
Lesson 10 — THE SEED



*“And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her seed.
He will crush your head, and you will strike his heel.”*

[Genesis 3:15]

The divine rebellion of the “*Nachash*” led to the human rebellion of Adam and Eve, which robbed Adam of his authority and fundamentally changed the very nature of the entire universe. Beyond subjecting the whole material creation to God’s curse, the greatest consequences of the fall were both spiritual and relational. The wages of sin is death, and man had been separated from God — cut off from the way to everlasting life.

Not only had Adam suffered a broken relationship with God, but also he immediately experienced alienation from his wife. Once their eyes had been opened to see themselves in their sinful condition, both Adam and Eve responded with shame and blame.

The tragic effects of the fall cannot be underestimated. Toil, pain, struggle, sickness, sin, and death became the new reality. A cruel, supernatural master had assumed control over the earth. God’s image bearers were cast under a cloud of spiritual darkness. All hope seemed to be lost.

But God ... in the midst of man’s worst hour, made a promise that would be the first gospel announcement in all of Scripture. God promised a Seed — a human offspring — that eventually and ultimately would crush the head of the Serpent and restore the broken relationship between God and man.

The Seed of the Serpent

One of the consistent motifs that runs throughout the entire Bible is that of seed. Although this concept naturally can refer to biological reproduction and normal procreation, the Scriptures also provide a spiritual context to the “seed” language. Here in Genesis 3:15, the LORD makes a clear declaration of war and recognizes two distinct, adversarial groups. The consequence of sin and rebellion had created perpetual enmity between the offspring of Satan and the offspring of God.

But what exactly is this seed war all about?

As we will discover in following lessons, the initial condition of humanity was plagued by corruption, wickedness, and violence, beginning with Cain's murder of Abel. Evil became so widespread in the earth that God resolved to destroy mankind through a global flood. Yet even after the flood of Noah's day, rebellion quickly resurfaced in the hearts of men and evil seemed once again to prevail. Perhaps the most obvious question is why?

The Bible is clear that man's heart is deceitful and desperately wicked [*Jeremiah 17:9*], but that's not to say that mankind has acted alone. The spiritual and supernatural forces of evil are also to blame, as the devil and his angels have been working relentlessly from the very beginning to steal, kill and destroy God's people.

The Serpent knew that God had declared war and had promised to crush him through one of Adam's future descendants. Therefore, Satan's strategy was simple. Destroy all mankind and eliminate the threat.

"Whoever makes a practice of sinning is of the devil, for the devil has been sinning from the beginning. The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the works of the devil." [1 John 3:8]

- ❖ Read Matthew 13:18-19. How does Jesus describe the seed of the kingdom? How does the devil attack God's seed? How should this inform our understanding of evangelism?

- ❖ Read Matthew 13:36-43. How does Jesus explain the parable of the wheat and tares? What can we learn about Satan's strategy in this parable?

- ❖ Read John 8:31-47. How does the seed imagery emerge in this passage? How do we know that the "seed" refers to more than mere flesh and blood? What do we learn in John 8:44?

- ❖ Read 1 John 3:4-10. How does John contrast the "children of the devil" with the "children of God?" What are the characteristics of those who are of the "seed" of Satan?

The Seed of the Woman

The Biblical text universally associates reproduction and procreation with the seed of man. Biologically speaking, the man carries the “seed” that is planted in the womb, resulting in life. A father’s genetic information is copied and passed down to his son through the “Y” chromosome. The genealogies almost exclusively list the names of the fathers and sons, emphasizing the role of man’s seed in procreation and future generations.

Yet in Genesis 3:15, Moses uses a counterintuitive phrase — the “*seed of the woman.*” One must wonder why God would juxtapose the seed of the *Nachash* with the seed of the woman. After all, a woman cannot produce life independently of man, can she? That which seems impossible with man, however, is possible with God.

While Cain was cursed and exiled for murdering his own brother, God provided Eve with another son, Seth, who was appointed to begin a new family of godly offspring [Genesis 4:25-26]. In the midst of an evil, sin-cursed world, God would continue to preserve for Himself a faithful remnant of believers, even to the point of preserving one family through the flood. Soon after the flood, God would chose a man of extraordinary faith to create an entirely new people. Enter Abraham.

When God first appeared to Abraham and his wife Sarah, they were childless and well advanced in years, and yet the LORD made a promise to them that surely seemed impossible. God not only promised them a son, Isaac. God not only promised them future descendants more numerous than the stars in the sky. God not only promised them a homeland, but God also promised that One of Abraham’s offspring eternally would bless all the nations of the earth!

- ❖ Read Genesis 17:1-8. What all did God promise Abraham and for how long?

- ❖ Read Luke 1:26-37. How is the Mary’s virgin conception connected to the “seed of the woman” in Genesis 3:15 and Sarah’s conception of Isaac? What are some of the possible theological implications behind Jesus Christ not being conceived by an earthly father?

- ❖ Read Galatians 3:7-10, 16, 26-29. What do we learn about God’s seed in this passage?

The Skull-Crushing Savior

As we study the Biblical narrative, it becomes clear that Satan and his forces of evil have been attempting to extinguish God's "Seed" from the beginning. His attempts have almost proven successful on many occasions. The Serpent targeted mankind in the days of Noah prior to the flood. He nearly eliminated God's people at the hand of Pharaoh in Egypt. Consider Haman's genocidal conspiracy during the days of Esther, and King Herod's murder of all the male children in Bethlehem after Jesus was born.

The crucifixion of Jesus itself at first seemed to be Satan's final death-dealing blow to God's promised Messiah, but every time Satan has made a strategic move to stop God's plan of redemption, he later discovered that God was a hundred moves ahead of him. Satan may temporarily have "*bruised the heel*" of Jesus on the cross, but he was only playing into the hands of Almighty God and ultimately fulfilling the plan that had been ordained before the foundation of the world.

"This Jesus, delivered up according to the definite plan and foreknowledge of God, you crucified and killed by the hands of lawless men. God raised him up, loosing the pangs of death, because it was not possible for him to be held by it." [Acts 2:22-23]

"None of the rulers of this age understood this, for if they had, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory." [1 Corinthians 2:8]

The Lord Jesus is the promised "seed of the woman" who was born in the fullness of time to redeem mankind [Galatians 4:3-7] and who will return to crush the head of the Serpent.

- ❖ Read Numbers 24:17, Isaiah 63:1-6, and Habakkuk 3:11-13. What are these passages describing and how are they related? How are they connected to Genesis 3:15?

- ❖ Read Hebrews 2:14-18 and Colossians 2:9-15. How are these passages connected to the original gospel promise in Genesis 3:15? How did Jesus ultimately crush the devil?

- ❖ Read Luke 10:17-20. How should we understand our present authority in Christ?