BC art 17; I John 3:4-10; Gen. 3:1-15; “The Mother Promise” I. The Shameful Context II. The Gracious Confrontation III. The Victorious Promise

Congregation of our Lord Jesus Christ, is it more loving to ignore sin or confront sin? I think many Christians are confused about this. Wanting to be loving, many Christians refuse to speak out about sin in the name of tolerance. But I ask again- is it more loving to confront sin or simply ignore it? Well, today as we continue our series in the BC we find that God in His love is going to confront sin by confronting the sinner! Not only to rebuke sin- but to open the door a solution to that sin! As we saw last week, original sin infects us all. We all were plunged into sin and we share the inherited guilt from our forefather, Adam. As our polluted inheritance, the fall into sin affects all of us and it affects every part of us. Original sin and total depravity. But praise God, that is not the end of the story! The good news is that God is not done with us yet! So today we consider this theme: the arrival of Jesus Christ to defeat sin is revealed in the Mother Promise. Now the Mother Promise is just another way to refer to Gen. 3:15- this is the first promise of the gospel and all other declarations of good news in the Bible find their source in this this Mother Promise.

**I. The Shameful Context**

In our first point we consider the context in which this Mother Promise was given. So what was going on in chapter 3 that sets the stage for us? Well, Adam and Eve have just fallen into sin. They have questioned the word of God and listened to the word of the devil. They have taken and eaten the forbidden fruit- rebelling against their good and gracious Creator. Now this brings immediate and dreadful consequences. As v. 7 says, their eyes were opened, and they knew that they were both naked. They were awakened to their own shame- their innocence was replaced by guilt. Joy by fear. Instead of being able to look at each other face to face, now they were ashamed. So they tried to hide their shame by covering their bodies with leaves. Added to that, they ran and hid. Adam and Eve heard God walking in the garden in v. 8, so they ran away and hid! You see, sin causes friction and fear! Adam was hiding from others where he had once been innocent and free from fear. Now Adam was afraid of God- ashamed and trembling. Hoping that the trees would hide his guilt from the pure eyes of God. He knew that he had done wrong- he knew that he was polluted and guilty- he knew that he could not stand in the presence of a holy God! He had become subject to guilt- physical and spiritual death was now hot on his heals. He was cut off from the source of life- miserable, alone and afraid. So Adam hid from God. Now this is very important- mankind does not run to God- Adam does not seek God’s face! Man does not on his own or in his own power look for God! No, by nature man will always run and hide! God is holy, and we are not! I am unclean- woe is me! Apart from God coming to us- apart from God acting, there can be no joy, reconciliation and peace! Having eaten the forbidden fruit, this very good couple was transformed but not for the better! Instead of a loving and holy union, man is now at odds and in conflict with others and with His God! You find this right away in v. 3:12- after being confronted by God for his actions, Adam goes on to blame both God and Eve for his own sin! This woman who You gave me! She made me do it! The loving, supportive marriage breaks down into blame shifting conflict! He does not repent and confess his sins- even now he hides behind others! And the relationship between God and man is strained to the point of breaking! This is what happens when sin enters the world! Like a child caught with his hand in the cookie jar- with chocolate smeared on his face- yet denying any wrong. I did not do anything- even though the proof of the crime is clear for all to see! Before we move on, guilt and shame have a purpose now that we have fallen into sin. Shame is a product of a conscience that knows it has done wrong! It is sad to see that some people can no longer blush- when our world has lost the ability to feal guilt or regret! When the world loses its ability to feel shame- when works of rebellion are praised and defended by the masses- God has this to say. Woe to those who call evil good and good evil! They have despised the word of the Holy One of Israel!

**II. The Gracious Confrontation**

But back to our passage, we find that Adam and Eve do feal guilt, fear and regret. But instead of running to God and asking for forgiveness, they run away and hide! Mankind will not on his own- cannot on his own- come to God to seek reconciliation. We are paralyzed in our fear- we know what we deserve from a Holy God- loving darkness and our own wicked deeds more than the light. So if reconciliation will take place, it needs to be initiated by God! So we find in our text in v. 9- God calls to his children. And in v. 11, He confronts his children for their sinful deed. It is God who searches and finds- it is God who calls Adam out! Now this is the first step of grace that we find in our text! God does not forsake mankind. God does not wash his hands and simply give up on them. Neither does God wipe them out and destroy them in His just wrath and anger! So God does not leave man in his sinful state- nor does he bring mankind to the grave in ruined heap- rather He comes to man and confronts Him! Our Gracious God presses the issue- putting Adam and Eve in the witness stand. What have you done?! This is an act of love! What do you think- is it more loving for a doctor to ignore the infection- or is it better for him to address the issue and apply the remedy? Although the remedy may hurt- it is more loving! We cannot overlook this fact- that God was pleased to seek and comfort Adam and Eve! But there is one more aspect to this confrontation. Not only does God confront Adam and Eve, He also confronts Satan. And more specifically, the LORD promises a confrontation between Satan and the woman in v. 15. So the LORD says- I will put enmity between you Satan and Eve- the woman. There will be a battle between the seed or the followers of Satan and those who are the seed of the woman. This is also good news- that God will bring a confrontation- that war will continue between man and the devil! There will be no peace- no lasting alliance here! In this we find the promise of the antithesis- the battle between good and evil! Satan will not win over all of mankind- there will be a church on earth made of Eve’s seed! The seed of the woman will war against Satan and his teaching! Although Eve listened to the words of Satan, this will not always be! Someone will come who will expose the lie for what it is- it is this one who came not to bring peace but a sword! So the LORD promises a battle- but more than that- He also foretells of a victory!

**III. The Victorious Promise**

In our last point then, we focus in on the victorious promise given in v. 15. The battle will rage between the seed of the woman and the serpent- but this war will not last forever! No, there is an end- and that end will come when the seed of the woman crushes the head of the serpent! Here, in the Mother Promise, we find the “first gospel.” The seed of the woman, as we know, is a reference to Jesus Christ who will crush or bruise the serpents head. Jesus is here said to be the seed or offspring of the woman. When reading from Rev. 12 we find a woman who gives birth to a child- in this we see that line of the woman- which is the covenant line- gives birth to a son who rules over all. In the genealogy of Jesus, we can find that his lineage is traced back to Adam and Eve in Luke 3. Jesus was the son of Adam and Eve. In this way, the physical lineage of Jesus is established as being the offspring or seed of the woman- descended from the line of covenant. Or as Paul says in Gal. 3, Jesus is the singular seed or the perfect child- that offspring is Christ. So already here in Gen. 3 we find a promise for the coming of Jesus Christ who is the child of the promise. Added to that, we read of His victory. He will crush the serpent’s head- or bruise his head under his feet. Putting this in context, we find that Satan will strike at Jesus as a snake might bites at the heal. This will be evident when Satan tempted Jesus for 40 days, and when Satan entered Judas in order to get Judas to betray Jesus. So the attack of Satan will be evident in the betrayal and crucifixion of Jesus Christ. But as painful as a bite to the foot might be- it is nothing like getting your head crushed! In fact, it will be in the act of striking the Son that Satan will be defeated! In the moment that Satan thought he had won- would turn out to be his undoing! In this battle between Satan and Christ, Jesus will win a convincing victory. First in his resisting temptation in the wilderness, and more fully in His resurrection from the grave and triumph over all the powers of darkness. As we specifically read in I John 3:8, the reason that the Son of God appeared was to destroy the works of the devil. So although Satan was able to sow discord in this world by tempting Adam and Eve, Jesus will secure reconciliation for us by crushing Satan and sin. All the powers of darkness will fall before Him the triumphant King! Yes there will be a cosmic warfare- a battle between good and evil- a fight between the woman and the serpent and their respective seed. But Jesus will win the victory for the woman- and it will be through a child of the woman that God’s people would be rescued! The only hope for lost humanity comes in the form of God sending a serpent crushing savior! He accomplished this as Jesus was sent to conquer the devil and defeat sin, death and hell! Our gracious God comes to trembling man and promises to give him His Son to crust the head of the serpent as our BC article says.

As we close, imagine that your child is drowning in a pool. If you see your child floundering in the pool after you told them to stay out- would you leave them to suffer the consequence of their own rebellion- or would your love compel you to go and rescue your rebellious child? Well, our God graciously rescues us by sending His Son- born of a woman- who would crush Satan’s head! The gospel was proclaimed hot on the heals of the fall- the good news proclaimed as the fall was still on the wind- the Mother Promise spoken the first mother! The good news heard as soon as sin arrived! Praise God that He did not leave us to wallow in our sins! Praise God that He sent His Son to seek and save the lost! The arrival of Jesus Christ to defeat sin is revealed in the Mother Promise. As I Cor. 15 puts it; He must reign until He has put all enemies under His feet! Praise God that Jesus has crushed the head of the serpent to make us blessed! And it is His birth- the arrival of this snake crushing savior- that we celebrate on Christmas Day!