

THE THIRD ANGEL'S MESSAGE. - NO. 11

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We shall begin this lesson with the verse we were studying last night: James 4:4. And I desire especially that everyone shall look at the verses himself and study carefully what they say. In the times in which we are and the place to which we have been brought by the evidences that we cannot avoid and against which it is impossible to shut our eyes, I know that I never entered upon a Bible study in my life as I do upon this one tonight, and I desire that all shall surrender every faculty to the guidance of God's Spirit, with the whole spirit surrendered to God, that He Himself may lead us where He wants us to go.

Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? Whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God.

We wish to notice particularly the question, "Know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God?" It follows therefore that the only possibility of any soul in this world ever being separated from this world and thus from Babylon is to have that enmity destroyed. For, I say again, the friendship of the world is not *at* enmity with God. If it were, it could be reconciled to God by taking away that which had put it *at* enmity with God. But it is not that; *it* is the thing itself—it *is enmity*." And that enmity against God, that which is enmity with God, puts us *at* enmity with Him. Men may be reconciled to God by having the enmity taken away, but the enmity itself can never be reconciled to God. And mankind, whom the enmity puts at enmity with God, are reconciled to God merely by taking away the enmity itself.

We have the key to the whole situation in the fact that the friendship of the world is enmity with God. "The friendship of the world," and "the enmity" are identical; a man cannot have the enmity without the friendship of the world, for that is it—the friendship of the world is in it.

Therefore I say yet again: The only hope of a man's being separated from the world as the Scriptures demand and as our times demand as never before in the world (if there could be any difference) is by having that enmity taken away. That is all we are to seek for; that is all there is to be done, for when that is gone we are free.

In the eighth chapter of Romans this same thing is referred to, beginning with the seventh verse. "Because the carnal mind" or as it is literally in the Greek, "The mind of the flesh is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law

of God, neither indeed can be." That makes emphatic the thought presented in connection with the other text, that there is no possibility of that enmity being reconciled to God. Nothing can be done with it but to take it away, to destroy it. Nothing can be done *for* it at all; something may be done *with* it, but nothing can be done *for* it: and for the reason that it is against God; it is *not subject to the law of God*, neither indeed *can* be. It cannot be subjected to the law of God. God Himself cannot make the carnal mind the mind of the flesh, subject to His law. It cannot be done. This is not speaking with any irreverence toward the Lord or limiting His power, but it cannot be done. God can destroy the wicked thing and all that ever brought it, but He cannot do anything *for* it, to reform it or make it better.

"So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God." Yet this world is of the flesh altogether: "But ye are not of the world" "for I" says the Lord "have chosen you out of the world." He has separated the Christian from the flesh, from the ways of the flesh, from the mind of the flesh and from the rule of the flesh. This separates from the world by separating us from that which of itself holds us to the world. Nothing but the power of God can do that.

Now let us trace a few moments the record of the time when God made man. Genesis 2. When God made man, God Himself pronounced him, with all the other things He had made, not simply good but "very good." Then man, the first Adam, Adam as he was, was glad to hear the voice of God. He delighted in His presence; his whole being responded joyfully to His call.

But there came another one into the garden and cast distrust of God into the minds of these. The serpent said unto the woman, Humph! Has God said you shall not eat of every tree of the garden? She said, We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden, but of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God said Ye shall not eat of it neither shall ye touch it lest ye die. The serpent said, "Ye shall not surely die; for God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, ye shall be as God, knowing good and evil." That is the Hebrew of it, and the Jew's translation of it also and the Revised Version, if I remember correctly.

The insinuation was to this effect: God Himself knows that that is not so, and He knows that it is not so that He has told you; this shows that there is something back of that. It shows that He is not dealing fairly with you. He does not want you to be where this will bring you. He does not want you to have what this will give you. He knows what this

will do for you and not wanting it to be so, that is why He says, Do not do that. His suggestions were taken and as soon as they were entertained, she thought she now saw what before she did not see and that which in fact was not true. As the Lord made them and intended they should remain, they were to receive all their instruction and all their knowledge from God. They were to listen to His word, to accept that word and allow it to guide them and to live in them. Thus they would have the mind of God; they would think the thoughts of God by having His word, expressive of His thoughts, dwelling in them. But here another mind, directly the opposite, was attended to. Other suggestions were accepted. Other thoughts were allowed. Other words were received, surrendered to, and obeyed so that “the woman saw that the tree was good for food.” Was the tree good for food? No. But by listening to those words she saw things that were not so. She saw things in a way that they were not seen before and never could have been seen in the light of God. But yielding to this other mind she saw things in a false light altogether. She saw that the tree was good for food and a tree to be desired to make one wise. It was no such thing. She saw it so, though.

This reveals the power of deception that there is in the words and the ways of Satan who made those suggestions at that time. As certainly as one inclines his mind that way or has anything in his mind that would of itself incline that way, this gives Satan a chance to work and cause that person to see things in the wrong way, to cause him to see things as being the only necessary things, which are not true at all and not only are they not necessary, but are absolutely false in every respect.

When Eve “saw” all this, it was only the natural consequence. “She took of the fruit thereof and did eat and gave also unto her husband with her, and he did eat.”

Look at the record a little further. Eighth verse: “And they heard the voice of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God.” What was the cause of that? There was something about them that would avoid the presence of God, something that was not in harmony with God and caused them to hide themselves rather than to welcome Him.

“And the Lord God called unto Adam, and said unto him, Where art thou? And he said, I heard thy voice in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked; and I hid myself. And he said, Who told thee that thou wast naked?” Now the question: “Hast thou eaten of the tree, whereof I commanded thee that thou shouldest not eat?” And he said, Yes, I have, and I am inclined to think that it was not exactly right and I am sorry. Did he? Oh, no. The question is, “Hast thou eaten of the tree whereof I commanded thee that thou shouldest not eat?” Hadn’t he eaten of it?

Certainly he had. Why didn’t he say, Yes? As to that “why,” I will go on a little further with the lesson and then ask this question again and then we can all see why.

He did not answer, Yes. Though that is all the answer there was any room for. But he said, “The woman whom thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat.” It came in at last, admitting that he was involved in it. But whereabouts did he come in? The last possible place. The woman, and even the Lord Himself, must come in for the blame before the man could allow himself to come into it at all. In all this he was simply saying, in substance, “I would not have done it if it had not been for the woman, because she gave it to me; and if the woman had not been here, she would not have done it; and if you had not put the woman here, she would not have been here. Therefore if she had not been here, she would not have given it to me, and if she had not given it to me, I would not have done it. So, of course, as a matter of fact, I did eat, but the responsibility is back yonder.” What was it in him and about that that would lead him to involve everybody else in the universe before himself and before admitting that he had any part in it at all? Nothing but *love of self, self-defense, self-protection*.

“And the Lord said unto the woman”—another clear question: “What is this that thou hast done?” And she said, Oh, I took of the tree and I ate of it and I gave it to my husband and he ate and it is too bad. No. She said no such thing. Mark: Still answering the question, “What is this that thou hast done?” (He did not ask, “Who did it?” but “What is this that thou hast done?”) “And the woman said, The serpent beguiled me, and I did eat.” She answered the question the same way that he did. The same thing caused her to dodge the question and involve somebody else that caused Adam to do that. Everybody else must come in but themselves.

Now I ask again, Why did they not answer the straight question straight? *They could not do it*. And they could not do it because the mind with which they were actuated, which had taken possession of them, which held them in bondage and enslaved them under its power is the mind that originated self-exaltation in the place of God and never will allow itself the second place even where God is. We all know that that is the mind of Satan, of course. But back when he started we know that the thing that caused him to reach the position where he stood at this time was exalting himself.

He turned away his eyes from God and looked to himself, gave himself credit for great glory, and the place where he was was not large enough for him and he must exalt himself. “I will exalt my throne above the stars of God. . . . I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the Most High.” That was sin. The Lord called upon him to

forsake his sin and his wrong course, to turn to God, to accept the ways of God once more. We know that that is so, because it is written, "God is no respecter of persons." There is no respect of persons with God. And as the heavenly family and the earthly family are all one family, as God is no respecter of persons, and as when man sinned, God gave him a second chance and called upon him to return—as certainly as there is no respect of persons with God, so certainly God gave to Lucifer a second chance and called upon him to return. That is settled. He might have forsaken his course; he might have forsaken himself and yielded to God. But instead of yielding he refused that call, rejected God's gift, refused to turn from his ways and to surrender to God once more. And in that he simply confirmed himself, in spite of all that the Lord could do in that self-assertive course. And thus *the mind which is in him*, thus confirmed in sin and rebellion against God is *enmity*—not simply at enmity; it is enmity itself: "It is not subject to the law of God, *neither indeed can be.*"

Now *that mind* was accepted by Adam and Eve. And being accepted by them, it took in the whole world, because they, in that acceptance, surrendered this world to Satan and thus he became the god of this world. Accordingly that is the mind of this world; that is the mind that controls the world. This mind of Satan, the mind of the god of this world, is the mind that controls mankind as mankind is in and of this world and is *in itself* "enmity against God, for it is not subject to the law of God, *neither indeed can be.*"

Now that is why Adam and Eve could not answer that straight question straight. Men could answer that question straight now. But at that time they could not, for the reason that Satan had taken them under his dominion and there was no other power to control them. His control was absolute and there *at that moment* was "total depravity." But God did not leave him there. He did not leave the race in that condition. He turns next and says to the serpent, "I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel." Thus there are *two enmities* in this world: one is from Satan and is enmity against God; the other is from God and is enmity against Satan. And through these two *enmities* come the two mysteries—the mystery of God and the mystery of iniquity.

This enmity against Satan is the righteousness of God, of course. In this saying, "I will put enmity between thee and the woman," God broke the bond of Satan over the will of man, set man once more free to choose which authority he would follow, which king and which world he will have. In this word God broke the absolute dominion of Satan and set the man free to choose which world he will have. And since that time the man who will choose God's way and yield his will to the control of God can answer a straight question unto the Lord, so that when the Lord comes and asks, Did

you do so and so? he can answer, Yes, without bringing anybody else into it at all. This is confession of sin. And thus came the ability to confess sin and reveals the blessed truth that the power to confess sin—repentance—is *the gift of God.*

Now the mind of Satan being the mind of this world, the mind that controls the natural man, is enmity against God, and it puts man *at* enmity with God. It cannot be reconciled to God, "for it is not subject to the law of God, *neither indeed can be*" The only thing to be done is to get it out of the way in some way. If that can be done, then the man will be reconciled to God, then the man is all right. He will be once more joined to God and God's word, God's thoughts, God's suggestions can reach him once more to be his guide and his all-controlling power. And as the *thing* cannot be reconciled to God, the only thing that can be done with it is to destroy it. Then, *only* then, and by that means can men be at peace with God and separate from the world. And thank the Lord He has given us the glad news that it is *destroyed.*

As to how it is done and how we can have the benefit of it, that will come in other studies. I count it glad news that God sends us that the thing is done. Then as to leading us into the benefit of it, the joy of it, the glory of it, and the power of it, that will be for the Lord to lead us. We know that this enmity—this mind of self and Satan—separated man from God, but God opened the way for man to return. The Lord gave man a chance to choose which world he will have. And this is the whole subject of our study. We are to leave this world if we are going to get out of Babylon at all. It was to give man a chance to choose which world, that the Lord said to Satan, "I will put enmity" between thee and the seed of the woman. And therefore the only and everlasting question is—which world? Which world? Which world shall a man choose? And when God in His wondrous mercy has opened the way and given us the power to chose a better world than this, why should there be any kind of hesitation?

Turn to the second chapter of Ephesians beginning with the first verse and let us read the good news that the enmity against God is destroyed so that all may be free. Beginning with the first verse:

And you hath he quickened who were dead in trespasses and sins; wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience.

We walked according to that spirit. What spirit is it that rules in the children of disobedience? The spirit that controls the world, the mind that originated the evil in the garden and that is enmity against God. Who is the prince

of the power of the air? The spirit that worketh in the children of disobedience, the god of this world—who has nothing in Jesus Christ, thank the Lord.

Among whom also we all had our conversation [our way of life] in times past, in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind.

The mind of this world, being of this world, naturally falls into the ways of this world. “And were by nature the children of wrath, even as others.” We *were*.

Before reading further in Ephesians, turn to Colossians 1:21. You “were sometimes alienated and enemies in your mind.” Then where did the enmity lie that made us enemies? In the mind, the fleshly mind. The mind of the flesh is enmity and it controlling us makes us at enmity and enemies—“By wicked works.”

Now Ephesians 2:11: “Wherefore remember, that ye being in time past Gentiles is the flesh, who are called Uncircumcision”—by the Lord?—No, but “by that which is called the circumcision in the flesh made by hands.” Then here are some men in the flesh calling other men in the flesh certain names, making certain distinctions between themselves.

That at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world.

Another passage in connection with that is in the fourth chapter, 17th and 18th verses, which we will read before reading further here:—

This I say therefore and testify in the Lord, that ye henceforth walk not as other Gentiles walk, in the vanity of their mind, [that is, in the idolatry of their mind], having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart.

Those who are in the flesh, far off from God, are walking in the vanity of their mind, are alienated from God and are separated from the life of God. Enemies in the mind; that is what we were. Reading again in Eph. 2:13: “But now”—When? I mean that. I mean we who are now here studying the scriptures, we are to yield ourselves to the word of God exactly as it is, that it may carry us where He may want us. Therefore I ask, When?—Now, right where we are.

“But NOW, *in Jesus Christ*, ye who sometime were far off.” Far off from whom? Far off from God? or far off from the Jews? The previous verse says far off from God, “without God,” alienated from the life of God. “Ye who sometime were

far off [from God] are made nigh” to *whom*? To God? or to the Jews?—Nigh to God of course.

“Ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh to God by the blood of Christ. For He who is our peace, who hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us—that was between us—*having abolished* in his flesh *the enmity*.” Thank the Lord. He hath “abolished the enmity” and we can be separated from the world.

“Hath broken down the middle wall of partition between”—whom? Between men and God, surely. How did He do it? How did He break down the middle wall of partition between us and God? By “abolishing the enmity.” Good.

True, that enmity had worked a division and a separation between men on the earth, between circumcision and uncircumcision, between circumcision according to the flesh and *uncircumcision* according to the flesh. It had manifested itself in their divisions, in building up another wall between Jews and Gentiles—that is true, but if the Jews had been joined to God and had not been separated from Him, would they have ever built up a wall between them and anybody else? No, certainly not, but in *their* separation from God, in their fleshly minds, in the enmity that was in their minds and the blindness through unbelief which put the veil upon their heart—all this separated them from God. And *then* because of the laws and ceremonies which God had given them, they gave *themselves* credit for being the Lord’s and for being so much better than other people, that they built up a great separating wall and partition between themselves and other people. But where lay the root of the whole thing, as between them and other people even? It lay in the enmity that was in them that separated them first from God. And being separated from Him, the certain consequence was that they would be separated from others.

“For He is our peace, who hath made both one.” Made both *who* one?—God and men, certainly. “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* [of two] *one new man*, so making peace.”

Let us look that over again. “Having abolished in His flesh the enmity.” Now omitting the next clause (We are not studying that in this lesson.), what did He abolish that enmity for? What did He break down that middle wall of partition for? Why? “for to make in Himself of twain one new man, so making peace.” Does Christ make a new man out of a Jew and a Gentile?—No. Out of a heathen and somebody else?—No. Out of one heathen and another heathen?—No.

God makes one new man out of God and A MAN. And in

Christ, God and man met so that they can be one.

All men were separated from God and in their separation from God they were separated from one another. True, Christ wants to bring all to *one another*; He was ushered into the world with "Peace on earth; good will to men." That is His object. But does He spend His time in trying to get these reconciled to one another and in trying to destroy all these separations between men and to get them to say, "Oh, well, let all bygones be bygones; now we will bury the hatchet; now we will start out and turn over a new leaf and we will live better from this time on"?

Christ might have done that. If He had taken that course there are thousands of people whom He could have persuaded to do that; thousands whom He could persuade to say, "Well, it is too bad that we acted that way toward one another; it is not right, and I am sorry for it. And now let us just all leave that behind and turn over a new leaf and go on and do better." He could have got people to agree to that. *But could they have stuck to it?*—No. For the wicked thing is there still that *made the division*. What caused the division?—The enmity, their separation from God caused the separation from one another. Then what in the world would have been the use of the Lord Himself trying to get men to agree to put away their differences without going to the root of the matter and getting rid of the enmity that caused the separation? Their separation from God had forced a separation among themselves. And the only way to destroy their separation from one another was of necessity to destroy their separation from God. And this He did by abolishing the enmity. And we ministers can get a lesson from this, when churches call us to try to settle difficulties. We have nothing at all to do with settling difficulties between men as such. We are to get the difficulty between *God* and *man* settled and when that is done, all other separations will be ended.

It is true, the Jews in their separation from God had built up extra separations between themselves and the Gentiles.

It is true that Christ wanted to put all those separations out of the way and He did do that. But the only way that He did it and the only way that He could do it was to destroy the thing that separated between them and God. All the separations between them and the Gentiles would be gone, when the separation, the enmity, between them and God was gone.

Oh, the blessed news that the enmity is abolished! It is abolished; thank the Lord. There is therefore now no need whatever of our having any friendship with the world. No need of our having any lack of obedience to the law of God. No need of any failure to be subject to God, for Jesus Christ has taken the enmity out of the way. He has abolished it, destroyed it. He has destroyed the wicked thing in which lies friendship with the world, in which lies lack of subject to God and failure to be subject to His law. It is gone; *in Christ* it is gone. Not outside of Christ; *in Christ* it is gone, abolished, annihilated. Thank the Lord. This is freedom indeed.

That has always been good news, of course. But to me now, in view of the situation which God has shown us as we are now placed in the world, this blessed news has come to me in the last few days as though I had never heard it before. It has come to me bringing such joy, such genuine Christian delight, that—well, it seems to me I am just as happy as a Christian.

Oh, the blessed fact that God says that thing which separates us from God, which joins us to the world and which does all the mischief, is abolished *in Him, who is our Peace*. Let us take the glad news tonight, rejoice in it all the night and all the day, that God may lead us on further and further into the green pastures and by the still waters of His glorious kingdom into which He has translated us. "Fear not, for behold I bring you good tidings of great joy which shall be to all people. For unto you [unto *me* I know] is born this day in the city of David, a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord." Thank the Lord.