

Praise the Lord

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THE SEED OF THE WOMAN...

“AND THOU SHALT CALL HIS NAME JESUS: FOR HE SHALL SAVE HIS PEOPLE FROM THEIR SINS.” MATTHEW 1:21

The Christmas story really starts in Genesis. It is the most awesome drama in all of the Bible! The story of God's salvation to humanity makes anything Hollywood has ever produced look like third rate junk. Fasten your spiritual seatbelt for the “E-ticket” thrill ride of all time!

It all starts in the Garden of Eden. Eve believes the lie of the devil and eats of the forbidden fruit. Adam also eats and sin enters the world. Man has given God's beautiful world to Satan and as a result death enters for the first time.

But here is where the adventure really begins, because God is greater than Satan! I know that sounds over simplistic, but did you know there are millions alive today that do not know this? Many still believe the lie that Satan is greater than the Lord God Jehovah, or like “fools” declare there is no God — yes, many do not know that:

“He [God] is not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.” 2 Peter 3:9

And so, “God so loved the world that he gave” — but what would He give? Imagine yourself back at the beginning of things: No prophecies, yet; no Scripture; no New Testament; no knowledge of God's great plan to redeem fallen man back to Himself. But, right at the beginning in Genesis, God makes a statement that sends cold chills through the devil — the first clue that God is going to do something about man's fallen estate:

“And I [God] will put enmity between thee [Satan] and the woman [Eve], and between thy

seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.” Genesis 3:15

What a strange statement. Looking back, of course, we understand. The “seed of the woman” is Jesus, and on the cross Jesus crushed the serpent's head. In dealing this fatal blow to the devil's kingdom, Jesus was bruised horribly on the cross. But, back in Genesis, Satan did not understand the mystery of God's great plan of salvation! This is evident from the apostle Paul's statement in 1 Corinthians:

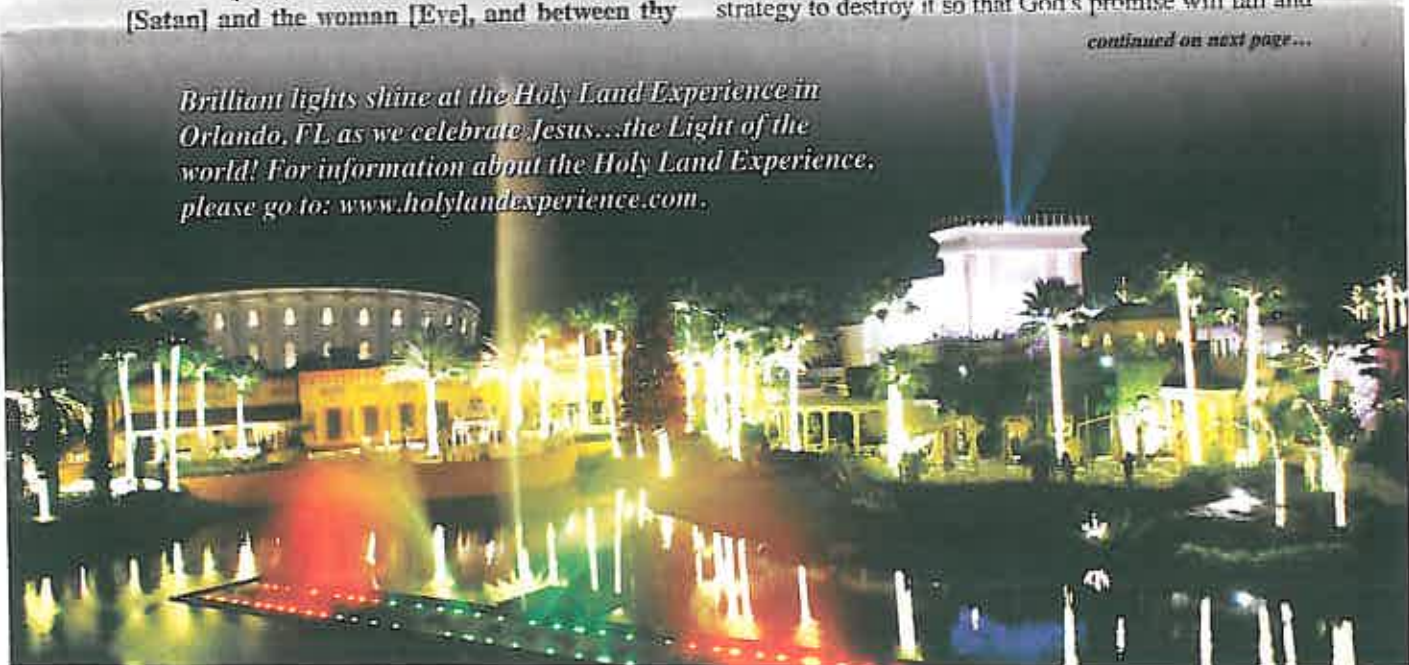
“But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery... which none of the princes [Satan] of this world knew: for had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory.” 1 Corinthians 2:7-8

But, Satan did realize from God's statement in Genesis that something was up! Who was this “seed of a woman”? All hell was on red alert to find out! The second clue comes in Genesis 22, where we find that the “seed” would come through Abraham. What untold horrors have been heaped upon the Jewish race by Satan as he has sought to destroy the entire race again and again in order to stop the promised seed. Even after Jesus came, Satan still seeks to destroy the Jews out of revenge for producing the chosen seed, Jesus. We recall with horror Hitler's holocaust in World War II!

The next clue or promise comes to the house of David. The pace quickens and the field narrows. Satan keeps his eye on this line. With great cunning he plots his strategy to destroy it so that God's promise will fail and

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that the “seed of the woman,” who is to bruise his head, will be destroyed. Three major attempts are recorded in 2 Chronicles.

We read first of Jehoram, who succeeded his father Jehoshaphat of the royal line of David. When he was thirty-two, we read that **“he strengthened himself and slew all his brethren with the sword”** (2 Chronicles 21:4). What did that mean? It meant that all the royal line of David through Solomon was dead, except for Jehoram. Think of it! The fulfillment of God’s promise hung upon the life of *one man*, and a wicked man at that! The Lord, however, must judge this wicked king Jehoram. The Philistines come and, according to the Scriptures, they carried away all of Jehoram’s substance and his sons also, so that there was not a son left him. What? Has Satan finally succeeded? But wait — the text goes on: **“There was not a son left him save Jehoahaz, the youngest of his sons”** (2 Chronicles 21:17). Only one son left! So the royal line is once more preserved by the faithful God.

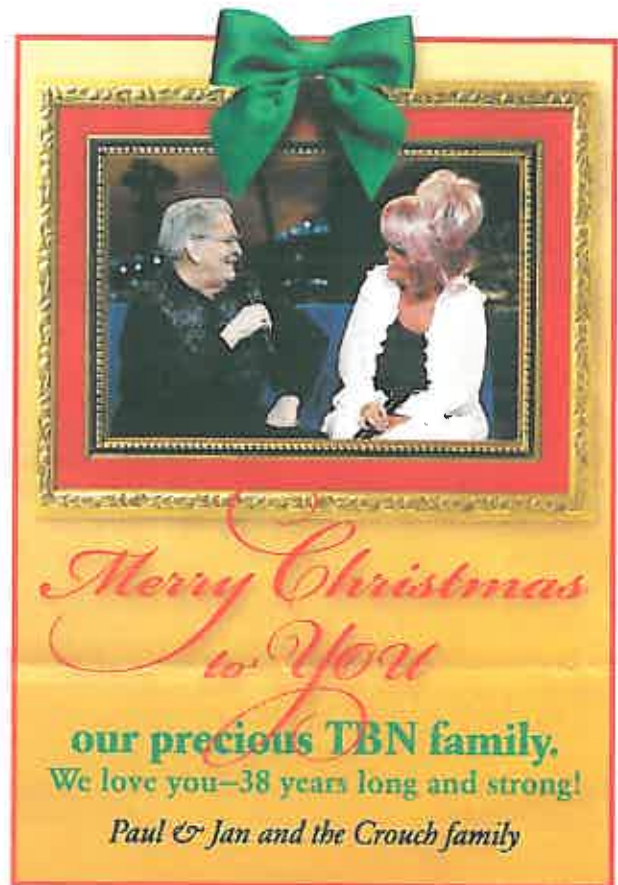
We now read of one of the foulest deeds in all Bible history. For when King Jehoahaz died, he left many sons, all legal successors in the line of David. But Athaliah, King Jehoahaz’ own mother, was covetous for the throne herself and **“destroyed all the seed royal of the house of Judah”** (2 Chronicles 22:10). Now, surely, Satan has won. He has found a grandmother vile enough to slaughter her own grandchildren and for a short time claimed the throne for herself! All the seed royal destroyed? Ah, read on: **“But the daughter of the king took Joash... and stole him from among the king’s sons that were slain...and hid him from Athaliah, so that she slew him not”** (2 Chronicles 22:11). The whole plan of God to send a Savior, the “seed of the woman,” now rests again this time on the life of one little child!

Hundreds of other attempts are made: from the slaughter of the Jewish male babies by pharaoh in Egypt, to the slaughter of the male babies by Herod. All of these attempts were the mad ravings of a desperate Satan, seeking to save his ill-gotten kingdom by destroying the seed of the woman.

Finally the long promised seed arrives! Angel choirs fill the Judean skies over Bethlehem! Shepherds, wise men, stars, and prophets confirm that He is here! How well we might exclaim:

“O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!”
Romans 11:33

Now, Satan’s plot moves into high gear! Now he knows *who* the seed of the woman is! Day and night he hatches scheme after scheme: Herod’s slaughter, the temptation of Jesus, storms, death plots, betrayal, and finally a Roman cross! As Jesus moves toward Golgotha, He is spit upon and his beard pulled from His face. A crown of thorns, a mock robe and then — His groans are drowned out by the ring of hammer on cruel spikes that rip the flesh. The cross is hoisted and sinks into the ground with a sickening thud. He cries aloud: **“My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?”** He is dying. The seed of the woman is dead! All hell rejoices! Surely Satan



has won — his wicked kingdom is secure.

Ah, but in the evil act of crucifying Jesus, Satan overplayed his hand! He did not yet understand the mystery of God’s salvation. When he killed Jesus, he brought the death sentence of Almighty God upon himself because he killed the first totally innocent man! Satan had fallen victim to God’s great plan. The deceiver was outwitted and was used to perform the very will of God!

“And having spoiled principalities and powers, he [Jesus] made a show of them openly, triumphing over them in it.” Colossians 2:15

Praise God — the very Word of the Lord finally fulfilled! The seed of the woman did, indeed, bruise the serpent’s head! Hallelujah! And then, as the old hymn proclaims:

*Up from the grave He arose,
With a mighty triumph o’er His foes.
He arose, hallelujah! Christ arose!*

Yes, the Christmas story is, on the one hand, beautifully simple and serene. But, from God’s and history’s perspective, it is the greatest drama of all eternity! What a tragedy to celebrate Christmas with all the lights and tinsel as millions do — never knowing the greatest story ever told! Know Him today. **Know this “seed of the woman,” Jesus the Son of Almighty God — the Savior of our souls! Yes, HALLELUJAH again!**

Thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins. (Matthew 1:21)

Paul