

**And I will put enmity  
between you and the woman,  
and between your offspring and hers;  
he will crush your head,  
and you will strike his heel. (NIV84)**

Theme: The Gospel Adam and Eve Heard

1. Their friend had become their enemy.
2. Their descendent would become their Savior.

Winston Churchill valued the study of history. He once said, “The farther backward you can look, the farther forward you are likely to see.” That is what we are doing in our mid-week advent services this December. In order to better understand and appreciate Christmas we will go back in history and review why it was so important. Each of the three sermons during our mid-week services looks back into Bible history, to see how God prepared his people for the amazing gift he had in store for them in Bethlehem.

Today, we go all the way back to the beginning of time and study the Gospel Adam and Eve heard. They heard that their friend had become their enemy and their descendent would become their Savior.

Adam and Eve were created in God’s image and likeness. They were perfect and holy and knew his will. They were born of God. And they had an opportunity to show their love and thanks to him each and every day as they refused to eat from the tree from which God commanded them not to eat. But then the devil came in the form of a serpent. He convinced them that he was their friend. He was telling the truth and God had lied to them. They would not die if they ate from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. They would become like God—knowing the difference between good and evil. Convinced by Satan, Adam and Eve doubted God. So they ate the forbidden fruit. Their eyes were opened immediately—they knew what they did. They heard God in the Garden. So they hid. God called them out—from behind the bushes and in their sins. But they refused to repent or take ownership. They offered excuses. They blamed others. Eve said, **The serpent deceived me, and I ate.**

God responded in a most astounding way. God spoke the first Gospel to Satan, his enemy. But he did so in front of Adam and Eve—so they could hear it too. What were words of condemnation to Satan, were words of promise to Adam and Eve. What was severe law for the devil, were words of the sweetest gospel and greatest comfort to Adam and Eve.

God said to Satan, **I will put enmity between you and the woman.** In the original Hebrew God emphasizes the word enmity by putting it first in the sentence. Enmity I will put. Enmity means hostility. God made Satan and enemy of Eve. Sadly, there was a friendship of sorts between Eve and Satan. The devil suggested to her that God didn’t really love them—that God was holding back from them, and she listened. At the devil’s urging Adam and Eve turned their back on God. They rebelled against his will. They thought Satan was their friend and God was their lying enemy. But Satan didn’t really want a friend. All he really wanted was company—in hell. And that is what he was going to get with Adam and Eve—had not God chosen to intervene. The first thing he did was make Eve realize who Satan is. So he drove hostility between the two. God made it clear that Satan was an enemy of Eve, not a friend.

And so, he is our enemy as well. He is our old evil foe. He is our enemy and adversary. He doesn’t want what’s best for you. He wants you to reject God and join him in eternal damnation. And if he is our enemy, so are his children. The offspring of the devil are unbelievers. As a believer, the offspring of Eve are believers. And unbelievers and believers do not get along. God has placed hostility between us. Believers don’t like unbelievers because they follow the ways of the world. They listen to the devil. And unbelievers hate believers because what they believe in is contrary to their reason. And what they teach goes against their lifestyle. God set this hostility in place on purpose. He wanted to protect his children from the devil and his children. So he made them hostile to each other.

God exposed Satan as our greatest enemy. But that wasn't the worst news for Satan. The worst news for Satan and the best news for us is that he would be crushed by Eve's descendant.

The most important part of God's promise to Adam and Eve is the last part of our text. God said to Satan, **he will crush your head, but you will strike his heel.** God was talking about all of Eve's descendants before. But here God is talking about one descendent in particular. A male descendent simply referred to as "he." A male descendent of Adam and Eve will crush Satan's head. That's all that Adam and Eve knew. There were no specifics—just a general reference that one would defeat their enemy on their behalf. Their salvation would be received through faith in that promise.

This prophecy was fulfilled in Christ. The New Testament never quotes this passage. It never specifically says that Jesus is the descendant of Adam and Eve who crushed Satan's head. But the New Testament does seem allude to it in a few different places. Take Romans 16:20 for example, **The God of peace will soon crush Satan under your feet.** On Palm Sunday Jesus talked about his coming death, **Now is the time for judgment on this world; now the prince of this world will be driven out.**

While the New Testament doesn't specifically make the connection, it is clear that Jesus fulfilled this prophecy when he died and rose from the dead. God told Satan that he would bruise the heel of Eve's descendent. When Jesus died Satan thought he had struck the winning blow. He had tried to land a hit over and over again—both before Jesus' birth, to snuff out the line of David, and after his birth—so that Jesus could not fulfill God's promise to Adam and Eve. But he failed. But then he led some Jewish and Roman leaders to crucify Jesus. Finally Satan succeeded. He had landed the fatal blow. Or so he thought. It ended up only being a blow to the heel. Because Jesus rose from the dead. It wasn't the knock-out punch that Satan thought he landed. Jesus came back with full glory and power. So Jesus rose from the dead and crushed Satan's head. He defeated Satan—for sin and death were stripped of their power. And this was truly a fatal blow. Satan's head was crushed.

Jesus knew this prophecy. He understood that it was going to be a battle. Jesus could tell by, "he will strike your heel" that his battle against the devil would be a bloody one. It would be painful. It would mean he would die. But Jesus didn't avoid it. He gave up the glories and riches of heaven to become one of us. He willingly was born to fight a battle.

That's not normally what you think of when you think of Christmas. It goes against all the pageantry, the lovey-dovey Christmas songs, the presents, charity, and cheer that many people usually associate with Christmas. No, on Christmas we celebrate the birth of a warrior. This Son of God was given the task of fighting our biggest enemy. It is on Christmas that he started that assignment. It was a battle he won for us. And that victory of sin, death, and the devil, he gives to us.

As a result, we have been set free from Satan. He no longer has control over us. If you have ever seen a snake with a crushed head, you know that he is dead and he can do you no harm. The same stands for Satan—his head is crushed and he can do us no harm. We realize that he is not our friend but our enemy. Adam and Eve were on their way to keep him company in hell. And that is where all of us would go by nature. So God promised them a descendant who would defeat Satan. And it is through faith in that descendant that they would be saved. It is through faith in the fulfillment of this prophecy, Jesus Christ, that we too are saved. We are no longer slaves to the sinful nature that Satan planted in our first parents when they sinned. We have been set free by Eve's descendent, Jesus Christ, who came some 4000 years after this first gospel promise.

This first gospel promise was certainly a veiled promise. Adam and Eve didn't know much about their descendant who would be the Savior. But they knew enough to be saved through faith. Today, through the study of history, we know much more. And we praise God for the gift of his Son and Eve's son. For he is our warrior Savior, born to save us from our Old Evil Foe. Amen.