

*The First Prophecy of the Coming Savior*

Introduction

1. At Christmas we love see a nativity scene. (**Show**)<sup>1</sup> Nativity = *occasion of a person's birth*.<sup>2</sup>
  - a. There's nothing more exciting than birth of a baby, especially long-awaited birth of Jesus.
  - b. This scene just radiates peace and serenity. *Peace on earth, goodwill to men.*
2. BUT...there is another side to this scene isn't there? Jesus was born into war zone.
  - a. That's right. In Matt's account, immediately after Jesus' birth, Herod attempts to kill child.
    - i. May've been as much as 2yrs later, but the account doesn't emphasize a time lapse.
    - ii. In the flow, immediately after Jesus birth, Herod attempts to kill him. Dramatic shift.
    - iii. Revelation 12:1-5 says Satan was the one behind Herod's attempt to destroy Jesus.
    - iv. He *stood before the woman about to give birth, that he might devour her child*.<sup>3</sup>
  - b. Doesn't this change the whole image? Image of a child sleeping now becomes war zone.
    - i. Christ was born into a war to face battle w/enemy of our souls, Satan himself.
    - ii. *Entire life of Christ is one of spiritual warfare, from birth, to cross, to empty tomb*.<sup>4</sup>
3. Why does Satan seek to destroy the baby Jesus right at the outset?
  - a. Because he knows the very 1<sup>st</sup> prophecy of the coming of Christ—**Show Genesis 3:14-15**.<sup>5</sup>
    - i. Passage called the *protoevangelium* (**Show**)<sup>6</sup> by early church leaders Justin, Irenaeus.<sup>7</sup>
    - ii. The 1<sup>st</sup> hope of the good news is a battle scene in which our Savior wins the war.
    - iii. Satan sought to devour Christ at His birth because he knew this prophecy.
4. There are 3 stages to every war: declaration of war, hostility of war, victory of war.
  - a. All 3 stages are right here. Satan knew w/the birth of Christ the final stage was set.
  - b. What's bad news for Satan = good news to us. Amen?! This why 4<sup>th</sup> Advent candle = joy.
  - c. **Give title. Let's look at why this prophecy is such good news. This is Satanology**.<sup>8</sup>

**I. The Declaration of War, v. 14: God declared war on Satan.**

**A. V. 14 is a Declaration of War**

1. This is a curse scene. To be cursed in the Bible meant that God was your foe/enemy.
  - a. The two key words in Genesis are *blessing & cursing*. God *blessed* Adam/Eve.
    - i. To be blessed meant to be in relationship with God & enjoy fruitfulness.
    - ii. It meant to share in His friendship, goodness, bounty & eternal inheritance.
  - b. *Cursed* = *to impose a barrier on, to be separated* from God's blessing.
    - i. It meant to be destined for punishment, judgment & eternal destruction.
    - ii. Satan had sought to ruin God's blessing; he would now receive God's curse.
2. This is graphically portrayed by comparing **THE TEMPTATION VS. THE CURSE**.

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.sermoncentral.com/church-media-preaching-sermons/powerpoint-template-backgrounds/christmas-nativity-609-detail?ref=MediaSerps>. Accessed 12/14/17.

<sup>2</sup> Soanes, C., & Stevenson, A. (Eds.). (2004). *Concise Oxford English dictionary* (11th ed.). Oxford: Oxford Univ. Press.

<sup>3</sup> *The Holy Bible: English Standard Version*. (2016). (Re 12:4). Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles.

<sup>4</sup> *In the Lord's Strength: Ephesians 6:10-13*. <http://slideplayer.com/slide/4248537/>. Slide 11. Accessed 12/14/17.

<sup>5</sup> *Worship As Warfare*. <http://slideplayer.com/slide/1467927/>. Slide 27. Accessed 12/14/17.

<sup>6</sup> Proto-Evangelium = 1<sup>st</sup> gospel. [http://images.slideplayer.com/36/10633695/slides/slide\\_17.jpg](http://images.slideplayer.com/36/10633695/slides/slide_17.jpg). Accessed 12/14/17.

<sup>7</sup> Wenham, G. J. (2002). *Vol. 1: Word Biblical Commentary : Genesis 1-15*. Word Biblical Commentary (80). Dallas: Word, Incorporated.

<sup>8</sup> Means "the study of Satan." It is the branch of Christian doctrine that studies Satan.

- a. **More crafty, v. 1; More cursed** Play on words that sound similar → →
  - i. **Crafty** = עָרוּם [‘aruwm /aw·room/]; **Cursed** = אָרַר [‘arar /aw·rar/]
  - ii. Satan was more deceitful; he would be more cursed.
- b. **Elevated over, v. 13b; Crawl beneath** (He put himself over the humans, so crawl.)
- c. **Eat the fruit, v. 5; Eat the dust**
  - i. Eating dust was used in ancient writings to describe the lowest form of life.
  - ii. Satan sought to exalt Adam/Eve to highest position; he would get lowest.
- d. **You will not die, v. 4; Total defeat**
  - i. *Eating the dust* is an army term in the Bible for inflicting total defeat.<sup>9</sup>
  - ii. Even today “You’re going to eat my dust” = “I’ll defeat you totally.”
- e. Now look at comparison. At each point God reversed on Satan what he did.
- f. God became unrelenting foe of our adversary. And all God’s people said? Amen!

## II. **The Hostility of War, v. 15a: Satan is at war with us.**

### A. **Meaning of Enmity** (*Enmity = to be an adversary or enemy*)

- 1. Iterative tense = repeated, long-lasting war that will continue thru history.
- 2. Humans had joined Satan in his war; now he would be at war w/them.

### B. **Spiritual Warfare with Satan** (This is the 1<sup>st</sup> teaching on Spiritual Warfare in Bible.)

- 1. **War between Satan and humans, v. 15a. (This is the 1<sup>st</sup> level of spiritual warfare.)**
  - a. We’re born with his sinful nature, John 8:44. Born under His control, 1 John 5:19.
  - b. He influences us to be disobedient, Ephesians 2:3.
- 2. **War between nonbelievers and believers, v. 15b. (This is 2<sup>nd</sup> level of spiritual war.)**
  - a. Satan’s *offspring* would be at war with the woman’s *offspring*.
    - i. Satan’s offspring includes the demonic world as well as all nonbelievers.
    - ii. Woman’s offspring represented those who turned fr. sin & put trust in God.
  - b. The 1<sup>st</sup> example of this battle came from Eve’s own sons, Cain and Abel.
    - i. Abel is listed in Heb. 11 as 1<sup>st</sup> man who turned fr. sin believed God’s promise.
    - ii. Cain became the 1<sup>st</sup> murderer who killed his righteous brother. Why?
    - iii. 1 John 3:12 says Cain *belonged to the evil one and murdered his brother*.
  - c. Cain = the nonbelieving offspring of Satan; Abel = believing offspring of woman.
  - d. We are either one or the other—in the kingdom of darkness or God’s dear son.<sup>10</sup>
  - e. *Christians in areas with severe religious restrictions pay a heavy price for their faith. Beatings, physical torture, confinement, isolation, rape, severe punishment, imprisonment, slavery, discrimination in education and employment, and even death are just a few examples of the persecution they experience on a daily basis. According to the US Department of State, Christians in more than 60 countries face persecution from their governments or surrounding neighbors simply because of their belief in Jesus Christ. Each month 322 killed for their faith.*<sup>11</sup>

<sup>9</sup> cf. Ps. 72:9; Isa. 49:23; 65:25; Mic. 7:17

<sup>10</sup> **Colossians 1:13. We must make a choice to become children of God by trusting in Christ.**

<sup>11</sup> “What Is Christian Persecution?” <https://www.opendoorsusa.org/christian-persecution/>. Accessed 12/15/17.

3. **War between nature and humans, v. 14. (This is the 3<sup>rd</sup> level of spiritual warfare.)**
  - a. Cursed serpent as a representative of creatures meant chaos would enter nature.
  - b. This is the reason for hurricanes, tornadoes, tsunamis, cancer, earthquakes, etc.
  - c. During the Tsunami in Indonesia 7yrs ago, people wanted know why it happened?
    - i. Pastor John Piper said it happened because of “my” sin. Our sin caused it.
    - ii. When hurricane Katrina destroyed N.O., emails said because greater sinners.
    - iii. No, New Orleans was hit because of the greatness of all of our sins.
    - iv. Because humans rebelled w/Satan, nature has rebelled against us.
    - v. Since we are in rebellion against God, God’s world is in rebellion against us.
  - d. How is this good news? Because there is a 3<sup>rd</sup> stage to this war. Hallelujah!

### **III. The Victory of War, v. 15b: *Christ wins the war with Satan.***

#### **A. Who Is This?**

1. **Septuagint** (Greek translation of O.T.) was translated by Jewish scholars in 250 BC.
  - a. Translated word *offspring*, used a Grk. neuter noun. Pronoun after should be “it.”
  - b. Instead the Jewish translators used masculine pronoun “he” against grammar.
  - c. 250 yrs. B.C. the Jews were clearly saying this referred to the coming of Christ.
2. The New Testament interprets it this way. Show Romans 16:20 referring to this.<sup>12</sup>

#### **B. How Does Christ Do It?**

1. V. 15c is describing a simultaneous action. They both happen at the same time.
  - a. To *strike someone’s heel* is painful but not fatal.
  - b. To *crush someone’s head* is not only painful, but completely fatal.
2. When did Satan inflict painful wound on Christ but be totally defeated at same time?
  - a. At the cross. Christ suffered in agony, but rose again from the dead.
  - b. But Christ took the power of death fr. Satan by dying for sin & rising for et. life.<sup>13</sup>

#### **Conclusion: Two Amazing Points to See & Rejoice In**

1. **When will this curse be lifted from the serpent?**
  - a. Never. No hope for Satan/demons. This declaration of war is forever. **Isaiah 65:25.**
  - b. When Jesus comes again the curse’ll be removed fr. all creation, except snakes
2. **There’s no similar curse uttered against the man and the woman. Did you see that?**
  - a. The ground is cursed, v. 17 and the serpent is cursed, v. 14, but not the people.
  - b. Why is this? Because w/the coming of Christ there is hope the curse’ll be lifted.
  - c. This is the answer to why there is a Hell. One of the struggles that people have.
    - i. Jesus said *the eternal fire was prepared for the devil & his angels*, Matt. 25:41.
    - ii. So God never intended people to be in Hell. Only Satan was cursed forever.
  - b. CS Lewis was right when he said God sends no one to Hell, send themselves.
  - c. By receiving God’s salvation in JC we exchange the eternal curse for et. life.

<sup>12</sup> [http://images.slideplayer.com/47/11662979/slides/slide\\_20.jpg](http://images.slideplayer.com/47/11662979/slides/slide_20.jpg). Accessed 12/15/17.

<sup>13</sup> John 12:31-32: ***Now is the time for judgment on this world; now the prince of this world will be driven out.***