



# First Baptist Church Selmer

SONGS OF THE SEASON • THE PROMISE •

GENESIS 3:14-15, 20-21; REVELATION 5:1-5 • 12/3/2023

## MAIN POINT

Although we celebrate the coming of Jesus on Christmas Day each year, the necessity of His coming is seen throughout the entirety of Scripture in both the Old and New Testaments.

## INTRODUCTION

As your group time begins, use this section to introduce the topic of discussion.

**What is your favorite Christmas carol?**

**What do you enjoy most about singing it?**

It wouldn't be uncommon for many carols to be on the list as you go around the room. Many Christmas carols mean much more to us than just a melody in our ears or lyrics to our minds, they have been a large part of our Christmas memories for years now.

**What makes for a great Christmas carol? The composition? The melody? The lyrics?**

Truth be told, what makes for a wonderful Christmas carol is about who it proclaims. Did you know that a Christmas carol and a Christmas song aren't synonymous? A carol is religious by nature and a song is secular. Think of it this way, all carols are songs but not all songs are carols.

You may have even mistakenly stated a Christmas song as a Christmas carol. The same goes for many other aspects of the Christmas holiday. There are traditions we hold that are religious by nature and others that are secular. We should be wise to them both and not confuse them for one another.

This month we will look at 'Songs of the Season' as we look back at the greatest gift ever given to us, Jesus Himself. Although it may not have occurred on December 25th, it is the time, each year, that Christians and others celebrate this wonderful time of year.

Let's start this month by looking back at the original promise of the Messiah as well as the necessity of the Messiah in regard to the fulfillment of God's plan of redemption.

## UNDERSTANDING

Unpack the biblical text to discover what the Scripture says or means about a particular topic.

| HAVE A VOLUNTEER READ GENESIS 3:14-15.

*14 "The Lord God said to the serpent, 'Because you have done this, cursed are you above all livestock and above all beasts of the field; on your belly you shall go, and dust you shall eat all the days of your life. 15 I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and her offspring; he shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise his heel.'" (ESV)*

**What is the promise of Genesis 3:15? What does it sound like is going to happen?**

**Who would be ultimately sent to deal a mortal blow to the serpent's head?**

Soon after the fall of Adam and Eve, God pronounced a curse on creation because of their sin. One curse would be directed towards the serpent himself. It would be a physical curse but also a spiritual one that one day would be fulfilled in someone of the lineage of Adam and Eve. God promised to send a son to Eve that would crush the head of the serpent. The serpent would strike his heel, but the son would strike the serpent's head, dealing a mortal blow. We know that the son promised to Eve would be none other than Jesus Christ, the incarnate Son of God. Though it took thousands of years and a great deal of history, God kept His promise to Adam and Eve by sending us Jesus Christ.

The statement "*he shall bruise your head*" is referred to as the protoevangelium, or 'first good news.' Essentially it is the first time the good news of the Gospel of Jesus Christ would be mentioned in all of Scripture. Shortly after sin entered, God's promise of a Savior was made known throughout creation thus revealing the path of redemption for all mankind. It is important to note, however, that the promise of Jesus came in the form of a

judgment/curse passed upon the serpent and not as a direct promise to mankind. This shows that redemption is as much of God's character as is mankind's necessity of it.

| HAVE A VOLUNTEER READ GENESIS 3:20-21.

*20 "The man called his wife's name Eve, because she was the mother of all living. 21 And the Lord God made for Adam and for his wife garments of skins and clothed them." (ESV)*

We jump ahead a few verses and see something that God provides for humanity. Although practical in some sense to receive a physical covering of animal skins, the spiritual metaphor of humanity's need for a divine covering is alluded to as well.

**What did God do for Adam and Eve in verse 21? How does this demonstrate His grace?**

**Why was a covering necessary for them?**

**Why is a 'greater' covering of sin necessary for us?**

Although the curse and ultimate expulsion from the garden were difficult, the grace and mercy of God through the provision of a covering was made known to mankind. God's holiness would require obedience, yet His grace and mercy would provide a covering. God made Adam and Eve clothing of animal skins. Their clothing reminded them that God cared for them and would provide for them despite their sin. The animal clothing was first a reminder that because of what they had done, death would now enter into the world, but secondly, a future covering would take place as well, one that would be eternal.

The Genesis account of the promise of the Messiah is vital in understanding that Jesus coming down to Earth was not an alternate plan. After sin entered, humanity would require divine intervention in order to restore a severed relationship with their Creator.

We fast forward now to the book of Revelation in which we will see that Jesus, being both man and God, was the only one that was capable of fulfilling the promise of the past as well as the future in regards to the Father's will.

| HAVE A VOLUNTEER READ REVELATION 5:1-5.

1 "Then I saw in the right hand of him who was seated on the throne a scroll written and on the back, sealed with seven seals. 2 And I saw a mighty angel proclaiming with a loud voice, 'Who is worthy to open the scroll and break its seals?' 3 And no one in heaven or on earth or under the earth was able to open the scroll or to look into it, 4 and I began to weep loudly because no one was found worthy to open the scroll or to look into it. 5 And one of the elders said to me, 'Weep no more; behold, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has conquered, so that he can open the scroll and its seven seals.'" (ESV)

### **Who are some of your favorite Bible heroes?**

### **According to Revelation 5:1-5, why aren't they worthy to open the scroll and break the seals?**

### **Why is Jesus worthy?**

The scroll of Revelation 5:1-5 symbolizes God's power and authority. It is a symbol of the covenant that God made with man. The scroll disclosed God's perfect plan (symbolized by the seven seals) of judgment and the redemption of His creation. It would be a disaster for mankind if no one was found worthy to open the scroll, which is why John cried when no one worthy was found.

In his vision, John saw different biblical heroes unable to open the scroll. Adam was not worthy because he sinned, and neither was Eve for the same reason. Abraham lied about Sarah being his sister to keep himself out of trouble and let Sarah be taken by another man. Moses struck the rock when he was told to simply speak to it. All the heroes of the Bible, even King David, were sinners who needed saving by the grace of God. The prophets could not save us, and the priests couldn't either. As Paul teaches in Romans 3:23, "All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God."

But Jesus, the promised Savior, can claim the scroll because He succeeded where all others failed. Jesus did not sin. Jesus overcame both sin and death, and He always did what pleased the Father. Therefore, the Promised One is worthy to open the scroll and reign over creation.

## **APPLICATION**

Help your group identify how the truths from the Scripture passage apply directly to their lives.

**How does the promise of Jesus' first coming demonstrate the love of God for humanity?**

**How important is it to keep our focus during this Christmas season on what Christmas is all about?**

**Why is it important for Christians to point to the fulfillment of God's promises when sharing their faith with others?**

## PRAYER

Praise God for the miracle of Jesus' birth in human history as Immanuel, "God with us." Thank the Lord for the transforming power of the gospel and for the eternal life you and all believers have received through faith in Jesus Christ. Ask God to help you recognize and take opportunities this week to share the gospel message with others.

## COMMENTARY

| GENESIS 3:14-15, 20-21

God took the initiative in reaching out to sinful humanity. This pattern—humanity sinning, then God seeking out sinners—becomes the primary theme of the rest of the Bible. Its ultimate expression is found in Jesus Christ, who came to seek and to save people alienated from God because of their sin; in Him God once again walked on the earth in search of sinners.

When Adam heard God, he was afraid. Rather than walking with God as righteous men of later generations would do, Adam hid from Him. Through the use of two direct questions God brought Adam to accountability for his sin (v. 11). God does not overlook sin, but He can be gently firm in confronting it. Adam answered neither of God's questions. Instead he sought to shift the blame for his sin first to the woman, and then to God. The woman passed the blame to the serpent and admitted that prior to eating, she was deceived (v. 13).

Though accountability began with God's confrontation of Adam, judgment began with the serpent. Because of the serpent's key role (being used of Satan) in bringing sin into the human experience, it would be permanently consigned to the position of ultimate shame, under the foot. Hostility between the first woman and the serpent would be passed on to future generations. This verse is the first foretelling of the gospel of Jesus Christ. Even though the woman had been deceived into eating the forbidden fruit, she was still held

accountable for her act. Two penalties were imposed; both struck at the heart of a woman's roles in life. More than would have been the case had sin not entered creation, bearing children would add to the sum of anguish in the universe. Marriage would also be marred; though the woman's desire would be for her husband, sin would mar God's plan for marriage and create tormenting inequality and subjugation. The latter is a description of the ravaging effect of sin on a husband-wife relationship, not a prescription for abusing one's wife. Because Adam listened to and obeyed his wife's voice in preference to what God commanded (2:17), a curse would strike at the heart of a fundamental relationship in his life as well. Adam's relationship with the ground would now be forever damaged by sin. All the days of his life he would experience painful labor as he worked to bring forth the fruit of the earth.

The new name Adam gave his wife emphasizes the woman's life-giving role that counteracts the curse of sin, which is death (v. 20). Yet the divine order calls for a reciprocity exhibited in male servant leadership and female submission, both of which are modeled in Jesus Himself. By making clothing out of skins, the Lord God graciously provided for humanity's need in a way superior to what Adam and Eve had done with fig leaves. Because of sin, people now knew good and evil experientially (v. 22). Since the gift of life was directly tied to obedience, man's sin meant that the penalty of death must be enforced.

## | REVELATION 5:1-5

In Revelation 5 we see both a book of judgment (in this instance one with seven seals held in the right hand of God) and a glorious, redemptive agent of God. But now, instead of an unidentified human figure, we learn that the exalted agent of God is none other than the crucified Jesus, the Lamb and Lion of God. This Jesus, because of His conquering obedience to the will of God, is now (being) enthroned and therefore is worthy to take the book and break the seals.