

A The beginning of the conflict

- ❖ Rebellion against God existed before humanity existed (Gen. 3:1). Jesus called this being that sows distrust between God and his creatures “an enemy,” which he identified as the devil (Mt. 13:39). Did God create the devil, that is, did God create an evil being?
- ❖ The Bible tells us that the devil is an angel called Lucifer (Is. 14:12). This angel was created perfect and beautiful (Ez. 28:12). He was exalted to the highest position an angel could aspire to: protective cherub (Ez. 28:13-14).
- ❖ God granted him, like all his created beings, freedom of choice and, inexplicably, Lucifer decided to rebel, and aspired to occupy the throne of God (Ez. 28:15; Is. 14:13-14).

B Rebellion in Heaven

- ❖ In his desire to usurp the throne of Heaven, Lucifer raised doubts in the angels about the justice of the divine government. Weren't they all free? Why submit to severe and, perhaps, unjust or capricious laws?
- ❖ Lucifer rejected all of God's loving calls to change his ways.
- ❖ The rebellion became an open conflict, a war where each angel had to make their decision. 1/3 of the angels followed Satan, while the rest remained faithful to God (Rev. 12:4a).
- ❖ Today the war continues. Satan is still active. He tries to drag every person to rebel against God. There are only two sides. Those who want to obey God's Law, or those who reject it. The decision is ours (Deut. 30:11, 16, 19; Josh. 24:15).

C Rebellion on Earth

- ❖ God created us in a sinless, perfect environment, just like the angels (Gen. 1:31).
- ❖ God also created us with the power to choose freely. And he gave Adam a simple order: “You shall not eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil” (Gen. 2:17).
- ❖ Satan deviously got Adam and Eve to doubt God and disobey him (Gen. 3:6, 9-13, 19). Adam opened the door for sin to enter, and thus death passed to all men (Rom. 5:12). Are we all paying for Adam's sin?
- ❖ We each pay for our own sin: “for all have sinned and come short of the glory of God” (Rom. 3:23).

D love strikes back

- ❖ Even before announcing the consequences of disobedience, God communicated to Adam and Eve that there was a plan for their redemption (Gen. 3:15).
- ❖ Humanity had voluntarily separated itself from the Creator. But far from abandoning his ungrateful children, God revealed his character by loving them infinitely (John 3:16).
- ❖ Death did not have to be the eternal destiny for the sinner. Jesus showed his love by paying the price of sin with his life (Rom. 5:8).
- ❖ There is nothing in us that makes us worthy of God's love. However, with every drop of blood that Jesus shed at Calvary, God tells us: “I love you.”

E The conflict today

- ❖ Today, Jesus is interceding for us in the Heavenly Sanctuary (Heb. 9:24; 7:25).
- ❖ By virtue of his blood shed on the cross, Jesus presents us before the Father – and before all the inhabitants of the Universe – as just, perfect people, worthy of being in Heaven.
- ❖ Therefore, we are invited to approach God with confidence through Jesus (Heb. 4:15-16).
- ❖ Jesus wants us to count on him for every need in our lives (John 14:13-14). Where there is fear, he brings peace; where there is guilt, he brings forgiveness; where there is weakness, he brings strength.
- ❖ Jesus' greatest desire is to live with us eternally (John 17:24). Is this also your greatest desire?