June 3, 2017

Prison Ministry

**Story of Redmption** (1947) Foreword and Chapter 1 – “The Fall of Lucifer”

GOD'S LOVE TRIUMPHANT AT LAST

 THE STORY OF REDEMPTION, BY THE GIFTED AUTHOR ELLEN G. WHITE, IS A BOOK WRITTEN FOR THESE TIMES. AS WE APPROACH THE YEAR 2000, WORLD EVENTS LEAVE A QUESTION MARK HANGING ON THE HORIZON. ARE WE, A RACE OF TORMENTED HUMAN BEINGS, DOOMED TO MORE TROUBLE AND WORRIES, OR WILL THE VISION OF TOMORROW CHANGE FOR THE BETTER? }

 SOME HOPE IS HELD OUT BY POLITICAL AND SCIENTIFIC LEADERS, BUT THE VOICES OF MOST PHILOSOPHERS, STATESMEN, AND CLERGYMEN SEEM PITCHED IN A MINOR KEY.

 IS THERE HOPE AND REASSURANCE ANYWHERE? YES, FOR THOSE WHO REFUSE TO DESPAIR AND WHO REASON THAT GOD MUST SURELY KNOW ABOUT THE HUMAN PREDICAMENT AND WILL ACT DRAMATICALLY TO CHANGE THE COURSE OF EVENTS--FOR THEM THERE WILL BE A WAY OUT. BUT THE READER OF THIS VOLUME WILL FIND MORE THAN HUMAN REASONING TO SUPPORT THE OPTIMISTIC VIEW. FAITH WILL SPRING UP IN HIS HEART AS HE READS THIS ENLIGHTENING AND POWERFUL ACCOUNT OF MANKIND'S PASSIONATE STRUGGLES AGAINST THE DARK POWERS OF EVIL. THE NARRATIVE IS BASED UPON THE SCRIPTURAL THEME OF THE AGE-LONG CONFLICT BETWEEN DIVINE AND SATANIC AGENCIES FOR THE CONTROL OF MAN'S WILL AND DESTINY. HERE IS REVIEWED THE STORY OF MAN'S CREATION AND HIS FALL INTO SIN, ALSO OF THE DEMONIC CONTROL THAT HAS INSPIRED WARS AND INSTIGATED CRIME AND UNIVERSAL SUFFERING AND TRAGEDY. AT THE HEART OF THE BOOK IS THE REDEMPTION OF MAN WROUGHT BY CHRIST ON THE CROSS.

 EACH PAGE IN THIS NARRATIVE PROVIDES INSIGHTS INTO HISTORY RARELY ATTEMPTED BY ANY AUTHOR EXCEPT BY THE WRITERS OF THE HOLY SCRIPTURES. THE STORY OF REDEMPTION IS A TRUE WAR STORY--THE STORY OF GOD AND DEMONS AND MAN IN CONFLICT. IT CULMINATES IN A TRIUMPHANT DENOUEMENT, WITH PEACE AND RESTORATION FOR ALL WHO FOLLOW JESUS CHRIST, THE KING OF KINGS, WHO RETURNS TO EARTH TRIUMPHANTLY.

 THE COMPILERS OF THIS VOLUME HAVE EXTRACTED CHOICE SELECTIONS FROM FOUR PREVIOUS BOOKS BY ELLEN G. WHITE ON THIS COMMANDING THEME. THESE EXCERPTS HAVE BEEN PLACED TOGETHER IN THE ORDER OF HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT. THE NARRATIVE ENCOMPASSES THE ENTIRE SPAN OF HUMAN EXISTENCE AND PROVIDES MOST COMPREHENSIVE AND REVEALING CHAPTERS ON THE SUBJECT.

 TIME IS PRECIOUS. TIME IS RUNNING OUT. ETERNITY BECKONS ALL OF US. THE READER OF THIS BOOK WILL DISCOVER THAT THE FUTURE IS BRIGHT. GOD AND THE FORCES OF RIGHT WILL GAIN THE FINAL VICTORY.

THE PUBLISHERS

Chapter 1 - The Fall of Lucifer

 Lucifer in heaven, before his rebellion, was a high and exalted angel, next in honor to God's dear Son. His countenance, like those of the other angels, was mild and expressive of happiness. His forehead was high and broad, showing a powerful intellect. His form was perfect; his bearing noble and majestic. A special light beamed in his countenance and shone around him brighter and more beautiful than around the other angels; yet Christ, God's dear Son, had the pre-eminence over all the angelic host. He was one with the Father before the angels were created. Lucifer was envious of Christ, and gradually assumed command which devolved on Christ alone.

 The great Creator assembled the heavenly host, that He might in the presence of all the angels confer special honor upon His Son. The Son was seated on the throne with the Father, and the heavenly throng of holy angels was gathered around them. The Father then made known that it was ordained by Himself that Christ, His Son, should be equal with Himself; so that wherever was the presence of His Son, it was as His own presence. The word of the Son was to be obeyed as readily as the word of the Father. His Son He had invested with authority to command the heavenly host. Especially was His Son to work in union with Himself in the anticipated creation of the earth and every living thing that should exist upon the earth. His Son would carry out His will and His purposes but would do nothing of Himself alone. The Father's will would be fulfilled in Him.

 Lucifer was envious and jealous of Jesus Christ. Yet when all the angels bowed to Jesus to acknowledge His supremacy and high authority and rightful rule, he bowed with them; but his heart was filled with envy and hatred. Christ had been taken into the special counsel of God in regard to His plans, while Lucifer was unacquainted with them. He did not understand, neither was he permitted to know, the purposes of God. But Christ was acknowledged sovereign of heaven, His power and authority to be the same as that of God Himself. Lucifer thought that he was himself a favorite in heaven among the angels. He had been highly exalted, but this did not call forth from him gratitude and praise to his Creator. He aspired to the height of God Himself. He gloried in his loftiness. He knew that he was honored by the angels. He had a special mission to execute. He had been near the great Creator, and the ceaseless beams of glorious light enshrouding the eternal God had shone especially upon him. He thought how angels had obeyed his command with pleasurable alacrity. Were not his garments light and beautiful? Why should Christ thus be honored before himself?

 He left the immediate presence of the Father, dissatisfied and filled with envy against Jesus Christ. Concealing his real purposes, he assembled the angelic host. He introduced his subject, which was himself. As one aggrieved, he related the preference God had given Jesus to the neglect of himself. He told them that henceforth all the sweet liberty the angels had enjoyed was at an end. For had not a ruler been appointed over them, to whom they from henceforth must yield servile honor? He stated to them that he had called them together to assure them that he no longer would submit to this invasion of his rights and theirs; that never would he again bow down to Christ; that he would take the honor upon himself which should have been conferred upon him, and would be the commander of all who would submit to follow him and obey his voice.

 There was contention among the angels. Lucifer and his sympathizers were striving to reform the government of God. They were discontented and unhappy because they could not look into His unsearchable wisdom and ascertain His purposes in exalting His Son, and endowing Him with such unlimited power and command. They rebelled against the authority of the Son.

 Angels that were loyal and true sought to reconcile this mighty, rebellious angel to the will of his Creator. They justified the act of God in conferring honor upon Christ, and with forcible reasoning sought to convince Lucifer that no less honor was his now than before the Father had proclaimed the honor which He had conferred upon His Son. They clearly set forth that Christ was the Son of God, existing with Him before the angels were created; and that He had ever stood at the right hand of God, and His mild, loving authority had not heretofore been questioned; and that He had given no commands but what it was joy for the heavenly host to execute. They urged that Christ's receiving special honor from the Father, in the presence of the angels, did not detract from the honor that Lucifer had heretofore received. The angels wept. They anxiously sought to move him to renounce his wicked design and yield submission to their Creator; for all had heretofore been peace and harmony, and what could occasion this dissenting, rebellious voice?

 Lucifer refused to listen. And then he turned from the loyal and true angels, denouncing them as slaves. These angels, true to God, stood in amazement as they saw that Lucifer was successful in his effort to incite rebellion. He promised them a new and better government than they then had, in which all would be freedom. Great numbers signified their purpose to accept him as their leader and chief commander. As he saw his advances were met with success, he flattered himself that he should yet have all the angels on his side, and that he would be equal with God Himself, and his voice of authority would be heard in commanding the entire host of heaven. Again the loyal angels warned him, and assured him what must be the consequences if he persisted; that He who could create the angels could by His power overturn all their authority and in some signal manner punish their audacity and terrible rebellion. To think that an angel should resist the law of God which was as sacred as Himself! They warned the rebellious to close their ears to Lucifer's deceptive reasonings, and advised him and all who had been affected by him to go to God and confess their wrong for even admitting a thought of questioning His authority.

 Many of Lucifer's sympathizers were inclined to heed the counsel of the loyal angels and repent of their dissatisfaction and be again received to the confidence of the Father and His dear Son. The mighty revolter then declared that he was acquainted with God's law, and if he should submit to servile obedience, his honor would be taken from him. No more would he be intrusted with his exalted mission. He told them that himself and they also had now gone too far to go back, and he would brave the consequences, for to bow in servile worship to the Son of God he never would; that God would not forgive, and now they must assert their liberty and gain by force the position and authority which was not willingly accorded to them. [THUS IT WAS THAT LUCIFER, "THE LIGHT-BEARER," THE SHARER OF GOD'S GLORY, THE ATTENDANT OF HIS THRONE, BY TRANSGRESSION BECAME SATAN, "THE ADVERSARY." --PATRIARCHS AND PROPHETS, P. 40.]

 The loyal angels hastened speedily to the Son of God and acquainted Him with what was taking place among the angels. They found the Father in conference with His beloved Son, to determine the means by which, for the best good of the loyal angels, the assumed authority of Satan could be forever put down. The great God could at once have hurled this archdeceiver 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. It would not have been safe to suffer any who united with Satan in his rebellion to continue to occupy heaven. They had learned the lesson of genuine rebellion against the unchangeable law of God, and this is incurable. If God had exercised His power to punish this chief rebel, disaffected angels would not have been manifested; hence, God took another course, for He would manifest distinctly to all the heavenly host His justice and His judgment.

**War in Heaven**

 It was the highest crime to rebel against the government of God. All heaven seemed in commotion. The angels were marshaled in companies, each division with a higher commanding angel at its head. Satan was warring against the law of God, because ambitious to exalt himself and unwilling to submit to the authority of God's Son, heaven's great commander.

 All the heavenly host were summoned to appear before the Father, to have each case determined. Satan unblushingly made known his dissatisfaction that Christ should be preferred before Him. He stood up proudly and urged that he should be equal with God and should be taken into conference with the Father and understand His purposes. God informed Satan, that to His Son alone He would reveal His secret purposes, and He required all the family in heaven, even Satan, to yield Him implicit, unquestioned obedience; but that he (Satan) had proved himself unworthy of a place in heaven. Then 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?" He then declared that he was prepared to resist the authority of Christ and to defend his place in heaven by force of might, strength against strength.

 Good angels wept to hear the words of Satan and his exulting boasts. God declared that the rebellious should remain in heaven no longer. Their high and happy state had been held upon condition of obedience to the law which God had given to govern the high order of intelligences. But no provision had been made to save those who should venture to transgress His law. Satan grew bold in his rebellion, and expressed his contempt of the Creator's law. This Satan could not bear. He claimed that angels needed no law but should be left free to follow their own will, which would ever guide them right; that law was a restriction of their liberty; and that to abolish law was one great object of his standing as he did. The condition of the angels, he thought, needed improvement. Not so the mind of God, who had made laws and exalted them equal to Himself. The happiness of the angelic host consisted in their perfect obedience to law. Each had his special work assigned him, and until Satan rebelled, there had been perfect order and harmonious action in heaven.

 Then there was war in heaven. The Son of God, the Prince of heaven, and His loyal angels engaged in conflict with the archrebel and those who united with him. The Son of God and true, loyal angels prevailed; and Satan and his sympathizers were expelled from heaven. All the heavenly host acknowledged and adored the God of justice. Not a taint of rebellion was left in heaven. All was again peaceful and harmonious as before. Angels in heaven mourned the fate of those who had been their companions in happiness and bliss. Their loss was felt in heaven.

 The Father consulted His Son in regard to at once carrying out their purpose to make man to inhabit the earth. He 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. He was to have the favor of God, and he was to converse with angels, and they with him. He did not see fit to place them beyond the power of disobedience. {SR 19.2}

Next Mailing: Story of Redemption Chapter 2 The Creation