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**THE HOPE**

**Story:** Jesus foretold

**Scriptures to study:** Genesis 3:15, Isaiah 53:5

This discussion is based on the Friday Morning Men’s Fellowship study “Genesis”, available at <https://leadmin.org/genesis>.

Many view the Bible as two separate major narratives. The Old Testament is where man falls into sin, and has a long series of struggles and bouts of disobedience, resulting in punishment after punishment from God. Then there’s the New Testament, where Jesus comes, dies for our sins, and sets things straight again for the future. But the coming of Jesus is actually foretold much, much earlier than most people realize. That future hope, in fact, is mentioned just after Adam and Eve sin for the first time.

**The offspring that brings a future hope.** When God curses the serpent in Genesis 3:14-15, he mentions that He will “put enmity between you and the woman and between your offspring and her offspring…” This is the cosmic struggle that will continue, between man and his propensity to disobey God. Yet Genesis 3:15 tells us that, on one distant day, the woman’s offspring “shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise his heel.” The serpent is told, in the future you’ll do a little damage to one of the woman’s descendants. But that Person is going to crush you, to defeat you once and for all. There will come a day when the serpent is no more, and we won’t have to battle against evil, because someone is going to finish that fight for good. What a hope!

**Protoevangelium.** Genesis 3:15 is sometimes called “the first gospel”, or by another theological term, *protoevangelium.* The descendent mentioned is Jesus. He will indeed be “bruised for our iniquities” (Isaiah 53:5). And notice the verse talks about the *woman’s* seed—Jesus will be born of a virgin (Isaiah 7:14). This is an oddly worded verse, until you put it into context. *Enmity* is the feeling of being oppressed, a hostility between people. And that’s what sin just did to Adam and Eve in Genesis 3. They’re going to be under the weight and punishment of sin. Until, God says, Someone will come a long and blot it out for good.

**A change in perspective.** This view of Genesis 3:15 changes our thought process when it comes to the Bible. These are not two different stories, dividing pre-Jesus and with-Jesus. Rather, the entire Bible is a complete account of God’s creation, our disobedience, and God teaching us about Himself as He restores us to a relationship with Him. First, though, God will set a standard (the Law), and then He will let us understand that need for Christ through the sacrifices and the temple, and the prophets and kings. When we understand that the story of Christ begins in Genesis 3, we will gain insight into God’s great plan for redemption. And as we read through the Old Testament, we already have hope in a Savior that is to come.



Use one of these to get the group talking about today’s topic:

* If you have children, what was it like when your first child was born? Do you remember what you felt in the moment? How did the birth affect you?
* Have you ever seen a movie with a big twist for an ending? What did you think when the surprise was revealed? Did you go back and watch the movie again and notice anything different?
* What are you looking forward to for the remainder of this year?



Go in-depth with these questions. Based on your available time, choose 3-4 that you believe are most thought-provoking:

* Read Genesis 3:15. What clues does this verse hold that God is foretelling a future event?
* Why does Jesus give us hope in life and leadership? What changes as a result of knowing Jesus?
* Do you ever feel crushed or oppressed by negatives happening in your own family or close to you? How do you react to these things?
* If Jesus’ coming is foretold in Genesis 3:15, what do you believe is the purpose of the Old Testament, with all of its stories, rules and laws? What is God teaching us through all of these words?
* Is there a real battle between man and satan/sin? Do you feel you are at war, spiritually? Why or why not?
* How does knowing that Jesus brings hope change your life or leadership? What do you do or think differently as a result?
* What is your view of the future? Do you look to it with hope, or with dread? Why do you feel this way?



* Does everyone in your immediate family—your wife, sons, daughters—know Jesus? If not, make an effort this week to find an opening and share the Gospel with them.
* What about those at work and those within your sphere of influence? Ask God to give you the opportunity to share the hope of Christ with them in the coming days.



• Commentary on Genesis 3: <https://www.blueletterbible.org/Comm/mhc/Gen/Gen_003.cfm>

• What does Genesis 3 mean? <https://www.bibleref.com/Genesis/2/Genesis-chapter-2.html>

• *Study Guide for Genesis 3* by Chuck Smith: <https://www.blueletterbible.org/Comm/smith_chuck/StudyGuides_Genesis/Genesis.cfm>

• *The Virgin Birth* by Moody Bible Institute: <https://www.moodybible.org/beliefs/virgin-birth/>

• Precept outline and commentary on Genesis 3: <https://www.preceptaustin.org/genesis-3-commentary>

• *Genesis 1-11: Creation, Sin, and the Nature of God* by John MacArthur: <https://churchsource.com/products/genesis-1-to-11-creation-sin-and-the-nature-of-god>

• *Exalting Jesus in Genesis* by Phillip Bethancourt: <https://www.amazon.com/Exalting-Genesis-Christ-Centered-Exposition-Commentary/dp/0805496556/>

• *Genesis: A 12 Week Study* by Mitchell M. Kim: <https://www.amazon.com/Genesis-12-Week-Study-Knowing-Bible/dp/1433535017>

• *BibleProject Guides: Book of Genesis:* <https://bibleproject.com/guides/book-of-genesis/>

**More ways to apply “The Hope” to your life and leadership:**

• Take a Post-It and write a list of one positive thing you can do each day for the person(s) around you. Consider how you might be a more hopeful and optimistic influence.

• Do an online Bible study about mentions of Jesus in the Old Testament. What does the Bible say and teach about the coming messiah?

• God had a far-reaching and detailed plan for the redemption of man. Consider your plan to share your faith with your immediate family and close associates. Write down who you can begin praying for and openings you have in your work and life to connect with others and share your faith. If you don’t plan to share your faith with others, you probably won’t.

• Are you a good planner in your leadership? Consider how you might plan better in your family, workplace, marriage, community, and other areas. Do you have future goals and designs for various areas of life and work that will help you and others progress and grow?

• Consider how your business or company might be a Gospel influence with your employees, customers or in your community.

• Get involved in an evangelism or outreach opportunity at your local church.