**The Genius of God's Plan**

(1 Timothy 4:1-2 KJV) Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils; {2} Speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron;

To depart from the faith means to be in apostasy, that is, to depart from the doctrine. This happens when one departs from the faith by giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils.

Seduce means "to draw away from the path of rectitude with the promise of physical delight." To seduce means to draw you away from the path of right living, doing what is right, staying in the faith and serving God with the promise of some physical delight.

Satan's policy of evil designed to cause you to depart from the faith and to become a part of Satan's program. There is a battle going on. Today, the battle is in a new arena.

In time past, when the Lord came to earth there was a battle with satanic opposition. God was forming a nation of people who were going to reclaim the earth. Satan was in opposition to what God was doing and he tried to destroy that people by inflicting them with sickness, disease and demon possession. In Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, there was a tremendous healing campaign by Christ, the 12 and the 70 who were sent out with power over the adversary who was inflicting the people. This conflict is in line with what God is doing: forming a nation of people to take back the earth.

Today, things have changed; God is no longer trying to restore the earth. God has introduced a new program: the mystery program. Prophecy has been interrupted and now God is forming the body of Christ, a spiritual body of believers formed by faith in the finished work of Christ where God, the Holy Spirit, takes that believing sinner who believes in the Lord Jesus Christ, baptizes him into the body of Christ and places him into a living union with the Lord Jesus Christ.

Today, the issue is not whether or not the kingdom is coming or if God is going to restore the planet. Now, there is a spiritual body, a spiritual issue and it is a spiritual battle. Today, in the dispensation of grace, what God is doing is forming the Body of Christ. This is what Satan is attacking today; he is opposing God in the forming of the Body of Christ.

The way we get in and function in the Body is by sound doctrine. Satan comes along and seduces many away from that sound doctrine. Satan does not care if you can quote the Bible; his main objective is to get you to depart from the faith (sound doctrine). Satan does not want you to quit believing the Bible; he just wants you to get away from the word rightly divided. There is a battle going on!

(Ephesians 6:11 KJV) Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.

God wants us to be able to stand against the attempts of the adversary to seduce you with doctrines of devils. Anyone that is grounded in the doctrines of the gospel of the grace of God (doctrine of the truth of the mystery) ought to be stabilized so they won't be tossed to and fro; they will be able to stand against Satan's attempts to seduce them with doctrines of devils.

The armor we put on today is doctrinal armor. It is not a physical armour because we are in a spiritual battle today.

(Ephesians 6:12 KJV) For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.

Have you ever seen a principality, a power or a ruler of the darkness of this world? No, these are all those things over in Colossian 1:16 that are invisible. The real battle today is a behind the scenes struggle. It is a conflict that is not visible except by the eye of faith. (Faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God.) You have to take the doctrines from the Word of God; it is having an understanding of what God is doing and knowing what God says is real - we are not fighting against flesh and blood. We understand we are fighting a spiritual battle by understanding the Word of God.

An Illustration of a real behind the scene conflict that is not visible except by the eye of faith:

(Isaiah 50:5-8 KJV) The Lord GOD hath opened mine ear, and I was not rebellious, neither turned away back. {6} I gave my back to the smiters, and my cheeks to them that plucked off the hair: I hid not my face from shame and spitting. {7} For the Lord GOD will help me; therefore shall I not be confounded: therefore have I set my face like a flint, and I know that I shall not be ashamed. {8} He is near that justifieth me; who will contend with me? let us stand together: who is mine adversary? let him come near to me.

Here is a picture of the behind the scenes battle. This passage is the prophecy of the Cross. In verse 7, we have the prophetic viewpoint of what was going on in the mind of Christ while he was going through the events leading up to the Cross and while on the Cross. In verse 8, as Christ hangs on the Cross, He taunts Satan. We do not see this when we read Matthew but it is there. There is a real battle behind the scenes. The conflict we face today is just as real; it is more than a physical conflict.

(Isaiah 14:14 KJV) I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the most High.

Satan's purpose is identified: he wants to be like the most High, the possessor of heaven and earth. Satan's goal (his purpose) is to take possession, rulership and authority over the heaven and the earth.

God had a purpose; in the beginning, He created the heaven and the earth. Lucifer saw that and said, "I can do it better." And he began to undermine God's authority and usurp the authority in heaven and earth from God. Satan began to exalt himself and make himself God.

God's response to Satan's plan:

(Ephesians 1:9-10 KJV) Having made known unto us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure which he hath purposed in himself: {10} That in the dispensation of the fulness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even in him:

God says He has a purpose and a plan. The secret of His will is that He will gather all the positions of rank and authority in earth and in the heavenly places under the headship of the Lord Jesus Christ and what Satan wants to do will not come about.

Now there is something about that issue of the mystery of the Father's will that I want you to appreciate:

God will take Israel and restore the planet back under the headship of the Lord Jesus Christ through the instrumentality of the kingdom. Christ will come back and set up the kingdom after the tribulation and restore the earth.

However, the body of Christ will be taken out before the tribulation and the positions of rank and authority in the heavens will be placed back under the headship of the Lord Jesus Christ through the body of Christ. When you and I go out at the rapture, we will go to the judgement seat of Christ and receive our commissions as to where we will be. We will be given a brand new body that will function in the heavenlies.

God has a purpose for Israel in which He will reconcile the earth and He has a purpose for the body of Christ in which He will reconcile the heavens. This is called the mystery and it is something God had planned before the foundation of the earth but did not tell anyone about it until He revealed it to Apostle Paul. Now this twofold purpose God has is in direct opposition to Satan's plan. The nation Israel and the Body of Christ are the two agencies God is going to use to thwart what Satan plan to be like the most High.

Satan had a wise plan: he was going to usurp God's authority and take over the heavens and the earth. Satan thinks he is wiser and better than God is. Satan went and sold his plan to the other angels. Some of the angels bought into the plan. God stopped the rebellion with a judgment so terrible and hideous: He created hell. God could have destroyed them at that moment but God had a purpose in the heaven and the earth when He first created it. In order for God to demonstrate His marvelous genius, which is what Satan was challenging - His wisdom not his power, God did something unexpected, he placed man on the earth.

In order to manifest His manifold wisdom, God had a plan. That plan has to do with putting a man on the earth. Man failed to obey God and was enlisted in Satan's plan. The LORD said, "I'll become a man and I'll do for man what man could not do for himself and I'll bring that kingdom in." This is the prophetic program.

Then God reveals another purpose, His secret purpose. Now God tells Satan he will take back all of the heaven and the earth. In the mystery, the genius of God is demonstrated in such a marvelous way.

(1 Corinthians 2:6-7 KJV) Howbeit we speak wisdom among them that are perfect: yet not the wisdom of this world, nor of the princes of this world, that come to nought: {7} But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world unto our glory:

God will bring the wisdom of this world, human viewpoint, to nothing. God will also bring Satan's wise plan to nothing. But we are able to speak the wisdom of God in the mystery, Why what we want to preach human viewpoint? Why what we want to be preaching the doctrines of devils? We have the wisdom of God in the mystery, even the hidden wisdom which God ordained before the world for our glory.

(1 Corinthians 2:7-8 KJV) But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world unto our glory: {8} Which none of the princes of this world knew: for had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory.

Why didn't any of the princes of the world know the mystery? God kept it a secret because if it was known what God was going to do Satan would not have crucified the Lord of glory.

God kept a secret and this secret was revealed to Paul. Had Satan known this secret, he would not have crucified the Lord of glory. The Cross of the Lord Jesus Christ is the very thing that gives God the ability to form the body of Christ, which is going to reconcile the heavenly places and to form the nation Israel which is going to restore the kingdom on earth. Without the Cross, none of this would be possible.

Satan reached the climax of his career of deception when he deceived himself at Calvary. God kept a realm of knowledge and information secret and that caused Satan to do the very thing that would bring about the complete destruction of his wise plan.

(Colossians 2:14-15 KJV) Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross; {15} And having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a show of them openly, triumphing over them in it.

The most shocked creature in the universe was Satan when Christ revealed the mystery to Paul. The Cross is the very thing that demonstrates the wisdom of God. By the time, Satan found out about what it accomplished, it was too late to do anything about it.

The mystery reveals that God had won when Jesus was nailed to that Cross. Satan watched as God poured out His wrath upon His Son. When Jesus said, "It is finished" and gave up the ghost, Satan thought he won. Then the resurrection happened but Satan had no idea what it meant.

The genius of God by keeping it is secret was taking the crafty in his own craftiness. The very thing that Satan used to bring about his victory is the very thing God is using to thoroughly defeat and destroy him. This is God's genius made manifest in the mystery.

(Romans 3:21-25 KJV) But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets; {22} Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference: {23} For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; {24} Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: {25} Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God;

But now (verse 21), with the revelation of this truth (the mystery revealed to Paul), we learn how God in time past forgave sins when a man brought the blood of bulls and goats, which could never have taken away the sin of anyone. But when a man realized he was a sinner and broke God's law and came God's way to have his sin forgiven, God honored that man's faith knowing Calvary was coming and Calvary would pay for it all. In the mind of God, Jesus Christ was sacrificed from *before*the foundation of the world and God, being God, could take that righteousness that came by Calvary and impute it to that man back there by faith. We can now understand the righteousness of God in doing this because of the mystery that was revealed to Apostle Paul.

No one in time past knew what God was going to do. If they were looking forward to Calvary then Satan also would have known about it. God had kept secret what He was going to do. *But now*, it has been revealed to and through Apostle Paul how God can forgive those sins that are past.

The word "forbearance" means an extension of time for the payment of the debt. We cannot understand this until we get the revelation from Paul. Paul tells us how the kingdom program will be brought to pass; it is because of Calvary. The blood is the basis for everything. What God revealed to Paul explains everything -- how God is going to accomplish the reconciling of the heaven and earth unto Himself through the Cross, the very thing Satan wanted to happen so badly.

from teaching by Richard Jordan