

Satan's Sympathizers

#0071

Study Given by W. D. Frazee—December 17, 1971

On March 14, 1858, in Lovett's Grove, Ohio, a funeral of a young man was in progress. James White, one of the early leaders of the Seventh-day Adventist church, had been asked to conduct the funeral. At the conclusion of his remarks his wife, whom Seventh-day Adventists believe was given the gift of prophecy, took her place by the side of her husband and made some remarks in connection with the funeral service. Suddenly her voice stopped and she appeared to be out of touch with the congregation. Her husband explained that she was in vision. And presently, he gave an opportunity for those in the audience who wished to examine his wife.

Going into vision, Sister White gave three shouts of "glory to God," the last one fainter, as if she was at a distance. During this vision, which lasted two hours, she was without any breath in her body. People from the congregation coming up bore witness to this fact.

On other occasions, when she was in vision, she was examined by physicians, always with the same report that during these visions she was without breath in her body. This is in harmony with the statement in Daniel 10:17 that the prophet Daniel, in Bible times, was without breath in his body.

For two hours, God showed Sister White many things. When she came out of vision, the funeral proceeded to its close. After the body was carried to the cemetery, Sister White spoke briefly about the things the Lord had shown her. In that vision, she was given a view of the great controversy that began in Heaven before this world was made and reaches on down through the 6,000 years of human history, and on into the future when this world will be purged from sin and renovated to make the home of the redeemed race, the people of God. She was shown in a great panorama, scene after scene of this great conflict that has been going on and would continue. She was told that she should write out these things and that they would be published.

On their return from Lovett's Grove, they stopped to spend the night at the home of Brother and Sister Palmer in Jackson, Michigan. The next morning as Elder White was out in the yard talking with Brother Palmer, Sister White was in the house talking with Sister Palmer and suffered a stroke. The Devil was trying to destroy her to keep her from having his plans exposed. God suffered him thus far. His servant was prostrated with this stroke. But on her return to their home at Battle Creek, she insisted on having writing materials brought to her bed, and in spite of distress and pain and inability in many lines, she began to write. By the time she had finished writing out the first book, she was well of the stroke.

I have one of the original books published in 1858. The title is *Spiritual Gifts, The Great Controversy Between Christ and His Angels and Satan and His Angels* by Ellen G. White, Battle Creek, Michigan. After writing this first volume, she wrote a second and a third and a fourth. They are a set of four volumes making up *Spiritual Gifts*, outlining briefly the great controversy.

Several years later, as the Lord continued to reveal to her further details and she had more time to write, she got out another series of four volumes. These were published in the 1870s a four-volume set called *The Spirit of Prophecy*, or *The Great Controversy Between Christ and Satan*. Most of you are aware that still later she wrote much more at length in the wonderful five-volume series which we have today—*The Conflict of the Ages* series which are *Patriarchs and Prophets*, *Prophets and Kings*, *The Desire of Ages*, *Acts of the Apostles*, and *The Great Controversy*. You note that in all these steps we have repeated, like a chorus, the great controversy. What does it mean, dear friends? It means there's a war on. There's a great battle. Let's turn to Revelation the twelfth chapter and we will see where the concept comes from, where language comes from—the great controversy between *Christ* and His angels and *Satan* and his angels.

“And there was war in heaven: Michael and His angels fought against the dragon. And the dragon fought and his angels, And prevailed not; neither was their place found any more in heaven. And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him” Revelation 12:7–9.

Would Christ fight? Would angels fight? Would they fight in Heaven? Why the very idea of war in Heaven, of all places, and good angels fighting. You wouldn't do anything like that, would you? Ah friends, there is the point. I want you to see before we finish this study tonight that whether you will or not, you're going to fight. It's just a question of which side you'll fight on.

What brought this about? In Ezekiel 28 and Isaiah 14, you'll find a picture given of the change that took place in Lucifer who was at one time the right hand covering cherub at the throne of God. So that he finally came to be Satan, the adversary, the Devil, the enemy of God and man. It's a strange thing that the brightest, most wonderful created being in all the universe could become the Devil. It's a mystery—the mystery of iniquity. There is no explanation for it. To explain it would be to excuse it, to defend it. There is no excuse for sin. There never has been, there never will be. All excuses come from Satan and those who sympathize with him or his agents. There is no explanation, I repeat.

Having given all His creatures the power of choice, God allowed Lucifer, along with the rest, at any point that they chose, either to continue to love Him, to serve Him, to cooperate with Him, or to rise in rebellion. And Lucifer, finding himself in the position of wanting to take the place of Christ the Son of God, became the first rebel, the first one to act as if he was abused. How many he's had since following in his steps.

I wonder if there is anyone here tonight who's been abused. I wonder if there's anyone here tonight who feels bad because you haven't been given your rights. I wonder if there's anyone here unhappy because someone else has the place that you wish you had. Ah friends, think of that bright, glorious being who had the *highest* place in the universe that any created being could have. But envy and jealousy are *never* satisfied. And Lucifer could think of only one thing—to brush Christ aside and even hurl God from His throne.

“How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! how art thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations! For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north: I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the most High” Isaiah 14:12–14.

What's that pronoun you find repeated here five times? I, I, I, I, I. Ah friend, it's right in the middle of that little word with *infinite* results: S-I-N. It's right in the middle of *pride*, which was the root sin in the heart of Lucifer.

There's something about this controversy that arose in Heaven that I want you to notice. Satan was not alone in his rebellion. We read in Revelation 12 that the dragon and his angels fought. They were not always in rebellion against God. They were created pure, holy, beings. But Revelation 12:3 in symbolic language pictures the dragon as drawing one-third of the stars of God with him. Yes, one-third of the bright angels were drawn with him.

It seems inconceivable, doesn't it? That right there in the very *presence* of God, with God upon His throne, with sin *never* having introduced itself, *never* appearing before. It seems incredible that one-third of those angels, having always been happy and holy from the moment of their creation should join Lucifer in his rebellion. It's hard to understand. It's *impossible* to understand. Again I say, sin is a mystery.

I want you to notice some of the elements involved. One of the greatest elements was sympathy. Sympathy is a wonderful thing when it's on the right side, but it's a tragic thing when it's on the wrong side. Lucifer himself would never have persisted in his rebellion had he not found so much *sympathy* among some of the other angels.

It is a terrible thing, my friends, to talk to someone who is under the chastisement of God and sympathize with them in their disobedience. Some of those angels sympathized with Lucifer and with one another.

There came a time when the rebellion had gone so far in Heaven that God had to do something. The question is: what would He do? He could have done any one of several things. He could have killed Lucifer as soon as Lucifer started his rebellion. But that would have introduced questions and fears among the other angels. God didn't do that. He could have put them out of Heaven just by His Word.

God could have said, "Lucifer and all who sympathize with him, you go." But He didn't do that.

You notice in our text in Revelation 12 it says that Michael (that is Christ) and His angels *fought* against the dragon, and the dragon and his angels *fought*. There was actual warfare that took place there—struggling angel against angel. I wonder why that was? Now from this early vision that I've been talking about in the introduction, I want to read something from the wonderful compilation, *The Story of Redemption*. Beginning on page 13 of this little book is a wonderful chapter called "The Fall of Lucifer." After going over some of the experiences that we have just been studying, we come upon this statement:

"The great God could at once have hurled this arch-deceiver from heaven, but this was not His purpose. He would give the rebellious an equal chance to measure strength and might with His own Son and His loyal angels. In this battle every angel would choose his own side and be manifested to all" *The Story of Redemption*, page 17.

Do you see the strategy of God? Suppose there was an issue right here in this group tonight. There is a right side and a wrong side. Suppose you are called upon to help decide which way the thing is to go. Suppose some of your friends are on one side, and some of them are on the other side. What will you do? Whatever you do, you'll hurt someone. Whatever you do, you'll make someone feel thankful and appreciated. What will you do?

This was the issue in Heaven 6,000 years ago. God deliberately arranged it so that every angel would have to reveal himself. Every angel would have to take his stand one way or the other. And it wasn't enough that an angel should say, "Well, I'm not going as far as Lucifer does. I think he's too critical, but I still want to be friends with him." Oh, no. That won't do. In effect God said, "Listen, you must go so far in standing against Lucifer that you will help to push him out and all who stand with him, or else you will stand with him and be pushed out with him."

This was the issue. The reason I am studying this with you tonight is that the last scenes in the great controversy will be so much like the first scenes in the great controversy. And we are even now entering into them. The remnant church will be purged as Heaven was purged 6,000 years ago. Christ will purify His church as He cleansed the temple in Jerusalem at the beginning and the close of His ministry.

There is such a thing as having a vision of love and meekness and gentleness that, in effect, wants to pat everybody on the back and say, "Good God and good devil." You cannot do it, my friends. The Prince of Peace says, "He that is not with Me is against Me."

Now may I read for the third time these interesting sentences on page 17 of the little book, *The Story of Redemption*:

“The great God could at once have hurled this arch-deceiver from heaven, but this was not His purpose. He would give the rebellious an equal chance to measure strength and might with His own Son and His loyal angels. In this battle every angel would choose his own side and be manifested to all” *Ibid*.

You know, sometimes when people come into the church of Christ, they think that they ought to have heaven on earth. Well friends, it could be a heaven on earth and still have a war. Is that correct? In fact, if it is heaven on earth, it *will* be a war if there's sin in the camp. As soon as sin reared its ugly, rebellious head in Heaven war *began*, and that war has never stopped. And it will never end until sin and sinners are destroyed and there's a new heaven and a new earth. Oh friends, God haste the day. What do you say?

Sympathy? Yes, sympathy with *God*, but *none* with rebellion. Whether it's in Heaven or on earth, whether it's the rebellion of the Devil or his angels or human agents that he uses to carry on, either in open defiance or in covert, subtle insinuations, spreading rumors, spreading discontent, spreading evasion of God's law, let us have no part of sin in any of its workings. God keep us from it.

It would not have been safe to suffer any who united with Satan to continue to occupy Heaven. They had learned the lesson of genuine rebellion against the unchangeable laws of God, and this is incurable. Genuine rebellion is incurable, friends. Thus it has been in the history of the work of God.

I think of men in this movement who have allowed jealousy and envy to come in. They have finally lifted their hands against the Lord's anointed. They have launched into criticism and on into rebellion, and finally find themselves outside the church. They may still claim loyalty to it.

Do you know that Satan claimed he was trying to improve the government of God? He claimed he had plans to reform the government of God. Oh, yes. He claimed to be working for the benefit of the universe.

And so today, self-styled reformers bring in their ideas of how they can change this or that or the other. Paul warned the elders at Ephesus about this. Grievous wolves entering in among you not sparing the flock, also of your own selves shall men arise speaking perverse things to draw away disciples after them. Oh, I pray for the eye salve that God's people may have anointed eyes and be able to see *through* the deceiver and his disguise.

This is one of the great reasons God has given His people the gift of prophecy. If we studied what the prophet has written instead of *all* the remarks that offshoots gather together and fill in their own ideas, we would be wise to discern evil and strong to resist it.

But it's not merely with the offshoots that our danger lies. Right in the church, there is always this battle going on over obedience or disobedience. There are always some elements whose sympathies are always on the side of the rebels.

It was so with Korah, Dathan, and Abihu in the exodus movement. When those men stood up and defied Moses and said the Lord spoke only by Moses and not by them, the miracle-working power of God destroyed them. The earth opened up her mouth and they went down into the pit alive.

The next day, multitudes in the camp came to Moses and said, "You killed the people of the Lord." Imagine, my friends. Ah, there is something insidious about this Godly sympathy. I want to read some statements dealing with this matter of unsanctified sympathy. There are some people here tonight that can get a great blessing from what I am reading. You might be one of them; listen for eternity, my friends:

"If persons are as deserving of being separated from the church as Satan was of being cast out of heaven, they will have sympathizers. There is always a class who are more influenced by individuals than they are by the Spirit of God and sound principles; and, in their unconsecrated state, these are ever ready to take sides with the wrong and give their pity and sympathy to the very ones who least deserve it" *Testimonies for the Church, Volume 3*, page 114.

Think of it. Here is someone who deserves to be separated from the church. The prophet of God says that even if he was as deserving as Satan was, he will have sympathizers. It must be that where there is smoke there is fire. If there are people who sympathize with someone who is being reproved, maybe it isn't something that ought to be handled. Maybe he has grounds for his grievances. And so the rumors run. There are those whose sympathies are always with the underdog.

But there are times when the government of the state and the government of the church is right. We should be very careful lest we allow this feeling that if someone is being reproved they are being abused. We must be very careful how we sympathize with that.

Do you know Who deserves sympathy, friends? God deserves sympathy. All these things hurt Him worse than they hurt anyone else. And do you know who among human beings deserve sympathy? It's men and women who have the courage to stand for the right like Moses did at Sinai, and Elijah did at Mount Carmel. They're the ones who ought to have sympathy. Often they have to do their duty without very much. They ought to do it whether they get any sympathy or not, but if you have sympathy to pass around, save it for those who are standing for the law of God and the principles of the Spirit of Prophecy.

Be very careful how you dish it out to someone who is being reproved, rebuked, labored with, and told they need to change their attitude or course of action. You may find yourself in the company of those angels in Heaven who stood with Lucifer when they should have stood against him. And if you continue in that, eventually you will find yourself outside the company who are going up that narrow path to the city of God.

It will be a clean work God will make in His church. The remnant church will be purged. The thrashing floor will have all the chaff blown out, and this unwise sympathy will have a lot to do with the loss of multitudes of souls.

“Those who have been nearly all their lives controlled by a spirit as foreign to the Spirit of God as was Achan's will be very passive when the time comes for decided action on the part of all. They will not claim to be on either side”
Ibid., page 272.

Did you get that? They want to be what? They want to be *neutral*. My dear friends, there are times you can't be neutral. Suppose you had been one of those angels in Heaven back there before the world was made, and someday you wake up and find there is a controversy going on in Heaven—that Lucifer has headed a rebellious faction. He's claiming to reform the government of God, but that God and His Son are standing firm that this cannot be. Angels are taking sides one way or the other. You look around you and here is some angel that's been your chosen companion for as long as you can remember, but that angel is going with Lucifer. And over here is some other angel you admire, and that angel is going with Christ. What, I ask again, what will you do? “Oh, I want to be friends with all my friends. Isn't there some way I can get out of this and still keep friends with this one and with that one?”

No. There is no way. This is the tragedy of sin. And never forget it. The man who tries to do that ends up on the wrong side.

“God will not be trifled with. It is in the time of conflict that the true colors should be flung to the breeze. It is then that the standard-bearers need to be firm and let their true position be known” *Ibid.*, page 272.

Are you willing to stand firmly for right? Do you know who it is who are finally going to receive the mark of the beast?

“Those who have step by step yielded to worldly demands and conformed to worldly customs”
Testimonies for the Church, Volume 5, page 81.

“And at that time the superficial, conservative class, whose influence has steadily retarded the progress of the work, will renounce the faith and take their stand with its avowed enemies, toward whom their sympathies have long been tending” *Ibid.*, page 483.

“As the storm approaches, a large class who have professed faith in the third angel's message, but have not been sanctified through obedience to the truth, abandon their position and join the ranks of the opposition. By uniting with the world and partaking of its spirit, they have

come to view matters in nearly the same light; and when the test is brought, they are prepared to choose the easy, popular side" *Great Controversy*, page 608.

Oh friends, it will mean something to be able to stand when the majority forsake us (*Testimonies for the Church, Volume 5*, page 136). But the only way you learn to do something is by doing it. How do you stand now when issues come? The great test of what we're studying tonight is not how we nod our heads or say Amen in these pews. It's what we say out in the parlor or the bedroom or the dining room or on the walks or in our yards, as we mingle with one another and with those around us. It is what we sometimes say not so much by word as by look—just attitude. Is our influence for law and loyalty, or is it for compromise and rebellion? Which way is your influence? That's the question.

Are you known as someone who cannot be bought and cannot be bribed and cannot be begged and persuaded to join in false sympathy? Do people know they can find in your ear a ready listener to tales of abuse, gossip, criticism, faultfinding? It's a wonderful thing to have people cry on your shoulder who are wanting to repent and turn to God, but it's a devilish thing to be known as someone where people can come and cry on your shoulder when they are in rebellion and want sympathy in their rebellion. That's a terrible thing.

"Reproofs always hurt human nature. Many are the souls that have been destroyed by the unwise sympathy of their brethren; for, because the brethren sympathized with them, they thought they must indeed have been abused, and that the reprover was all wrong and had a bad spirit" *Testimonies for the Church, Volume 3*, page 329.

When Moses came down from the mountain and broke the tables of the law and took Aaron and spoke sharply to him, multitudes stood by and admired the lovely spirit of Aaron and were disgusted with the rashness of Moses. That's what Inspiration says. But we are told that God sees not as man sees. There are those who reprove and criticize the leadership of the Seventh-day Adventist church because of the way it has had to deal with offshoot movements in the last ten years. If men were as close to God as Moses was, they would still get the ill-will, the criticism of those whose sympathies are with those who rebel against leadership.

There is no way to avoid the crisis. There is no way to get away from this cross. I urge you for your soul's sake, never be deceived by the serpent's suggestion that if this one or that one had only done different the rebellion might have been averted.

Is God to blame because Lucifer was not compromised so that he could come back into Heaven? Shall the leadership of God's church be blamed because offshoots and rebels cannot find a place of welcome in the church? No. For Jesus' sake let us make certain that we never give our sympathy to those whose influence is on the wrong side.

“The only hope for sinners in Zion is to fully see and confess their wrongs, and put them away. Those who step in to destroy the edge of sharp reproof that God sends, saying that the reprover was partly wrong and the reproved was not just right, please the enemy” *Ibid*.

Look at it, friends. You’ve just been having a class in child guidance on this campus. Tell me you parents: how would you like it if some neighbor who had known that your child was punished and the child was crying, how would you like it for some neighbor to come along and put his hand on Johnny and say, “Johnny, poor Johnny. What happened? Did daddy whip you? What happened? Well Johnny, maybe you weren’t just right, and maybe daddy wasn’t feeling very good today. Maybe daddy got up on the wrong side of the bed this morning, or maybe you didn’t do right too.” Is that the medicine Johnny needs? What is being sown in the child’s heart? It’s sowing rebellion; it’s sowing distrust. And is it any better when Johnny’s 23 or 33 or 43, is it? Not a bit, my friends. Not a bit. Oh, that the Spirit of God might be allowed to send the arrow home to the heart without somebody getting out there with a *shield* to protect the individual.

The worse thing that can happen to sinners in Zion is not to get their feelings hurt. The worse thing that can happen to those who are transgressing the law of God is to be sympathized with and go *on* in their transgression until it’s forever too late. That is real cruelty. That’s real unkindness.

False sympathizers will have an account to settle with the Master by and by for their work of death. I pray that every soul on this campus and every visitor here tonight will settle in your hearts that before you sympathize with anyone you make sure you know what God says, and that your sympathies will be on the side of obedience instead of disobedience; on the side of strict principle instead of compromise.

Saul had been anointed king over Israel. He’d been sent to annihilate the heathen nation of the Amalekites, the enemies of God. Instead of doing what God said, he brought back a lot of spoil and he brought back the king of the Amalekites as a trophy. He didn’t fully obey God. Now he meets the prophet. The prophet of God is the picture of stern rebuke:

“And Samuel said, Hath the Lord as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the Lord?” 1 Samuel 15:22.

He claimed that all these sheep and oxen he had saved were to bring a sacrifice to God. Samuel said, “Listen Saul, what God wants is obedience, not your ideas of sacrifice.”

“Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams. For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry”
1 Samuel 15:23.

Witchcraft, open communication with the Devil and his angels, is indeed a terrible thing. This says that rebellion is like that. It doesn't make any difference what the point is, whether it's breaking God's Sabbath, stealing, committing adultery, swearing, lying, or any of the many things that come from those sins and lead to them. Persistent rebellion against the law of God will lead at last to being excluded from Heaven as Lucifer and his angels were cast out of Heaven.

Shall we clean up or be cleaned out? Shall we sympathize with those who give the message of reform, or shall we sympathize with those who rebel against the church and her high standards, against the church and its leadership? One way or the other, each one of us is making decisions day by day. I am so glad that whatever our mistakes of the past may have been, tonight we can turn homeward and set our influence on the side of full obedience.

I studied with you in recent evenings the marvelous grace of God: that we can be justified from all things through the blood that was shed upon the cross. But I want to tell you, we are not cleansed from sin that we hang onto. We are not pardoned for transgressions of which we are not repentant. We need sorrow for sin, and we need to see what sin is to see what to be sorry for.

Thank God, we can plead with Jesus that His precious blood shall cleanse us. Ah, when we see what our sins and the sins of others have done to Christ, we shall not pour out any false sympathy upon those who have pierced the Savior. It is looking upon the One whom we have pierced that will cause us to mourn for Him. (Zachariah 12:10)

Have you tears of sympathy tonight? Oh, that they might be shed for Jesus. Instead of having sympathy for sin, we should have sympathy for the One whom our sins have pierced, whose heart was broken because of our transgressions. Thank God, friends, if we look upon Him, that experience can be ours. We can feel genuinely sorry for the rebellion that has broken His heart, for the sins that have pierced His soul.

I'm so glad that He's able and willing to do that for us. Aren't you? I want that blessing, and I want it tonight. Shall we kneel together in prayer?

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