

## THE THIRD ANGEL'S MESSAGE - NO. 12

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The same text that closed the study last night will be our study for several lessons yet to come. Therefore if any part of the text should be passed over and you think it has not been explained yet or has not been noticed even, just bear in mind that we are not nearly done with the text yet and each part will come in in its place. Ephesians 2:13-18:

But now, in Christ Jesus, ye who sometime were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ. For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us; having abolished in his flesh the enmity ... for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace.

That is He did it to make peace. Peace is made and only by this means. And it is all "in himself." And He made this peace, "*that* he might reconcile both [Jew and Gentile] unto God in one body by the cross, "having slain the enmity thereby." The text says "thereby." The margin says, "having slain the enmity *in himself*"; the German says, "having put to death the enmity through himself"; "and came and preached peace to you which were afar off and to them that were nigh. For through him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father."

I would mention again, as I did last night briefly, that it is the separation, the enmity, that existed between Jew and Gentile that is considered here. It is true that the destruction of that separation and enmity is considered, the taking away of it is studied and explained, and also the means by which it is taken away and the destroying of it is told. But as we mentioned last night, Christ did not spend any time trying to get the Jew and the Gentile, as of themselves, reconciled among themselves. He did not begin by trying to get them to agree to put away their differences, turn over a new leaf and try to do better, and forget the past and let bygones be bygones. He did not spend two minutes on that, and if he had spent ten thousand years, it would have done no good, because this separation, this enmity, that was between them was only the consequence, the fruit, of *the enmity* that existed *between them* and God.

Therefore, in order effectually to destroy the whole evil tree and its fruit as it stood between these, He destroyed the *root* of the whole thing by abolishing the enmity between them and God. And having done so "he came and announced the glad tidings—*peace to you* who were afar off and to those near." Greek.

Thirteenth verse: Therefore, "Now, *in Christ Jesus*, ye who sometime were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ. For he is our peace who hath made both one." It is true that he made both Jew and Gentile one, but he first made *another* one, in order that these two, "both Jew and Gentile," might be one and before they could be made one. Therefore the "both" in this verse, that are made one, are not the "both" of verse 18. In verse 13 the two, the "both" are *God* and *man*, who is separated from God whether he be near or far off.

Therefore, first, he is our peace who hath made both *God* and *man* one and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between God and man, having abolished in his flesh *the enmity*; that is, the enmity which is in man against God, which is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. This He did in order that He *in Himself* of two should make one *new man*, so making peace.

The new man is not made of two men who are at outs, but is made of God and *the man*. In the beginning man was made "in the image of God." And that signifies a good deal more than the shape of God. One looking upon him would be caused to think of God. He reflected the image of God; God was suggested to whoever looked upon the man. *God* and *the man* were *one*. And God and the man would have always remained one too, had not the man hearkened to Satan and received his mind which is enmity against God. This mind that is enmity against God, when received by the man, separated him from God. Now they were *two and not one*. *And being separated from God and in sin, God cannot come to him Himself, for the man cannot bear the unveiled glory of His presence. "Our God is a consuming fire" to sin, and so for God to meet a man in that man's self or alone would be only to consume*

him.

Men in sin cannot meet God alone and exist. This is shown in Rev. 6:13-17. The great day when the heaven departs as a scroll when it is rolled together and the face of God is seen by all the wicked ones upon the earth, then “the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every bond man, and every free man, hid themselves in the dens and in the rocks of the mountains and said to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne and from the wrath of the Lamb, for the great day of his wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?” A man who is in sin, a man in and of himself, meeting God, would rather have a mountain upon him than to be where the unveiled glory of God would shine upon him.

Therefore, in order that God might reach man, and be joined to him once more; in order that God might be revealed to man once more, and that man might be once more in the place which God made him for, *Jesus gave Himself*, and God appeared in Him with His glory so veiled by human flesh that man, sinful man, can look upon Him and live. In Christ man can meet God and live, because in Christ the glory of God is so veiled, so modified, that sinful man is not consumed. All of God is in Christ, for “in him dwelleth all the fullness of the godhead bodily.” When Jesus came to bring man once more to God, He veiled this bright consuming glory so that now men can look upon God as He is in all His glory in Jesus Christ and live. Whereas, out of Christ, in Himself, alone, *no man* can see God and live. In Christ, out of Himself, no man can see God and *not* live. In Christ, to see God is to live, for in Him is life and the life is the light of men.

Thus God and man, by the enmity, were separate, but Christ comes between and in Him the man and God meet, and when God and the man meet in Christ, then those two—“both”—are *one*, and *there is the new man*. And “so,” and only *so*, peace is made. So that in Christ, God and man are made as one; consequently, Christ is the at-one-ment between God and the man. At-one-ment, making at one. Consequently, join the syllables together and He is the *atonement*. Oh, the Lord Jesus gave Himself and *in Himself* abolished the

enmity to make *in Himself* of *two*—God and the man—*one new man*, so making peace.

Now we come to the other “both” in verse 18: “That he might reconcile *both* [both Jew and Gentile] unto *God in one body*.” But what body is it in which He, Christ, reconciles “both” into God? His own, of course. His own, in which the at-one-ment is made. “Having slain the enmity thereby and came and preached peace to you which were afar off” to the Gentile, “and to them that were nigh,” that is, the Jews.

The Jews were nigh “for their fathers’ sakes.” As in themselves, on their own merit, the Jews were separated from God and were just as far off as the Gentiles. But God had made promises to their fathers and they were beloved for the fathers’ sakes. And they had the advantage, for to them pertained “the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service of God, and the promises.” In this sense, and for this cause they were nigh. And he preached peace to them *that were nigh*; they needed peace preached to them.

Thus “through him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father.”

Now let us follow this expression, that the enmity is destroyed in himself.

“Having abolished *in his flesh* the enmity”—having slain the enmity *in Himself*. *In Himself* of two, so making peace. It is all *in Himself*. No man can have the benefit of it except *in Him*. If there be those in the audience to whom this seems obscure and who would say, “I cannot see that” and would stand off and look at it as though it were something you would try to get hold of from without, I would say to such, You will never get it in that way. That is not the way it is done. It is *in Him* that it is done, not outside of Him. In Him only can it be known, not outside of Him at all. Surrender to Him, yield to Him, sink self in Him, then it will be all plain enough. Only *in Him* it is done, and only *in Him* can it be known. We are to study now how it was done in Him. And knowing this, we shall know how it is done for every one of us in Him.

First of all I would call especial attention to that

expression “in Him.” This expression is not used in the Scriptures and I shall never expect to use in any such sense as that it is in Him as in a receptacle or a reservoir to which we are to go and take out what we may need and put it upon us or apply it to ourselves. No, no, no! That is not it. It can never be gotten in that way. It is not there as in a receptacle to which we are to go and take out what we would have of him and enjoy it and apply it to ourselves and say, “Now I have got it.”

No, it is *in Him*, and we ourselves are to be in Him, in order to have it. We are to sink ourselves *in Him*. Our self is to be lost *in Him*. Then He *has us*. Only *in Him* it is. We find it *only* in Him. And even when we would get it in Him, it is only by being ourselves overwhelmed *in Him*. *Never* are we to think of going to get it there and take it *out of Him* and use it ourselves. Therefore where the Scriptures use the term “in Him,” it means only that to all. All is *in Him* and we get it by being ourselves *in Him*.

Many people make a mistake here. They say, “Oh, yes, I believe on Him. I know it is in Him and I get it *from Him*.” And they propose to take it *from Him* and apply it to themselves. Then soon they become quite well satisfied that *they* are righteous; *they* are holy, and they get so far along at last that in their estimation it is a settled fact that *they* are perfect and just *cannot* sin and are even beyond temptation. Such a view is certain to bring only such result, because it is *out of Him*. And it is *themselves* who are doing it.

But that is not the way. That is self still, because it is out of Christ. And “without Me,” that is, outside of Him, “ye can do nothing,” because ye are nothing. *In Him* it is and only in Him. And only as *we* are *in Him* can we have it or profit by it at all. The Scriptures will make that all plain. I thought best to set down this explanation so that in the studies that are to come of what is done *in Him* and what is given is *in Him*, we shall not make the mistake of thinking we are to find it in Him and take it out. No. We are to go to Him for it. There is where it is, and when we go to Him we are to enter into Him by faith and the Spirit of God and there remain and ever “be found in Him.” Phil. 3:9.

Turn to the book of Hebrews now and we will study the first two chapters for the rest of this present lesson. The

question now is, How did Christ abolish this enmity “in His flesh” “in Himself.” I will first state the argument in both chapters in order that we may cover the two chapters in the short time we shall have.

In these two chapters the one great thought is the *contrast between Christ and the angels*. I do not say that is all there is in the two chapters, but that is the one thought that is above everything else.

In the first chapter and up to the fifth verse of the second chapter is the first contrast; in the second chapter from the fifth verse to the end of the chapter is the second contrast.

In the first chapter and up to the fifth verse of the second is the contrast between Christ and the angels, *with Christ as far above the angels* as God is, because He is God. In the second chapter, from the fifth verse onwards, is the contrast between Christ and the angels, but with Christ as far below the angels as man is below the angels, because Christ become man.

There is the outline of the two chapters. That is the statement of the case. Let us read the chapter:

God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds; who being the brightness of his glory and the express image of his person and upholding all things by the word of his power.

Or, as the German reads, “Holding up all things by his powerful word.” That gives another turn to it; not simply the word of His power, but He carries all things, holds them up, by His powerful word. And we might pause a moment upon that one statement. How many things are held up by His word? All things. The world? Yes. The sun? Yes. All the starry heavens? Yes. Does the word that made them still hold them up? Yes. Can we be numbered among the “all things?” Assuredly so. Will He hold you up by His powerful word? That is the only way that he holds anything up.

Were you ever uneasy any time in your life, when you arose in the morning with the sun, for fear that the sun

would drop out of place before noon or before sundown? Oh, no. Were you ever uneasy when you arose with the sun for fear that *you yourself as a Christian* would slip out of place before sundown? You know you have been. Why were you not as uneasy as to whether the sun would drop out of place before sundown, fearing that that might slip out of place and fall as you were that you yourself would fall? Oh, of course *no one* ever thinks of any such anxious question as to why the sun does not fall. It is always there and will stay there.

But it is perfectly fair for the Christian to ask, Why is it that the sun does not slip out of his place? And the answer is, The “powerful word” of Jesus Christ holds the sun there and causes him to go on in his course. And *that same power* is to hold up *the believer in Jesus*. That same word is to hold up the believer in Jesus and the believer in Jesus is to expect it to do so, just as certainly as it holds up the sun or the moon. That same powerful word is to hold up the Christian in the Christian’s course, precisely the same as it holds the sun in his course. The Christian who will put his confidence upon that word that is to hold him up, as he puts his confidence in that word that holds up the sun will find that that word *will* hold him up as it holds up the sun.

If you think of this scripture tomorrow morning when you arise, you will think that God is holding up the sun. You will not wonder at it either; you will expect him to do that and will not be watching uneasily to see whether the sun will slip out of its place. No. You will simply go about your work with your mind upon the work and leave the holding up of the sun altogether to God, to whom it belongs. Also tomorrow morning when you arise with the sun, just expect that same powerful word to hold you up as it does the sun. Leave this part to God too, and go about your work with all your might and put all your mind upon your work. Let God attend to that which belongs to Him, and give your mind to that which He has given you to do. And thus serve God “with *all* the mind.” We cannot keep ourselves from falling. We cannot hold ourselves up. And He has not given us that task to do.

This is not contradicting the text that says, “Let Him that thinketh He standeth take heed lest He fall”

because in this way the man is relying upon God to hold him up and does not depend upon his own efforts. And he who constantly bears in mind that God is holding him up and that he *must* be held up is not going to be boasting of his ability to stand. If I had to be carried in here this evening, perfectly helpless and two or three of the brethren should have to stand here and hold me up, it would not be very becoming in me to say, “See how I can stand.” I would not be standing. I could not stand. Just the moment they should release their hold, I would fall.

It is precisely so with the Christian. The word of God says of the Christian, “To his own master he standeth or falleth. Yea, *he shall be holden up*; for God is able to make him stand.” Rom. 14:4. And the man whom God is holding up, who is trusting in God *to* hold him up, and knows that it is God alone who is making him stand—it is impossible for that man to begin to say, “I am standing now, and therefore there is no danger of my falling.” Is there any danger of a man’s falling while God holds him up? Of course not. It is only when he takes himself out of the Lord’s hand and begins to try to hold himself up and then boasts that he can stand, it is then that there is not only danger but the thing is done. He has already fallen. He takes himself out of God’s hand and he is bound to fall.

When he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high.

When did he sit down on the right hand of God? How long ago? Away back yonder, when he arose from the dead and went to heaven—nearly nineteen hundred years ago. But notice, He *had* purged our sins before He sat down there. “When He *had*”—past tense—“by himself purged our sins, sat down.” Are you glad of this? Are you glad that He purged your sins so long ago as that? *In Him* it is. *In Him* we find it. Let us thank Him it is so. The Word says so.

Being made so much better than the angels as he hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they. For unto which of the angels said he at any time, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee? And again, I will be to him a Father, and he shall be to me a Son? And again, when he bringeth in the first-begotten into the world, he saith, And let all the angels of God

worship him. And of the angels, he saith, Who maketh his angels spirits, and his ministers a flame of fire. But unto the Son he saith, Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever.

What is his name? What does the Father call him? God. “Thy throne, *O God*.” Then that is His name. How did He get it? Fourth verse: “As He hath *by inheritance* obtained a more excellent *name* than the angels.” You and I have a name that we have by inheritance. We may have four or five names, but we have only one name that we got by inheritance. And that is our Father’s name. And that name we have just as soon as we exist and just because we exist. By the very fact of our existence we have that name; it belongs to us by nature. The Lord Jesus “hath by inheritance” obtained this name of “God.” Then that name belongs to Him just because He exists. It belongs to Him by nature. What nature is His, then? Precisely the nature of God. And God is His name, because that is what He is. He was not something else and then named that to make Him that, but He *was* that and was called God because He is God.

A scepter of righteousness is the scepter of thy kingdom. Thou hast loved righteousness and hated iniquity; therefore God, even thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows.

The Father still speaking, says:—

And, thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth; and the heavens are the works of thine hands. They shall perish, but thou remainest: and they all shall wax old as doth a garment; and as a vesture shalt thou fold them up, and they shall be changed: but thou art the same.”

No change with Him. Notice the connection in these words: “They shall *perish*,” “thou *remainest*,” they shall *be changed*; thou art *the same*.” When these perish and pass away there is no passing away to Him—Thou remainest. When these are folded up and changed, there is no change in Him,—Thou art the same.

And thy years shall not fail. But to which of the angels said he at any time, Sit on my right hand, until I make

thine enemies thy footstool? Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation? Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip. For if the word spoken by angels was steadfast and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward; how shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him; God also bearing them witness, both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to his own will?

There is the contrast between Christ and the angels so far. And where is Christ in the contrast? Where God is, with the angels worshiping Him. And if an angel’s word was steadfast and received a just recompense of reward when it was disregarded, how shall we escape if we neglect the word of Him who is higher than the angels? How shall we escape if we neglect the word of God spoken by Himself?

Now turn to the other contrast. Ephesians 2:5—

For unto the angels hath he not put in subjection the world to come, whereof we speak.

There are those two worlds of which we spoke last night. God said, I will put enmity between man and Satan. And that gives man a chance to choose which world. We have chosen the world to come. Unto the angels hath He not put in subjection that world either; that is the thing He is talking about. The world to come which we have chosen is not put in subjection to the angels.

But one in a certain place testified, saying, What is man that thou art mindful of him? or the son of man, that thou visitest him?

Now what is the purpose, what is the force, of putting the word “but” in there? He has not put it in subjection to the angels, but He has said of man so and so. Does that suggest that He has put it in subjection to man? What do you think? Look at it again. “Unto the angels hath he not put in subjection the world to come, whereof we speak; *but*”—What part of speech is “but”?

A conjunction. A conjunction joins two parts of a sentence. But this is a peculiar kind of conjunction, a disjunctive conjunction. A juncture is a joining, conjunct is to join together; disjunct is to separate. Then here is a word that both joins and separates. It is a *conjunction* in that it joins the clauses; it is a *disjunctive* in that it separates the thoughts that are in the two sentences or clauses as the case may be.

Many people say, "I believe the Bible, but"; "Yes, I believe the Lord forgives sins, but"; "Yes, I confessed my sins, but." That "but" disjoins them from everything that they have said; it shows that they do not believe at all what they have said. What are the two things, then, that are separated by this "but" in Hebrews 2:6? First, who are the two persons who are separated by the "but"? One is the angels and the other is man. He has not put in subjection to the angels the world to come, but has put it in subjection to somebody and that somebody is *man*. Let us study it for that blessed truth.

But one in a certain place testified, saying, What is man that thou art mindful of him? or the Son of man, that thou visitest him? Thou madest him a little lower than the angels; thou crownedst him with glory and honor and didst set him over the works of thy hands: thou hast put all things in subjection under his feet. For in that he put all in subjection under him, he left nothing that is not put under him. But now we see not yet all things put under him. But we see Jesus.

Where do we see Jesus? "We see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels." There is the contrast again between Christ and the angels. In the other contrast we saw Jesus higher than the angels; here we see him lower than the angels. Why? because man was made lower than the angels and by sin went still lower even. Now "we see certainly as it is true that as Jesus was where God is, so certainly He has come to where man is.

There is another thought we want to put right with that. He who was with God *where* God is, is with man *where* man is. And He who was with God *as* God is, is with

man *as* man is. And he who was *one with God* as God is, is *one with man* as man is. And so certainly as *His* was *the nature of God* yonder, so certainly *His is the nature of man* here.

Let us read this blessed fact now in the Scriptures, and that will close the lesson for tonight. Tenth verse:

For it became him for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings. For both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all *of one*.

Christ sanctifies, and it is men who are sanctified, and how many are there of them? One. It was Christ and God in heaven, and how many were there of them? One in nature. How is He with man on the earth and how many are of them? One, "all of one."

For which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren, saying, I will declare the name unto my brethren, in the midst of the church will I sing praise unto thee.

That time is coming soon, when Christ in the midst of the church will lead the singing. Remember, this is Christ speaking in these quotations. "And again, I will put my trust in him." This is Christ speaking—through the Psalms, too.

And again, behold I and the children which God hath given me. Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; and deliver them, who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage. For verily he took not on him the nature of angels; but he took on him the seed of Abraham. Wherefore in all things it behooved him to be made like unto his brethren.

He who was one of God has become one of man. We will follow the thought further tomorrow night.