

The Seed of Promise

Or . . . How Adam and Eve's rebellion set the stage for that first Christmas pageant

Genesis 3*

Today we begin a series that traces God's plan of redemption throughout history, providing us with a brief glimpse of God's grace fulfilled in the Messiah. Our society views Christmas as an annual celebration filled with food, family, and gifts. Many Christians recognize it as the day when God began implementing his plan for our salvation. They are both wrong. In reality, Christmas is a continuation of God's redemptive plan—a plan that was in process at the very beginning of time and can be traced throughout the entire Bible.

Understanding Genesis is foundational for appreciating the message of Christmas. If we do not know why it is that Jesus had to come, we cannot adequately appreciate what he has accomplished in his coming; nor can we adequately appreciate the plight which we are in without him. Starting in Genesis chapter 3 puts everything in perspective.

- We have a problem (8-13)

- We live with the consequences (14-19)

- God provides the solution (15, 20-24)

*These notes are prayerfully prepared to aid, not replace, your personal study of God's word.

The Great Divide

Michael Shermer, publisher of *Skeptic* magazine and author of *The Science of Good and Evil*, writes:

I once had the opportunity to ask Thomas Keneally, author of *Schindler's List*, what he thought was the difference between Oskar Schindler, rescuer of Jews and hero of his story, and Amon Goeth, the Nazi commandant of the Plaszow concentration camp. His answer was revealing. Not much, he said. Had there been no war, Mr. Schindler and Mr. Goeth might have been drinking buddies and business partners, morally obtuse, perhaps, but relatively harmless. What a difference a war makes, especially to the moral choices that lead to good and evil.

Shermer goes on to quote Russian writer Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn: "If only there were evil people somewhere insidiously committing evil deeds, and it were necessary only to separate them from the rest of us and destroy them. But the line dividing good and evil cuts through the heart of every human being. And who is willing to destroy a piece of his own heart?"

Jerry De Luca, Montreal West, Quebec, Canada; source: Michael Shermer, "Something Evil Comes This Way," www.skeptic.com (3-18-04)