

## **Lesson 1: *War in Heaven***

**Sunday, March 31, 2024**

*Ryan Day*

**Quarterly Title: *The Great Controversy***

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### **Lesson 1: *The War Behind All Wars***

**Memory Text: “And war broke out in heaven: Michael and his angels fought with the dragon; and the dragon and his angels fought, but they did not prevail, nor was a place found for them in heaven any longer” (*Revelation 12:7, 8, NKJV*).**

### **Sabbath Afternoon**

If God is so good, why is the world so bad? How can a God of love allow so much evil to exist? Why do bad things happen to good people? In this week’s lesson, we will explore the age-long conflict between good and evil. Beginning with Lucifer’s rebellion in heaven, we will examine the origin of evil and God’s longsuffering in dealing with the sin problem.

God is a God of incredible love. His very nature is love (*1 John 4:7, 8*). All of His actions are loving (*Jer. 31:3*). Love can never be forced, coerced, or legislated. Ellen G. White states it well when she writes, “Only by love is love awakened.” — *The Desire of Ages*, p. 22. To deny the power of choice is to destroy the ability to love, and to destroy the ability to love is to eradicate the possibility of being truly happy. God wins our allegiance by His love. He is dealing with the great controversy between good and evil in such a way that sin will never arise in the universe again. God’s purpose is to demonstrate before the entire universe that He has always acted in the best interests of His creatures. Looking at the world through the lens of God’s love, in the light of the great controversy between good and evil, reassures each of us that right will triumph over wrong and will do so forever.

## Sunday *War in Heaven*

Read Revelation 12:7–9. What does this passage reveal about the freedom existing in heaven and the origin of evil? When Lucifer rebelled, in what ways could God have responded?

<sup>7</sup> And **war** broke out in heaven: Michael and his angels fought with the dragon; and the dragon and his angels fought, <sup>8</sup> but they did not prevail, nor was a place found for them in heaven any longer. <sup>9</sup> So the great dragon was cast out, that serpent of old, called the Devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world; he was cast to the earth, and his angels were cast out with him.—**Revelation 12:7-9**

<sup>8</sup> He who does not love does not know God, for **God is love**.—  
**1 John 4:8**

<sup>4</sup> Love suffers long *and* is kind; love does not envy; love does not parade itself, is not puffed up; <sup>5</sup> does not behave rudely, **does not seek its own**, is not provoked, thinks no evil; <sup>6</sup> does not rejoice in iniquity, but rejoices in the truth; <sup>7</sup> bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. <sup>8</sup> Love never fails...—  
**1 Corinthians 13:4-8**

“God is love.” [1 John 4:16](#). His nature, His law, is love. It ever has been; it ever will be. “The high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity,” whose “ways are everlasting,” changeth not. With Him “is no variableness, neither shadow of turning.” The law of love being the foundation of the government of God, the happiness of all intelligent beings depends upon their perfect accord with its great principles of righteousness. **God desires from all His creatures the service of love—service that springs from an appreciation of His character.** He takes no pleasure in a **forced obedience**; and to all He grants **freedom of will**, that they may render Him **voluntary service**.—***Patriarchs and Prophets, Pg. 33***

1. Love Requires Freedom
2. Freedom Involves Risk
3. Risk Entails Responsibility
4. Responsibility Enables Growth

Lucifer **“perverted the freedom”** given to him.—*Patriarchs and Prophets, Pg. 35*

<sup>12</sup> “Son of man, take up a lamentation for the king of Tyre, and say to him, ‘Thus says the Lord God:

“You were the seal of perfection,  
Full of wisdom and perfect in beauty.  
<sup>13</sup> You were in Eden, the garden of God;  
Every precious stone *was* your covering:  
The sardius, topaz, and diamond,  
Beryl, onyx, and jasper,  
Sapphire, turquoise, and emerald with gold.  
The workmanship of your timbrels and pipes  
Was prepared for you on the day you were created.

<sup>14</sup> “You were the anointed cherub who covers;  
I established you;  
You were on the holy mountain of God;  
You walked back and forth in the midst of fiery stones.  
<sup>15</sup> You were perfect in your ways from the day you were created,  
Till iniquity was found in you...

<sup>17</sup> “Your heart was lifted up because of your beauty;  
You corrupted your wisdom for the sake of your splendor;  
I cast you to the ground,  
I laid you before kings,  
That they might gaze at you.—*Ezekiel 28:12-15, 17*

<sup>12</sup> “How you are fallen from heaven,  
O Lucifer, son of the morning!  
*How* you are cut down to the ground,  
You who weakened the nations!

<sup>13</sup> For you have said in your heart:  
‘I will ascend into heaven,  
I will exalt my throne above the stars of God;  
I will also sit on the mount of the congregation  
On the farthest sides of the north;  
<sup>14</sup> I will ascend above the heights of the clouds,  
I will be like the Most High.’—*Isaiah 14:12-14*

In great mercy, according to His divine character, God bore long with Lucifer. The spirit of discontent and disaffection had never before been known in heaven. It was a new element, strange, mysterious, unaccountable. Lucifer himself had not at first been acquainted with the real nature of his feelings; for a time he had feared to express the workings and imaginings of his mind; yet he did not dismiss them.

He did not see whither he was drifting. But such efforts as infinite love and wisdom only could devise, were made to convince him of his error. His disaffection was proved to be without cause, and he was made to see what would be the result of persisting in revolt. Lucifer was convinced that he was in the wrong. He saw that “the Lord is righteous in all His ways, and holy in all His works” (Psalm 145:17); that the divine statutes are just, and that he ought to acknowledge them as such before all heaven.

Had he done this, he might have saved himself and many angels. He had not at that time fully cast off his allegiance to God. Though he had left his position as covering cherub, yet if he had been willing to return to God, acknowledging the Creator's wisdom, and satisfied to fill the place appointed him in God's great plan, he would have been reinstated in his office.

The time had come for a final decision; he must fully yield to the divine sovereignty or place himself in open rebellion. He nearly reached the decision to return, but pride forbade him. It was too great a sacrifice for one who had been so highly honored to confess that he had been in error, that his imaginings were false, and to yield to the authority which he had been working to prove unjust.—*Patriarchs and Prophets, Pg. 39*

<sup>8</sup> He who does not love does not know God, for **God is love**.—*1 John 4:8*

