

**Welcome to the
Common Ground Café!**



Sunday, December 17, 2023

**The Genesis of Christmas
A Study of Genesis 3:14-15**

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What is your opinion of snakes? Tell us your funniest or scariest snake story.

Although snakes aren't inherently "evil," they are often used in the Bible and other literature as symbols of evil. Why?

In Genesis 3, a snake-like creature entices Eve and Adam to distrust God and rebel against him. Read Genesis 3:1-13.

In Genesis 3:14-15, God issues a prophecy to this snake-like creature. Read Genesis 3:14-15.

Pastor Tom said that we can learn three things about God from this first biblical prophecy. God planned to fix all that sin messed up through his gracious **planning**, his relentless **persistence**, and his sacrificial **pain**.

His Gracious **Planning**

When we face shocking, unexpected news, it usually takes us a few weeks or months to recover emotionally and start thinking about what we need to do next. Why?

When God's perfect world was ruined by the Tempter's influence over Adam and Eve, how long did it take God to announce his plan to fix everything?

Read Genesis 3:16-19 and summarize the hardships God said that Adam and Eve and their descendants would now have to suffer because of the Fall.

When God prophesied a plan to fix his ruined world, did that come **before** or **after** he told Adam and Eve the consequences humankind would have to suffer because of the Fall?

How can our knowledge of God's prophesied plan to fix his ruined world make the consequences of the Fall easier to bear?

His Relentless **Persistence**

Read Genesis 4:1.

Some Bible scholars believe Eve's declaration to the birth of her firstborn was directly related to Genesis 3:15. In other words, she was expressing the hope that this offspring would be the one to fix all the ruin the Tempter had led her into. Pastor Tom said that if she hoped her firstborn was the offspring of God's prophecy, she was way off the mark. Why?

Pastor Tom said that much of the Old Testament is simply story after story of Eve's offspring being **unqualified** to be the one God would use to reverse the ruin of his perfect world. Give some examples of patriarchs, judges, or kings who showed promise but ultimately failed to be the One who would rescue us from the Serpent.

His Sacrificial *Pain*

In Genesis 3:15, God prophesied that the Serpent would strike the heel of Eve's offspring, but Eve's offspring would crush the Serpent's head.

- ❖ In what way was Jesus's crucifixion like a serpent striking him on the heel?
- ❖ In what way was Jesus's resurrection like a man fatally crushing the head of a serpent?

God said that Eve's offspring would suffer while crushing the Serpent. Pastor Tom said that was, in fact, a prophecy that **God himself** would have to suffer to fix his ruined world. Explain.

God announced that he himself would bear the cost to bring an end to the Serpent. How does this make you love God more?

Close with praise reports and prayer requests.