

HE OPENS US AGAIN THE DOOR OF PARADISE
Sermon for Christmas Day 2025
Genesis 3:15

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all. Amen.

The text for our sermon today is Genesis 3:15: **“I shall make you and the woman hostile to each other and shall make your descendants and her Descendant hostile to each other. He will crush your head and you will crush His heel.”**

Lord God, heavenly Father, sanctify us through Your truth, Your Word is truth. Amen.

Dear friends in Christ,

We are a blessed people, you and I, and I'm not just talking about the everyday blessings we receive from God. Yes, they are many, and we are thankful for them, but our true blessing is that *we have received directly from God Himself*, and that is what Christmas is truly about. This day is centred on God. It is therefore a sacred day. All the glory belongs to Him because the story is His. It speaks of man's sinful state and God's gracious promise fulfilled and perfected in His only-begotten Son, Jesus Christ. It is a story that begins in paradise and is destined to end in a new paradise. On this day, we once again remember the truth of a paradise lost by man and regained by man's Substitute. When we wish others a merry Christmas, we are simply sharing a joy that points to Jesus Christ and the wonderful news that He reopens the door of paradise for us today.

When we open the first pages of our Bible, we see God's revealing light shining on the splendour of His new creation. In six days of 24 hours each, God made everything, and we are told, *“God saw all that He had made and, indeed, it was very good”* (Gen. 1:31). The crowning achievement of His creation was man, and now, He stands before the first human couple, who are to rule His creation on His behalf. In a blessed and perfect relationship, they stand before God as a reflection of His own holiness and righteousness. In perfect happiness, they share God's own immortality and bask in the glory of life with Him. Adam and Eve have all that they need. They enjoy life with the triune Lord of heaven and earth. They are in paradise. What more could any human being want?

Well, Satan had a suggestion. Why be satisfied with being merely *“in the image of God”*? So he whispered in Eve's ear, *“Why not be a god yourself? After all, God has not told you everything or given you everything you would like to have. Didn't He tell you not to eat of the tree in the middle of the garden? He did not tell you why, however, did He? God is holding out on you because He knows that if you eat of its fruit, you will have equal status with Him—you will be like God, knowing good and evil.”*

Satan plants the seeds of doubt, pride, and rebellion in the hearts of our first parents by his lies. That hater of God did his evil work well, and Adam and Eve became willing partners in open revolt against the Lord of all. They received what Satan had promised them, and now they would be like God in knowing the existence of good and evil.

But at what cost! Those who sought to be like God and rule over their own life would now be ruled by Satan. A poisoned heart and sinful nature acting through a hostile will would mark the children of these first parents down through the years of time. As God had forewarned, Adam and Eve would forfeit the right to life with Him. They soon discovered how dreadful sin is, how awful it is to rise up against God! Their existence would be coloured by death, by the experience of life without God, and by the hostile, never-ending, and fatal struggle with Satan and the power of sin. The door of paradise *slammed shut* for our first parents.

The Apostle Paul writes, “*just as sin came into the world through one man, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men because all sinned*” (Rom. 5:12). As all mankind is connected by birth with Adam as the head and representative of the human race, so all mankind was involved in his sin and fall from God. What other nature could Adam and Eve pass on to their offspring but one like their own — a nature now corrupted by sin? Genesis 5 tells us that “*When God created man, He made him in the likeness of God.... When Adam had lived 130 years, he fathered a son in his own likeness, after his image*” (v. 1, 3). Their children would be literal “chips off the old block,” not in the image, the likeness of God, but in the image of Adam, the father of the human race.

Like Adam, humanity would now be caught in a constant and tragic struggle with Satan and the powers of darkness, a deadly fight where both would pretend to be gods. An “enmity” would exist, raging in the arena of life without God. In Adam’s sin, we all sinned; in Adam’s death, we all died. The door of paradise slammed shut on mankind, making us all by nature children of wrath. What would have to happen for that door to once again be opened so paradise could be restored? Let’s find out.

As Adam and Eve stand before God in their naked shame and guilt, they hear God’s curse upon their tempter. In that curse and judgment upon Satan, Adam and Eve hear wonderful words of comfort and hope: **“I shall make you and the woman hostile to each other and shall make your descendants and her Descendant hostile to each other. He will crush your head and you will crush His heel.”**

This is the glory of Adam and Eve’s Christmas. In a curse upon Satan that took away all hope of forgiveness from God for him, our first parents hear something different and totally unexpected — not a curse but wonderful news offered in a promise. Facing only despair in their sin, they experience alongside God’s justice *His pure grace and mercy*. The prophet Isaiah captures God’s grace and mercy well when he writes, “*Come now, let us reason together, says the LORD: though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they are red like crimson, they shall become like wool*” (Is. 1:18).

How comforting it must have been for our first parents to realise that God is the enemy of that evil one who inflicted such a serious rupture in their relationship to God, and that God Himself would fix things! In those words of our text, grace and mercy begin to shine forth from the midst of the wrath which sin and disobedience aroused. In the midst of most serious threats, the Father reveals His pure heart. In a love so undeserved, the hands of God outstretched to embrace our first sinful parents to assure them that in the struggle of mankind with Satan, there would come One who would gain the victory for humanity by crushing Satan’s head and rendering him powerless, even though the Head-Crusher would Himself be mortally wounded in the conflict.

It would indeed be the lot of everyone born of a woman to struggle with Satan and his sin-powers and be fatally bitten in the encounter. But a certain Descendant of Eve, *unique in His birth*, would enter into the struggle with and for man and win the victory over that evil power which inflicts savage death strokes upon mankind. For Adam and Eve, it meant only one thing: the forgiveness of sins and victory, and Paradise again through that One who would break down the door of sin which stood between human creatures and their Creator Lord. That was God’s promise to Adam and Eve. They trusted it and relied upon it, so much so that when Eve gave birth to her firstborn son, she hoped she already had that Satan-Crusher whom God had promised. When Cain was born, she said, “*I have acquired a man, the LORD*” (Gen. 4:1). Confident in God’s promise to send His Son, born of a woman, Eve believed her firstborn, Cain, was that promised Saviour.

Although Eve was deceived about that hope, she came to realise that, *in God’s good time*, this Seed would be born among her descendants. The gracious promise of God was passed down through the centuries. It was repeated to Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, and David, and through the prophets.

Brighter and brighter that promise glowed as God revealed more and more details of the Servant who would suffer, that Root of Jesse, that Child of Bethlehem, that Sun of Righteousness. This promise gave hope and salvation to all who believed it, and then, the battle lines were drawn up once and for all against the enemy of God and man. A little Baby is born to humble, God-fearing Mary and Joseph in a little village called Bethlehem, and the very heavens burst with the victory cry: “*For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, who is Christ the Lord*” (Luke 2:11).

The fight is on. The Promised Seed is here — a little Baby that, for all purposes, looks like any other newborn. Those who trusted in God’s promise stand wrapped in the wonder of it all, and when their amazement subsides and turns to joy, His name is heard: “*Immanuel, God is with us!*”

See what a battle it is! This is the very Son of God, this Babe, clothed in man’s flesh and blood to become one of humanity and destined to become man’s Substitute to “*save His people from their sins*” (Matt. 1:21). Over His humble manger stands an awesome cross; for Satan’s henchmen are even now seeking “*the young Child to destroy Him*” (Matt. 2:13). Scarcely is He born and the enmity begins. This sinless Seed soon would face the full onslaught of sin, be face to face with Satan and his temptations, be beset by a “*brood of snakes,*” and finally be betrayed and crucified by hearts which Satan had won. Willingly, He would do battle with Satan and bear in His own body the sins of all men on a cross, suffering the full and fatal death bite of sin. Satan and his draftees from among men would cheer with fiendish glee as they drive each nail, thinking that at last they have pinned God down.

But Satan’s triumph is short-lived; for Satan’s victory is a “heel” victory. It is a victory shattered to pieces by the final thrust of his Victim: “*It is finished!*” (John 19:30). It sounds almost like a word of resignation, of relief, perhaps, that Jesus’ suffering was coming to an end. But it had to be more than that. Remember how this was Jesus’ hour, that He went to the cross voluntarily, that He was there to complete God’s plan of salvation. Jesus was not saying that the wicked plot against Him was finished. He was declaring that His task as the one and only Son of the heavenly Father was finished. Satan’s head has been crushed. Heaven and earth re-echo its sound, and the earth convulses in a spasm that brings forth its dead in a mighty show of that death which is swallowed up in victory.

Three days later, the Victor returns from battle, bearing the scars of the bitter conflict. In His person, He carries the spoils of the victory — forgiveness, eternal life, and salvation — which He desires to give to mankind, assuring every soul that He is still Lord. The Apostle Paul wrote how “*Christ has been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep*” (1 Cor. 15:20). Again, “*For as by the one man’s disobedience the many were made sinners, so by the one man’s obedience the many will be made righteous*” (Rom. 5:19), and “*There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus*” (Rom. 8:1).

The words of the prophet Isaiah have come true, and to mankind comes the proclamation of a victory for mankind: “*Comfort, comfort My people, says your God. Speak tenderly to Jerusalem, and cry to her that her warfare is ended, that her iniquity is pardoned, that she has received from the LORD’s hand double for all her sins*” (Is. 40:1-2).

Is it any wonder that the angels of God would burst from the heavens to sing the praise of this holy Child who is born in Bethlehem? “*Glory to God in the highest,*” they sing in joyful exultation.

And how is it with us this Christmas Day? What is our living response to such a gracious God? Can it be anything less than to give thanks to God the Father who has given us victory over sin and Satan, who has opened us again the door of Paradise through Jesus Christ, our Lord! “*Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among those with whom He is pleased!*” (Luke 2:14). May you all have a holy and blessed Christmas! Amen.

The peace of God which passes all understanding, keep your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus. Amen.