

Clear Distinction Ministries

Study Notes

Night #8: “**The Great Controversy—We Are At War!**”

Warring Messages in Heaven:

- The great controversy/war between Christ & Satan began in heaven and continues here on earth...**Rev. 12:7-12 & 17, Hos. 4:1-7**
- The Bible teaches that God’s ways are not the same as man’s ways. What does this mean? If we were to define “war” by our dictionaries what would we find there? We would find an accurate definition of what war is **according to the way that men wage war**. If God’s ways are **NOT** our ways then that definition cannot accurately apply here...**Is. 55:8-9**

““Whereunto,” asked Christ, “shall we liken the kingdom of God? or with what comparison shall we compare it?” [Mark 4:30](#). **He could not employ the kingdoms of the world as a similitude. In society He found nothing with which to compare it.** Earthly kingdoms rule by the ascendancy of physical power; **but from Christ's kingdom every carnal weapon, every instrument of coercion, is banished.**”

(Acts of the Apostles pg. 12.2)

“In matters concerning the kingdom of Christ no compulsion or forcing of conscience is permitted. No blood is to be shed, no force of

arms employed, no prison is to be opened for the incarceration of one who does not choose the kingdom of God and his righteousness. Christ will accept only of the voluntary service of the heart which has been sanctified through the truth.”

(The Review & Herald March 26th 1895 Par. 5)

- What then was the nature of this war? That depends of course on the armies themselves. The Bible says it was a war between Michael (a name which means “Who is like God”) and the Dragon, “that old serpent called the Devil and Satan.” Who else was involved? Their “angels.” The original Greek word here for angel is “aggelos” which means “**MESSENGER**.” In other words, the war in heaven, wasn’t an armed conflict of bombs or swords and tanks as we understand war to be but a conflict of **OPPOSING MESSAGES** concerning what God is actually like.
- It is important to note that the opposing objectives in this war was to 1) secure allegiance and obedience to God or 2) to start rebellion through disobedience. The same controversy continues today...**2 Cor. 10:3-6, Eph. 6:12-13, Rom. 6:14-18**
- Satan has always sought to make rebels out of men, to lead us into disobedience of God and the worship of some other god. He led Adam and Eve into disobedience (**Genesis 3**), he led Cain to disobey God’s commands and kill his brother Able (**Genesis 4**), he led the entire world to reject God’s offer of mercy and rebel in Noah’s day (**Gen. 8**), in the days of Elijah he led all of Israel to rebel against God’s law and worship the sun-god Baal (**1 Kings 18**), in the days of Daniel he led men to persecute God’s servants for worshipping the

one true God (***Daniel 3 & 6***), in the days of Christ he tried the same and Christ was able to identify Satan in his disguise **BY HIS DESIRE FOR WORSHIP THAT BELONGS TO GOD ALONE** (***Matt. 4:1-11***).

The evidences are scattered all throughout the word of God.

- It was the throne of God that Satan (then called Lucifer) desired...***Is. 14:12-14, Ps. 48:1-2***
- In order to win any war, one must have an accurate understanding of his enemy's strategy. **What was Satan's plan/strategy to gain the throne of God?** The Bible says that God is **RIGHTEOUS** (***Ps. 11:7, Ps. 145:17***). Satan's strategy is to destroy **THE FOUNDATION** of God's throne (***Pr. 11:3***). That foundation is **HIS LAW** (***Pr. 16:12, Ps. 119:172***). The only way any can keep God's law is if they have an accurate understanding of that law (***Ps. 119:34***). Therefore, Satan worked and is working today to distort man's view of God's law. In order to secure obedience, Christ must do the opposite (***Matt. 5:17***).

"The warfare against God's law commenced in heaven. Satan was determined to bring God to his ideas, his way, to force Him to change the law of His government. This was the cause of the war in heaven.

Satan worked upon the sympathies of the angelic host by his deceptive attitude, but he was expelled from heaven, and **now he is determined to carry out on this earth the plans [he] instituted in heaven."**

(Manuscript Releases Vol. 12 pg. 37.1)

The 4 Essentials of Successful Government:

- In order to function properly, all government demands these 4 essentials: 1) **Law** which provides a systematic structure or way of life, 2) **Order** which is the fruit of obedience to just laws, 3) **The Governor** who determines/declares the laws that govern, 4) **The Governed/Citizens** who enjoy protection in obedience to the law.
- God's law is not as man's laws (*Is. 59:1-2*). **They do not originate in the same way.** Nor do the consequences of breaking them occur in the same way. His law is exceedingly broad (*Ps. 119:96*) and yet Christ simplified it so beautifully for us. God's law is **LOVE** (*Matt. 22:35-40, Rom. 13:8-10*).

“But in heaven, service is not rendered in the spirit of legality. When Satan rebelled against the law of Jehovah, **the thought that there was a law came to the angels almost as an awakening to something unthought of.** In their ministry the angels are not as servants, but as sons.

There is perfect unity between them and their Creator. **Obedience is to them no drudgery. Love for God makes their service a joy.** So in every soul wherein Christ, the hope of glory, dwells, His words are re-echoed, **“I delight to do Thy will, O My God: yea, Thy law is within My heart.”**

Psalm 40:8.”

(Thoughts from the Mount of Blessing pg. 109.2)

“The exercise of force is contrary to the principles of God's government; He desires only the service of love; and love cannot be commanded; it cannot be won by force or authority. Only by love is love awakened. To know God is to love Him...”

(The Desire of ages pg. 22.1)

- **The facts:** 1) God’s law is LOVE. 2) He desires that service only. 3) That service of love CANNOT BE COMMANDED. 4) It can only be awakened by Love!
- In other words, obedience to God’s law of love never comes by “the spirit of legality.” **True obedience is always in response to Divine love!** In **demonstrating** that love to His creatures God 1)sets the **example** and 2)**gives us power to love in the same way (John 5:19)**. This law of love, therefore, is not a command as we know it but **a fixed and eternal principle of communion between Creator and creature**: the Creator being the Source and Demonstrator of love and the creature, beholding that love, is a receiver and reflector of the same. God is always the Initiator of this relationship!

“Is the Lord arbitrary in any of his ways? - No. **How do his laws originate?** - **They are His life**. Does the Lord sit down and devise laws, and say, “This is what I will impose upon the people? This will be a good thing for them, and I will impose it upon them, and if they don’t do it I will cut them off?” - **No. The Lord is life, and His life is law**. His life is always the same, and it can never be any different from what it is. **God’s law is as it is, just because He is, and He cannot be other than He is.”**

(GCDB March 8th, 1897 pg. 298.3)

“Whosoever, therefore, rejects His life, must as a necessary consequence have death. It cannot be otherwise. It is so because it is so. It is not arbitrary punishment put upon man, but there is nothing else that can be done. If a man will not have life, he must have death.”

(GCDB March 8th, 1897 pg. 298.3)

How the Law of Love Works:

- God is Love! He is the very personification of the life He expects of you and I and He leads us by His own example...**1 John 4:8**
- Our entire duty is to keep that law of love. In other words, God made you and I to Love and to be loved...**Ecc. 12:13**
- Love creates. God did this through Christ, His Son...**Eph. 3:9, Col. 1:16-17**
- All that God creates is to serve/minister to some other life. For example, Christ created the sun and the sun ministers to the created trees, which minister to the created family by producing fruit, and the created family minister back unto the trees by planting and gardening and upkeeping them. All praise returns to God who maintains and upholds all things by Christ...**Heb. 1:3, Acts 17:28**

“But turning from all lesser representations, **we behold God in Jesus. Looking unto Jesus we see that it is the glory of our God to give!** “I do nothing of Myself,” said Christ; “the living Father hath sent Me, and I live by the Father.” **“I seek not Mine own glory,”** but the glory of Him that sent

Me. [John 8:28](#); [6:57](#); [8:50](#); [7:18](#). In these words is set forth **the great principle which is THE LAW OF LIFE for the universe**. All things Christ received from God, but **He took to give**. So in the heavenly courts, **in His ministry for all created beings: through the beloved Son, THE FATHER'S LIFE FLOWS out to all; through the Son it returns**, in praise and joyous service, a tide of love, to the great Source of all. And thus, **through Christ THE CIRCUIT OF BENEFICIENCE** is complete, representing the character of the great Giver, the law of life.”

(The Desire of Ages pg. 21.2)

“In heaven itself this law was broken. Sin originated in self-seeking. Lucifer, the covering cherub, **desired to be first** in heaven. He sought to gain control of heavenly beings, **to draw them away from their Creator**, and to win their homage to himself. **Therefore, he misrepresented God, attributing to Him the desire for self-exaltation**. With his own evil characteristics he sought to invest the loving Creator. **Thus he deceived angels. Thus he deceived men**. He led them to doubt the word of God, and to distrust His goodness. **Because God is a God of justice and terrible majesty, Satan caused them to look upon Him as severe and unforgiving. Thus he drew men to join him in rebellion against God**, and the night of woe settled down upon the world.”

(The Desire of Ages pg. 21.3)

“To live for self is to perish. Covetousness, the desire of benefit for self's sake, **cuts the soul off from life**. It is the spirit of Satan to get, to draw to self. It is the spirit of Christ to give, to sacrifice self for the good of others. “And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal

life, and this life is in His Son. He that hath the Son hath life; and **he that hath not the Son of God hath not life,**" 1 John 5:11-12."

(Christ's Object Lessons pg. 259.1)

God Is...	His Law Is...
Love ...1 John 4:8	Love ...Rom. 13:10
Good ...Luke 18:10	Good ...1 Tim. 1:18
Holy ...Is. 5:16	Holy ...Rom. 7:12
Perfect ...Matt. 5:48	Perfect ...Ps. 19:7
Pure ...1 John 3:2, 3	Pure ...Ps. 19:8
Just ...Deut. 32:4	Just ...Rom. 7:12
True ...John 3:33	True ...Ps. 19:9
Spiritual ...John 4:24	Spiritual ...Rom. 7:14
Righteous ...Jer. 23:6	Righteous ...Ps. 119:172
Faithful ...1 Cor. 1:9	Faithful ...Ps. 119:86
Unchangeable ...James 1:17	Unchangeable ...Matt. 5:18
Eternal ...Gen. 21:33	Eternal ...Ps. 111:7-8

TO ATTACK THE ONE IS TO ATTACK THE OTHER! SATAN WELL KNOWS THIS AND CONTINUES THIS WAR TODAY.