

## Identity Wars Study 9 – The Heart of Babylon

Review the story of king Hezekiah, son of king Ahaz, son of king Jotham (Kings of Judah)

- 2Kings 15:32-35; 16:1:4; 18:1-6.

Hezekiah's illness – 2Kings 20:1,6,21. Manasseh was born 3 years after Hezekiah's life extension. Manasseh became the worst king in Judah's history.

How often we hear of a good Christian couple whose children turn away from God! What happens, that a faithful couple who has received God's love, have to face the disappointment of having their children turn against them. Why?

- The emotions of knowing your children have rebelled against God can bring shame, grief, and confusion. What went wrong?

This exact thing happened to our first parents. Gen 4

- The tiny bundle of joy, received from God as a gift of love, grew up to become an enemy of God. Cain turned from God's ways, and before he knew it, his choice to live for himself led to him murdering his brother. The sad legacy of Cain's thinking and actions is the curse of worthlessness and misery found in people around the world.

His example, of conducting their spiritual experience on their own terms, has been adopted by people world wide both in our day and down through history.

The Bible term for those having their own form of spiritual experience is Babylon. In today's lesson we will trace the driving spirit behind this group of people and how it affects you and me.

What was the purpose of killing a poor innocent lamb?

1. It demonstrated what we were willing to do to God's Son to maintain our own spiritual experience.
2. It showed what God was willing to pay in order that we might see our true condition.

These two aspects of the sacrifice of the lamb were to lead us to repentance and to ask forgiveness.

- The sacrifices pointed to the reality of the sufferings of Christ at the present moment (sin hurts Christ – "In all our affliction, he is afflicted Isaiah 63:9).
- They pointed forward to the revelation of God's love in giving His Son into our hands thus revealing God's character. (Isaiah 53)
- It also pointed back to what humanity had done to Christ since the fall in Eden. (slain from foundation of the world – Revelation 13:8)

It was both a comforting reminder of God's love, while at the same time a painful reminder of our hatred of God.

How do people deal with those mixed feelings?

- Denial that there ever was a fall, or claim that it was God who required the death of His Son. In both instances, we remove the responsibility of the death of Christ onto God.

That which was supposed to inspire hope was turned into a symbol of manipulation which causes rebellion ("God you demand blood of innocent animals! Sick!").

How did misunderstanding the purpose of the sacrifices affect Cain?

- He didn't want to face the truth that his sin and hatred of God was reflected in the sacrifice of the lamb. This meant he avoided the conviction of sin.
- Cain misinterpreted God's exposing of his true nature, so that he might repent and be converted, as being God's disapproval and non-acceptance of him, and this led to rebellion.
- He replaced conviction of sin, which the death of the lamb evoked, with a works based form of worship, hoping that God would be pleased by his efforts and offering. Humble faith and acceptance of God's salvation plan was replaced by prideful display in worship.

Why didn't God respect Cain's offering?

- God's lack of respect for Cain's offering was symbolic of His unwillingness to accept pride and self exaltation as an offering of worship. Humans need a new heart, not a modified old heart. This requires an acceptance of God's diagnosis – Luke 5:32

In study no. 5 we looked at some of the emotional scars that come from family breakdowns.

- Constantly seeking approval
- Judge themselves too harshly
- Overact to situations over which they have no control – I.e. they are often very controlling
- Have trouble with relationships

What happened to Cain when he removed himself from God's plans for him?

- He felt distanced – blamed God
- Insecurity troubled him – no longer comforted by the Spirit of God
- He felt empty as his sense of shame increased

What did Cain do to remedy his situation?

- He became defensive, argumentative, and angry.
- He murdered his brother
- Denied his actions
- Went away claiming he could never be forgiven

Why is sin so illogical? Jer 17:9

Makes mountains out of a molehills. He didn't do what was required, then blamed God and Abel, killed Abel and rejected God's attempt at reconciliation.

How does God try to reconcile us? Jer 17:10; Gen 4:6, 7; Jer 17:23; Rom 3:20; Rom 5:20, 21

Making bread - what's more important, having the ingredients or using them? Who can you blame if you don't use all the ingredients, and the bread fails?

Each ingredient in the plan of salvation is vital. Appropriately accepting the recipe and following the guidelines towards the salvation of our souls is vital.

- Satan's plan has always been to mystify or veil the true process and meaning of salvation. Has he been successful?

Compare David's attitude to his sin. Psalm 139:23, 24; Psalm 51:1-12

Understanding the process of how God actually saves us is vital to be able to see the deceptive counterfeits Satan has set up as alternate methods of salvation.

- This is important, because the final showdown before Jesus returns to save His people will be the showdown between Babylon and the Bride of Christ.

Babylon has a method or methods of salvation which appeal to all the world, for all the world wonders after the beast. Any alternate method of salvation is acceptable by Satan as an offering to be presented before God.

- Sadly, at the end of time, these human centred offerings will not be acceptable to God because they do not teach us the truth about our spiritual state which would lead us to repentance and healing.
- The story of Cain is a vital lesson for us as we approach these last days, and as we observe the plethora of alternate religious experiences being offered to us by religions world wide.

As a result of rejecting God's plan for his life, Cain walked away, taking his empty and worthless heart with him. To compensate for this worthlessness, Cain adopted a new method of receiving value, to fill the emptiness: he went out and built a city. Gen 4:16, 17.

- In the city environment Cain was able to control people and find value in that as well. It was the descendants of Cain who eventually built the city of Babel and its tower.

The woman who sits upon the beast in a Revelation 17:5 has a name on her forehead, 'Mystery, Babylon the great, the mother of harlots and abominations of the earth.'

Like Cain, she developed a new system of worship. She desires to find value by appealing to all the world and adopting other ways and means of worshiping God.

- In fact, she actually recreated God in her own image, making God to be what she wanted Him to be. Anybody who disagreed with her was removed from her presence through persecution and death.
- She has also built a city from which she rules the world. She also has descendants that continue to operate in the same vein as she does. These are her daughters.

Just as the daughters of men - Cain's descendants - allured the sons of God - Seth's descendants - into physical relationships and turned them away from God (Gen 6:1-2), so too, the daughters of Babylon will allure God's children into relationships which will turn them away from God.

- Adopting a false view of God will lead people to invent worship styles that feed self while seeming to be God-centred.

Those who do not comply with the alternate views of God, and the worship practices that go with it, shall be removed as Abel was removed by Cain.

The heart of Babylon, while passing as a form of true worship, will in fact lead people away from God.

- it also sets them up to be judges of others, and in the end lead to the loss of eternal life.

There can be no rest for the wicked because they are constantly struggling for value and self worth, and at the same time, busy judging others around them so they feel better about themselves.

Psalm 119:165 Great peace have they ...

If nothing offends you, is there any need to become judgmental. The underlying sense of worthlessness drives the human soul to judge self and others mercilessly. This in turn causes others to resist us and God. This is the heart of Babylon.

Rom 5:1 ... we have peace with God ...

Knowing and experiencing God's complete and consistent grace, through Jesus Christ, is the key to casting off the heart of Babylon

God help us walk in this knowledge.