

**TOPIC: BRUISED? CRUSH!**

God told Eve that her descendant would be bruised by the serpent, but would crush its head. As children of Eve we share in that promise. As the body of Christ we fulfill that promise. Been bruised? Now crush!

**KEY POINTS**

- ▶ Near the beginning of human history God made a decree, recorded in Genesis 3:14-15 (God’s Word Translation): “So the Lord God said to the snake, ‘Because you have done this, you are cursed more than all the wild or domestic animals. You will crawl on your belly. You will be the lowest of animals as long as you live. I will make you and the woman hostile toward each other. I will make your descendants and her descendant hostile toward each other. He will crush your head, and you will bruise his heel.’”
- ▶ We live in a fallen world, with many rocks, difficulties, people, sickness and hardships that can bruise us and leave us hurting.
- ▶ God Himself may allow us to go through a time of bruising, as with Job, but bruising also comes from paths we choose.
- ▶ Whenever we choose to just follow our own ways and not seek the ways of God, we usually encounter all sorts of bruising: emotional bruising, financial bruising, loss of precious time and sometimes physical bruising.
- ▶ There are ways that seem right to mankind. But they often turn out to be ways that lead to damage and death.
- ▶ By the time the prophet Isaiah began his ministry, the nation of Judah had gone far along their own path, away from devotion to God, away from obedience to God, away from holding God as important in their lives. As a result, they were experiencing every kind of bruising (see Isaiah 1:2-8).
- ▶ God has no pleasure in seeing us bruised, battered and beaten by our own bullheadedness, deaf ears and commitment to self-will. He has shown us the way of life and is always ready to help us to take it.
- ▶ Further on in Isaiah 1 we see God’s response to the condition of His people (Isaiah 1:16-20).
- ▶ When we turn to God, we experience the bruising turning into blessing. Listen to the promise God makes to His people in Isaiah 49:25-26:  
“But thus says the Lord: ‘Even the captives of the mighty shall be taken away, And the prey of the terrible be delivered; For I will contend with him who contends with you, And I will save your children. <sup>26</sup>I will feed those who oppress you with their own flesh, And they shall be drunk with their own blood as with sweet wine. All flesh shall know That I, the Lord, am your Savior, And your Redeemer, the Mighty One of Jacob.’”
- ▶ Our bruising is well deserved; but it has been accepted by another. We read about this in Isaiah 53. Verses 5-6 say:  
“But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; The chastisement for our peace was upon Him, And by His stripes we are healed. <sup>6</sup>All we like sheep have gone astray; We have turned, every one, to his own way; And the Lord has laid on Him the iniquity of us all.”
- ▶ But God says something beautiful to those who, acquainted with bruising, hardship and affliction, still trust in Him:  
<sup>11</sup>“O you afflicted one, Tossed with tempest, and not comforted, Behold, I will lay your stones with colorful gems, And lay your foundations with sapphires. <sup>12</sup>I will make your pinnacles of rubies, Your gates of crystal, And all your walls of precious stones. <sup>13</sup>All your children shall be taught by the Lord, And great shall be the peace of your children.

**KEY SCRIPTURE**

Genesis 3:14-15

<sup>14</sup>In righteousness you shall be established; You shall be far from oppression, for you shall not fear; And from terror, for it shall not come near you. <sup>15</sup>Indeed they shall surely assemble, but not because of Me. Whoever assembles against you shall fall for your sake” (Isaiah 53:11-15).

- ▶ Paul makes a very brief and powerful statement in Romans 16, echoing what God said in Genesis 3: “And the God of peace will crush Satan under your feet shortly. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you. Amen” (Romans 16:20 NKJV).
- ▶ It is purely by grace (nothing that we deserve) that God has given us a great privilege, a great power.
- ▶ He has allowed us to be baptized into the body of Jesus Christ. So, yes, in this life we will feel some of the bruising that came upon that body. We will feel the pain of a beaten back and a bruised heel. But with that wounded heel we can crush his head.
- ▶ Revelation 12:11 tells us that we overcome the evil one by the blood of the Lamb and the word of our testimony. The blood of the Lamb has already been given, and we can claim it every time we’re attacked, afflicted, or bruised. We can add to this the word of our testimony.
- ▶ Better yet, we can take as our testimony the Word of God. Jesus defeated the devil by quoting the Word of God (Matthew 4:1-11; Luke 4:1-13). We can too. We can crush his head with the heel of the Word.
- ▶ This Word is sure and is forever settled in heaven. You can declare it on Earth. Declare it, believe it, insist on it, live according to it. And see God’s will done on earth, as it is in heaven.
- ▶ Declare the Word of God, with confidence, with the power of God’s promise.
- ▶ Bruised? Maybe. But you have the power to crush!

**DISCUSSION/REFLECTION TOOLS**

1. Do all trials end as soon as we employ the Word of God? Examine the account of Jesus’ encounter with Satan after 40 days of temptation (see references above). What happened when Jesus used the Word?
2. Here are some “crushing scriptures” to declare (read through them together):  
Psalm 27:1; Romans 6:14; Isaiah 44:3; Isaiah 59:19; Isaiah 43:1-3; Isaiah 46:9; Psalm 91
3. Choose one of the scriptures above or another of your choosing and declare it before the group. Tell why this scripture is a “crushing scripture” for you.
4. Testify about a time that you were bruised, but you crushed the enemy by the help of God.
5. Share, if comfortable, a bruising you are currently experiencing, so others can help you to “crush” by their encouragement and prayer.

**Prayer Time**

Lord, thank you for the promise that I can be “down, but not out” because of the power of Your Word.

**WEEK OF SUNDAY, JUNE 11, 2017**

**NOTES**

Meditate as you read through/listen to this week’s message. If it helps, use symbols for your notes.

- ✔ (Reminds me/Confirms)    💡 (New idea)    🧠 (Think about)
- ⊗ (Do this)    ❤️ (Speaks to my heart)    ↺ (Must share)

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L.G. Ice-Breaker: When you encounter an insect or small pest, do you kill it or ensure its safety? Does where you encounter it make a difference?