

Eve, the Lady of Hope

11/26/2023

(Gen. 3:1-20 ESV)

Now the serpent was more crafty than any other beast of the field that the LORD God had made. He said to the woman, "Did God actually say, 'You shall not eat of any tree in the garden'?"

And the woman said to the serpent, "We may eat of the fruit of the trees in the garden, but God said, 'You shall not eat of the fruit of the tree that is in the midst of the garden, neither shall you touch it, lest you die.'"

But the serpent said to the woman, "You will not surely die. For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil."

So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate, and she also gave some to her husband who was with her, and he ate. Then the eyes of both were opened, and they knew that they were naked. And they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves loincloths. And they heard the sound of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God among the trees of the garden.

But the LORD God called to the man and said to him, "Where are you?"

And he said, "I heard the sound of you in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked, and I hid myself."

He said, "Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten of the tree of which I commanded you not to eat?"

The man said, "The woman whom you gave to be with me, she gave me fruit of the tree, and I ate."

Then the LORD God said to the woman, "What is this that you have done?"

The woman said, "The serpent deceived me, and I ate."

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. 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."

To the woman he said, "I will surely multiply your pain in childbearing; in pain you shall bring forth children. Your desire shall be contrary to your husband, but he shall rule over you."

And to Adam he said, "Because you have listened to the voice of your wife and have eaten of the tree of which I commanded you, 'You shall not eat of it,' cursed is the ground because of you; in pain you shall eat of it all the days of your life; thorns and thistles it shall bring forth for you; and you shall eat the plants of the field. By the sweat of your face you shall eat bread, till you return to the ground, for out of it you were taken; for you are dust, and to dust you shall return."

The man called his wife's name Eve, because she was the mother of all living.

Scripture 2: (Lk. 3:23-38 ESV)

Jesus, when he began his ministry, was about thirty years of age, being the son (as was supposed) of Joseph, the son of Heli, the son of Matthat, the son of Levi, the son of Melchi, the son of Jannai, the son of Joseph, the son of Mattathias, the son of Amos, the son of Nahum, the son of Esli, the son of Naggai, the son of Maath, the son of Mattathias, the son of Semein, the son of Josech, the son of Joda, the son of Joanan, the son of Rhesa, the son of Zerubbabel, the son of Shealtiel, the son of Neri, the son of Melchi, the son of Addi, the son of Cosam, the son of Elmadam, the son of Er, the son of Joshua, the son of Eliezer, the son of Jorim, the son of Matthat, the son of Levi, the son of Simeon, the son of Judah, the son of Joseph, the son of Jonam, the son of Eliakim, the son of Melea, the son of Menna, the son of Mattatha, the son of Nathan, the son of David, the son of Jesse, the son of Obed, the son of Boaz, the son of Sala, the son of Nahshon, the son of Amminadab, the son of Admin, the son of Arni, the son of Hezron, the son of Perez, the son of Judah, the son of Jacob, the son of Isaac, the son of Abraham, the son of Terah, the son of Nahor, the son of Serug, the son of Reu, the son of Peleg, the son of Eber, the son of Shelah, the son of Cainan, the son of Arphaxad, the son of Shem, the son of Noah, the son of Lamech, the son of Methuselah, the son of Enoch, the son of Jared, the son of Mahalaleel, the son of Cainan, the son of Enos, the son of Seth, the son of Adam, the son of God.

Sermon:

Advent is a very special season of the church year. Although there is no clear and direct Biblical warrant for its observation it remains helpful for us in our devotional lives for our spiritual growth. Advent is a special season of preparation for Christians, not just as the remembrance and celebration of our Savior's birth {whenever He may have actually been born; whatever date or year, because it is certain that Jesus was not born on December 25th in a "Year 0" or "Year 1" AD (*Anno Domini*, Year of the Lord) and it is not something directly stated in Scripture. What we call Christmas and 1 AD are interpretative calculations based upon external historical sources.} but also as we prepare for Christ's return. During this season we celebrate and remember the wonderful works of God which He has done throughout redemptive history leading up to the first Advent {appearance} of Jesus, the incarnation of God the Son: His entrance into time and space and His assumption of our human nature (Phil 2:5-11); and we prepare for His second Advent, His coming in Glory with judgment, wrath, and mercy culminating in the restoration or renewal of all things.

Each year it is common for many Pastors {and it has been my practice} to do a limited, seasonal Sermon series, as a way to focus us upon some particular aspect of redemptive history and its anticipation of our Savior's coming. Every week we connect it to the different Christian responses of hope, peace, love, joy, and faith {coming as fruits of the Holy Spirit with (Gal 5:22-23): love, joy, peace, patience/hope, kindness, goodness, faithfulness/obedience, gentleness, self-control} which come from our own anticipation and the prompting of the Holy Spirit within us.

Two years ago, we spent the Advent Season looking ahead, focusing upon Christ's return; His Second Advent.

Last year, we focused upon the names and titles of the Messiah as given in Isaiah, chapter nine: Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

This year, our emphasis will be upon certain members of God's people who were exemplars of these spiritual fruits. The most important contribution of these women towards our redemption is not limited to their place within the genealogy of Jesus, but are also found in their lived example within church history. Who they were, and the things which they did on account of their faith remain important for God's people to remember, understand, appreciate, and to learn from their example.

This Advent, the first Lady whom we shall consider is Eve, the greatest grandmother of us all; the first mother.

I expect that we are all familiar with the narrative of mankind's fall from grace in the Garden of Eden but, while there is a lot going on within this passage, today, we will only focus upon the latter portion following Adam and Eve's sin: the LORD's promising of curses and their aftermath.

After being deceived by the serpent and after them choosing to sin, rather than to trust their Creator's wisdom, goodness, and continuing provision, when the LORD came down to visit them in His holy Garden. Adam and Eve sought to hide from his presence but they could not hide from the only Omnipotent, Omniscient, and Omnipresent God. God's call to Adam of "Where are you?" was not due to any lack of knowledge on God's part.

- The LORD already knew precisely where Adam and Eve were.
- He already knew precisely what they had done.
- Furthermore, He already knew how they had been deceived and were convinced by the serpent to disobey His commandment.

God's questions were rhetorical, but because He is merciful and forgiving, they were also an invitation to confession and repentance. But sadly, that was not the response He got. Instead of being repentant, Adam was accusatory towards God and he blamed Eve, *"The woman whom **you** gave to be with me..."* for his sin. Eve likewise blamed the serpent for deceiving her, while the serpent was not even afforded an opportunity to make excuses.

Nobody in this story was willing to accept responsibility for their own sins, choosing to blame everyone else for their own failures. Unfortunately, we have still not learned this lesson or taken it fully to heart, but after the Holy Spirit regenerates us, we do become better at being repentant and admitting our sins; better, but not perfect.

Now back to the Garden. The prohibition of their Creator had been violated, despite His warning of promised consequence. God's sovereign command was ignored. The King of the Universe had been disobeyed. Justice must be done and judgment had to be rendered because the LORD's nature required it. Yet we also get to see God's righteous and graceful character on display here, at the very beginning of Man's damaged relationship with God, in His promise of hope for the future restoration of our relationship.

Things were truly hopeless, from Adam and Eve's perspective, when the LORD turned towards these three creatures to pronounce His sentence against them. They had committed cosmic treason, for which the stated penalty was death. This should have been the end of the story for all three of them, right then and there, but instead, God issued a "stay of execution" and gave them His grace.

Anything other than death or annihilation would be merciful. Even the worst curse imaginable to the mind of Man, would be the greatest gift of grace and deserving of thanks. Any curse which the LORD might pronounce, no matter how terrible it seems to us, was an act of divine mercy compared to the alternative.

"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." The snake was cursed to become the lowest of the low, hated and feared by all creation. It was forced to crawl, kept forever in a position of abasement before His Creator. The serpent would now only be permitted to eat dust. The Hebrew word used here is *afar*, which plainly means dry earth, dirt, and dust. Now, the serpent would devour and consume dust; bringing it into himself and uniting it unto himself, but only so long as the LORD would allow it and no longer. One day, the serpent's time would be ended and eventually his reign over the dust would cease.

But that was not all because the serpent's cursing was not complete. God next said, *"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."* Therefore the woman and the serpent would also hate one another. They would be forever at odds against each other, and their mutual offspring would continue to perpetuate and participate in this feud. However, the use of "offspring" here seems strange. Other translations may use the word "seed" because ordinarily, the intended sense and meaning usually is regarding their descendants, their children, or most particularly their heir.

When the LORD established His covenant with Abraham in Genesis 17, He said, *"And I will establish my covenant between me and you and your offspring after you throughout their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be God to you and to your offspring after you."* (Gen. 17:7 ESV), on the one hand speaking about Isaac and Jacob and all of his descendants, but He was also speaking about the singular offspring and heir, Jesus Christ, upon the other (Gal 3:16). Regarding this woman's offspring, it is quite clear here that the LORD has one singular, particular offspring in mind when God says, *"...he shall bruise your head..."*. Some theologians have taken this idea and applied it as Eve's hope for Cain, or Abel, or finally Seth; that they would be this "offspring"

to bruise the serpent's head, but if it was, then it was an unrealized, false hope. Thus a greater hope and expectation was revealed for her, through the further revelation of Scripture which shows the One who is Eve's true offspring; her ultimate heir, Jesus, the son of Mary.

Now remember that during that period {the time of Moses} women did not ordinarily own valuable property. It was typically held in trust for them by a male relative, but Israelite women actually were eligible to inherit (Numbers 27 and 36; the daughters of Zelophehad) and then their sons would inherit from them {this is why they daughters of Zelophehad were commanded to marry within their tribe and clan, to preserve familial property rights in inheritance}. Such sons would inherit from both their father and their mother, but according to common convention they might only be said to inherit from their father, since he would have previously had control or stewardship of their mother's property.

- Who alone, among all humanity since Adam, had no human father from whom he could possibly inherit everything that he had to pass onto the next generation {even children abandoned by their fathers could still potentially have a right to inherit}?
- Who alone had no natural claim to Adam's inheritance, a sinful human nature?
- Who alone could truly be declared the “offspring” of Eve and be her true heir?

Only Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Mary. He is the God-man, born of a virgin woman and conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit, without the aid or participation of any man. So just as He is Abraham's ultimate heir, He is also Eve's ultimate heir. That is why Luke's genealogy of Jesus is so important for us and also why it is different than Matthew's (Matthew 1:1-17).

- Is there tension between the two? Yes.
- Do they contradict one another? No.

But how do we resolve them both? Both can actually be true, even though they are different. Genealogies in the ancient world were maintained very differently from our modern genealogies, so much so that neither the Daughters of the American Revolution nor the Mayflower Society would be likely to accept them as valid. Genealogies, especially royal genealogies, served to tell a story by linking a person to notables from the past {Jehu, King of Israel, was labeled as the “son of Omri” by Assyrian documents despite being the person who exterminated Omri's line and deposed them from the throne¹. Jehu was thereby considered a “son” in this regard because he replaced Omri's dynasty; as the heir or successor to the throne, not by natural means.} as a justification for their authority, through past relationships rather than natural descent.

When we consider Matthew's list, we find that it is very neat and tidy, as it is “conveniently” divided into a series of three groups of fourteen (Abraham to David, David to the Exile, Exile to Jesus; Matt 1:17). This suggests that it is a genealogy written in this ancient historian mindset, demonstrating the transfer of authority, responsibility, and the rights of lawful inheritance from Abraham to Jesus {as Abraham's offspring/seed/heir per Paul} and making this the “legal”, “Regal” genealogy of Jesus. This marks Him as the son of David and rightful heir to David's throne as the Jewish Messiah, which suits the general motivations and emphases of Matthew's Gospel.

When we consider Luke's list, we find the emphasis is on Jesus's relationship to the first man, Adam, both justifying Jesus as the Son of God and, by way of juxtaposition, the “second {or last; 1 Cor 15:45} Adam”, demonstrating Jesus's authority as the federal head for all of God's Elect. Concerning the different names and

1 The Black Obelisk of Shalmaneser III; British Museum in London

additional generations listed here, this is probably more of a “natural” genealogy, based upon contemporary Temple records {now lost, ever since the Temple's destruction in 70 AD} researched by Luke {to whom they would have been available}, and may also include examples of un-noted levirate relationships {where an uncle would father a son to carry on his brother's line (Deut 25)} or adoption {as Abraham considered Eliezer of Damascus (Gen 15:2), as Jacob claimed the sons of Joseph (Gen 48:5), and as was also a common contemporary practice by the Romans (as Julius Caesar had adopted his nephew Octavian, who followed him as Augustus Caesar)}.

Alternatively, it has been popularly suggested that Matthew's list was Joseph's genealogy (and thus still Jesus' legal ancestry) while Luke traced Mary's {a thesis based largely upon Luke's remark, “*being the son (as was supposed) of Joseph*”} (thereby enhancing the Davidic connection through two lines of descent, Solomon and Nathan). However, while that might explain the differences in the lineage between Zerubbabel and Jesus, that does not explain any of the differences prior to Shealtiel {Matthew and Luke list different fathers for Shealtiel and his predecessors going back to David, through his son Nathan (1 Chron3:5) according to Luke instead of Solomon} unless he was a relative that was adopted as {Judah's exiled king} Jeconiah's heir, on account of the LORD's curse given through prophet Jeremiah “*Is this man Coniah a despised, broken pot, a vessel no one cares for? Why are he and his children hurled and cast into a land that they do not know? O land, land, land, hear the word of the LORD! Thus says the LORD: "Write this man down as childless, a man who shall not succeed in his days, for none of his offspring shall succeed in sitting on the throne of David and ruling again in Judah."*” (Jer. 22:28-30 ESV), which then makes Luke's list both a continuation of Jesus natural ancestry back through King David to Adam and a “legal” ancestry.

Regardless, both Matthew's and Luke's lists together establish Jesus as the heir of King David, of Abraham, and of Adam. Jesus is the inheritor of all God's covenant promises: an eternal throne, a land and a people, Sonship to the LORD God Almighty but also, along with those, as the virgin's son, He is Eve's offspring and heir.

Now back in the Garden, while in the midst of cursing the serpent, God made him a promise about Eve's singular, male heir, “*...he shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise his heel.*”. First, this was a promise of God's judgment and wrath upon the serpent, Satan, while secondly, it was also a promise of hope for Eve and the Elect. Please notice that this promise does not describe a conflict between Jesus Christ and an Antichrist at the end of time. This promise describes the conflict between Christ and the enemy of God, the arch-enemy of humanity: the serpent, Satan (Rev 12:9), not “Satan's son”; the conflict which would be and was engaged upon on that Roman cross.

One day, Eve's son would do battle against the serpent and He would emerge in triumph; victorious against their ancient foe. However, before we consider that battle, we must examine God's curses upon Eve and Adam to understand their implications upon it.

After cursing the serpent, the LORD next turned His attention to Eve saying, “*I will surely multiply your pain in childbearing; in pain you shall bring forth children. Your desire shall be contrary to your husband, but he shall rule over you.*”. So yes, all of you women and mothers, you may fairly blame Eve for your uniquely feminine, physical travails because they are a consequence of her and Adam's sin. However, in the midst of pronouncing this curse the LORD also made Eve a beautiful promise to build up her hope for the future.

Despite the promise of pain, the LORD also promised her children. He promised her hope for the future. Therefore, every woman born since, shares in her same hope; albeit not necessarily as a promise for children of our own, but a hope for the future which comes through children whether they be our born, adopted, “Aunt-ed”,

or spiritual children. While God cursed Eve with her feminine pains, He also promised her the consoling hope of a certain future, in an uncertain world {uncertain from her perspective anyways}.

Although the latter half of this verse, of Genesis 3:16, is also part of God's curse upon Eve and her descendants, we will suffice to remind ourselves that the curse's penalty will be eventually reversed and the LORD's intended norm will be one day re-established in Christ Jesus. We do not have the time to go into it today. Considering that portion of the Fall's curse warrants an entire sermon of its own.

Then lastly, the LORD addressed Adam, “*Because you have listened to the voice of your wife [meaning, 'instead of obeying the LORD's spoken command to you from Genesis 2:16-17'] and have eaten of the tree of which I commanded you, 'You shall not eat of it,' cursed is the ground because of you; in pain you shall eat of it all the days of your life; thorns and thistles it shall bring forth for you; and you shall eat the plants of the field. By the sweat of your face you shall eat bread, till you return to the ground, for out of it you were taken; for you are dust, and to dust you shall return.*”. The ground was cursed on account of Adam's sin, but it was not the ground that sinned; so why? The ground was not so much cursed in and of itself, but for the effect it had upon the man.

The ground was made into a curse for Man because of **why** Man was made, and **why** the LORD had put Adam where He did. Genesis 2:15 says, “*The LORD God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to work it and keep it.*”, thereby defining Adam's original purpose as a gardener. That is the vocation through which he was to exercise his delegated dominion over all creation, as the LORD's regent: as His Image, as the *Imago Dei* (Genesis 1:26). Then, as recompense for his work he would enjoy the gracious blessing of the LORD's free provision (Gen 1:29-30). But now, after God's curse, work became toil and he was no longer fed by God's free grace alone. Now he had to struggle in order to earn his daily bread, “*By the sweat of your face you shall eat bread*”. No longer could he just wander through God's garden and pick whatever he wanted to eat, whenever he wanted to eat. Now first, he had to remove the weeds, till the earth, sow the seed, and then wait for it to eventually, hopefully, maybe grow.

Adam no longer had the certainty of God's grace. Now he only had the vain hope that his work might somehow be good enough in the end. While Eve was given hope for the future: the hope of life; Adam was given only the certainty of death, “*...till you return to the ground, for out of it you were taken; for you are dust, and to dust you shall return.*”. There was no hope for Adam, because there is no hope in Adam. He broke the LORD's covenant of works and earned the reward of death for everyone who also shares in his vain hope, “*For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.*” (Rom. 6:23 ESV).

Perhaps Adam recognized and understood this key difference between them: her hope of life and his surety of death; because it was only after their cursing that Adam gave the woman her name, Eve. Now the name of Eve comes to us, mediated by several ancient languages, from the Hebrew form of *Chavah*, a word which simply means “life”. This is why “*The man called his wife's name Eve, because she was the mother of all living.*”. The woman was given her name by Adam; she was named by her husband for her hope: God's promise of future life.

Yet toil in work and the hopelessness of our own efforts were not the totality of the LORD's curse upon Adam and the whole human race for our sin. The LORD also reminded Adam of what he was, dust. “*... till you return to the ground, for out of it you were taken; for you are dust, and to dust you shall return.*”. Now Adam's name in Hebrew is actually *Adam*. That same word can also be used to mean man, as in “a man”, or it can be used to mean Man, as in “mankind” or “humanity” (if we are using modern, “gender-inclusive” language). Adam's name comes from the Hebrew word, *adamah*, which means ground or dirt. His name therefore, serves as a perpetual reminder of what he and we are, and where we come from. We are God's creations and we are formed from the dust of the earth.

However, while the LORD was reminding Adam of the lowliness of his origin, God was also informing him and warning him of a greater, further reaching implication of sin's curse upon him. Do you recall the second part of the serpent's curse, “...and dust you shall eat all the days of your life.” The serpent was permitted, he was allowed to consume, absorb, devour, and rule over the dust, the *afar*; so long as he lived; for only so long as the LORD chose to suffer his existence. This part of the serpent's curse, strange as it sounds (because snakes generally do not eat dirt) was never about food, instead it is about authority and dominion. The LORD allowed the serpent and his offspring dominion for a limited time, over Adam and his offspring who are dust, as part of this curse. This is like the limited authority which the LORD allowed Satan to exercise over Job.

So when cursing both Adam and the serpent, God permitted and granted the serpent to have authority over Adam. The authority of Satan, which Adam had chosen once to obey through his sin, was confirmed as his new lord and master, which means that part of Adam's curse was chosen by himself. Satan surely considered this to be a boon for himself. Victory was found (from his perspective) in the enslavement and subjection of mankind to his vile depredations, even as his own personal ending was predetermined to come one day. Surely Adam, upon reaching his understanding, considered this a personal travesty, yet there still remained a glimmer of hope; perhaps not for himself, but hope for an ending to his bondage. Adam's enslavement to Satan would one day be ended by death, and again mankind's enslavement to Satan would one day be finished at Satan's promised ending, in his overthrowing.

Now I know that was a lot, so let us rewind and repeat things to understand the curses a bit more concisely.

The serpent:

- was humbled and forced to abase himself before and beneath God.
- is hated, feared, and reviled by all of creation.
- is permitted authority over Man, but that authority is limited in scope and duration: until the end of Satan's days and the “bruising” of his head by the woman's offspring.

The woman, Eve:

- will be haunted, hunted, and hated by the serpent, along with all of her descendants.
 - Yet she was also given hope, through the LORD's promise, that one day her offspring would be the one to overthrow and defeat the serpent.
- was granted pain in every aspect of childbearing.
 - Yet she is also given hope of the future through the LORD's promise that, although there will be pain, there will also be life in her children.

The man, Adam:

- would still perform his intended vocation but now, his work will be accomplished through toil, and struggle, and in pain.
- Trust in God's grace would be replaced by his own effort, and his continued survival would depend upon the fruit of his labor instead of God's bounteous provision.
- Adam was forced to trust in his own efforts, until the LORD would either decide to show mercy and restore grace unto him or consign him to death's justice.

- Adam, and through him all of mankind, was now condemned to serve a terrible master, the serpent, instead of the benevolent God.
 - When Adam transferred his obedience and loyalty from the LORD to the serpent, he brought with him into his enslavement everything that was under his authority: all of creation and future humanity. Therefore, since the LORD had already delegated this responsibility to Adam, the serpent now became the de facto “ruler of this world” (John 12:31).

Finally, after all of that, we return to more closely examine Eve's great hope: the promised victory of her offspring over the serpent.

“...*he shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise his heel.*”. This is the very first messianic prophecy written into Scripture and historically the Church has understood it directly as the Cross.

Now depending upon the English translation that you read, this sentence might seem to carry a different tone, for the NIV puts it, “...*he will **crush** your head, and you will **strike** his heel.*” (Gen. 3:15 NIV) thereby forcing the interpretation to come out through the translation; yet the interpretation still stands true. The Hebrew verb translated here as: bruise, crush, or strike; is a verb of violent action and that is all that it needs to immediately convey because, although the verbal action is the same, it is the location which matters most in this prophetic promise.

“...*he shall bruise your **head**, and you shall bruise his **heel**.*”.

Eve's heir will inflict injury upon the serpent's head, while the serpent will only inflict injury upon the heir's heel. The great difference here is in the extremes: in both the degree of injury and in the symbolism of their relational authority: from the top of the head to the bottom foot (the heel).

The head wears the crown of authority. It carries the symbol of rulership. It is the height and the pinnacle of achievement. The heel is the least favored part of the body, but it is not unimportant. It is not trivial. It is important enough for the whole body to be carried upon it and is thus supported. However, the heel is shown neither honor nor respect. It is ignored, neglected, and trampled upon constantly. Although the whole stands upon it, it is the head which gives it its strength and even its power.

- If the heel is injured, then the body may be hobbled and hampered for a time. But
- If the head is struck, then the whole body may be overthrown.

Now consider the conflict fought by Jesus Christ through the cross.

- The only innocent man, the lamb without blemish, was sacrificed to suffer the just penalty due for all the sins of God's chosen people.
- The Righteous One died to sin so that sinners would live. “*“O death, where is your victory? O death, where is your sting?” The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.*” (1 Cor. 15:55-57 ESV).

Jesus' death upon the cross was the serpent's strike against His holy heel. Yes, Jesus died. He was in the grave over three days. The work of God appeared to be hindered but, although the Son of God died, God was not and is not dead.

“*Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by*

the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life. For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we shall certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his. We know that our old self was crucified with him in order that the body of sin might be brought to nothing, so that we would no longer be enslaved to sin. For one who has died has been set free from sin. Now if we have died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him. We know that Christ, being raised from the dead, will never die again; death no longer has dominion over him. For the death he died he died to sin, once for all, but the life he lives he lives to God.” (Rom. 6:3-10 ESV). Jesus' resurrection from the dead, His triumph over the grave was His strike against Satan's head. Walking out of the tomb that early morning, Jesus knocked the crown from Satan's brow and freed His people from the Devil's dominion. All of the saints, whom he had held captive for so long, were rescued from his power. They were redeemed by Christ Jesus and restored to a right relationship with the LORD God, and are even now raised (like Him) to everlasting life in heaven until the world that is yet to come finally appears. While we who yet remain, are presently raised to life, spiritually. Our hearts are regenerated. They have been turned from cold, dead stone into warm and living flesh.

Although that serpent struck our Savior's heel, he could not keep the only Good man down. When Jesus struck Satan's head, the ruler of this world was overthrown.

The king is dead, long live the King!

This is the hope of Eve and this is the hope we share with her and all who wait upon the LORD. Although God's people are no longer subject to Satan's authority, we continue to suffer under that serpent's power. Our allegiance is now to Christ our King. Our citizenship is now in heaven, not the *kosmos*, but we still remain as sojourners in this foreign land; in the occupied enemy territories.

Before the regenerating work of the Holy Spirit upon our hearts, our hope was in Adam; in ourselves, and thus we were truly hopeless.

- Now our hope is in Jesus Christ, our Savior, our Redeemer, our Brother, and our King.
- Now we pledge allegiance to Him and God our Father in heaven, alone.
- Now we remain steadfast and loyal to Him and we obey Him, alone.
- Now we will no longer put Satan above our God, nor all the world above Christ's Kingdom.
- Now we will no longer claim the throne of authority and dominion over our lives for ourselves, but instead we submit with Joy to the love of God and His perfect plan.

Still we wait with hope and eager anticipation for the culmination and the consummation of Christ's victory; the ultimate hope of Christmas future. We now have hope in our waiting, a hope we once did not have. We wait for Eve's hope to be actualized, even while it has already been accomplished.

Eve's offspring: Jesus Christ, the son of Mary, the virgin; has bruised the serpent's head. Although the serpent also bruised Christ's heel, Jesus emerged victorious from the grave of sin. Now He is leading us out from the place of our bondage in a new Exodus, to the land which God has promised His children. Now as we follow Him wherever He leads, we have a beautiful hope in which we trust.

AMEN