

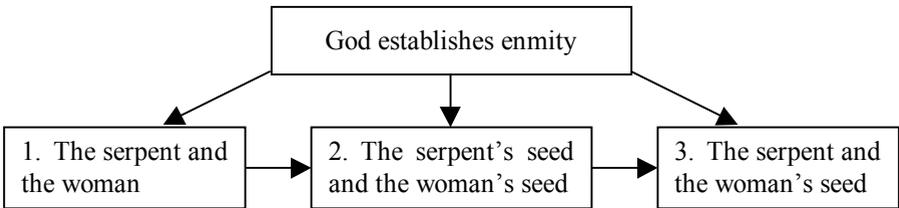
ANALYSIS OF “ENMITY” IN GENESIS 3:15

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ENMITY OF GEN 3:15 IN TERMS OF THE EXEGESIS OF THE IMMEDIATE CONTEXT

The elements of Gen 3:15 can be grouped into three categories: The three parts to the “enmity” in Gen 3:15 are illustrated below:



To elaborate, God is the source of enmity. Firstly, He establishes enmity between the serpent and the woman. Then, this enmity is passed on to the serpent’s seed and the woman’s seed. Finally, the enmity reaches its climax between the serpent and the woman’s seed.

GOD THE ORIGINATOR OF ENMITY

The final form of the story gives readers the analysis of the process of temptation, through suggestion of doubt, superior wisdom of the serpent, who knows how to deny God’s directives, and promise wisdom through the artistic, intellectual, and useful appeal of the “forbidden fruit”.¹ In Gen

¹ W. Caldwell, “The Doctrine of Satan: 1. In the Old Testament”, in *Biblical Word* 41 (1913), p. 31.

3:15a, וְאֵי יָבִחַ אֶשְׂתִּית, (“And I will put enmity”), the Qal imperfect of the root verb שָׁתַּת (“to place”), refers to a future action of God. In context, the enmity is to be introduced by God. How soon the enmity will come into effect may be unclear, but the imperfect expresses an action, a process, or a condition, which is incomplete. In this verse, the imperfect refers not only to an action, which is about to be accomplished, but one that is not yet begun.

William Ralston suggests that enmity has already taken place prior to the judgment. He argues that, in the old Palestinian story, the serpent was already in a form of a god, a god who was at enmity with the God of the garden, jealous both of His ownership of it, and of the man and woman who lived in it. Ralston says that enmity, jealousy, and deceit already existed before the judgment.² Other scholars have suggested that the serpent story is a pagan idea that had been used in an earlier source. The writer, therefore, thought the story was highly dangerous to the basic polytheistic understanding of God, which Israel had brought with them from the desert.³ Ralston’s interpretation suggests that enmity did not originate with God. But, looking at the text, the Lord God is portrayed as the originator of this hostility, and the enmity came into effect when God placed a curse upon the serpent, the woman, and the man.

The word עָרִים (“subtle”) implies that the serpent showed wisdom.⁴ From the woman’s perspective, the serpent seemed to occupy a prominent place. For example, the serpent was convincing in its argument. To the woman, the serpent seemed to be a life renewer and restorer.⁵ But, because God had put enmity, the woman will come to see the serpent as a life destroyer, rather than life renewer. Whatever the serpent may have meant to earlier versions of the story, in its final form, the writer makes reference to the Lord God as the originator of enmity.

² H. Ralston, “That Old Serpent”, in *The Sewanee Review* 81 (1973), pp. 402-404.

³ C. S. Wake, “The Origin of Serpent-Worship”, in *Journal of the Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland* 2 (1873), p. 376.

⁴ H. Blocher, *In the Beginning*, (Nottingham UK: IVP, 1984), p. 150.

⁵ F. Hviderg, “The Canaanite Background of Gen I-III”, in *Vetus Testamentum* 10 (1960), p. 287.

According to the biblical account, the serpent is a creature and not a god. The Lord God did not set out to put enmity between His creatures (serpent and woman). He created them to live in harmony. The serpent, being an animal, is punished in the story.⁶ It is impossible to imagine the serpent talking, and yet it talks in the story. However, the serpent of Gen 3:15 is not a “fanciful character”, even if not “invented by the ancient author”. He has based it on a figure, which played a prominent part in the worldview of his time.⁷ The serpent was seen as a god, at the time of the writing of Genesis. By God establishing enmity, and cursing the serpent, the prominent character of the serpent is diminished.

The reader can certainly see wisdom and evil, or opposition to God, embodied in the serpent, in the temptation story. In terms of animal symbolism in the OT, the snake was an obvious candidate for an anti-God symbol, since the serpent openly contradicted the divine warning (3:4-5).⁸ The name for serpent became the name for magic. The Arabic word *hanash*, “to enchant”, and שֶׁנָּקָה “the serpent” are etymologically connected, and it simply meant that the enchanter, medicine man, or priest was as clever as a serpent.⁹ The noun שֶׁנָּקָה, “serpent”, is linked to the word שֶׁנָּקָה “to hiss”, i.e., a sound the snake makes to show aggression. It, therefore, shows that the serpent was against God, or disapproved God’s commands. Because of the serpent’s aggression towards God’s directives, God initiated the woman to hate the serpent by establishing enmity.

God created Adam and Eve in His image (Gen 1:26-27), but now they attempt to make themselves to be, in the words of the serpent, “like God”.¹⁰ It is also because of this malicious spirit, controlling the serpent’s body and

⁶ S. R. Driver, *The Book of Genesis*, 6th edn (London UK: Methuen, 1907), p. 47.

⁷ R. G. Murison, “The Serpent in the Old Testament”, in *American Journal of Semitic Languages and Literature* 21 (1905), p. 129.

⁸ M. Emmrich, “The Temptation Narrative of Genesis 3:1-6: A Prelude to the Pentateuch and History of Israel”, in *Evangelical Quarterly* 73 (2001), p. 11.

⁹ Murison, “Serpent in the Old Testament”, p. 118.

¹⁰ J. Katz, “The Social Psychology of Adam and Eve”, in *Theory and Society* 25 (1996), p. 547.

speech that God puts enmity between the serpent and the woman.¹¹ In the Garden of Eden, the snake was known for its intelligence, knowledge, and power (Gen 3:1-6). The serpent, which was believed to be full of wisdom, and the source of healing, was now to be hated, rather than respected, because it spoke and acted against God.¹² From God's perspective, putting enmity was the only reasonable and satisfactory response to the serpent's action.¹³

This animal does not appear to be an ordinary animal. It is endowed with the capability of speech, and is inspired with wisdom – being able to predict the effect of eating the forbidden tree. In some sense, the serpent is more knowledgeable than man. It acts like a person, talks like a person, reasons like a person, and so, effectively, has personhood.¹⁴ The serpent is used as a medium of impersonating a human, through which the power of temptation can be brought to bear.

Besides Gen 3:1-6, Num 22:28 contain a reference to “bestly speech” (Balaam's ass). Num 22 affirms the miraculous ability of an animal to speak. In both texts, the animals exhibit a deeper understanding of the relationship between God and man than Eve and Balaam.¹⁵ Christians may argue that, if the Lord opened the mouth of the ass (Num 22:28), then, the serpent's mouth was opened by another power, probably Satan. However, the OT provides us with little information on which to build an understanding of the devil. In reading this story in its own terms, the serpent should not be identified as Satan. However, this identification is made in later sources.

¹¹ H. M. Morris, *The Genesis Record* (Grand Rapids MI: Baker Book House, 1976), p. 19.

¹² D. E. Burns, “Dream Form in Genesis 2:4b-3:24”, in *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament* 37 (1987), p. 8.

¹³ Murison, “Serpent in the Old Testament”, p. 18.

¹⁴ D. Sheriffs, “‘Personhood’ in the Old Testament? Who's Asking”, in *Evangelical Quarterly* 77 (2005), p. 21.

¹⁵ G. Savran, “Bestly Speech: Intertextuality, Balaam's Ass, and the Garden of Eden”, in *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament* 64 (1994), p. 33.

Satan emerged as a rebellious being, jealous of humanity, and as the primary foe of both humanity and God. Satan gradually became a useful way to explain sin and suffering. Nestor Rilloma says that, in the book of Jubilees, the prince of evil spirits is called “Mastema”, which means the “prince of enmity”. According to Rilloma, Satan, or “Mastema”, and his followers, rebelled, and, as a result, were punished and expelled from heaven to earth.¹⁶ Christians also see the serpent as an agent of the devil (Satan).

God had made the woman and man to hate the serpent, because God Himself was the ultimate lifegiver, but the serpent brought death. The snake was attributed to life, according to other ANE societies.¹⁷ God spoke the truth, but the serpent lied. It was through the wisdom of the Lord God that the world was created, but it was through the deceitfulness of the serpent that disaster came to the world.¹⁸ The act of placing enmity was out of God’s love for His creation. God showed His love to the woman by placing the spirit of “hatred” and “hostility” between her and the serpent.

Enmity Between the Serpent and the Woman

In context, the serpent of the story is not the Satan of the later portions of the OT (Job 1:6; Zech 3:1; 1 Chron 21:1). It is one of the creatures of the earth, though more subtle and clever than any other (Gen 3:1). The idea of the serpent representing evil does not come from the text, because God created the serpent. Gen 3 is not yet prepared to accept the explanation of the serpent as a satanic agency.

Although the serpent tempts Eve to eat, it does not itself even touch and eat the forbidden fruit. Its task is to urge the woman to opt for knowledge, by taking advantage of one element in the garden that the Lord God does not control (the possibility that Adam and Eve would eat from both trees).¹⁹

¹⁶ N. C. Rilloma, “Biography of the Devil: An Alternative Approach to the Cosmic Conflict”, in *Journal of the Adventist Theological Society* 13 (2002), p. 140.

¹⁷ D. J. Thomas, “‘D. H. Lawrence’s Snake’: The Edenic Snake Inverted,” *College Literature* 13-2 (Spring 1986), p. 200.

¹⁸ Hviderg, “Canaanite Background”, p. 289.

¹⁹ Burns, “Dream Form”, p. 8.

The serpent forces the Lord God to issue curses.²⁰ The serpent's distance from human beings is made definite after it receives the punishment, and the enmity is placed between them.²¹

The first occurrence of enmity is between the serpent and the woman: וְאֵי־בָח אֲשֶׁר־יִתְּ בֵּינִי וּבֵין הָאִשָּׁח (‘‘And I will put enmity between you and the woman’’, Gen 3:15.) This is hostile strife between Eve, herself, and the serpent, itself. God established this enmity, because the serpent and Eve had formed a relationship, because Eve subscribed to the lies of the serpent. The serpent's attempt to establish a relationship with the woman resulted in a ‘‘pitiless and never ending enmity between them’’.²² The enmity that was placed came out of God's mercy towards Eve, though she believed the serpent's accusation of the command of God.²³ This is because she was deceived. The woman gave in to the subtlety of the serpent, and, being first deceived, had drawn her husband to take part (Gen 3:1-6).

Without enmity, the woman and the serpent would have been friends, and she would continue to believe his lies. Without enmity, she would rely on the promises of the creature, rather than trusting God. She would continue to trust in, and communicate with, the serpent, and she would continue to have doubts about God's love and wisdom.²⁴ The serpent would also continue to arouse desires, and incite to disobedience.²⁵ This then, would indicate some victory for him.²⁶

²⁰ T. Stordalen, ‘‘Man, Soil, Garden: Basic Plot in Genesis 2-3 Reconsidered’’, in *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament* 53 (1992), p. 22.

²¹ Katz, ‘‘Social Psychology’’, p. 550.

²² J. Skinner, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on Genesis* (New York NY: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1910), p. 79.

²³ J. Calvin, *Commentaries on the First Book of Moses Called Genesis*, J. King, tran. (Edinburgh UK: Bibliolife, 1923, trans out of Latin into English by T. Tymme, 1578), p. 167.

²⁴ A. J. Ferch, *Genesis: In the Beginning* (Hagerstown MD: Review & Herald, 1985), p. 43.

²⁵ Blocher, *In the Beginning*, p. 142.

²⁶ D. G. Barnhouse, *Genesis: A Devotional Exposition* (Grand Rapids MI: Zondervan, 1973), p. 23.

However, the declaration of enmity carries a far deeper meaning. Eve had found, in her experience, that the serpent had deceived her, and caused her ruin.²⁷ She would, therefore, withdraw from him, as a “dangerous and deadly enemy”.²⁸ According to Fritsch, this enmity was natural. It was fixed, confirmed, and with clear understanding between the serpent and the woman.²⁹

Enmity Between the Woman’s Offspring and the Serpent’s Offspring

The second part of the enmity is between the woman’s seed and the serpent’s seed. Gen 3:15: וְכִן יִרְעֶךָ וְכִן יִרְעֶתָ (“And between your seed and her seed”). The רֵעַ (“seed”) comes from the root רָעַע meaning to sow; and, figuratively, it means to “disseminate”, “plant”, or “fructify”.³⁰ In the LXX, it is rendered as σπέρμα, meaning “lineage”, or “descent”.³¹

Biologically, it is, of course, a fact that the male, not the female, passes the seed, although there is a famous accidental crux in Heb 11:11, which refers to Sarah producing seed.³² Adam’s role in this passage in Gen 3 is not mentioned, but the idea remains that, because רֵעַ is progressive, Adam, as a husband, has a part to play in producing רֵעַ (Gen 1:28). In fact, the usage of the concept of the seed of the woman is not unique to Gen 3:15. In Hebrew, the noun, רֵעַ can be used as both a singular and a plural, depending on the context of the passage. The word appears in the Hebrew Bible 230 times (see Table 1 below).

²⁷ R. Jamieson, A. R. Fausset, and D. Brown, *Genesis-Esther: A Commentary: Critical, Experimental, and Practical*, 13 vols (Grand Rapids MI: William B. Eerdmans, 1978), p. 1:56.

²⁸ Ibid.

²⁹ C. T. Fritsch, *The Book of Genesis*, Layman’s Bible Commentary, 25 vols, (Atlanta GA: John Knox Press, 1978, reprint), p. 2:33.

³⁰ Brown, Driver, Briggs, s.v. “רֵעַ”.

³¹ S. Z. Schulz, “σπέρμα”, in *TDNT*, pp. 7:536-538.

³² See J. Irwin, “The Use of Hebrews 11:11 as Embryological Proof-Text”, in *Harvard Theological Review* 17 (1978), pp. 312-316.

Table 1: The Range of Meanings of the Noun עֵרֶבֶת.

Hebrew	Meaning	Number	Examples
עֵרֶבֶת	Part of a plant's fruit, from which a new plant will grow	27	Gen 1:11, 12, 21, 24; Ps 65:9-13; Deut 14:13, 18
	The sowing seed	2	Gen 8:22; Jos 3:15; Ps 67:6; Jer 5:24; Zech 14:18
	Field crops and grain	11	Gen 47:24, 26; Deut 14:28, 29
	Progeny/offspring	182	Gen 6:20; 7:3
	Semen	8	Lev 15:32

Whenever the noun עֵרֶבֶת is used, the term is implicitly plural, which is similar to terms in the English language, such as chicken, fish, sheep, and so on. Yet, when it refers to an explicit or identified offspring, the word is always singular in the Hebrew Bible. Furthermore, when עֵרֶבֶת is used in reference to children in the Hebrew Bible, it refers exclusively to progeny, i.e., biological descendants.³³ So, the woman's offspring refers to godly descendants of the woman.

The term עֵרֶבֶת ("her seed") in Gen 3:15 denotes Eve's generic descendants, i.e., humanity, since Adam and Eve are considered the progenitors of humanity, as stated in the account of creation in Genesis. Theologically, the "seed" refers to godly human descendants of Eve. This verse would be understood as a situation or a condition of enmity between godly human descendants of Eve, and ungodly human descendants of Eve, who characterise the serpent.³⁴

The woman and the serpent are "representatives" of their descendants.³⁵ From this understanding, the hostility that commences with the woman and

³³ See *Jewish Publication Society Hebrew-English Tanakh* (Philadelphia PA: The Jewish Publication Society, 1999), p. 6.

³⁴ Woudstra, "Recent Translations of Gen 3:15", p. 194.

³⁵ J. H. Sailhamer, *Genesis*, The Expositor's Bible Commentary, 12 vols, F. E. Gaebelin, ed. (Grand Rapids MI: Zondervan, 1990), p. 1:55.

her deceiver is to be continued by their descendants.³⁶ The reference made to the ages-long struggle serves as a constant reminder of the enemy serpent.³⁷ Every descendant must go through the path the woman went through, and the descendants of the woman should never reconcile with the descendants of the serpent.

In a literal sense, the verse describes the general idea that people will fear snakes, and will attempt to kill them by hitting them on the head. Snakes will fear people, and, will bit people on their feet.³⁸ However, the author of Genesis views the snake in terms that extend beyond a literal snake of the garden. The snake, for the author, is anti-God.

In this part of the passage, the snake is represented by its seed. The serpent's "seeds" represent those generations, who would be hostile to God and His law. Careful observation reveals that a program is being set forth, or a plot established, which will take the author beyond just the woman and the serpent. It seems likely that the author intended these words to be read as "programmatically and foundational for the establishment of the plot".³⁹

In the narrative, the concept of enmity now spreads. The two sides are represented by the two seeds. Throughout Genesis, the historical development of this hostility is progressive. In other words, this enmity unfolds in the following chapters of Genesis: the enmity between the serpent and the woman (Gen 3) spreads to enmity between Cain and Abel (Gen 4), which continues through Cain's godless line (Gen 4:16-24), and is counteracted by Seth's godly line (Gen 4:25-5:32).⁴⁰ The universal flood follows, but God preserves the seed family (Gen 7:21-2:2). God assures Sarah that she will bear a son, and the seed line will be preserved and

³⁶ T. Whitelaw, *Genesis*, Pulpit Commentary, 23 vols, H. D. M. Spence, and J. S. Exell, eds, reprint (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 1978), p. 1:66.

³⁷ *Great Texts of the Bible*, 20 vols plus index, *Genesis-Numbers*, J. Hastings, ed. (Grand Rapids MI: William B. Eerdmans, 1976), p. 1:91.

³⁸ P. Haupt, "The Curse on the Serpent", in *Journal of Biblical Literature* 35 (1916), pp. 161-162; see also Becker, *Messianic Expectation*, pp. 34-35; Sarna, *The JPS Torah*, p. 27.

³⁹ Sailhamer, *Genesis*, p. 56.

⁴⁰ See R. S. Hendel, "Of Demigods and Deluge: Towards an Interpretation of Genesis 6:1-4", in *Journal of Biblical Literature* 106 (1987), p. 24.

continued (Gen 17:15-19). God's seed people were doomed to starvation (Gen 42:1-2, cf. 43:8), but God was with Joseph, so the seed continued.

In summary, if Gen 3:15 is the skeletal framework of the enmity theme, a major part of the rest of Genesis is the fleshing out of this one verse and its related theme. In other words, the theme of enmity is developed throughout the book of Genesis. The structural analysis demonstrates that the beginning of the two seeds is to be found in the two sons of Adam and Eve – Cain and Abel. The enmity between them is on a “cosmic scale”, it is about the two seeds – the line of Cain (Gen 4:17-26) and the line of Seth (Gen 5).⁴¹

Later in Genesis, that enmity is reproduced in Noah and Ham. Ham's seeds grow to become the Canaanite nations, which opposed God's people. The same can be seen in Jacob and Esau. The two seeds then grow from just being family members to being nations. The theologically-significant use of the term “seed” is found in certain passages of Genesis that deal with the Abrahamic covenant (i.e., Gen 12:7; 13:15, 16; 15:3, 5, 13, 18; 17:7, 9, 10, 12, 19). A great many OT uses of **זָרַע** are in connection with God's covenant promises to the patriarchs.⁴²

You will Strike his Heel and He will Bruise your Head

The enmity described here **הוּא יִשׁוּפֶךְ רֹאשׁ וְאַתָּה תִּשּׁוּפֶנּוּ עֵקֶב** (“you will strike his heel and he will crush your head”, Gen 3:15) describes a confrontation between the serpent and the woman's seed. Just as the enmity began between one individual person (Eve) and the serpent, it will approximately reach its brutal climax with enmity between one (He: Eve's descendant) and the serpent. Just who is **הוּא** (“He”) can be ascertained from the rest of Genesis, which traces down the identity of this **זָרַע** or **הוּא** (Gen 12:3; 22:17-18; 49:10).

⁴¹ D. Spencer, “Protoevangelium of Genesis 3:15”, in *III Magazine* 2 (August 20, 2006).

⁴² L. O. Richards, *The Expository Dictionary of Bible Words* (Grand Rapids MI: Zondervan, 1985), p. 469.

Francis Schaeffer argues that the “seed” here should be considered a personal “he”. The one who is promised here is a person. He says a person will bruise Satan’s head, and, in doing so, will be wounded.⁴³ Surprisingly, the RSV translates אִיָּהּ as he. But the use of masculine pronoun in English is hard to defend. It is true that, in Hebrew, this word is a masculine singular personal pronoun, but this is required by the fact that Hebrew words have only masculine and feminine gender (in contrast to English, which has a neuter gender). The antecedent of אִיָּהּ (he) in Hebrew is זָרַע (seed). Grammatically, זָרַע is masculine, but often it is a collective noun, whose natural “gender” is neuter. The proper translation in English would be “it” or “they” (meaning the descendants of Eve).⁴⁴ “They” is probably better, because of the progressive development of זָרַע, as outlined in the previous section.

Upon the announcement of the fatal wound of the serpent, the serpent is left in the dark as to which person would be the seed, and at what time. Both Satan and Eve may have thought, initially, it would be her first-born son. As the centuries passed, attacks continued against males born in the promised line of the woman (e.g., Abel, Seth, Noah, Abraham, Jacob, and Joseph).⁴⁵

Concerning the result of the confrontation, various translations have been made of “crush” and “bruise”, with the understanding that one party in this conflict will receive a fatal blow, and the other a less-severe injury. For example, the exegesis of the early church found a protoevangelium, or messianic prophecy, in this verse; a reference to a final victory of the woman’s seed, Jesus, over Satan, on the cross. But this interpretation does not agree with the sense of the passage. As already noted, the word “seed”

⁴³ F. A. Schaeffer, *Genesis in Space and Time* (London UK: Hodder & Stoughton, 1972), p. 103.

⁴⁴ Martin, “The Earliest Messianic Interpretation”, p. 425.

⁴⁵ Morris, *Genesis Record*, p. 122.

should not be translated personally, but should be translated more generally with the meaning “posterity”.⁴⁶

The confrontation needs to be seen in a progressive way, because the “seed” of Gen 3:15 is generic. The enmity unfolds between Cain and Abel, Noah and Ham, Jacob and Esau, Jacob’s sons and Shechem, and Joseph and his brothers. When interpreting this confrontation, there are no shortcuts. The historical development of this confrontation in Genesis must be acknowledged. In Hebrew, the same word is used to describe what the woman’s seed will do to the serpent’s seed and vice versa.

Modern translations use the weaker word “strike”. Other translations use the stronger word “to crush”.⁴⁷ In the Vulgate, it is *insidiari* (“lie in wait for”), and, in the LXX, the verb **τηρέω** is used.⁴⁸ According to Johan Lust **τηρέω** means “to guard, to keep, to take care of”, and he further states that the future **τηρήσει** means “he will lie in wait”.⁴⁹ Also, according to Maraoka, **τηρέω** means “to watch”, or to “attack at an opportune moment”.⁵⁰ However, Brown, Driver, and Briggs uses the Hebrew word **קִישׁ**, and suggests that it may be closer to Hebrew **קִישׁ**, which means to “gasp”, “pant”, or to “pant after”.⁵¹

The concept of “strike” derives from the habit of the snake (recognised by the author) to bite its victim in the heel, or from behind, and that of mankind striking the head of the snake (i.e., with a stick). As mentioned earlier, the same verb is used to describe the attack upon the heel and the head, to show that destruction is aimed at both. But, though the bite of the serpent on the heel of a man, when the poison enters the blood, is quite dangerous, it need

⁴⁶ Von Rad, *Genesis*, p. 93.

⁴⁷ See *TWOT*, s.v. “קִישׁ”.

⁴⁸ See *TWOT*, s.v. “קִישׁ”.

⁴⁹ Lust, s.v. “**τηρέω**”.

⁵⁰ T. Maraoka, “**τηρέω**” in a *Greek-English Lexicon of the Septuagint* (Paris: Peeters, 2002), p. 555.

⁵¹ See Brown, Driver, Briggs, s.v. “קִישׁ”.

not be fatal. The crushing of the serpent's head, however, is completely destructive.⁵²

It is important to note that the enmity is progressive; it can be described as strife between the descendants of the woman and the serpent itself. It is the head of the serpent and not its seed that is to be crushed. The multitude of descendants on both sides will struggle. Outside of the immediate text, most Christian commentators argue that the actual crushing of the serpent's head would be accomplished by a single individual.⁵³ Such an interpretation may be legitimate in the wider biblical understanding, but the details of any climax in the conflict are not made explicit in Gen 3:15 itself.

CONCLUSION

Gen 3:15 is really the seedbed of the theme of enmity. All other enmities in Genesis are the fleshing out of this text. God had to put enmity, because of the malicious spirit controlling the serpent's body and speech. It was used as a medium through which the power of temptation was brought to bear.

The enmity was established between the serpent and the woman, because, without enmity, the woman and the serpent would be friends, and she would continue to believe its lies. She would rely on the promises of the creature, rather than God. The enmity was also placed between the woman's seed and the serpent's seed, because the enmity, which commenced with them, was to be continued by their descendants. The woman's descendants are those who were faithful to God. The serpent's descendants are, theologically, those who thought, spoke, or acted against God's directives. This enmity was meant to be progressive. It can be described as strife between the seed of the woman and the serpent itself.

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⁵² Jamieson, Fausset, and Brown, *Commentary*, p. 57.

⁵³ *Genesis*, Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary, p. 1:235.

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