

Clear Distinction Ministries

Study Notes

Night #9: "The 2 Covenants: Kingdom Building!"

Satan's Special Objective Exposed!

- That war which began in heaven has been continued on our planet for many generations and at the very center of that war is a **struggle for obedience** either to God or to the Devil (*Rev. 12:7 & 12, 2 Cor. 10:3-5*). Note: What is God seeking to bring into obedience? "Every **THOUGHT**." Where are our thoughts held? **IN THE MIND**. What then is the desired prize of this war? The minds of men.
- Satan seeks the place and throne of God...*Is. 14:12-14, Ps. 48:1-2*
- In order to get that throne, he has attacked **THE FOUNDATION** of God's throne—His righteousness. According to the Bible, God's righteousness is transcribed in His commandments. Therefore, Satan's war, from the very beginning has been **AGAINST GOD'S COMMANDMENTS** (*Ps. 119:172*) and **CHRIST** who is the very embodiment of that righteous law (*1 Cor. 1:30 & Matt. 5:17*).
- It is not necessary that Satan attack the whole of the law in order to lead us into sin. He only needs to attack **ONE POINT** of the law...*James 2:10*
- The question now is, **which commandment is the special object of his attack and why?** What is it that Satan desires most? In the

wilderness, Jesus chose to identify Satan by His desire for

WORSHIP! What is it that Satan desires? **WORSHIP...*Matt. 4:1-11***

- According to the Bible, Christ is worthy of our worship because He is **OUR CREATOR. Thus, Biblical worship is intimately tied to our relation to Him as His creations. His power to create is in fact His power to redeem...*Rev. 4:11, Col. 1:13-17, Is. 43:1-3***
- Satan desires what? **WORSHIP!** But man was **CREATED** to worship his **CREATOR** alone! How do we identify Him? Genesis of course! “In the Beginning God created,” (*Gen. 1:1*). **Note: the 4th commandment is the only commandment in God’s law that identifies Him as our creator and thus it is the commandment that best invites our worship of Him!** if it is worship that Satan desires to rob God of then it is **this commandment** he must and has attacked. **Interestingly enough, the very commandment that begins with the word “REMEMBER” is the same commandment that the entire Christian world tries so hard to forget.** (More on this to come).
- How do we worship God? With the mind. What then must Satan seek to capture? **THE MINDS OF MEN! We are the products of our thoughts beloved. The kingdom of heaven is within us by the mind of Christ** (this fact does not deny a literal kingdom to come but highlights the importance of exercising our citizenship there even now by practicing our faith)...*Rom. 7:24-25, Pr. 23:7 & 4:23, Luke 17:20-21*

“Every organ of the body was made to be servant to the mind. **The mind is the capital of the body. The mind controls the whole man.** All our

actions, good or bad, have their source in the mind. **It is the mind that worships God** and allies us to heavenly beings. Yet many spend all their lives without becoming intelligent in regard to the casket [jewel case] that contains this treasure.”

(Mind, Character & Personality pg. 72.1-2)

“Truth and love for Christ must occupy **the citadel of the soul**. **There is God enthroned**, there is conscience obeyed, and God would have given you a place in His house better than of sons and of daughters.”

(Daughters of God pg. 139.2)

“...By indolence not only the moral strength is weakened, and the impulse of passion increased, but **Satan's angels take possession of the whole citadel of the mind** and compel conscience to surrender to vile passion.

We should teach our children habits of patient industry.”

(Child Guidance pg. 462.2)

- **THE MIND IS THE PRIZE!** How is it won? It is liberated by truth! It can be enslaved only by error...***Phil. 4:7-9, John 8:32***

War of the 2 Minds: 2 Covenants—2 Kingdoms:

- According to the Bible, the two covenants are an “allegory” or an object lesson designed to teach us something of God’s way of saving man...***Gal. 4:22-24***
- What do we learn from this allegory of two covenants?

- **The Old Covenant (represented by Hagar & the birth of her son Ishmael):** Hagar was an Egyptian slave, Ishmael was born of the flesh (representing our works), this produces only bondage, those who live by this covenant always become the persecutor, this covenant can be found at Mt. Sinai where Israel, in response to God's commandments said "all that the Lord has commanded **WE WILL DO,**" (*Ex. 19:8*).
- **The New Covenant (represented by Sarah & the birth of her son Isaac):** Sarah was a free woman, Isaac was born by the promise of God (not by our works but by faith), this produces only free people, those who live by this covenant are always persecuted by those who do not, this covenant is everlasting.
- **Note:** The two covenants are founded on **PROMISES** (*Heb. 8:6*). The old covenant is the promise of man to keep God's commandments (*Ex. 19:8*) but the new covenant promise, God's promise, is that **HE WILL** write that law in our hearts (*Heb. 8:6-10*). These are not dispensations of time (that is to say God didn't have an old plan and then when it failed to work He started a new one) they are conditions of the heart/mind. Any who have ever been saved have been saved, not by their own works or promises (old covenant) but **BY FAITH ALONE** (new covenant).
- The old covenant, our promise to God to be better and to do better, can never/has never worked. God made a promise (covenant) with Abraham that HE would make him the father of many nations. God did not ask Abraham to figure out how best to accomplish this task. God's covenant does not seek our working in out but our faith. instead, Abraham and Sarah, discouraged by the long wait for its

fulfillment, came up with ***a plan of their own devising to accomplish what God had promised***. This is the very essence of old covenant thinking and this is why the Bible uses the birth of Ishmael as an allegory to teach us... ***Gen. 15:1-6 & 16:1-4***

“If Abraham and Sarah had waited in confiding faith for the fulfillment of the promise that they should have a son, much unhappiness would have been avoided. **They believed that it would be just as God had promised, but could not believe that Sarah, in her old age, would have a son.** Sarah suggested **a plan whereby she thought the promise of God could be fulfilled**. She entreated Abraham to take Hagar as his wife. **In this they both lacked faith, and a perfect trust in the power of God.”**

(The Spirit of Prophecy pg. 95.2)

- Initially, **Abraham saw nothing wrong with this**. Notice, how the Lord returns after the birth of Ishmael and repeats His promise (covenant) to His servant. **Abraham’s desire was that Ishmael be the fulfillment of God’s promise, but God did not acknowledge Ishmael (the fruit of Abraham’s works) as the fulfillment of His promise** but repeated again His promise that Sarah his wife would bear Isaac... ***Gen. 17:15-22***
- It is important to note, that while the birth of Ishmael signified in allegory the entire old covenant principle, whereby men can never be saved, Ishmael, as a person was loved of God just as Isaac was. God’s desire is to save all men and all men may be saved if they come to Him. The old covenant principle can never save. We must

receive Christ by the faith (new covenant). The new covenant is only called such because it was the 2nd to be ratified by blood at Calvary.

A Preview of Earth's Final Crisis!

- In summary, **the Old Covenant: SYMBOLIZED BY THE BIRTH OF ISHMAEL**, REPRESENTS THE PROCEDURES OF AN APOSTATE CHURCH: **the building of God's kingdom & fulfilling of His promises by the power of man, according to the way and will of man.**
- In summary, **the New Covenant: SYMBOLIZED BY THE BIRTH OF ISAAC**, REPRESENTS THE PROCEDURES OF GOD'S TRUE & FAITHFUL CHURCH: **God's kingdom is built according to His own Way and His promises are believed by man and fulfilled by God!**
- **Which of these covenants is functioning in you today?** The final crisis over the building of God's kingdom will center in the very thing Satan has been fighting for, **WORSHIP. The seventh day Sabbath of the Lord testifies to His creative/redemptive power and is a sign of our allegiance to Him. Satan's plan is to tear it down and establish a sign of his own power in its place (more on this later). The final showdown is the battle for our WORSHIP...Dan. 7:25, 13:3-4, 8, 12 & 15, Rev. 14:9-12**

“The Sabbath will be the great test of loyalty, for it is the point of truth especially controverted. When the final test shall be brought to bear upon men, then the line of distinction will be drawn between those who

serve God and those who serve Him not. **While the observance of the false sabbath in compliance with the law of the state, contrary to the fourth commandment, will be an avowal of allegiance to a power that is in opposition to God, the keeping of the true Sabbath, in obedience to God's law, is an evidence of loyalty to the Creator.** While one class, by accepting the sign of submission to earthly powers, receive **the mark of the beast**, the other, choosing the token of allegiance to divine authority, receive **the seal of God.**”

(The Great Controversy pg. 605.2)