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Angelic Involvement In History

We have been working with the ascent and session of Christ. With this lesson and the one coming up next week we'll finally finish up the ascension and session of Christ. We said that the doctrinal consequence of these historical events is judgment/salvation, the countdown to final judgment has begun. So it's a repeat and amplification of judgment/salvation. Where did we see it first? At the Flood of Noah. We saw it a second time where? At the Exodus. The third time judgment/salvation is seen is the finished work of Jesus Christ. So we're looking at the same categories we looked at with the Flood and the Exodus and the Cross. The big idea, again by way of review, is God never saves apart from judging. And God, when He judges is always saving. That's the story of grace in a fallen world. Because of sin there must be judgment and because judgment is by nature discriminatory, when there is judgment there is salvation.

We said that God always gives Grace Before Judgement. In general this truth means that grace is manifest during the Church Age, but when the Church is raptured His judgment immediately falls in the day of the Lord. Specifically this truth means that God extends grace to individuals during their physical life, they may live 10 years or 110 years, but however long we live that's the period of grace. When we breathe our last that's the end of grace because there is no more opportunity for repentance; we've made our decision and we're stuck with it. So life is sort of sobering when we think in this context that God gives grace but it ends in judgment.

Then we talked about Perfect Discrimination, and the fact that God doesn't judge statistically but He judges with surgical precision. He's not sloppy when He judges. Certain armies try to cut out evil with surgical precision and they develop a lot of technology to accomplish this without much collateral

damage but when God judges evil He does it with perfect and absolute precision, no collateral damage. The separation is between those who believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and those who reject Him. In our religiously pluralistic American culture this is a serious bone of contention. But it can be easily reversed in the conversation. If somebody accuses a Christian of discriminating by insisting that Jesus is the only way, turn it right around and say you're discriminating against those who say Christ is the only way, you're discriminating against the gospel. So Jesus Christ is always the divider and He is THE standard of discrimination.

The third talking point under this doctrine is the One Way of Salvation and people will say, well that's just your opinion. No, it's not my opinion, and it wouldn't matter if it was my opinion, it's what the Bible teaches. If you want to argue with Jesus, argue with Jesus, if you want to argue with Luke, argue with Luke, but I didn't write this. There is only one way of salvation and there's a reason and a rationale behind that; we studied that. Death of Christ: here we go with the events; the death of Christ accomplished something. What was the basic idea we learned when we talked about the death of Christ? What was the primary worldview issue that controls how a person approaches the death of Christ? The primary thing that's operating in the background that causes people, when the issue of Christ on the cross comes up, to go one of two ways. If they go negative toward His work and come up with some bizarre reinterpretation of what the cross of Christ did, you can lay nine to one odds they're screwed up in their concept of justice.

The idea of justice underlies the cross, and if you have a fouled up sloppy view of justice, you're going to have a fouled up sloppy view of the cross of Christ. That's why we have so many people that are sloppy in what they think about the Lord Jesus Christ and His finished work, because they don't have a background of justice. Where do you get the background of justice? God's attributes. The religions of the world who say there's no need for a substitutionary blood atonement in effect are saying something positive; they're saying that God has a compromisable stand of justice, i.e. He can arbitrarily forgive, just forget it, it's no problem. What happens to all this sin? It just gets kind of swept under the carpet. Oh it does? Therefore the bad deeds aren't really significant, so if I blow your brains out you won't mind that because it's really not a significant act, it can be arbitrarily forgiven at any point in time, no problem. When you get down to the practical

consequences it's just foolish, it's absolutely foolish. But you've got to kind of work with it to get folks to see that they've got a justice problem. That's why, if given the fact that God is a God of justice, who defines the way of salvation. He defines the way of salvation and that's His way. The challenge would be to come up with another way to be saved, try it, given the fact that you have the God of the Scriptures, given the fact that you have God who is just, God who is holy, God is righteous, you come up with a better way, go ahead and try it. This is the idea of the one way of salvation.

We have come to the fourth point, which is when God judges and saves, He always judges and saves man and nature. It's not just psychological; salvation is not just centered on human beings. We saw this with the Flood; when God judged He judged mankind and He judged the earth. And if 2 Pet 3 is to be taken seriously He judged the entire cosmos. God, when He judges, judges both man and nature. In the Exodus He did that too, they were natural judgments.

Here's where we're moving. In the inter-advent age we're going to examine nature, and we're going to see that nature, i.e. everything that's been created other than man, includes a material and an immaterial component. Angels are immaterial beings and they're part of nature. It shouldn't surprise you that nature has an immaterial component. Why not? Because all animals have an immaterial component, animals have spirit, angels are spirit, so angels being part of nature should be no surprise, they are non-corporeal beings that have a strange ability to corporealize and transmorph into a variety of things. We're going to look at that in several verses. We've already looked at some of these verses; one of the key ones we looked at last time, Psalm 104:4 where it's clear that the statement is being made that angels can transform themselves from corporeal beings into material phenomena like fire and wind. And for all intents and purposes it looks like fire, wind and smoke. Just like the top of Mount Sinai, but over in Stephen's speech in Acts 7 he's talking about Mt Sinai and he says the fire, wind and smoke was angels. That was angels? The only way you can make sense of that kind of Scripture observation is that the physical phenomenon actually was angelic beings. How they transform from two men eating steak at Lot's house to becoming a wind or becoming a flame I have no idea. The Scriptures are just saying that they have the capacity to do that. But for our purposes we don't care how they do it, we're just pointing out that angels are included, right

here, in nature, and when God judges man and nature in the inter-advent period, the angels are being implicated.

That's what we want to go into now is the background of the angels. The first point we make is Angels and how they interact with Israel during her history. Did you know you can't write a history book without writing about angels? That's right; angels interact with history so how can you write history without angels? Karl Marx said history is driven by economic forces. Charles Darwin said history is driven by biological forces. Freud said it was driven by sex. The word of God says it is driven by angels, when we say angels we mean that God is sovereign over history and angels are one of the means by which He sovereignly runs history. And one of the great places to see this is 1 Kings 22. This is a very uncomfortable passage for commentators because it seems to imply something about God, it seems to imply a moral/ethical issue, just like when God tells Hosea to go marry a prostitute, people have a problem with that and so they get loose with the text, try to help God out, try to preserve His character. But the Holy Spirit wrote the Scripture so I presume He doesn't need our help.

In 1 Kings 22:19 the OT prophet, Micaiah reports on something that he saw, a vision. "And Micaiah said, 'Therefore, hear the word of the LORD. I saw the LORD sitting on His throne,'" so he got a glimpse of this throne room wherever it is, and all the host of heaven, standing by Him on His right and on His left." And notice it says "all the host of heaven," the host of heaven here are the angelic beings. The words for "the host of heaven" are also used for the planets and stars. This is why people say well, is that planets? No, it's not planets and stars, but the angels somehow are involved with the planets and stars. How I have no idea. But they're involved somehow. "I saw the LORD sitting on His throne, and all the host of heaven standing by Him on His right and on His left." Verse 20, "And the LORD said, 'Who will entice Ahab to go up and fall at Ramoth-gilead?' And one said this while another said that." This is very interesting. Notice what is happening here. You have "all the host of heaven," this is a meeting of all the angels. The Lord is the chairman of the meeting. And He throws this out for discussion; it's very interesting, the Lord throws out a proposal, I want to see who's going to do an interesting task, I want a task done here. Ahab is going to be judged, and I want to set him up; who's going to be the conspirator in this thing. It's interesting that God says to the angels, go ahead, talk it out among

yourselves, who will do this. Notice the Lord doesn't say you do this and this is how I want you to do it. No, the angels are given an opportunity to decide who will do it and how they do it. Isn't this an amazing point of history! So how does history move from this point to the next point? It moved because of angelic movement and interaction with history. Then in v 21 a spirit comes forth. "Then a spirit came forward and stood before the LORD and said, 'I will entice him.'" There's so much in this passage we can't even touch on it other than just skim it, but look at the broad outline. "A spirit" comes forth, so here one of these guys shows up and he says I'll do it. So he's got an idea, v 22 "And the LORD said to him, 'How?'" Explain how you'll do it. "And he said, 'I will go out and be a deceiving spirit in the mouth of all his prophets.'" That means hundreds of people, which leads us to the other interesting phenomenon that angels can multiply and divide, they can split up and somehow insert the same idea in hundreds of peoples minds. How they do this we don't know, but we know they do it. You know from your own experience of talking with people and listening to the world that they're all on the same wavelength. How can that be? Part of the answer is that angels can split up and divide and implant ideas in minds.

The analogy God makes in the Bible is between angels as spirits and the wind as spirit. The same word *ruach* is used both of angels and the wind in the atmosphere. The problem we have in the atmosphere is that we can conceive of the atmosphere as a set of parcels, but these parcels multiply and divide and you can't get your hands around what the parcel of air is that you're trying to do your analysis thing with. It's a gas, it's a fluid. So the angels are hard to get your hands around and the only vocabulary word that describes them is the same word for the physical phenomenon that you all see, and that is the wind. So there's some analogy between how the wind works that we can see a little bit of, and how these angels work. We cannot explain it. But angels have this ability.

So here's one spirit and he says I'm one spirit, but I will become hundreds of spirits in the mouth of his prophets. Also notice in this sentence that he says I will be in the mouth of the prophets. What does it mean to be in the mouth of the prophets? What is the mouth used for? To speak. To speak what? Language. Aha, isn't this interesting. We'll see more about this when we get into Pentecost. Spirit and language are related, so how does the spirit entice? It entices linguistically. This is not some Spook Ville phenomena where the

prophets see visions and so on; it's actual deception, a linguistic deception that's happening here. Language is a result of a spirit.

Remember in Proverbs it says of the teacher, "I pour out my spirit" and what else, parallelism, "I make my words known," two synonymous things. "I will pour out my spirit on you; I will make my words known to you." You know what making your words known is - when you say words ideas are transmitted. The spirit is involved in this, it's not material. Think about it this way, maybe if it's hard to think that way think about it this way. When we talk about good, love, evil, bad, any idea. Is that idea something that is physically measured? This is the problem atheist materialist have, they're always talking about logic, they're always using language, but the problem they have is it can't be smelled, it can't be touched, it can't be measured. Isn't this an interesting thing? Here we have people using logic and language and all the time they can't be empirically measured. There's no physical nature to an idea; it's completely immaterial.

If you pursue that line of thinking it will lead you to this union of language and spirit. So what he does here in verse 22 is this spirit is going to set up a false doctrine that is going to afflict the whole northern kingdom. And he's going to do it by infiltrating and somehow deceptively implanting in the thought processes and speech of many, many influential people in that culture. And only one spirit needs to do it. That's kind of scary to think that one spirit can deceive an entire society or nation of people. That's what this verse is saying, no getting around it. It's not my opinion. There are no other interpretations possible here. So we have an entire group of people that are going to be controlled by one demon. This is the origin of a mob. A mob has a nature all unto itself. And people, I've never worked with it but I've been told by people who have had to deal with mobs that there is something sinister that takes over that short-circuits people of normal common sense, just go with the mob, its so prevalent they coined an expression to describe it, the mob mentality. How does that happen? We don't know exactly but it does happen.

Here we have a religious apostate mob that is going to run the northern kingdom and the spirit says I'll do it; I volunteer. And hundreds of people are going to feed the king the idea of this demon and they're going to convince the king to go into battle so he'll be killed.

Verse 23, “Now therefore, behold, the LORD has put a deceiving spirit” this is the commentary of Micaiah, he concludes his vision. By the way, then the Lord said at the end of verse 22, “You are to entice him and also prevail. Go and do so.” Then Micaiah comments again in verse 23, it comes back to Micaiah, “the LORD has put a,” notice singular, “a deceiving spirit in the mouth of all these your prophets,” plural. Let’s think about one little application here. What does this politically say about an axiom of democracy? Democracy says what? The majority is always right. Was the majority always right here? Was the majority right when Christ was crucified? What happens then? See, behind the spirit of raw democracy is that the voice of the populous; the voice of the mob is the voice of God. Do you know who said that? The French said that. The French Revolution. That’s the spirit of democracy. That’s why America is not a democracy; it was never intended to be a democracy. That’s why we have something called the Constitution. It’s not a perfect solution but it’s a conservator against a mob. There’s a lot in Scripture and you’ve got to approach it slowly and think it through and dare to take it to its consequences.

Let’s go further into this angelic thing. Let’s turn to Dan 10. Daniel had a vision and he couldn’t interpret the vision so he started to pray. And in Dan 10:13 you have God sending an angel to Daniel to explain the vision, which shows you angels have linguistic capability, it shows you another thing too. Angels are common in apocalyptic literature, by that we mean literature that is highly visionary, lots of symbols, in that kind of literature God sends angels in to interpret. So we’re not bouncing around trying to interpret these things, the angel tells you what it means. But here is an angel that has to travel through the air space of Persia to get to Daniel, and that’s what it is, Persia has air space. If we had a map of Persia and we drew walls up from the border up into the air space over Persia, up in that air space there are demons that are assigned to that air space, they operate over Persia influencing, deceiving, manipulating. As Ephesians says, the spirit that now works in the children of disobedience. We don’t know all the details of how they do it but Dan 10:13 says that “the prince of the kingdom of Persia withstood me twenty one days,” now he’s not talking about the human leader of the kingdom of Persia, he’s talking about someone else behind the human leader, someone who is the real prince, the real power, the one who is really calling the shots, that’s “the prince of the kingdom of Persia.” And he says he

was withstanding me for twenty one days.” Twenty-one days, for three weeks a battle went on between this angel trying to get to Daniel and some other angel. Daniel is down inside the country of Persia praying, and this angel is coming from the throne of God to answer Daniel and talk to him and he can’t get to him. So he’s held up for three weeks here and look why he says it took him three weeks. He says, “behold, Michael, one of the chief princes,” so now we have rank, here’s one of the angels that pulls rank on whoever the prince of Persia is, “Michael, one of the chief princes came to help me, for I had been left there with the kings,” plural “of Persia.” So all kinds of stuff is going on here and the Bible doesn’t go into great detail but God wants to let us know that if we think it’s all just human beings doing this and thinking that and plotting and scheming we’re living in a fantasy world. There’s a spiritual world out there full of intrigue, darkness and war that is interacting heavily with human history. So that’s a summary of how the angelic forces of nature interacted with Israel.

Now go to Gen 3; we want to look at Angels in Pre-Flood Civilization, angels and their function in nature between the Creation and the Flood. If you look at Gen 3:24, here’s one of the angels functioning or several of them “at the east of the garden of Eden He stationed the cherubim,” plural, in the English you see cherubim, the “im” is plural in the Hebrew, “He stationed the cherubs and the flaming sword which turned every direction, to guard the way to the tree of life.” Who has the power of capital punishment here, the sword? Angels. We want to trace this because this is a very important element in reasoning through the ascent of Christ and what He’s doing. Notice that angels have authority here, we’ll just say the sword. There’s no human government, if there’s any government it’s angelic government. People say this is weird, we have immortal angels running around with mortal men. Yeah, it happened before, it’s a part of our history, if we could trace back our genealogy people in our genealogy walked with angels. And it’s going to happen again isn’t it? When? In the millennium. Immortal resurrected people are going to interact with mortal people. So we’re making the same claim about the millennium. Apparently something like that was going on here. If this is so, and I believe it is, this answers the high technology question: where did Noah and the colonists that set up our present civilization get navigation, get clocks, get geometry and get all these things. This is one of the problems, one of the enigmas of civilization, where did this high technology come from? The unbeliever is driven to such desperate attempts to explain high

technology in ancient civilization that they want to say well, aliens came to this planet, in one sense they're kind of close to the truth, maybe aliens did come to this planet in the form of angels and teach man his high technology.

But in this period there is no question that angels had the sword among men. Some of the recent creationist writings, and we are speculating somewhat here based on later associations of angels with the wind and fire, etc...but I think it's worth considering, between the time of the Fall and the Flood, when they had the sword, that the judgments they issued may have been catastrophic, not on the same order as the Flood, but catastrophic. "The pre-Flood world was a time of exceptional Divine interventions upon the earth. Even in post-Flood times, when God takes a strong hand to show His displeasure over sin, floods, earthquakes, volcanic eruptions and plagues, etc., are cited in Scripture.... When God dealt with ancient Israel as a theocracy, He stressed that punishment on the Covenant people be given with increased intensity... (Lev. 26:14, 18, 21, 24, 28, 32). This increasing degree of punishment in order to bring about repentance seems indicative of how the Lord has acted in history towards sin. The account of the pre-Flood world is brief in Scripture, but Divine activity appears to have been even more forceful in the pre-Flood world before God sanctioned human government to act on His behalf in dealing out punishments." Was it possible that God used the ruling angels to carry out these punishments? So we have the angels possibly involved here, though it's purely speculative, that they were actually involved in physical judgment. But I just wanted you to see that between the time of the flood and the time prior to that, there was this judgment going on, God judging man through nature.

Go to Gen 4:10, it didn't take long for the first murder to happen. Verse 8, the first murder; if you interpret the book of 1 John carefully, it's talking about the word "to slay with a knife," which means the first murderer used a knife. Verse 9, "Then the LORD said to Cain, 'Where is Abel your brother?' And he said, 'I do not know. Am I my brother's keeper?'" [10] "And He said, 'What have you done? The voice of your brother's blood is crying to Me from the ground. [11] And now you are cursed from the ground, which has opened its mouth to receive your brother's blood from your hand. [12] When you cultivate the ground, it shall no longer yield its strength to you; you shall be a vagrant and a wanderer on the earth.'" He's going to be a wanderer, a nomad. God is judging Cain but the way He judges Cain is by judging the earth

under Cain's feet because now the earth is going to rebel against him, just as the earth originally was given to rebel against Adam at the Fall, now it's going to rebel even more against Cain. Verse 13, "And Cain said to the LORD, 'My punishment is too great to bear! [14] Behold, You have driven me this day from the face of the ground,'" see, you've alienated me from the ground and he becomes a nomad, wandering from place to place and this is distressing because man's function, man's responsibility is to labor; to till the Garden, bring it to fruition, to domesticate animals and so forth. So now Cain's labor is more difficult, the ground under his feet is going to rebel against him and he's just going to wander around. In essence Cain becomes the first hippie of history.

"Behold, You have driven me this day from the face of the ground; and from Your face I shall be hidden, and I shall be a vagrant and a wanderer on the earth, and it will come about that whoever finds me will kill me. [15] So the LORD said to him, 'Therefore whoever kills Cain, vengeance will be taken on him sevenfold.'" So the Lord promises a protection on Cain in that whoever touches him, they will be judged in a similar way. If that's the case how are they going to be judged? How was Cain judged? By the ground rebelling against him. So how is someone going to be judged who tries to attack Cain? By the ground rebelling against him even more. Were angels involved in that? I don't know, but it's possible.

Now we come to Gen 6 and the angels at this point are called *ben ei elohim*, the sons of God, 6:2, "the sons of God saw that the daughters of men were beautiful; and they took wives for themselves, whomever they chose. [3] Then the LORD said, 'My spirit shall not strive with man forever.... [4] The Nephilim were on the earth in those days," etc. So something is going on here that's weird. What we want to pick up here is that they were obviously among men. Maybe they were provincial rulers in the antediluvian period that had some sort of governmental responsibilities and interacted with the human race. You say, what a strange time? It gets stranger, in verse 2 you have this sexual intercourse going on between angels and women, and you have the offspring of this union called the "Nephilim." "The sons of God came in to the daughters of men, and they bore children to them." So it's obvious that the angels were able to transform into some kind of physical structure and underneath the physical structure was a physical DNA. DNA is just chemistry, it's a physical component and if you're going to have physical

offspring you've got to have physical component. So apparently angels can have a temporary DNA structure that can combine with a females DNA structure and produce offspring. The thing here, whatever is going on, what is going on anyway? What is this accomplishing? Were the women just good looking? They may have been good looking but I think something more is going on here. If they're in governmental power and the promise is that the sword will one day be held by the seed of the woman, it will be in the hands of a member of the human race then you have to have genuine humanity. So if you are an angel and you don't want to lose governmental power then all you have to do is contaminate the human gene pool and then you've hijacked the plan of God, ruined the plan of salvation and written your own destiny. So a brilliant move was being made here. But God, as a superior chess player, played his countermove, and He caused the Flood to happen and destroy all those freak offspring. So angels were involved in that weird thing.

Now let's go back further in time, we've looked at angels with Israel, we've looked at angels in this pre-Flood period, now Job 38, we're going to go back into the origin of creation itself. In Job 38:7, during creation the angels sang. "When the morning stars" and there's the word for stars, so we want to make another little point in our list, angels and sword, angels and gods, angels and stars and planets, those identities are deliberately put in Scripture for reasons which we don't really know, but there are associations between them, there are linkages. "When the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy," there's the word "sons of God" for those people who say "sons of God" in Gen 6 were human beings, these aren't human beings in Job 38:7. At this point it says "all the sons of God were shouting for you," they were rejoicing. There's no sign of sin in the angelic realm at the point of Job 38:7, there's no Satan rebelling, all the angels are on the same team.

But it wasn't long before the Fall happened in the angelic realm, so we turn to Ezek 28, a part of the Bible that's never read; here a prophecy is made against they king of Tyre. Notice something, here we go again, something like Dan 10, angels associated with political leaders, the prophecy is against a physical king of Tyre. Ezek. 28:12, "Son of man, take up a lamentation over the king of Tyre, and say to him, 'Thus says the Lord God,' Here the king of Tyre is being addressed, but actually the force in behind this man is being addressed. So the dialogue looks weird if you're going to think the dialogue is directly against the human king of Tyre. Here the king of Tyre takes on the

persona of Satan. The prophet, Ezekiel, addresses him, and he gives a lot of information about how evil began in the angelic realm. "Son of man, take up a lamentation over the king of Tyre, and say to him, 'Thus saith the Lord God, 'You had the seal of perfection, full of wisdom and perfect in beauty.'" He's talking about Satan here. Satan left the hand of God when He pronounced everything was good, Satan left the hand of God "full of wisdom and perfect in beauty." Verse 13, "You were in Eden, the garden of God; every precious stone was your covering: the ruby, the topaz, and the diamond" and he goes on, a big long list, "the workmanship of your settings and sockets, was in you. On the day that you were created, they were prepared. [14] You were the anointed cherub," now look at that word, guess what the word anointed is there? Messiah, "You are the Messianic cherub," that's the word that's later used for Jesus Christ. "You were the Messianic cherub who covers; and I placed you there. You were on the holy mountain of God; you walked in the midst of the stones of fire." Verse 15, "You were blameless" notice "in your ways from the day you were created, until..." *until* "unrighteousness was found in you." There's the origin of sin. Then he goes on to talk about sin in a commercial context. By the way, verse 16, trade and world economics, just like the book of Revelation brings in sin being tied in with Babylon and economic dealings, etc. that go on. So he is the god of this world. But notice angels and political leaders, there's the power behind them.

Now turn to Isaiah 14, another passage with another political leader who takes on the persona of Satan again, this time in verse 4 who is this? The king of Babylon, just like the other guy was the king of Tyre, here's the king of Babylon and he takes on the persona of Satan. And he says against this king, verse 11, "Your pomp and the music of your harps have been brought down to sheol; maggots are spread out as your bed beneath you, and worms are your covering. [12] How you have fallen from heaven, O star of the morning, son of the dawn!" Do you know the title John uses for the Lord Jesus Christ in the Revelation? The bright and morning star. There's no accident that the vocabulary words once used of Satan are now used of the Lord Jesus Christ. This is not accidental, something is happening here. "You have been cut down to the earth, you who have weakened the nations!" Notice his global ministry, nations, plural, not just one, all of them. Verse 13, "But you said in your heart," now verse 13-14 is the greatest passage on sin that you ever want to read, and when the Lord leads you to examine your own heart for sin, this is a great passage because this is the essence of sin.

And it's not immorality, it's not theft, it's not something else, it goes a lot deeper than those things. Those things are results of sin and they are particular styles of sin. But the essence of sin is right here, so this is a key passage of Scripture you want to remember, here it is. "I will ascend to heaven; I will raise my throne above the stars of God," and what are the stars of God? That's that angels that we saw back in Job 38, "I will raise my throne above the stars of God, and I will sit on the mount of assembly in the recesses of the north. I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will make myself like the Most High." I, I, I, I, I, please notice what the heart of sin is. Sin isn't something caused by the environment, sin isn't something caused by poverty, sin isn't something that started because people were uneducated. Sin started because of the insistence that we will become as God, it's an attitude that I will become the Creator of the universe. I am not content with who God made me to be and therefore I will uproot Him and replace Him with myself. Sin is rebellion against God, we want to call the shots. That's sin. Satan here isn't some slut, he doesn't do drugs, he's not a crook, he's just an arrogant rebel, and that's what the sin issue is.

And out of that we want to define what reality is, we want to legislate the nature of reality, we want to construct reality as God constructs reality. And probably the finest articulation of this was done by Immanuel Kant. Kant said the mind of man defined reality. In other words, man's task is not to collect data from the real world and organize it, there are no real data to discover until the mind of man invents it. I quote from Cornelius Van Til who was an excellent Dutch Reformed theologian. "With more or less consistency the followers of Kant ascribe, by implication if not otherwise, ultimate definitory power to the mind of man. Christianity, on the other hand, ascribes ultimate definitory power to the mind of God...There is no no-man's land of neutrality between these two positions. Two "Creators" stand face to face in mortal combat. Two minds, each claiming to define fact before the other can meet fact stand squarely opposed to one another. If Christianity is true, the "facts" are what God says they must be; if the Kantian position is true, the "facts" are what man says they must be. The method employed by modern science, philosophy and religion does not seek to find God's structure in the facts of the universe. Man's structural activity is itself made the ultimate source of significant predication...There cannot be two ultimate interpreters. The orthodox position makes God, the modern position makes man the

ultimate interpreter of reality.”¹ It’s the modern position that is at the core of sin. The core of sin is us trying to redefine reality and shape it the way we want, that’s why the battleground is not a fact here and a fact there but two entirely different and opposing frameworks, one that begins with God as the self-authenticating sovereign and the other that begins with man on the throne as self-authenticating sovereign. And what we want to do as we go on and examine this is see how serious the sin issue is, it goes far beyond the human race, far, far beyond human civilization. It’s embedded into the very structure of fallen nature, in the demonic realm. So when we talk about Jesus Christ bringing in His Kingdom, we’re not just talking about a slight modification of present kingdoms. Oh no! We’re talking about something that changes substantively the entire structure of nature, something that fundamentally alters the spiritual principalities and powers that lurk in the background, that have been sitting there for centuries sabotaging the nations, working their deceptive ideas, splitting apart and organizing religious mobs.

So when we read in the NT..., and this is where we’re headed, we have to reconcile this angelic conflict with what we see with the crucified, resurrected, ascended and seated Lord Jesus Christ. If He sits far above all these princes and principalities then why is there still all this sabotaging going on? Why does Satan still rule as the god of this world? What, if anything, has changed? Something has changed and it’s that something we want to focus on. What has changed in the angelic conflict since the Lord Jesus Christ passed through the heavenly places and the Father said sit at My right hand? If we can understand what has changed then we can drive forward through the whole Church Age and get a handle on what it is God is doing in the interadvent age between the First and Second Comings. So we’ll be attempting to show you what changed with Jesus Christ and the progress that is made through time.

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¹ Van Til, C., & Sigward, E. H. (1997). *The Articles of Cornelius Van Til* (Electronic ed.). Labels Army Company: New York.