

PRESENT TRUTH

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Wherefore I will not be negligent to put you always in remembrance of these things, though ye know them, and be established in the present truth. (2 Peter 1:12 KJV)

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His Ultimate Intention

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Have you ever been involved in trying to understand something that seemed so big and complex that you had to break it down into smaller pieces? And then you get so involved with the details of the pieces that you forget about the bigger picture? We have some proverb type sayings that describe this, such as, “you can't see the forest for the trees”, or “its right under your nose but you can't see it”, or “blind to the obvious”. I, personally, like the one I heard in my business career: “when you are up to your neck in alligators, it is easy to forget that your original intention was to drain the swamp”.

This same affliction plagues believers. We get so involved in the details of what God is doing, we forget (or never know) about His original intention. We have received from God so many blessings, so many benefits, so many promises, so much revelation and knowledge that it is easy to become lost in the details and forget that God has a plan and purpose for all that He does and that His purpose began with His original, ultimate intention before the creation of man.

The Scriptures tell us that the Lamb was slain before the foundation of the world (Rev. 13:8). Why was it necessary for the Lamb to be slain before man was created? Think about the context in which such a statement would be made. This says that God had an ultimate intention before the foundation of the world that He intended to bring about or complete. In His foreknowledge, He knew that man would sin, that he would need a savior; therefore, God made provision to correct the sin problem before there was even a man to commit sin. Jesus offering His blood as an atonement was a part of the purpose of God before creation. It was a necessary part of God accomplishing His intention. The blood of Jesus was not an emergency add-on to fix a problem, but, instead, was a part of the original plan of God.

When God made Adam, he had the *potential* to fulfill God's ultimate intention, the reason or purpose for which man had been created. The obedience of Adam's heart was tested by a single, simple command of God. Adam failed by his disobedience, which resulted in him being cut off from God and losing the potential to fulfill God's intention for man. Therefore, God sent forth the Last Adam, the second man, to atone for the first Adam's sin (and our sin in him) and restore man to the *potential* of fulfilling God's intention. Unlike the first, the Last Adam had a heart of

obedience, which He learned by the things that He suffered (Heb. 5:8).

While salvation is necessary and blood atonement is necessary, this is not the ultimate intention of God, but, steps to restore man to a place where he can move into the fulfillment of God's intention. We must look beyond the trees in order to see the forest. While salvation and all of the things that accompany it are wonderful and necessary, they are means to an end, not the end itself. We must see that if we are to mature.

God's Ultimate Intention

The question is, what is God's ultimate intention? Our only source for insight into the thoughts of God are the Scriptures and their enlightenment by the Holy Spirit.

Hebrews 2:10 NASB For it was fitting for Him, for whom are all things, and through whom are all things, in bringing many sons to glory, to perfect the author of their salvation through sufferings.

Fatherhood is one of the eternal principles of the Godhead and, as such, will be reflected in all that God does. He has a paternal nature that is expressed in fatherhood and sonship. It is His intention to bring many sons to glory. That is the aspect of God's intention that relates to us individually. However, there is also a corporate aspect of God's intention.

Ephesians 1:10-11 NASB with a view to an administration suitable to the fullness of the times, *that is*, the summing up of all things in Christ, things in the heavens and things on the earth. In Him (11) also we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to His purpose who works all things after the counsel of His will,

It is God's ultimate intention that all things will be summed up (literally, headed up) in Christ. This occurs in the “fullness of the times”; that is, as time is fulfilled or completed. This has been predestined according to His purpose or intention. The completion of His intention is being worked out in time after the counsel of His own will.

This means that before the foundation of the world, God purposed in Himself to bring all things that He had created under the headship of Christ (headship is another eternal principle of the Godhead).

Ephesians 2:14-16 NASB For He Himself is our peace, who made both *groups into* one and broke down the barrier of the dividing wall, (15) by abolishing in His flesh the enmity, *which is* the Law of commandments *contained in* ordinances, so that in Himself He might make the two into one new man, *thus* establishing peace, (16) and might reconcile them both in one body to God through the cross, by it having put to death the enmity.

The “one new man” is the Body of Christ with Him as the Head. When Jesus walked the earth as a man, He was the “one new man” in miniature—a single body expressing the glory of the Father. Now, the “one new man” is in magnitude—a corporate body composed of many members expressing the glory of the Father.

In Ephesians, Paul is explaining his calling in Christ and what the Lord had entrusted to him as it relates to the Gentiles. Paul calls it a mystery that had been hidden to previous generations but

had now been revealed to the apostles and prophets. This makes it a uniquely New Testament revelation of mystery as it relates to the purpose of the Church (the *ecclesia*, the Body of Christ) and its becoming the “one new man”.

Ephesians 3:9-11 NASB and to bring to light what is the administration of the mystery which for ages has been hidden in God who created all things; (10) so that the manifold wisdom of God might now be made known through the church to the rulers and the authorities in the heavenly places. (11) This was in accordance with the eternal purpose which He carried out in Christ Jesus our Lord,

This mystery involves the revealing of the manifold wisdom of God, which, in accordance with His eternal purpose, was carried out in Christ Jesus. According to the scripture above, this is all being done to make the wisdom of God known to the rulers and the authorities in the heavens. God's instrument to do this is the “one new man”—the Church, the Body of Christ.

Now, the question becomes, why does the manifold wisdom of God *need* to be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavens? Don't the angels already know God's wisdom? Isn't this a given? Is it possible that something occurred or God did something that caused the heavenly rulers and authorities to question or possibly even doubt God's wisdom?

I think that the answer to these questions have to do with God's decision to create man and make him a son and an heir of God, which would include the idea of the Son of God laying aside His divinity and taking on the form of a man in order to redeem man and fulfill the purpose of God. What God is doing with man is not clear to the angels.

1 Peter 1:12 NASB It was revealed to them that they were not serving themselves, but you, in these things which now have been announced to you through those who preached the gospel to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven--things into which angels long to look.

Peter makes it clear that the whole purpose of the gospel and the sending of the Holy Spirit is not fully comprehended by the angels. That is why they desire to look into it. Could it be that this is one of the areas in which the wisdom of God is not fully known or understood by the angels?

The Scriptures tell us that man was made as an inferior creature.

Hebrews 2:5-7 NASB For He did not subject to angels the world to come, concerning which we are speaking. (6) But one has testified somewhere, saying, "WHAT IS MAN, THAT YOU REMEMBER HIM? OR THE SON OF MAN, THAT YOU ARE CONCERNED ABOUT HIM? (7) "YOU HAVE MADE HIM FOR A LITTLE WHILE LOWER THAN THE ANGELS; YOU HAVE CROWNED HIM WITH GLORY AND HONOR, AND HAVE APPOINTED HIM OVER THE WORKS OF YOUR HANDS;

[NOTE: *The NASB puts Old Testament quotes in all capitals, which is why the bulk of the verses above are in caps.*]

The writer of Hebrews is quoting from Psalm 8 concerning man and the son of man (Jesus). Man was made lower than the angels; that is, inferior to them. Even the Son of man was made lower than the angles. The Son of God humbled Himself, emptying Himself of His divinity and

assuming the form of a man, a servant, a creature inferior to the angels.

The phrase “for a little while” means for a period of time. Man has been made temporarily lower than the angels. Jesus humbled himself in the form of a man and was, temporarily, lower than the angels. It is God's intention that those who become like the Lord, conformed to His image, will rule with Him in the coming ages. Man will then be greater than the angels instead of lower.

It appears that this has become an issue with the angels and reflects upon the wisdom of God. Hebrews mention several things about the Son and the angels.

Hebrews 1:3-4 NASB And He is the radiance of His glory and the exact representation of His nature, and upholds all things by the word of His power. When He had made purification of sins, He sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high, (4) having become as much better than the angels, as He has inherited a more excellent name than they.

When Jesus sat down on the right hand of the Majesty, He was in His resurrected body and that body is the body, the physical likeness, of a man. We don't know what form the Son had prior to His incarnation, but afterward, He has the body of a man—a natural body that was planted as a seed and was raised a spiritual body of the same type and nature that we will have in the resurrection. Even though He was made a little lower than the angels by His incarnation, in His resurrection, He was made much better than the angels inheriting a more excellent name.

Now, the real question is, why even bring up anything about the angels? What do they have to do with this? The writer of Hebrews goes on to say several things about angels and contrasts them and their functions with the Son.

Hebrews 1:5 NASB For to which of the angels did He ever say, "YOU ARE MY SON, TODAY I HAVE BEGOTTEN YOU"? And again, "I WILL BE A FATHER TO HIM AND HE SHALL BE A SON TO ME"?

Hebrews 1:13 NASB But to which of the angels has He ever said, "SIT AT MY RIGHT HAND, UNTIL I MAKE YOUR ENEMIES A FOOTSTOOL FOR YOUR FEET"?

He makes it clear that none of the angels have the position of the Son; none of the angels will rule at the right hand of the Father while his enemies are made a footstool. Instead, the functions of the angels are clearly stated.

Hebrews 1:14 NASB Are they not all ministering spirits, sent out to render service for the sake of those who will inherit salvation?

The angels render service on the behalf of man, who are the ones that inherit salvation. The superior creature, the angels, serve the inferior creature, man and this by the will of God.

Why is this an issue? Why does the Hebrews' writer mention any of this? Isn't it a given that the Son is more excellent than an angel? It is like the writer of Hebrews is answering a question that we have not asked. We have to fit what is said in Hebrews into a context or structure that brings understanding about this. To do that we have to look at a bigger picture.

Is it possible that when Lucifer wanted to be as God and ascend to the throne of God, what he wanted was the place and position of the Son? That is what I think. But, God made man, an

inferior creature, with the intention that through the work of the Son, incarnate as a man, He would sum up all things in Christ—one new man, manifesting the glory of God.

That is why the writer of Hebrews brings up all of this about the angels, the Son, and man. The very wisdom of God hangs in the balance as the intention of God is unfolded in time. Yes, God has chosen an inferior creature; but, God created man in such a way that He, Himself, as the Holy Spirit can dwell in man and *make him capable* of fulfilling the purpose of God so that the excellency may be of God and not of ourselves.

Our destiny awaits us—that we might be a part of the glorious one new man. Let us enlarge our viewpoint and our understanding. We stand on the stage of time with all eternity watching the outcome, the resolution, the completion of God's ultimate intention. It is so much bigger than whether or not we go to heaven when we die. We have work to do. May the Lord enable us, empower us, and use us to His glory.

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