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MENTAL ATTITUDE, REVERSIONISM AND THE OLD SIN NATURE

A STUDY OF THE BOOK OF HEBREWS
NUMBER 119
HEBREWS 12:3-4

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Let us get a corrected translation of verse 2--

"Be concentrating on Jesus, our prince ruler, even the one who brings us to the attainment of the super grace objective, by means of doctrine resident in the soul. Jesus, who instead of his present happiness, endured the cross, having disregarded the shame and he has sat down in the past with the result that he remains seated in the highest place of honor, the right hand at the throne of God."

HEBREWS 12:3 "For consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds." Now we have already considered "For begin thinking about" which is an aorist, middle, imperative of analogizomai.

THE DOCTRINE OF MENTAL ATTITUDE

1. DEFINITION.

This is the doctrine which says that a man is the result of his thinking. "As a man thinketh in his heart (mind) so is he." Thoughts determine the man. What your personality is, is what you think. PROVERBS 23:6-7 "Eat thou not the bread of him that hath an evil eye, neither desire thou his dainty meats: For as he thinketh in his heart, so is he: Eat and drink, saith he to thee; but his heart is not with thee." Verse 6 says that some tightwad may offer you something that sounds wonderful, but it doesn't really reveal what he is. What he really is, is determined by what he thinks.

2. THE CONFLICT OF MENTAL ATTITUDE IN THE BELIEVER.

Every believer is a walking mental attitude. Multitudes of believers have great conflicts in their mental attitude. Isaiah 55:6-9 is a passage that describes this. This passage says that we are to forsake our way (works) and thoughts (human viewpoint) and move over to God's way of divine viewpoint. The reversionist has a bad mental attitude and he wants something for nothing. But Bible Doctrine in the soul changes the mental attitude every time. The most dangerous thing that can come to you when you are in reversionism are your thoughts for it will be human viewpoint every time. This is where mental illness comes from. "Return to the Lord" is a return to divine viewpoint.

3. WE ARE COMMANDED TO HAVE DIVINE VIEWPOINT.

Since doctrine is the mind of Christ (1 Cor. 2:16), attitude toward doctrine determines our viewpoint of life. (Phil. 2:5) Maximum doctrine in the soul is the only way to have divine viewpoint, 2 Corinthians 10:4-6 tells us what the attitude in the family of God should be as we face our enemies. We can't fight with human attributes but it takes the attributes of divine viewpoint. The soul must be loaded and the load the soul needs is divine viewpoint, and this comes from doctrine.

4. RAPPORT IN THE ROYAL FAMILY IS ALSO BASED ON DIVINE VIEWPOINT.
Harmony, agreement, real soul peace in the royal family comes from doctrine. (Phil. 2:2)
Soul rapport in thinking is love.
5. THE FUNCTION OF THE ROYAL PRIESTHOOD DEMANDS A NEW MENTAL ATTITUDE. (2 Timothy 1:7) This is what we call stabilized mentality. (Romans 12:2)
6. DIVINE VIEWPOINT FROM DOCTRINE PRODUCES CONFIDENCE.
2 Cor. 5:1--The building from God is our resurrection bodies.
2 Cor. 5:6--We keep having confidence.
2 Cor. 5:7--We walk by doctrine resident in the soul.
7. LOOK AT SOME AREAS IN LIFE INVOLVING MENTAL ATTITUDE.
 - a. Stability. (James 1:8)
 - b. Prosperity. (Phil. 4:7)
 - c. Giving. (2 Cor. 9:7)
 - d. Worldliness, a mental attitude. (Romans 12:2, Col. 3:2)
 - e. Evil starts in the mind. (Matthew 9:4)
 - f. Arrogance. (Gal. 6:3)

Next in verse 3 we have the words, "That endured" and this is a perfect, active, participle of hupomeno and should be translated "Having endured." This includes all that went into the preparation for the cross and then the three intense hours of suffering on the cross. The words "such contradiction" comes from toi outos anti logia. Satan threw everything he could against him and he still stood up under it. The words "of sinners" come from hupo hamartolos. "Against himself" is eis heautos. Eis can be used as meaning "against."

Next we have the conjunction hina plus the negative me and it means "least." Then we have the arorist, active, subjunctive of kamno and it means "exhausted." It really is referring to a tired soul. You may have a tired body but if you have a tired soul, then you are in trouble.

Next we have the word "faint" and this is a present, passive, participle of ekluo. Those believers in Jerusalem in 67 A.D. who were the first ones to receive this message of Hebrews were fainting in their minds. The word here for "mind" is psuche and it means "To faint in your soul."

Let us take a brief look at reversionism, at this fainting of the soul.

1. Reversionism Defined.

- a. Reversionism in simple terms is one who is in a negative status toward doctrine. Negative volition toward doctrine.
- b. Negative volition toward doctrine means perpetual carnality.
- c. Reversionism is a recession from any stage of spiritual growth, partial or complete. It is the retreat from the super grace status.
- d. Reversionism is lack of spiritual growth. It is neglect of Bible doctrine.
- e. Reversionism means that one has rebelled against the laws of divine establishment.

- f. Make a distinction between reversionism and carnality. Reversionism is the path that leads the believer out of fellowship. Carnality is the destination. Reversionism leads to carnality. Reversionism is when one is negative toward doctrine. The carnal believer starts to recover once he takes steps to learn doctrine, use rebound, and get back in fellowship. The carnal believer can rebound and move back into fellowship, while the believer, as long as he is in reversionism keeps moving farther and farther away.

2. Stages Of Reversionism.

Discouragement, boredom, disillusionment are reactions people have either toward circumstances or toward other people. If you are bored at doctrine, you will have soul fatigue and are bordering on reversionism. Boredom is soul pain.

HEBREWS 12:4 "Ye have not yet resisted unto blood, striving against sin." With this verse we start a new subject and this subject will be developed in verses 4-15. This is the section which presents the alternative to super grace. This is the divine discipline which comes to the believer. In verse four we are going to meet the culprit of it all. We have here a negative adverb oupo plus the aorist, active, indicative of antikathisteimi. And should be translated "Not yet have you resisted." This means that not yet in your whole life have you resisted to the point of being wounded. This passage says that these believers had not been combat tested. They had been in reversionism and didn't really enter into real spiritual warfare. The word mechris and it is a word of decree and means "to the point of" plus the word for "blood" which is haima. So this says, "You have not yet resisted to the point of blood." It means to the point of being wounded. Next we have the word "striving" which is a present, middle, participle from antagonizomai and it means to be in combat, to fight as a part of a military team. Then we have proshamartia and sin here is in the singular and it means "by fighting against the old sin nature." The word for sin here is in the singular and this means the old sin nature. So this verse says, "You have not yet resisted to the point of blood fighting against the old sin nature." In reversionism, they were not successful in combating the old sin nature and its problems.

TAKE A CAREFUL LOOK AT THE OLD SIN NATURE

1. DEFINITION.

- a. The old sin nature is that part of the soul (essence of the soul) that God did not create but was acquired by the fall of man. God created the soul with self-consciousness, mentality, volition, conscience, and emotion. The old sin nature was not in the original soul created by God. It came later and was acquired by man.
- b. The old sin nature comes through physical birth. (One exception and this was the virgin birth where there was no old sin nature passed on to Jesus Christ.)

- c. The old sin nature is the center of the soul's rebellion against God, and the source of spiritual death. In addition, it is the source of all personal sin in the life. However, the old sin nature is not the source of personal sin in itself. It requires volition. Your volition must connect up with the old sin nature in order for acts of sin to come forth. This means that each person must take personal responsibility for our own sins. In rebound you have to admit that you and you alone committed that sin without the help of anyone. This is what David said in Psalm 51. This distinguishes the mature believer from the immature believer. The mature person is willing to take the sole responsibility for his sins. The immature believer is never willing to assume this responsibility but always wants to blame someone else.

2. THE ESSENCE OF THE OLD SIN NATURE.

Romans 6:6 tells us that the old sin nature has essence.

This comes out in that phrase "the body of sin." That word soma indicates essence.

- a. The area of weakness. This is the source of all personal sins. Hebrews 12:1 speaks of the "easily ensnaring sin." Three basic categories of sin emerge from this area of weakness.

(1) Mental sins.

Like arrogance, pride, bitterness, implacability, guilt complex.

(2) Verbal sins.

Like gossip, maligning, criticism, bad rapping someone.

(3) Overt sins.

Like murder or fornication.

- b. The area of strength.

This is the source of socialism. This is man's effort to save man. This is the area where man tries to make his good take the place of only what God can do.

(Isaiah 64:6 and Romans 8:8)

- c. The lust pattern.

All lust is in the old sin nature. Approbation lust. This is the person who is always trying to prove something and he always keeps people off balance. This is living to please others. Power lust gets people hurt and brings on crime, and violence and war. We also have lasciviousness and this is sex lust. Then we have materialism lust. Look at Romans 7:7.

- d. Trends.

We have trends toward lasciviousness or asceticism. The old sin nature drives you toward one or the other.

3. BIBLICAL NOMENCLATURE FOR THE OLD SIN NATURE.

- a. The old sin nature is called flesh in Galatians 5:16 and Ephesians 2:3.

b. It is called the old man in Ephesians 4:22 and Col. 3:9.

c. It is called carnal in 1 Cor. 3:1-3 and Romans 7:14.

- d. The old sin nature is sin in the singular. Our passage here and Romans 5:12 and Romans 7:14, 1 Cor. 15:56 and 1 John 1:8.
- e. Some passages use the word "heart" and it means the old sin nature. (Jer. 17:9, Matt. 12:34-35; 15:19, Mark 7:21-23)

4. THE ORIGIN OF THE OLD SIN NATURE.

Romans 5:12 is probably the best verse in the Bible to explain this. The original sinner in the human race who knew what he was doing when he sinned was Adam. The woman sinned first and her volition was involved but not her understanding. This verse says that "all sinned when Adam sinned." Or "Where were you when the lights went out?" You were in Adam as were all the other members of the human race. I was in Adam and so were you. This comes at the moment when breath hits the human body. (Explain at this point the Roman Catholic doctrine of the Immaculate conception. Remember, Mary had an old sin nature and she got hers just like you got yours, from her father.) Mary gave birth to the humanity of Christ. All mothers have an old sin nature but they can't pass it down to their children. Christ was born minus the old sin nature, minus spiritual death, minus the imputation of Adam's sin. This qualified him to go to the cross. The one sent to the cross to die for sin had to be one who had no sin and no old sin nature. (All the other children of Mary had old sin natures but they got the old sin nature from Joseph, not from Mary.) The Virgin Birth cut off the line at Coniah. It would come down to him, but it would never go through him. The other cut off was that the old sin nature could not be passed down by Mary. The origin of the old sin nature in the garden of Eden was the volition of Adam and Eve in the garden. Eve sinned just as definitely as Adam sinned, but the sin in Eve was different, for she didn't understand what she did. Both sinned with their volition and both stood guilty before God.

Summary

1. Although God created man, he did not create the old sin nature in him.
2. By his very essence, God cannot sin and he cannot solicit man to sin.
3. God is not the author of sin.
4. Sin originated in mankind the same way it originated in the Angelic Creation. It came by negative volition in creature free will.
5. Satan is the original sinner and the author of sin.
6. Please note that when the first sin came, man was tempted by Satan but it came under the guise of a serpent. The serpent is that part of animal creation that is totally cold-blooded.
7. By disobedience, or negative volition toward the divine prohibition in the garden, the old sin nature was formed in man with resultant spiritual death. They didn't die physically. Adam lived over 930 years after that. The wages of sin is not physical death, but spiritual death. Spiritual death came the moment they ate that fruit. They did not come to Christ but he went to them.

8. Man, from the volition of his own soul, manufactured and perpetuated the old sin nature.
9. Through copulation, the old sin nature is perpetuated in the human race.

5. THE PERPETUATION AND CONSEQUENCES OF THE OLD SIN NATURE.

(1 Timothy 2:13-14)

The woman was deceived but she got an old sin nature just the same. Adam was not deceived but sinned with his eyes open and with complete understanding. Since the old sin nature, therefore, comes from the man, the Virgin Birth means that a man was born without an old sin nature. Mary received her old sin nature from her father, but she couldn't pass it on to her son because God sired Christ and not a man and God doesn't have any old sin nature. So the old sin nature is perpetuated by human birth.

Study Psalm 51:5. Here David says he was brought forth with an old sin nature.

Look at Psalm 58:3 and the words, "the wicked are estranged from the womb." Notice it does not say, "In the womb."

Ephesians 2:3 says we got our behaviour pattern from the old sin nature. The old sin nature is the source of spiritual death. (Ephesians 2:1 and 2:5)

We continue to have an old sin nature after conversion.

(1 Cor. 3:1, 1 John 1:8, Romans 7:14)

6. THE OLD SIN NATURE IS THE SOURCE OF TRANSITORY PLEASURE IN LIFE
(So--Rebound with a smile on your face.)

Hebrews 11:25 says "That to keep having transitory pleasure from sin from the source of the old sin nature."

7. THE FRUSTRATION OF THE OLD SIN NATURE.

Look at a close analysis of Romans 7:15.

Three words here meaning "do"--Katergazomai, Prasso, Poieo.

The old sin nature is the most frustrating thing in the Christian life.

8. DIVINE JUDGMENT SOLVES THE FRUSTRATION OF THE OLD SIN NATURE.

a. In salvation the cross solves the problem of sin.

b. In the Christian life, rebound and confession solves the sin problem.

c. In life after death, the Judgment Seat of Christ solves all human good.

9. DOCTRINE RESIDENT IN THE SOUL IS THE WAY TO COMBAT THE OLD SIN NATURE. (Hebrews 12:4 and Psalm 51:5-6)

The antidote to the old sin nature in verse five is doctrine in the soul of verse six.

10. THE OLD SIN NATURE IS NOT FOUND IN THE RESURRECTION BODY.

(1 Cor. 15:55-57)

The sting of death is the old sin nature. The victory is the resurrection body. (Phil. 3:20-21)