

Happily Ever Before

“THE FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES”

The Mystery

“For the mystery of lawlessness is already at work.... The coming of the lawless one is according to the working of Satan, with all power, signs, and lying wonders, and with all unrighteous deception among those who perish, because they did not receive the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this reason God will send them strong delusion, that they should believe the lie, that they all may be condemned who did not believe the truth but had pleasure in unrighteousness.”

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The Lie

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— Isaiah 14:13–14

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Why?

“It is impossible to explain the origin of sin so as to give a reason for its existence.... 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.”

— *Great Controversy*, 492

Why?

“God calls for far more tact, more wise generalship, than has yet been given him by his human agents. There is need of sharp, sanctified thinking, and keen work to counteract the ingenious plans of Satan.”

— *Youth's Instructor*, May 24, 1894

Why?

“At the final condemnation of Satan and his angels and of all men who have finally identified themselves with him as transgressors of God’s law, every mouth will be stopped. When the hosts of rebellion, from the first great rebel to the last transgressor, are asked why they have broken the law of God, they will be speechless. There will be no answer to give, no reason to assign that will carry the least weight.”

— *Signs of the Times*, April 28, 1890

Why?

“The greatest talents and the highest gifts that could be bestowed on a created being were given to Lucifer, the covering cherub. Before his fall he was a glorious being, occupying a position next to Christ.”

— Letter 21, 1901

Lucifer “was a covering cherub, distinguished by his excellence. God made him good and beautiful, as near as possible like Himself.”

— *Review and Herald*, September 24, 1901

Why?

“When God said to His Son, ‘Let us make man in our image,’ Satan was jealous of Jesus. He wished to be consulted concerning the formation of man, and because he was not, he was filled with envy, jealousy, and hatred.”

— Early Writings, 145

“Satan.... hates mankind because they are the workmanship of God. He opposed the creation of man.”

— Manuscript 38, 1890

Why?

“Next to the angelic beings, the human family, formed in the image of God, are the noblest of His created works.”

— Ministry of Healing, 397

“The earth was to be peopled with beings only a little lower than the angels.”

— Patriarchs and Prophets, 60

“No other creature that God has made is capable of such improvement, such refinement, such nobility as man.... Man cannot conceive what he may be and what he may become. Through the grace of Christ he is capable of constant mental progress.”

— Letter 26d, 1887

Why?

“It was a wonderful thing for God to create man, to make mind.... God created man that every faculty might be the faculty of the divine mind.”

— Ellen G. White 1888 Materials, 1430

“Man was the crowning act of the creation of God, made in the image of God, and designed to be a counterpart of God.... Man is very dear to God, because he was formed in his own image.”

— Review and Herald, June 18, 1895

Why?

God “would place man upon probation to test his loyalty, before he could be rendered eternally secure. If he endured the test wherewith God saw fit to prove him, he should eventually be equal with the angels.”

— Signs of the Times, January 9, 1879

“Those who in the strength of Christ overcome the great enemy of God and man, will occupy a position in the heavenly courts above angels who have never fallen.”

— General Conference Bulletin, April 1, 1899

Why?

“The work of redemption involved consequences of which it is difficult for man to have any conception. There was to be imparted... an excellency of power, which would place him higher than the angels who had not fallen.”

— *General Conference Bulletin*, October 1, 1899

Why?

“God was a light so effulgent, that Lucifer occupied the position of covering cherub, so that the universe could at all times look upon His glory.”

— Manuscript 112, 1897

“He who was once the covering cherub, whose work it was to hide from the heavenly intelligences the glory of God, perverted his intellect, and divorced himself from God.”

— Letter 197, 1901

Adam and Eve “were granted communion with their Maker, with no obscuring veil between.”

— *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 50

Why?

“Through the imparted life of Christ, man has been given opportunity to win back again the lost gift of life, and to stand in his original position before God, a partaker of the divine nature.”

— *Signs of the Times*, June 17, 1897

“Satan in his efforts to deceive and tempt our race had thought to frustrate the divine plan in man’s creation; but Christ now asks that this plan be carried into effect as if man had never fallen. He asks for His people not only pardon and justification, full and complete, but a share in His glory and a seat upon His throne.”

— *Great Controversy*, 483

So Maybe That's Why....

“The creation of our world was brought into the councils of heaven. There the covering cherub prepared his request that he should be made prince to govern the world then in prospect. This was not accorded him. Jesus Christ was to rule the earthly kingdom; under God He engaged to take the world with all its probabilities. The law of heaven should be the standard law for this new world, for human intelligences. Lucifer was jealous of Christ and this jealousy worked into rebellion and he carried with him a large number of the holy angels.”

— Manuscript 43b, 1891

The Core of Rebellion

- ◆ God said, “Please do this.”
- ◆ But Lucifer thought, “No, that is better.”

In order to get to this point, one of two things had to have already happened:

- ◆ Either Lucifer believed that God had made a mistake
- OR**
- ◆ He believed that God had deliberately commanded something that was not in Lucifer’s best interest

The Core of Rebellion

In other words, Lucifer had lost faith in God.

Even if God had just made a “simple mistake,” that was a serious concern. After all, God was in charge of running the universe!

Who could trust His wisdom if it had been proven faulty?

And if God *hadn't* made a mistake, then it meant that He was intentionally harming His subjects!

Who could trust His love if it had been proven false?

So Lucifer had lost faith in God's wisdom, and probably God's love as well.

The Core of Rebellion

But that's not all!

If Lucifer was smart enough to spot God's mistake, that meant *Lucifer was smarter than God!*

What's more, if God *had* tried to trick Lucifer into doing something that wasn't for his best good, then the mere fact that God had failed to fool him meant that *Lucifer was smarter than God!*

That's the stuff that pride is made of.

Now it would be easy for Lucifer to simply do what *he was sure was the best thing.*

That's what we call disobedience.

The Core of Rebellion

But that's not all!

Even if Lucifer never said a word about his disobedience, the influence of his actions told all the other angels, "You can't depend on God to take care of you! You need to take charge of your own life! You need to do what God does.

You need to exalt yourself!"

That's a lie.

The Core of Rebellion

But that's not all!

Once Lucifer took the responsibility of caring for himself, it meant he had to do whatever it took to provide for himself.

If necessary, that meant stealing.

If necessary, that meant murder.

Like Jesus said, Lucifer “was a murderer from the beginning.”

The Core of Rebellion—Review

- ◆ If I don't believe God will take care of me, that's a loss of faith.
- ◆ If I think I can do a better job of taking care of myself than God can, that's pride (and stupidity).
- ◆ If I try taking care of myself in some way other than what God asks me to, that's disobedience.
- ◆ If my influence convinces someone else that “self-serving” is better than “service,” that's lying.
- ◆ And if I put myself first, instead of loving my neighbor as myself, that's stealing, and—under enough pressure—it will become murder.

The Tactics of Rebellion

- ◆ **Exploit position and trust as long as possible**
- ◆ **Hide intentions from others**
- ◆ **Imply or insinuate without clear assertions**
- ◆ **Distort others' perceptions**
- ◆ **Maintain plausible deniability**
- ◆ **Shift responsibility to others**
- ◆ **Lie**
- ◆ **Abandon discredited positions without accepting responsibility for having advocated them**
- ◆ **Cite supporters as evidence of correctness**
- ◆ **Appeal to sympathy**

The Tactics of Rebellion

“Taking advantage of the loving, loyal trust reposed in him by the holy beings under his command, he had so artfully instilled into their minds his own distrust and discontent that his agency was not discerned. Lucifer had presented the purposes of God in a false light—misconstruing and distorting them to excite dissent and dissatisfaction. He cunningly drew his hearers on to give utterance to their feelings; then these expressions were repeated by him when it would serve his purpose, as evidence that the angels were not fully in harmony with the government of God.

The Tactics of Rebellion

“While claiming for himself perfect loyalty to God, he urged that changes in the order and laws of heaven were necessary for the stability of the divine government. Thus while working to excite opposition to the law of God and to instill his own discontent into the minds of the angels under him, he was ostensibly seeking to remove dissatisfaction and to reconcile disaffected angels to the order of heaven. While secretly fomenting discord and rebellion, he with consummate craft caused it to appear as his sole purpose to promote loyalty and to preserve harmony and peace.”

— Patriarchs and Prophets, 38

The Tactics of Rebellion

“In his first display of disaffection, Satan was very cunning. All he claimed was that he wanted to bring in a better order of things, to make great improvements.”

— Review and Herald, August 4, 1910

“Satan could present no defined reasons as to why he wished the law of God changed or abolished. He simply declared his conviction that the angels would be better off without the law, but could not tell in what way they would be advantaged.”

— Signs of the Times, November 14, 1895

The Tactics of Rebellion

“Lucifer... 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.”

— Letter 162, 1906

The Tactics of Rebellion

“Words... have power to react on the character. Men are influenced by their own words. Often under a momentary impulse, prompted by Satan, they give utterance to jealousy or evil surmising, expressing that which they do not really believe; but the expression reacts on the thoughts. They are deceived by their words, and come to believe that true which was spoken at Satan’s instigation. ... It is dangerous to utter a word of doubt, dangerous to question and criticize divine light.”

— Desire of Ages, 323

The Tactics of Rebellion

“Many of these angels [who sympathized with Lucifer] had occupied high positions in the government of God. All were enriched with the talent of intellect and were girded with strength and glory.”

— Manuscript 87, 1903

The Tactics of Rebellion

“The seeds of alienation were planted, afterward to be drawn out and presented before the heavenly courts as originating, not with Satan, but with the angels....

“In his artful way he drew expressions of doubt from them. Then, when he was interviewed, he accused those whom he had educated. He laid all the disaffection on the ones he had led.”

— Review and Herald, September 7, 1897

The Tactics of Rebellion

“In his interviews with other angels, after succeeding in finding sympathizers, he arranged his arguments and presented them as if they were sentiments that had originated in the minds of those whom he first led astray.”

— Manuscript 23, 1891

“The tempter would throw all the blame of his course upon others who were below him. He would make it appear that if he could have moved according to his own judgment all this demonstration of rebellion would have been avoided.”

— Letter 16a, 1892

The Tactics of Rebellion

“The influence of mind on mind, so strong a power for good when sanctified, is equally strong for evil in the hands of those opposed to God. This power Satan used in his work of instilling evil into the minds of the angels, and he made it appear that he was seeking the good of the universe.”

— Letter 114, 1903

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— Letter 114, 1903

“Satan was artful in presenting his side of the question. As soon as he found that one position was seen in its true character, he changed it for another.”

— *Review and Herald*, March 9, 1886

The Tactics of Rebellion

“Satan exultingly pointed to his sympathizers, comprising nearly one half of all the angels, and exclaimed, These are with me! Will you expel these also, and make such a void in heaven?”

— *Signs of the Times*, January 9, 1879

“When it was announced that with all his sympathizers he must be expelled from the abodes of bliss... Satan and his host threw the blame of their rebellion wholly upon Christ, declaring that if they had not been reprovved, they would never have rebelled.”

— Manuscript 125, 1907

The Tactics of Rebellion

Lucifer “cast the cause of his defection upon Jesus Christ and upon God. If They had not so firmly resisted his plans, he said, he would not have gone on doing as he did. Wrongdoers always find sympathizers, and Satan so represented his case to the angels that he drew many angels from their allegiance to God.”

— Letter 15a, 1896

The Tactics of Rebellion

“It is impossible for man to measure the ingenuity shown by Satan in deceiving human minds.”

— Letter 80, 1910

Lucifer’s “work of deception was done in so great secrecy that the angels in less-exalted positions supposed that He was the Ruler of heaven.”

— Letter 292, 1906

The Accusations

- 1. Angels are holy by nature and wise enough to govern themselves, so they don't need God's law.**
- 2. God was unfair when He exalted Jesus above Lucifer.**
- 3. The plan to create human beings was a mistake.**
- 4. God is selfish, unforgiving, and revengeful.**
- 5. God's law is defective, and needs to be changed.**
- 6. Neither angels nor human beings can obey God's law.**
- 7. God's law is arbitrary.**
- 8. God's law makes forgiveness impossible.**
- 9. God is lying about all the above.**