

**PURPOSE OF STUDY:** To reveal the cosmic struggle between good and evil that began with Lucifer's fall in heaven and will end with His utter destruction and the complete restoration of all things to God's original perfection.

### TEXTS:

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|--------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| 1. GE 1:1-3, 10, 12, 16-18, 31 | 10. REV 12:17                    |
| 2. 1JN 1:1-5                   | 11. DA 7:25                      |
| 3. MT 13:24-30, 38-39          | 12. 2TH 2:9                      |
| 4. EZE 28:11-15                | 13. REV 13:4                     |
| 5. 1JN 3:8, 4                  | 14. MT 13:30 (1PE 1:12; EP 3:10) |
| 6. REV 12:3-4                  | 15. JN 14:15                     |
| 7. REV 12:7-9                  | 16. 1JN 3:8                      |
| 8. IS 14:12-14 (MT 4:9)        | 17. REV 21:1-5                   |
| 9. RO 6:16 (MT 15:9)           |                                  |

### THE STUDY:

- 1. How does God describe His creation "in the beginning"? GE 1:1-3, 10, 12, 16-18, 31**  
*God created everything good... good... very good.*
- 2. Does the Bible teach that God has a "dark side"? 1JN 1:1-5**  
*Absolutely not.*
- 3. If God didn't create evil, then where did it come from? REV 12:7-9**  
*The Bible says there was war in heaven. The antagonist in this war is "called the devil and Satan." The word "devil" comes from the Greek word diabolos, which means "false accuser" or "slanderer"; the name "Satan" means "adversary." As we will see, the devil slandered God's character and tried to overthrow His government. But he and his angels were defeated, and were cast out of heaven.*
- 4. What does the Bible say that the devil did from the beginning? 1JN 3:8, 4**  
*He sinned. This is simply saying that he was the originator of sin. Verse 4 defines sin as transgression of the law, or lawlessness. It is law that gives a government its authority. It is important to understand that Satan's sin did not consist of simply breaking a rule, but in rebelling against and ultimately seeking to overthrow the entire system of law and order in heaven.*
- 5. How many angels did Satan convince to join him in his rebellion? REV 12:3-4**  
*An entire third of the sinless, holy angels sided with Satan, and were cast out with him. They are referred to in the Bible as devils or demons or evil spirits. This shows us that Satan can make very bad ideas sound like very good ones. This is why he is called a deceiver.*
- 6. Did God create the devil? EZE 28:11-15**  
*The Bible teaches that the devil was once a good and wise angel, perfect in all his ways, named Lucifer (which means "light-bearer"); that iniquity was found (not created) in him, and he sinned.*

7. **What is Satan's ultimate purpose in fighting this war against God? IS 14:12-14 (MT 4:9)**  
*Lucifer's pride led to his desire to be exalted and worshiped as God.*
8. **How is worship best expressed? RO 6:16 (MT 15:9)**  
*The highest form of worship is obedience. Jesus said that if we follow the teachings of men instead of obeying the commandments of God, our worship is empty.*
9. **Who is the special target of Satan's attack? RV 12:17**  
*Those who seek to obey God's commandments. Satan understands that as long as any of God's creatures chose to obey His law, he can never have their worship.*
10. **How will Satan try to redirect worship to himself? DA 7:25**  
*He will attempt a change in the law of God so that those who think they are obeying God will actually be deceived into disobeying Him.*
11. **Through whom will he work in the last days to accomplish this? 2TH 2:9**  
*The antichrist power, called "the lawless one," will be the means through which Satan will work to deceive the multitudes into giving their worship to him.*
12. **Will he succeed? RV 13:4**  
*Yes. When the people of earth give homage to the first Beast of Revelation 13, they will ultimately be worshiping the dragon – Satan himself!*
13. **Why wasn't Satan destroyed as soon as he rebelled? MT 13:30 (1PE 1:12; EP 3:10)**  
*To destroy Satan at this point would only awaken the sympathy of the angels. If God had destroyed Lucifer immediately, the heavenly universe would have assumed that Lucifer must have had his facts straight. Instead, God realized that He had to give time for Satan's plan to fully develop and bring forth a "harvest." Then and only then could the other created beings see what He already saw – that Satan's plan only leads to misery, destruction and death.*
14. **Why didn't God simply force Satan and his rebel angels to obey? JN 14:15**  
*God can only accept willful obedience, because genuine love cannot be forced. God has created His beings with the power of choice, and He has preserved that choice at an infinite cost to Himself, because without it there can be no true loving relationship between Him and His people.*
15. **What amazing sacrifice did God make to bring the evil work of Satan to an end? 1JN 3:8**  
*God sent His Son, Jesus, to reveal His true character and disprove the devil's lies, and bring an end to sin and suffering.*
16. **What amazing thing does God promise to do after Satan is finally destroyed? REV 21:1-5**  
*God promises to bring an end to all sin – sickness, sorrow, pain and death – and to make all things new!*

#### **APPEAL:**

There is a spiritual war that is still being fought, a great controversy between good and evil; there are only two sides – the side of Christ and the side of Satan. The final battleground is in our own hearts. Won't you forever settle the war over your heart today, and surrender your life to Jesus? He loves you! And He is worthy of your trust. When this war has finally come to an end, Jesus Christ and those who have chosen to follow Him in obedience will be the only ones left standing. This entire universe is interested in the outcome of this battle. Which side will you choose?

## DIFFICULT TEXTS/OBJECTIONS:

### “If God is so good, why is there so much evil in the world?”

First of all, the person who speaks of evil assumes that there is also good; and if there is both evil and good, there must be a law to determine which is which; and if there is an absolute law, there must be a lawgiver, and that lawgiver is God. Consider the following story for Christian apologist Ravi Zacharias –

Let me narrate an interaction I had with a student at the University of Nottingham in England. As soon as I finished one of my lectures, he shot up from his seat and blurted out rather angrily, "There is too much evil in this world; therefore, there cannot be a God." I asked him to remain standing and answer a few questions for me. I said, "If there is such a thing as evil, aren't you assuming there is such a thing as good?" He paused, reflected, and said, "I guess so." "If there is such a thing as good," I countered, you must affirm a moral law on the basis of which to differentiate between good and evil.... When you say there is evil, aren't you admitting there is good? When you accept the existence of goodness, you must affirm a moral law on the basis of which to differentiate between good and evil. But when admit to a moral law, you must posit a moral lawgiver. That, however, is who you are trying to disprove and not prove. For if there is no moral lawgiver, there is no moral law. If there is no moral law, there is no good. If there is no good, there is no evil. What then is your question? – Zacharias, *Can Man Live Without God?*

Secondly, every human being in every philosophical and religious system must deal with the problem of evil – nobody can escape it. Christianity is the only system that effectively meets the problem with a two-fold solution –

- God Himself coming into the midst of evil and receiving the brunt of human suffering, while at the same time bringing into humanity the power to deal with sin and suffering by uniting His own divine nature with that of fallen humanity.
- God promising to restore every loss encountered, and remove every trace of sin and suffering, and to “make all things new.” The pain will be forgotten, the hurts will all be healed, the sorrow and heartache will be no more, families and loved ones will be reunited.

Finally, it is not God who causes suffering. In Luke 13:10-17, Jesus tells the story of a woman who had been sick for 18 years. In the words of Jesus, she had been bound by Satan (v. 16). The story of Job (Job 1:6-12, 2:1-10) also shows very plainly that the devil is responsible for wars and other acts of crime and violence, natural disasters, economic troubles and personal illness.

### **God cannot be both loving and all-powerful, otherwise He would put an end to sin.**

This leaves out one important aspect of God's government – that of free will. The reality is that love must be given freely to be love. God Himself cannot make a triangle with four sides, or a square with no right angles; for by definition a triangle has three sides, and a square has right angles. Love by definition must be freely given. This can only happen when beings have the freedom to choose whom they will serve.