

Pine Knoll Sabbath School Study Notes

Fourth Quarter 2022: *Life Everlasting: On Death, Dying, and the Future Hope*

Lesson 1 “Rebellion in a Perfect Universe”

Read for this week’s study

1 John 4:8, 16; 1 John 4:7–16; Ezekiel 28:12–19; Isaiah 14:12–15; Revelation 12.

Memory Text

“ ‘How you have fallen from heaven, you star of the morning, son of the dawn! You have been cut down to the earth, you who defeated the nations!’ ” (Isa. 14:12, NASB).

Lesson Outline from Adult Sabbath School Study Guide

- I. Introduction
- II. Creation, an Expression of Love
- III. Free Will, the Basis for Love
- IV. Mysterious Ingratitude
- V. The Price of Pride
- VI. The Spread of Unbelief
- VII. Further Study

Questions and Notes for Consideration

Facilitator: Jon Paulien

1. Since the title, “Life Everlasting”, is a little ambiguous, I studied the Introduction to the quarter’s lessons at the beginning. The introduction was titled “On Death and Dying: Our Future Hope”. This suggested a focus on death and resurrection, the topic of SDA Fundamental Belief number 26. The purpose of the quarter’s lessons was further elaborated as follows: “The present bible study guide deals with the subject of the great controversy between good and evil from the perspective of two major themes. One is the origin and ongoing existence of sin and death. The other theme is God’s enduring work to solve these problems and bring the world back to its original perfect condition. Special emphasis is given also to the mortal nature of human beings and how the resurrection is what leads to immortality.” This statement suggested the lesson would focus on Fundamental 8, the Great Controversy, and Fundamentals 9 and 10 on Salvation. The Introduction concluded with the statement: “This quarter we will explore the painful subject of death, but through the lens of the hope offered us through Jesus.” This statement returned to the focus of the title, death and resurrection. Still a bit uncertain, I reviewed the 14

items in the Table of Contents. They seemed to follow a timeline beginning with rebellion in heaven and ending with the New Earth. But there is also a focus on sin and human nature (Fundamental 7). Given that information, how would you formulate the theme of the quarter? (Lesson Introduction)

2. After some reflection, I concluded that the organizing principle of the quarter's lessons was the Great Controversy theme, something dear to the hearts of the Pine Knoll community. But with that overarching theme in mind, the lesson pursues themes like human nature (Fundamental 7), and death and resurrection (Fundamentals 9 and 26). There is also some focus on end-time events (Fundamentals 25 through 28). So I would summarize the lesson theme as "Death and Resurrection through the Lens of a Cosmic Conflict Approach." The running context will be cosmic conflict, but the primary theme will be death and resurrection. Did this summary make things clearer or less clear? (Lesson Introduction)
3. According to this week's lesson, the theme of the first week's study is the question: How did sin and evil appear in a perfect world? We will pursue that question in the rest of our study together below. (Sabbath Afternoon's Lesson)
4. Nature in its present condition offers a mixed message that mingles good and evil. How does one explain the co-existence of good and evil in our world? One option, philosophically, suggests that evil exists to enhance our appreciation of the good. Another is that evil is a disruption of a perfect plan. Jesus seems to address this issue in Matthew 13:24-30. According to Him, what is the origin of evil? (Sunday's Lesson)
5. What is love?
6. Read 1 John 4:7-8. What does this passage say about God? If everything God does is an expression of love, how do the six types of wrath in the Bible fit in as expressions of love?
7. Read 1 John 4:9-16. What do we learn about God's love from this passage? What kind of decision-making process can help avoid the negative consequences of choices we have made in the past? Does the creation of Lucifer make God ultimately responsible for the origin of sin? (Monday's Lesson)
8. Read Ezekiel 28:12-19. What can we learn from this passage about the mysterious origin of sin? (Tuesday's Lesson)
9. Read Isaiah 14:12-14. What does this passage tell us about us about God and about Lucifer? (Wednesday's Lesson)
10. What does Revelation 12 tell us about the cosmic conflict? In what ways is this battle continuing in our world today? (Thursday's Lesson)
11. Does the creation of Lucifer ultimately make God responsible for the origin and existence of evil? How might we seek to answer the charge that God is to blame? (Friday's Lesson)

12. In Matthew 5:43-48 Jesus spoke of God's unconditional love for all human beings as a pattern for our own attitudes and behavior. What are some challenges people face when truly exercising unconditional love? (Friday's Lesson)

Thoughts from Graham Maxwell

So first let us consider again what has gone wrong, because I believe the way we understand what went wrong helps us to understand the methods God has used to set things right. And particularly then it helps us to understand **why** Jesus had to die. Our God has been accused, specifically, of being arbitrary, and exacting, vengeful, unforgiving, and severe. God sent His Son to reveal the truth about these matters. Why was it not enough for Jesus to come and live among us as He did and tell us the truth about His Father and then demonstrate by His gracious treatment of the worst of sinners that God, indeed, is not the kind of Person His enemies have made Him out to be?

Of course, the way He lived and the way He treated people is vital evidence. And we will spend much time on it later, particularly on the evening entitled "How God Treats His Erring Children." But remember that the most serious charge leveled against our God is that God has lied to us. He lied when He said that sin results in death. Worse than that, Satan has turned God's gracious warning to our first parents in the Garden of Eden into a terrifying threat. He pictures God as saying to Adam and Eve, "Either you obey me, or I'll kill you!" And think of the baleful effect that perversion of the truth about our God has had on the human race. Think how it has poisoned people's attitude toward God and their practice of religion. Think of picturing our gracious God as saying, "You either love and obey me, or I'll torture and execute you in my righteous wrath." How could this satanic view of God win such wide acceptance as it has? And it is still very widely believed.

For thousands of years, men have sacrificed even their own children to win the favor of their offended gods. Even in the Christian world it is suggested, even believed, that if it were not for Christ's appeasement sometimes called propitiation, of His Father's wrath, we would long before now have been destroyed. And were it not for Christ's constant pleading with the Father, God could not find it in His own heart to forgive and heal His children.

Who could have thought up such perversion? But now, as you know the sixty-six books, does anything need to be done to persuade God to love His children? The testimony of all sixty-six books is that God has always loved even His most wayward child. That is what is summed up in John 3:16, "God so loved the world. . . ." Not just His good children, but all His children, both good and bad.

And those serious words to Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden were no threat. Those words were a gracious warning—because sin actually results in death. Sin so changes the sinner that a natural consequence of this condition is death. Cut off by his own rebellious choice from the source of life, the sinner will die. Now out of harmony with God by his own rebellious rejection, the sinner is so changed that even the life-giving glory of our God becomes a consuming fire. How can this best be clarified? Not by claims, but by evidence and demonstration.

One choice that God had, was to allow Adam and Eve to die. And He could have said to the universe, “Who is telling the truth? I said sinners would die! It is the devil who has lied to you.” Or going back even further, God could have left Satan and his followers to reap the natural results of their sin and they would have perished. And surely then there would have been no question about the truthfulness of God’s warning. Why didn’t God take those—it would seem—easy choices? He could have saved all the painful history since that time.

Of course, had the universe watched Satan and his followers die, they had never seen death before, so there was the hazard that they would assume that God had executed His children who did not please Him. Then there would be the danger that the angels would serve God from fear, and the obedience that springs from fear produces the character of a rebel. And rebelliousness is the essence of sin. And so instead of God taking that easy way, not wanting the obedience and love that springs from fear, totally unacceptable to so gracious a God as we know Him to be, and having such dire consequences; instead of taking those choices, God sent His Son in human form. And He died the death that is the natural result of sin. And the universe watched to see how God was involved in the death of the wicked. {Graham Maxwell. Excerpt from the audio series, *Conversations About God*, #8, “The Most Costly and Convincing Evidence” recorded March 1984, Loma Linda, California} *To listen to the entire audio of the above reference, click on the following direct link: <http://pkp.cc/8MMCAG>*

I wonder if tonight we could think back in imagination to the very dramatic events of that first week of this earth’s history. The war had begun already up in heaven. Satan had already leveled his charges and his accusations. One-third of the angels had already agreed with him that God is not worthy of our love and our trust.

Right in the middle of that devastating crisis, God invites His family to watch Him as He creates yet another world, this time ours. How easily He could have created our world with a snap of His fingers, in just an instant of time. But in the dramatic and significant setting of the Great Controversy, He chose, this time, to do it in six twenty-four hour days. On the first day, all He said was, “Let there be light.” That’s all. And then day two, three, four, and five, as God in unhurried majesty and drama unfolded His plans for our earth. By the sixth day, what a beautiful place this was. Where now were Satan’s charges that God was selfish?

I mean, look at the freedom. He created us in His own image with power to think and to do. And we know from human history that He created us free to either love and trust Him or hate Him and spit in His face, because it has been done. He created us able to do it. God even allowed Satan to approach our first parents at the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil. And He didn't hide that tree in some dark corner of the garden; He put it right in the middle near the Tree of Life, so that Adam and Even would see it every time they came to that other tree.

{Graham Maxwell. Excerpt from the audio series, Conversations About God, #10, "The Reminder of the Evidence" recorded March 1984, Loma Linda, California} *To listen to the entire audio of the above reference, click on the following direct link:* <http://pkp.cc/10MMCAG>

Have you ever watched a hummingbird? What do you think of a God who would make that little creature? And those colors?—they're incredible! Once in awhile, when our children were still small, a bird would build a nest near a window where we could see. That's the most marvelous thing to watch! And then the little eggs. I've always been fascinated by birds' eggs. And the way the mother looks after them. Of course, then like as not a scrub jay would come and steal the eggs or a cat would catch the bird. Well, that's also part of the scene.

But think of a God who would create the hummingbird to come and get nectar from the bird of paradise. We had some that bloomed right outside our breakfast window. And you know how they open? Absolutely marvelous! Their color, and then the little blue part, and then the next section, and another blue part. Did you ever try to pull one of those open prematurely? They just don't go right, do they? And yet when they're ready, the case opens just enough to let the next section out. Do you see God engineering that? Ah, it speaks marvelously of our God.

The most wonderful thing He ever made on our planet is celebrated in Song of Solomon. You know how religion tends to be so legalistic, so demanding. Is it not true that on this planet we have tended to think of people who withdraw, separate themselves, live lives of total self-denial and denial of everything that's really pleasant, that they are the *truly* spiritual folk? No, that's not the way God designed it. Why make heaven beautiful if there aren't people who enjoy things that are beautiful? {Graham Maxwell. Excerpt from the audio series, The Picture of God in All 66 – Ecclesiastes and Song of Solomon, recorded January 1982, Riverside, California} *To listen to the entire audio of the above reference, click on the following direct links:*

*Audio links to the West Covina series recorded in 1984:

<http://pkp.cc/31MMPOGIA66> (Part 1) <http://pkp.cc/32MMPOGIA66> (Part 2)

Now these inhabitants of Babel, did they believe in God? Did they believe in His power? Did they believe He had the power to drown the whole world in a flood? Did they believe His promise that He would never do it again? And so they built the tower. They didn't build the tower because they didn't believe in God, but because they did believe in God and it scared them that He has so much power. So perhaps we need not spend so much time discussing God's power, unless we don't believe that He has it. ***The Great Controversy is not over power, but over who is telling the truth.*** God has been accused of the abuse of power and of a failure to tell the truth. Such charges cannot be met by force. To resort to force would only worsen the matter, as if to suggest, "I don't have evidence, so now I must intimidate you with power." And so God chose the only way—the long and painful, and costly and apparently weak way as some regard it—of teaching, of explanation, of demonstration. {Graham Maxwell. Excerpt from the audio series, Conversations About God, #4, "God's Way of Restoring Trust" recorded February 1984, Loma Linda, California} *To listen to the entire audio of the above reference, click on the following direct link: <http://pkp.cc/4MMCAG>*

Recommended Listening:

Conversations About God #1 "The Conflict In God's Family" is available at:
<http://pkp.cc/1MMCAG>

Conversations About God #2 "What Went Wrong in God's Universe" is available at:
<http://pkp.cc/2MMCAG>

Further Study with Ellen White

God is love. Like rays of light from the sun, love and light and joy flow out from Him to all His creatures. It is His nature to give. His very life is the outflow of unselfish love. {MB 77.2}

Every manifestation of creative power is an expression of infinite love. The sovereignty of God involves fullness of blessing to all created beings. {PP 33.2}

God is love, God is life. It is the prerogative of God to redeem, reconstruct, and restore. {HP 291.2}

In the creation of man was manifest the agency of a personal God. When God had made man in His image, the human form was perfect in all its arrangements, but it was without life. Then a personal, self-existing God breathed into that form the breath of life, and man became a living, breathing, intelligent being. All parts of the human organism were put in action. The heart, the arteries, the veins, the tongue, the hands, the feet, the senses, the perceptions of the mind—all began their work, and all were placed under law. Man became a living soul. Through Jesus Christ a personal God created man and endowed him with intelligence and power. {8T 264.1}

Infinite love—how great it is! God made the world to enlarge heaven. He desires a larger family of created intelligences (MS 78, 1901). {1BC 1081.2}

All heaven took a deep and joyful interest in the creation of the world and of man. Human beings were a new and distinct order. They were made “in the image of God,” and it was the Creator’s design that they should populate the earth (RH Feb. 11, 1902). {1BC 1081.3}

Love, the basis of creation and of redemption, is the basis of true education. This is made plain in the law that God has given as the guide of life. The first and great commandment is, “Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind.” Luke 10:27. To love Him, the infinite, the omniscient One, with the whole strength, and mind, and heart, means the highest development of every power. It means that in the whole being—the body, the mind, as well as the soul—the image of God is to be restored. {Ed 16.1}

Next to the angelic beings, the human family, formed in the image of God, are the noblest of His created works. God desires them to become all that He has made it possible for them to be, and to do their very best with the powers He has given them. {MH 397.1}

Christ, the Light of the world, veiled the dazzling splendor of His divinity and came to live as a man among men, that they might, without being consumed, become acquainted with their Creator. No man has seen God at any time except as He is revealed through Christ. . . . {8T 265.2}

Christ came to teach human beings what God desires them to know. In the heavens above, in the earth, in the broad waters of the ocean, we see the handiwork of God. All created things testify to His power, His wisdom, His love. But not from the stars or the ocean or the cataract can we learn of the personality of God as it is revealed in Christ. {8T 265.4}

God saw that a clearer revelation than nature was needed to portray both His personality and His character. He sent His Son into the world to reveal, so far as could be endured by human sight, the nature and the attributes of the invisible God. {8T 265.5}

But not to any class is Christ’s love restricted. He identifies Himself with every child of humanity. That we might become members of the heavenly family, He became a member of the earthly family. He is the Son of man, and thus a brother to every son and daughter of Adam. {DA 638.4}

It was taught by the Jews that before God’s love is extended to the sinner, he must first repent. In their view, repentance is a work by which men earn the favor of Heaven. And it was this thought that led the Pharisees to exclaim in astonishment and anger. “This man receiveth sinners.” According to their ideas He should permit none to approach Him but those who had repented. But in the parable of the lost sheep, Christ teaches that salvation does not come

through our seeking after God but through God's seeking after us. "There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. They are all gone out of the way." Romans 3:11, 12. We do not repent in order that God may love us, but He reveals to us His love in order that we may repent. {COL 189.1}

The gift of God to man is beyond all computation. Nothing was withheld. God would not permit it to be said that He could have done more or revealed to humanity a greater measure of love. In the gift of Christ He gave all heaven. {AG 176.5}

But in our contemplation of Christ, we are only lingering round the edge of a love that is measureless. His love is like a vast ocean, without bottom or shore.—RH, May 6, 1902. {1MCP 251.2}

The years of eternity, as they roll, will bring richer and still more glorious revelations of God and of Christ. As knowledge is progressive, so will love, reverence, and happiness increase. The more men learn of God, the greater will be their admiration of His character.—GC 678 (1911). {1MCP 252.1}

The Holy Spirit will not compel men to take a certain course of action. We are free moral agents; and when sufficient evidence has been given us as to our duty it is left with us to decide our course. {RH, July 17, 1888 par. 4}

The law of love being the foundation of the government of God, the happiness of all created beings depended upon their perfect accord with its great principles of righteousness. God desires from all His creatures the service of love—homage that springs from an intelligent appreciation of His character. He takes no pleasure in a forced allegiance, and to all He grants freedom of will, that they may render Him voluntary service. {GC 493.2}

When Christ took human nature upon Him, He bound humanity to Himself by a tie of love that can never be broken by any power save the choice of man himself. Satan will constantly present allurements to induce us to break this tie—to choose to separate ourselves from Christ. Here is where we need to watch, to strive, to pray, that nothing may entice us to *choose* another master; for we are always free to do this. But let us keep our eyes fixed upon Christ, and He will preserve us. Looking unto Jesus, we are safe. Nothing can pluck us out of His hand. In constantly beholding Him, we "are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord." 2 Corinthians 3:18. {SC 72.1}

Nothing is more plainly taught in Scripture than that God was in no wise responsible for the entrance of sin; that there was no arbitrary withdrawal of divine grace, no deficiency in the divine government, that gave occasion for the uprising of rebellion. Sin is an intruder, for whose presence no reason can be given. It is mysterious, unaccountable; to excuse it, is to defend it. Could excuse for it be found, or cause shown for its existence, it would cease to be sin. {FLB 66.3}

The first sinner was one whom God had greatly exalted. He is represented under the figure of the prince of Tyrus flourishing in might and magnificence. Little by little Satan came to indulge the desire for self-exaltation. . . . Though all his glory was from God, this mighty angel came to regard it as pertaining to himself. Not content with his position, though honored above the heavenly host, he ventured to covet homage due alone to the Creator. Instead of seeking to make God supreme in the affections and allegiance of all created beings, it was his endeavor to secure their service and loyalty to himself. . . . {FLB 66.4}

Satan's rebellion was to be a lesson to the universe through all coming ages—a perpetual testimony to the nature of sin and its terrible results. The working out of Satan's rule, its effects upon both men and angels, would show what must be the fruit of setting aside the divine authority. It would testify that with the existence of God's government is bound up the well-being of all the creatures He has made (*Patriarchs and Prophets*, pp. 42, 43). {LHU 19.6}

Opposition to the law of God had its beginning in the courts of heaven, with Lucifer, the covering cherub. Satan determined to be first in the councils of heaven, and equal with God. He began his work of rebellion with the angels under his command, seeking to diffuse among them the spirit of discontent. And he worked in so deceptive a way that many of the angels were won to his allegiance before his purposes were fully known. Even the loyal angels could not fully discern his character, nor see to what his work was leading. When Satan had succeeded in winning many angels to his side, he took his cause to God, representing that it was the desire of the angels that he occupy the position that Christ held. {7BC 972.6}

The evil continued to work until the spirit of disaffection ripened into active revolt. Then there was war in heaven, and Satan, with all who sympathized with him, was cast out. Satan had warred for the mastery in heaven, and had lost the battle. God could no longer trust him with honor and supremacy, and these, with the part he had taken in the government of heaven, were taken from him. {7BC 973.1}

Lucifer was envious of Christ, and gradually assumed command which devolved on Christ alone. {SR 13.1}

Not until the death of Christ was the character of Satan clearly revealed to the angels or to the unfallen worlds. The archapostate had so clothed himself with deception that even holy beings had not understood his principles. They had not clearly seen the nature of his rebellion. {DA 758.3}

God could have destroyed Satan and his sympathizers as easily as one can cast a pebble to the earth; but He did not do this. Rebellion was not to be overcome by force. Compelling power is found only under Satan's government. The Lord's principles are not of this order. His authority rests upon goodness, mercy, and love; and the presentation of these principles is the means to

be used. God's government is moral, and truth and love are to be the prevailing power.
{DA 759.1}

Lucifer was enshrouded with glory as the covering cherub. Yet this angel whom God had created, and entrusted with power, became desirous of being as God. He gained the sympathy of some of his associates by suggesting thoughts of criticism regarding the government of God. This evil seed was scattered in a most seducing manner; and after it had sprung up and taken root in the minds of many, he gathered the ideas that he himself had first implanted in the minds of others, and brought them before the highest order of angels as the thoughts of other minds against the government of God. Thus, by ingenious methods of his own devising, Lucifer introduced rebellion in heaven. {4BC 1143.1}

God desired that a change take place, and that the work of Satan be brought out in its genuine aspect. But the exalted angel standing next to Christ was opposed to the Son of God. The underworking was so subtle that it could not be made to appear before the heavenly host as the thing that it really was; and so there was war in heaven, and Satan was expelled with all who would not stand on the side of loyalty to God's government. The Lord God stood forth as Supreme Ruler. {4BC 1143.2}

This condition of things had existed a long period of time before Satan was unmasked and the evil ones expelled (Letter 162, 1906). {4BC 1143.3}

God in His wisdom permitted Satan to carry forward his work, until the spirit of disaffection ripened into active revolt. It was necessary for his plans to be fully developed, that their true nature and tendency might be seen by all. Lucifer, as the anointed cherub, had been highly exalted; he was greatly loved by the heavenly beings, and his influence over them was strong. God's government included not only the inhabitants of heaven, but of all the worlds that He had created; and Satan thought that if he could carry the angels of heaven with him in rebellion, he could carry also the other worlds. He had artfully presented his side of the question, employing sophistry and fraud to secure his objects. His power to deceive was very great, and by disguising himself in a cloak of falsehood he had gained an advantage. Even the loyal angels could not fully discern his character or see to what his work was leading.
{GC 497.1}

In His dealing with sin, God could employ only righteousness and truth. Satan could use what God could not—flattery and deceit. He had sought to falsify the word of God and had misrepresented His plan of government before the angels, claiming that God was not just in laying laws and rules upon the inhabitants of heaven; that in requiring submission and obedience from His creatures, He was seeking merely the exaltation of Himself. Therefore it must be demonstrated before the inhabitants of heaven, as well as of all the worlds, that God's government was just, His law perfect. Satan had made it appear that he himself was seeking to

promote the good of the universe. The true character of the usurper, and his real object, must be understood by all. He must have time to manifest himself by his wicked works. {GC 498.1}

It is impossible to explain the origin of sin so as to give a reason for its existence. Yet enough may be understood concerning both the origin and the final disposition of sin, to make fully manifest the justice and benevolence of God in all His dealings with evil. Nothing is more plainly taught in Scripture than that God was in no wise responsible for the entrance of sin. . . . Sin is an intruder, for whose presence no reason can be given. It is mysterious, unaccountable; to excuse it, is to defend it. Could excuse for it be found, or cause be shown for its existence, it would cease to be sin. Our only definition of sin is that given in the word of God; it is “the transgression of the law;” (1 John 3:4) it is the outworking of a principle at war with the great law of love which is the foundation of the divine government. {TMK 15.2}

Satan has ascribed to God all the evils to which flesh is heir. He has represented Him as a God who delights in the sufferings of His creatures, who is revengeful and implacable. It was Satan who originated the doctrine of eternal torment as a punishment for sin, because in this way he could lead men into infidelity and rebellion, distract souls, and dethrone human reason. {CT 27.2}

Heaven, looking down and seeing the delusions into which men were led, knew that a divine Instructor must come to the earth. Through the misrepresentations of the enemy, many were so deceived that they worshiped a false god, clothed with the attributes of the satanic character. Those in ignorance and moral darkness must have light, spiritual light; for the world knew not God, and He must be revealed to their understanding. Truth looked down from heaven and saw not the reflection of her image; for dense clouds of spiritual darkness and gloom enveloped the world. The Lord Jesus alone was able to roll back the clouds; for He is the light of the world. By His presence He could dissipate the gloomy shadow that Satan had cast between man and God.—First published Nov. 17, 1891. {CT 28.1}

The whole universe will have become witnesses to the nature and results of sin. And its utter extermination, which in the beginning would have brought fear to angels and dishonor to God, will now vindicate His love and establish His honor before the universe of beings who delight to do His will, and in whose heart is His law. Never will evil again be manifest. Says the word of God: “Affliction shall not rise up the second time.” Nahum 1:9. The law of God, which Satan has reproached as the yoke of bondage, will be honored as the law of liberty. A tested and proved creation will never again be turned from allegiance to Him whose character has been fully manifested before them as fathomless love and infinite wisdom. {GC 504.1}

If we have on the heavenly armor, we shall find that the assaults of the enemy will not have power over us. Angels of God will be round about us to protect us (RH May 25, 1905). {6BC 1119.4}

Satan is a deceiver. When he sinned in heaven, even the loyal angels did not fully discern his character. This was why God did not at once destroy Satan. Had He done so, the holy angels would not have perceived the justice and love of God. A doubt of God's goodness would have been as evil seed that would yield the bitter fruit of sin and woe. Therefore the author of evil was spared, fully to develop his character. Through long ages God has borne the anguish of beholding the work of evil, He has given the infinite Gift of Calvary, rather than leave any to be deceived by the misrepresentations of the wicked one; for the tares could not be plucked up without danger of uprooting the precious grain. And shall we not be as forbearing toward our fellow men as the Lord of heaven and earth is toward Satan? {COL 72.2}

Love, the basis of creation and of redemption, is the basis of true education. This is made plain in the law that God has given as the guide of life. The first and great commandment is, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength." Mark 12:30. To love Him, the Infinite, the Omniscient One, with the whole strength and mind and heart, means the highest development of every power. It means that in the whole being—the body, the mind, as well as the soul—the image of God is to be restored. {CT 32.1}

Like the first is the second commandment, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." Mark 12:31. The law of love calls for the devotion of body, mind, and soul to the service of God and our fellow men. And this service, while making us a blessing to others, brings the greatest blessing to ourselves. Unselfishness underlies all true development. Through unselfish service we receive the highest culture of every faculty. {CT 32.2}

Looking upon man, God saw his desperate rebellion, and He devised a remedy. Christ was His gift to the world for man's reconciliation. The Son of God was appointed to come to this earth to take humanity and by His own example to be a great educating power among men. His experience in man's behalf was to enable men to resist Satan's power. He came to mold character and to give mental power, to shed abroad the beams of true education, that the true aim of life might not be lost sight of. The sons of men had had a practical knowledge of evil; Christ came to the world to show them that He had planted for them the tree of life, the leaves of which are for the healing of the nations. {CT 33.3}

The earth was dark through misapprehension of God. That the gloomy shadows might be lightened, that the world might be brought back to God, Satan's deceptive power was to be broken. This could not be done by force. The exercise of force is contrary to the principles of God's government; He desires only the service of love; and love cannot be commanded; it cannot be won by force or authority. Only by love is love awakened. To know God is to love Him; His character must be manifested in contrast to the character of Satan. This work only one Being in all the universe could do. Only He who knew the height and depth of the love of God

could make it known. Upon the world's dark night the Sun of Righteousness must rise, "with healing in His wings." Malachi 4:2. {DA 22.1}

The plan for our redemption was not an afterthought, a plan formulated after the fall of Adam. It was a revelation of "the mystery which hath been kept in silence through times eternal." Romans 16:25, R. V. It was an unfolding of the principles that from eternal ages have been the foundation of God's throne. From the beginning, God and Christ knew of the apostasy of Satan, and of the fall of man through the deceptive power of the apostate. God did not ordain that sin should exist, but He foresaw its existence, and made provision to meet the terrible emergency. So great was His love for the world, that He covenanted to give His only-begotten Son, "that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." John 3:16. {DA 22.2}