

# The Messenger



“... How beautiful are the feet of those who bring glad tidings of good things!” Romans 10:15

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## The Scheme of Redemption

*by Dempsey Collins*  
*continued*

### II. God's Plan from Creation to the flood

A. Gen. 1:1 – Physical creation only has meaning because of God's plan of spiritual salvation.

1. Seven times God calls His creation “good”.
  - a. “That which is useful to accomplish its intended purpose.”
  - b. Physical creation occurred only because it suited God's plan.
2. This world was created for no other purpose than to bring glory to God (Psa. 19:1; Rom. 1:20). It was not created for any intrinsic value in itself.
  - a. After its purpose is accomplished, it will be destroyed (II Pet. 3:10; Rev. 20:11).
  - b. Glorifying God is the greatest benefit man can gain, for it gives him the hope that someday he will be glorified with God (Eccl. 12:13; Rom. 8:30).
  - c. This is the fundamental error and folly of materialism and worldliness. We attach much more value to physical things than was ever intended and than they are actually worth.

B. The physical creation was necessary to bring about a spiritual creation. (Eph. 2:10; 4:24; Gal. 6:15; II Cor. 5:17; Rom. 6:4).

1. Comparison of the two creations:
  - a. Both were begun by the Word of God. (The physical creation will also be destroyed by it.)
  - b. Both glorify God.
    - (1) We worship God because He is Creator and Redeemer (Rev. 4:11; 5:9-14; Rom. 8:30).
    - (2) The physical creation shows God's power and Deity (Rom. 1:18-20; Psa. 19:1ff).

C. The Fall of Man (Gen. 3-5)

1. The fall of man shows why this plan was necessary.
  - a. God foreknew the fall, but did not cause it. Foreknowing and forecausing are two entirely different things.
  - b. I foreknow my own physical death, but I am not necessarily the cause (Gen. 3:19).

- c. Both the man and the woman sinned.
  - (1) The woman was deceived (Gen. 3:4-6; I Tim. 2:13-15).
- 2. The fall shows that sin and disobedience brings consequences (Gen. 3:14-19).
  - a. The serpent was cursed.
  - b. The woman was cursed.
  - c. Man and the ground were cursed.

A brief study of verses 14-19.

v. 14 – Though the serpent was a mere instrument in the temptation, he is cursed to crawl on his belly as a perpetual reminder to man of his part in the fall. Whatever may have been its beauty and posture before, it would hence forth glide on its belly and be an object of dread and loathing by all. It would “eat dust” in the sense of crawling and preying directly off the ground. Such language graphically shows his humiliating position. What happened to the serpent was a foreshadowing of the final degradation that would be inflicted upon the principal agent – Satan. Note that the serpent was cursed “MORE” than all the creatures. Sin brought about its curse upon all.

v. 15 – What is meant by “seed”? The following comments by R. Kent Hughes in his commentary on Genesis are very helpful here:

“In 250 B.C. when Jewish scholars translated the Bible into Greek, giving the world the Septuagint translation, they interpreted the word “seed” (“offspring” in the ESV) as a single individual – *he* will crush your head.” The Septuagint translators, who could not possibly have had any Christian presuppositions, understood the seed of the woman to be a future individual who would deal a deathblow to the serpent. Later rabbinic commentators saw it otherwise, but not the original Septuagint translators. Recently, Hebrew scholar Jack Collins examined every use of the word “seed” when it means offspring and found that when the word is singular (as it is here in Genesis 3:15) it always denotes a specific descendant and that when it is an individual, the pronoun will be masculine. Thus, in the broader context of Genesis, Collins argues that “it would be fair to read this as God’s threat to the snake, of an individual who will engage the snake in combat and win.”

This view is sustained by the fact that in Galatians 3:16 Paul argues, on the basis of the use of the singular “seed” in God’s promise to Abraham, that the word “seed” refers to Christ: “Now the promises were made to Abraham and to his offspring. It does not say, ‘And to offsprings,’ referring to many, but referring to one, ‘And to your offspring,’ who is Christ.” Here in Genesis 3:15 we have a prophecy of the cross when Satan would strike the heel of Christ (the suffering on the cross), but Christ would *strike* Satan’s head (through his death and glorious resurrection). All Christians (those who are in Christ) participate in the crushing through Christ, so that Paul could write in the conclusion of the book of Romans, “The God of peace will soon crush Satan under your feet” (16:20).

*to be continued*

## **News and Notes:**

Remember to check the prayer list for those with ongoing spiritual weaknesses and physical illnesses.

*“...Pray for one another...The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.”*

James 5:16