern: CREATION FALL

Following the FALL, God promised REDEMPTION and RESTORATION.

How was God to bring about REDEMPTION? Through the REDEEMER. Who is...JESUS.

The PROMISE-PLAN of God – His plan of redemption on earth unfolds from the third chapter of Genesis through to the end of Revelation! Each aspect of the Messiah and His work has been linked into an ongoing stream of announcements in Scripture.

What we’re going to call the PROMISE-PLAN of God formed one continuous message placed into Israel’s history! AND consider that God’s mercy, grace, love, holiness, justice, faithfulness, immutability (He does not change) are brilliantly displayed against the backdrop of sin!

This verse encompasses both a curse and a promise.

- The first promise of a coming Messiah in Scripture comes in God’s rebuke of Satan which speaks to Satan’s ultimate destruction. The Messiah was to come to both destroy Satan and to deliver man from under Satan’s dominion. This theme continues through the NT.
- The destruction of Satan gives Adam and Eve HOPE even in their punishment. There is no redemption for Satan. The judgments placed upon Adam and Eve are softened by the promise of deliverance. Eve will suffer birth pangs in bearing children, but this pain will be eased by the knowledge that the “Seed” of the woman to come will cause Satan’s destructions. The woman’s “Seed” will be Satan’s destroyer.
- Gen. 3:20 - *And Adam called his wife’s name Eve, (for the first time) because she was the mother of all living* – because there was HOPE.

Satan was dealt a death blow at the cross. What seemed like Satan's moment of triumph when Jesus was crucified, was actually his greatest defeat. Jesus rose from the grave and conquered man's greatest oppressor - death.

Heb. 2:14 - *...through death He might destroy him who had the power of death, that is, the devil.*

The “place of the skull” has an interesting history. This location of Jesus’ crucifixion is called both Calvary and Golgotha. The Greek word κρανίον (kran-ee-on), translated as Calvary, means skull. The word Golgotha is a Hebrew word which also

means skull-better known as the “place of the skull.” The crushing of Satan’s head is our first clue as to why Jesus was crucified on Calvary, the place of the skull. Moses prophetically writes that there will come a time when the future “Seed of the woman” will crush the head of the serpent.

There are no verses in Scripture which state, “Now what you’re about to read is a Messianic prophecy!” One of the statements/challenges that we may hear from a Jewish person who is not yet a believer in Jesus – who is fairly knowledgeable about his/her Judaism is “If Jesus is really the Messiah, and if he is so important, why doesn’t the Torah speak of him at all?” Whether or not one accepts a passage as Messianic depends largely on how one understands the person and the work of the Messiah! There were Jewish people in Jesus day and Jewish people today who only understand the Messiah as KING Messiah Who would bring peace to the earth. There are Jewish people who, when presented with Isa. 53, would respond, “This is not Messianic.” WHY? Because in Isa. 53 we have an individual who SUFFERS and dies! As students of the word of God, we need to know the complete work of the Messiah! What are the works of the Messiah? (heal, redeem, die, resurrect, ascend to heaven, sit at the right hand of God, physically return, establish His kingdom on earth, rule as King on King David’s throne in Jerusalem...). Look what Gen. 3:15 is telling us against the backdrop of sin...the first man and woman rebelled against God...and we IMMEDIATELY see the resolution for sin – the One Who would come and reign as King first? NO!!! The ONE Who would SUFFER for sin – the ONE Who would be in battle against an adversary – the ONE Who would bruise/crush the adversary’s head – a mortal wound will happen to this adversary – and the “Seed of the woman” will SUFFER!!

The first Messianic prophecy clearly teaches us that the Messiah would SUFFER. The first Messianic prophecy doesn’t tell us He would first come as a conquering King. He would SUFFER. He would be one of us – He would be human. BUT the first Messianic prophecy also suggests that this would be a supernatural birth (virgin birth) because a woman does not have a seed (zerah - masculine noun meaning semen!)

Genesis 3 goes on to tell us of God’s judgment on the woman and on the man and the curse on the earth. “Return to the ground.” Man, because of sin, was changed immediately. He was separated from God, and, became liable to all the sufferings and miseries of life, and to death. And, man was ashamed.

Gen. 3:7 - *Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves coverings*

Gen. 3:21 - *the LORD God made tunics of skin, and clothed them.* In lieu of the fig leaves they crafted for themselves. The first physical death should have been the man and his wife...but it was an animal. WHY? What message was being declared?

- Someone sins – there must be death. (Rom. 6:26 – *the wages of sin is death*)
- We're understanding a substitutionary death in this verse. An innocent animal taking the place of one who sins.
- And, we're understanding that blood was shed.

How much did Adam and Eve realize?

Gen. 3:20 – Adam calls his wife Eve – for the first time. Eve means living. There is HOPE.

Gen. 4:1 gives us Eve's response when she gave birth to her first son, Cain. Gen. 4:1 - *Now the man had relations with his wife Eve, and she conceived and gave birth to Cain, and she said, 'I have gotten a man: Jehovah.'* This is the Hebrew rendering for Gen. 4:1. Eve appears to have understood from the prophecy in Gen. 3:15 that the serpent would be defeated by a God-Man (supernatural birth suggested) and that she gave birth to Jehovah. Eve took God at His word. She understood God's promise. The timing, however, wasn't God's timing! Eve was believing that the promise was fulfilled immediately! She believed that Cain, her first child, was the promised God-Man. If the translation is indeed, *I have gotten a man: Jehovah*, from Gen. 3:15 we understand that God's antidote for sin would be HIMSELF coming in the flesh. Eve was soon to realize, after Cain killed Abel, that Cain was not the One Who would carry out the promise of God.

As the first Messianic prophecy, how does Gen. 3:15 lay out the promise-plan of God?