The Promised Child (1)

Prophecy is God speaking, through His Holy Spirit, to someone who would tell other people God's message. We are going to investigate a prophecy in the Old Testament and see how it was fulfilled in the birth of Jesus of Nazareth.

1.

Read Genesis 3 v 1-15. This is the account of the first time people sinned and the curse that God then put on the devil (represented by the snake). What is prophesied in v15?

Read Luke 3 v 23 and 3 v 38. These verses begin and end a family tree. Who is Adam's descendant in v23?

2.

Read Matthew 1 v 18-25

Joseph is given two names for the baby. What are they and what do they mean? Why do you think the baby would be called by these names?

3.

Read Hebrews 2 v 14-15. What did Jesus' death achieve?

Read 1 Peter 3 v 18. Why did Jesus, who had never sinned, die?

How does Jesus fulfil the prophecy of Genesis 3 v 15?

4.

Way back in the Garden of Eden, God said that the woman and the devil would be enemies because of sin. He said that a descendant of the woman would crush the head of the devil (here represented by a snake) and the snake would bite the man's heel.

We are reminded that Jesus is fully God and fully man when we remember His miraculous conception. He was sinless, and so qualified to die in the place of sinful people, paying for their sins. Jesus is the one who fulfils the prophecy of Genesis 3 v 15. His 'heel was bitten' in death, as He crushed the devil.

Jesus is the serpent-crusher.

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Prayer: Father God, thank you for sending your Son, Jesus, to 'crush the head' of the devil. Thank you that, in His death, Jesus paid for sin so that people can be forgiven. Thank you for loving us so much that you gave us such a precious gift of being rescued from sin and death. Please help me to receive your wonderful gift this Christmas. Amen.

If you have a Bible, why not look up the verses yourself instead of just reading them here. I've printed them here for people who don't have a Bible!

Genesis 3 v 1-15

Now the serpent was more crafty than any of the wild animals the LORD God had made. He said to the woman, "Did God really say, 'You must not eat from any tree in the garden'?" 2 The woman said to the serpent, "We may eat fruit from the trees in the garden, 3 but God did say, 'You must not eat fruit from the tree that is in the middle of the garden, and you must not touch it, or you will die.'" 4 "You will not certainly die," the serpent said to the woman. 5 "For God knows that when you eat from it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil." 6 When the woman saw that the fruit of the tree was good for food and pleasing to the eye, and also desirable for gaining wisdom, she took some and ate it. She also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it. 7 Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they realized they were naked; so they sewed fig leaves together and made coverings for themselves. 8 Then the man and his wife heard the sound of the LORD God as he was walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and they hid from the LORD God among the trees of the garden. 9 But the LORD God called to the man, "Where are you?" 10 He answered, "I heard you in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked; so I hid." 11 And he said, "Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree that I commanded you not to eat from?" 12 The man said, "The woman you put here with me—she gave me some fruit from the tree, and I ate it." 13 Then the LORD God said to the woman, "What is this you have done?" The woman said, "The serpent deceived me, and I ate." 14 So the LORD God said to the serpent, "Because you have done this,

"Cursed are you above all livestock and all wild animals! You will crawl on your belly and you will eat dust all the days of your life. 15 And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; he will crush your head, and you will strike his heel."

Luke 3 v 23 and 3 v 38

23 Now Jesus himself was about thirty years old when he began his ministry. He was the son, so it was thought, of Joseph, the son of Heli, … 38 the son of Enosh, the son of Seth, the son of Adam, the son of God.

Hebrews 2 v 14-15

14 Since the children have flesh and blood, he too shared in their humanity so that by his death he might break the power of him who holds the power of death—that is, the devil— 15 and free those who all their lives were held in slavery by their fear of death.

1 Peter 3 v 18

18 For Christ also suffered once for sins, the righteous for the unrighteous, to bring you to God. He was put to death in the body but made alive in the Spirit.

Matthew 1 v 18-25

18 This is how the birth of Jesus the Messiah came about: His mother Mary was pledged to be married to Joseph, but before they came together, she was found to be pregnant through the Holy Spirit. 19 Because Joseph her husband was faithful to the law, and yet did not want to expose her to public disgrace, he had in mind to divorce her quietly. 20 But after he had considered this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, "Joseph son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary home as your wife, because what is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. 21 She will give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins." 22 All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had said through the prophet: 23 "The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel" (which means "God with us"). 24 When Joseph woke up, he did what the angel of the Lord had commanded him and took Mary home as his wife. 25 But he did not consummate their marriage until she gave birth to a son. And he gave him the name Jesus.

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