

Text: Genesis 3:8-15

"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." (Genesis 3:15).

Grace, mercy, and peace to you from God our Father and from our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Amen.

Adam and Eve were created in God's image. **"Then God said, 'Let us make man in our image, after our likeness...So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him, male and female he created them.' (Genesis 1:26a-27).** Having been created in God's image He gave them every good thing, making sure all their needs were met. He even made sure that their spiritual needs were taken care of by walking and speaking His Word to with them. Then Satan came along in the form of a serpent and tempted Adam and Eve. Eve believed the lie and gave into temptation and ate of the Tree that God commanded her not to, and then she gave the fruit to Adam and the first man ate as well. With those first bites, sin entered the world, cursing life and mankind to death and paving the way for future generations to be born into original sin.

This original first sin allowed for Adam and Eve to know that they were naked. And they knew that being naked before God shamed them. So they went and made clothing out of leaves and vines and they covered their nakedness, trying to hide what they had done. They felt ashamed, not so much because they were naked, but rather because they had disobeyed their Creator. And after clothing themselves with leaves they hid. Guess they figured that if God couldn't see the sin they had committed than maybe it would be ok.

But God saw and He asked our First Parents about what had happened. Eve blamed the serpent and Adam blamed his wife Eve. **"It wasn't my fault Lord, the devil made me do it."** With that, God turned to the serpent and spoke, **"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. 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."** God spoke these words of promise, words that would be fulfilled on the cross.

What a story! We first hear about it in our Sunday school classes. We remember it in Vacation Bible School. The pastor goes through it during confirmation class. We even read it sometimes when we do our daily devotions. Each time we are reminded of how sin entered the world and God's response to it. And in each telling, have we ever thought about what exactly God's response means, and why?

Some scholars believe that before the fall, Lucifer was the most beautiful of all of God's creations. And now Jesus says to the serpentine devil, **"You are the most cursed of all things. You are not to above anything or anyone but rather you are brought low to the ground. So low that all you'll ever eat is dust."** Pride comes before the fall and Satan experienced both in short order. His pride caused his fall from grace, from being in the presence of God. And from the moment that he and his armies were defeated in heaven and cast out (Revelation 12), the Father of Lies made it his earthly mission to take as many people as he could to hell with him.

So when Adam and Eve sinned, Satan danced his dance of victory, his pride screaming from the rooftops, "Ha God! I did it. I have killed your creation. Everything dies now because of me and there is nothing you can do to stop it. I've won!" What a fool the devil is because He forgot about the promise. **"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."** What do you mean God, he shall bruise my head and I shall bruise his heel? Who? Send anybody you want and I'll destroy them. I'll kill them just like the rest."

So God responds to the devil...with LIFE! He gives the promise that not only will the offspring of Eve come, but that when He does, Satan and death will be defeated forever. God would not send just anyone but rather He'd send His only begotten Son, to come and to taste the kiss of death; and to overcome death with Life Himself. Jesus Christ had His heel bruised because Satan is beneath all things. It was a severe bruising, physically and emotionally. Yet in every hammer blow, every drop of blood, God stomped His righteous foot upon the head of the serpent and crushed it, killing death and the Satan with one blow.

But that wasn't enough. Dying was only part, for Satan tried to seal the deal with the sealing of the tomb, "Ha! His cold dead body lays in the grave. What are you going to do about that God?" For three days the devil and his demons had the party of parties. The worse of the worse was there. Only to find out on day three, that the party was over, and Satan had lost everything and would know once and for all, the pain of the curse he placed on humanity in the beginning.

This is usually, to some extent, where our Sunday school, Vacation Bible School, and confirmation classes leave off. But it's not the end of the story, nor is it just about what we hear in our text this morning.

Rather, the story includes two words that are not even mentioned in the text. Those two words are: **"For You"**. Everything in the Bible is written for you. It's God's Word, for you. It shows you not only what He did and how He did it but also why He did it. **He did it, for you.** God tells you the story of the fall of mankind in Genesis because you were not physically there. He wants you to know, **"This is why there is sin in the world. You are a sinner because of this. And I sent my Son, in the flesh, for you, to save you through His death on the cross."**

You are sinners because of original sin. Like Adam and Eve, you try to cover your sin with darkness, reason, clothing, etc. And just like how God saw what your First Parents did, He sees what you do too! He knows your every thought, word, and deed. He knows that you listen to the devil even if you don't know that you do or more often than you admit.

He also knows that the curse in the Garden would also be upon you and your children and all generations everywhere. God's Word of promise is for you too, because of the curse. Jesus came to die for you, to crush the serpents head. He came to die in your stead, to be laid in a cold empty tomb, and to raise again on the third day, for you.

But He doesn't stop there. God wants to dwell with you too, just as He did with Adam and Eve before the Fall. Because He does, He lovingly gives you His church. In His Holy House, He gives you the Scripture to hear His voice. He gives you baptism to wear His garment. He gives you Holy Communion, so that you can feel His body and blood on your lips, so that all your sins will be forgiven. He gives you His music to sing with all the Saints. And He gives you the liturgy so that you may experience a little bit of what heaven will be like, for you. God is with you, just as He promised, from womb to heaven.

So come, every chance you get and sit at the feet of Jesus. Read and listen to His story for you again. Sit among Him with fellow brothers and sisters in Christ and take comfort in your struggles and victories together, knowing that you are only a stranger here on earth, that your real home, your eternal home is in heaven. Drink from His cup, taste His love for you in fellowship with one another. Do so with joyful hearts, joyfully Lutherans, knowing that He does it all, for you. Amen.

Now may the peace of God which surpasses all understanding keep your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus. Amen.

