Teacher's Guide

1. God promised a savior to resolve the problem of sin (Genesis 3:15)

"I will put hostility between you and the woman, and between your offspring and her offspring. He will bruise your head, and you will bruise his heel." (Genesis 3:15, WEB)

Background

- In Genesis 3:1-12, Adam and Eve commit the first-ever sin. Genesis 3:15 is part of God's response. He addresses the problem of sin and alludes to the solution -- a singular individual (the Messiah), who will resolve the problem of sin.
    - In Genesis 2:17, God gives the first law: Do not eat from the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil; doing so will lead to death.
    - Adam and Eve eat from the tree, in disobedience to God, committing the first sin.
    - God responds with Genesis 3:14-15, addressing the problem of sin and alluding to a promised solution, a *He* (the Messiah) who will confront the serpent (Satan), as in deal with the problem of sin.
    - Later in the Bible, in 1 Chronicles 21:1, we get the name *Satan* as a way to refer to this entity (the serpent) that tempts people to sin.
- Genesis 3:15 is called the *protevangelium*, which means *first Gospel*, and is the first and oldest Messianic prophecy in the Old Testament of the Bible.
    - The prophecy in Genesis 3:15 was given by God during the dawn of human history. It was later committed to writing, in the book of Genesis, by Moses about 3,400 years ago (about 1400 BC).
    - All other Messianic prophecies follow the same template of Genesis 3:15, by speaking of a singular individual who would address and resolve the problem of sin, to reconcile people with God**.**
- The context for understanding Genesis 3:15 includes all verses leading up to it, especially Genesis 2:17 and Genesis 3:1-3:12.

    - Genesis 2:17 is the first passage to speak of the cost of sin, which is death. It is the first to link sin with death.

- The two main themes of the Old Testament are the **Problem of Sin**, which separates humanity from God (Isaiah 59:2), and the **Promise of a Solution** – the Messiah, who reconciles people with God (Isaiah 53, John 3:16). Genesis 3:15 is the first time that God addresses both themes together.

Examine, analyze and understand

1. Who is the speaker in Genesis 3:15?
    a. God is the speaker.
2. Who is the *you* in this verse?
    a. The serpent from Genesis 3:1-14, who, as we learn later in 1 Chronicles 21:1, is Satan.
3. Who is *the woman*?
    a. Eve, the mother of humanity.
4. Who is *your offspring*?
    a. The followers of Satan.
5. Who is *her offspring*?
    a. The offspring of Eve, as in all of humanity.
6. Who is the *He,* in the ultimate sense?
    a. In the ultimate sense, the He points to the Messiah, who as we learn later in the Bible, especially in Isaiah 53 (Isaiah 52:13-53:12) is the one who is anointed to resolve the problem of sin for the benefit of humanity.
7. What problem is God responding to when he speaks the words of Genesis 3:15?
    a. He is responding to the problem of sin, just after Adam and Eve committed the first sin.
8. How do the verses leading up to Genesis 3:15, especially Genesis 2:17 and Genesis 3:1-12, provide a context for understanding Genesis 3:15?
    a. Genesis 2:17 is the first law given by God: Do not eat from the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil; doing so will lead to death. Genesis 3:1-12

explain that Adam and Eve break this law and will die a physical death because of it.

9. How do we know that the *He* is the Messiah?
    a. Genesis 3:15 is part of God's response to the single biggest crisis in the Bible, which is the problem of sin, and he alludes to the single biggest solution, a *He* who would confront the serpent (Satan), who tempts people to sin. Deductively speaking, the biggest problem requires the biggest solution – the *He* must be the promised Messiah.
10. **Bonus Round:** How does Genesis 3:15 establish a pattern that all 300-plus Messianic prophecies in the Old Testament follow?
    a. It speaks of an individual who suffers injury.
    b. He suffers injury in a context of dealing with the problem of sin.
    c. He suffers for the benefit of the other descendants (offspring) of Eve, meaning his suffering benefits humanity.

This Bible Study is based on Ray Konig's "301 Prophecies Fulfilled by Jesus". The book is optional but helpful. Free resources, including a summary of all 301 prophecies, are available at zealization.com/301.html