

The
HEARTBEAT of ADVENTISM

The Great Controversy Theme

IN THE WRITINGS OF ELLEN G. WHITE



HERBERT EDGAR DOUGLASS, TH.D.

~~ COMPILER ~~

PACIFIC PRESS PUBLISHING ASSOCIATION
NAMPA, IDAHO

Copyright © 2010 by Herbert Edgar Douglass, ThD
Printed in the United States of America
All Rights Reserved

Cover design by Gerald Lee Monks
Cover resources from dreamstime.com
Copy editing by Connie Dahlke
Inside design, layout, and Index by Ken McFarland /Page One Communications

Unless otherwise noted, all Scripture quotations are from the New King James Version of the Bible, copyright © 1979, 1980, 1987, Thomas Nelson, Inc., Publishers.

The compiler is responsible for the accuracy of quotations and referenced material.

Compiler's note: This compilation will always be a work in progress. Further, no author or compiler can ever promise a book that would be free from errors. Additions and perhaps subtractions will be made in later printings. If any reader would like to suggest additions or subtractions of any material in future printings, please contact the compiler at: herbdouglass@sbcglobal.net.

ISBN 13: 978-0-8163-2458-3
ISBN 10: 0-8163-2458-1

Contents

V	DEDICATION
vi	A REVIEWER'S RESPONSE
vii	PREFACE
1	SECTION I. INTRODUCTION: THE GREAT CONTROVERSY THEME IS THE GRAND CENTRAL THEME OF THE BIBLE
15	SECTION II. THE GREAT CONTROVERSY THEME EXPLAINS THE BACKGROUND FOR THE RISE OF SIN, SUFFERING, AND DEATH
27	SECTION III. THE GREAT CONTROVERSY THEME RECOGNIZES "THE CHANGE IN MAN'S CONDITION, THROUGH THE COMING IN OF A KNOWLEDGE OF EVIL"
65	SECTION IV. THE GREAT CONTROVERSY THEME HIGHLIGHTS THE CHARGES THAT SATAN HAS MADE AGAINST GOD
71	SECTION V. THE GREAT CONTROVERSY THEME ILLUMINATES HOW GOD HAS TOLD HIS SIDE OF THE STORY!
103	SECTION VI. THE GREAT CONTROVERSY THEME EXPLAINS WHY JESUS BECAME MAN, NOT ONLY TO REVEAL THE TRUTH ABOUT GOD, BUT TO IDENTIFY WITH HUMAN BEINGS, THUS GIVING CREDIBILITY TO HIS APPEAL TO US TO OVERCOME, EVEN AS HE DID
123	SECTION VII. THE GREAT CONTROVERSY THEME MAKES CLEAR WHY JESUS DIED
131	SECTION VIII. THE GREAT CONTROVERSY THEME UNFOLDS THE GLORIOUS SUBJECT OF THE ATONEMENT
151	SECTION IX. THE GREAT CONTROVERSY THEME EXPLAINS THE ROLE OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

- 159 **SECTION X.** THE GREAT CONTROVERSY THEME REVEALS THE ROLE OF JESUS AS OUR HIGH PRIEST
- 169 **SECTION XI.** THE GREAT CONTROVERSY THEME UNFOLDS WHAT GOD INTENDS TO ACHIEVE WITH HIS PLAN FOR OUR SALVATION
- 229 **SECTION XII.** THE GREAT CONTROVERSY THEME DIRECTLY INFORMS ALL ASPECTS OF THE CHRISTIAN'S LIFE
- 243 **SECTION XIII.** THE GREAT CONTROVERSY THEME HAS A BEGINNING AND AN END, AND ITS END IS CLEARLY PREDICTED, WITH ITS PARTICIPANTS PLAINLY IDENTIFIED
- 255 **SECTION XIV.** THE GREAT CONTROVERSY THEME BEGINS IN HEAVEN, WHEN SATAN ATTEMPTED BY DECEIT AND SUBTERFUGE TO OVERTHROW THE LAW OF GOD—AND THAT HELLISH ENMITY CONTINUES ON EARTH, WITH HIS FINAL ATTACK BEING RATCHETED UP IN THE END TIMES.
- 257 **SECTION XV.** THE GREAT CONTROVERSY, IN THE END TIMES, WILL DEVELOP INTO A PERFECT STORM, WHEN SATAN WILL EMPLOY ALL HIS DECEPTIONS IN SUCH A WAY THAT EVEN “THE ELECT” WILL BE CHALLENGED (MATTHEW 24:24).
- 287 **SECTION XVI.** THE GREAT CONTROVERSY'S LAST-DAY ISSUES, FORECASTING SATAN'S FINAL ATTEMPTS TO CONQUER THIS WORLD, ARE OUTLINED IN THE BIBLE.
- 293 **SECTION XVII.** THE GREAT CONTROVERSY THEME DESCRIBES TWO GROUPS IN THE LAST DAYS THAT DEFINE THOSE WHO HONOR GOD AND THOSE WHO REPRESENT SATAN'S REBELLION.
- 313 **SECTION XVIII.** THE GREAT CONTROVERSY THEME OUTLINES THE FINAL EVENTS THAT PRECEDE OUR LORD'S RETURN.
- 333 **SECTION XIX.** THE GREAT CONTROVERSY THEME PROVIDES SATAN'S PLAYBOOK FOR ALERT, END-TIME LOYALISTS.
- 349 **SECTION XX.** PREACHING THE GREAT CONTROVERSY THEME REQUIRES SPECIAL KINDS OF PREACHERS AND SERMONS.
- 373 **SECTION XXI.** THE GREAT CONTROVERSY ENDED—ALL ISSUES SETTLED, UNIVERSE FOREVER IN HARMONY.
- 379 **INDEX**

◆ SECTION I ◆

The Great Controversy Theme Is the Grand Central Theme of the Bible

Introduction:

“The light that I have received, I have written out, and much of it is now shining forth from the printed page. There is, **throughout my printed works, a harmony with my present teaching.**”¹



“The plan of redemption is **comprehensive, but its parts are few, each depending on the other,** and all working together in utmost simplicity and entire harmony.”²



“To the last God permits Satan to reveal his character as a liar, an accuser, and a murderer. Thus the **final triumph of His people is made more marked,** more glorious, more full and complete.”³



“The controversy has waxed stronger and more determined from age to age, and will continue to do so, to the concluding scenes when the masterly working of the powers of darkness shall **reach their height.** Satan, united with evil men, will deceive the whole world and the churches who receive not the love of the truth.”⁴

-
1. *Selected Messages*, bk. 3, 38.
 2. *Signs of the Times*, January 4, 1899.
 3. *Selected Messages*, bk. 3, 414.
 4. *Manuscript Releases*, vol. 1, 99.

2 • THE GREAT CONTROVERSY THEME IN THE WRITINGS OF ELLEN G. WHITE

“The heavenly universe is watching with the deepest interest the **conflict between Christ in the person of His saints**, and the great deceiver.”⁵



“We cannot appreciate the truth only in contrast with error; with the dark background, false doctrines, and error, the truth shines forth clear and connected, link after link, **uniting in a perfect whole**; it binds all that is good and true together, and connects them with heaven.”⁶



“We are on the earth **as combatants**. This is not time or place for us to be negligent, indifferent, or careless. We have a heaven to win and a hell to shun. There is frequently presented to me a scene of conflict and of determined opposition. How can it be otherwise when we are in an enemy’s country?”⁷



“Every Christian should understand that there is a decided warfare going on between the chosen people of God and the powers of darkness. When men are content to live merely for this world, the inclination of the heart unites with the suggestions of the enemy, and his bidding is done. **But when they seek to leave the black banner of the power of darkness, and range themselves under the bloodstained banner of Prince Emmanuel, the struggle begins, and the warfare is carried on in the sight of the universe of heaven.** Everyone who fights on the side of right, must fight hand to hand with the enemy. He must put on the whole armor of God, that he may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. Our foes are within and without. We are assailed by temptations which are numerous and deceiving, the more perilous because not always clearly discerned. Often **Satan conquers us by our natural inclinations and appetites.** These were divinely appointed, and when given to man, were pure and holy. It was God’s design that reason should rule the appetites, and that they should minister to our happiness. And when they are regulated and controlled by a sanctified reason, they are holiness unto the Lord.”⁸



“The working out of the great plan of salvation, as manifest in the history of this world, is **not only to men but to angels** a revelation of the Father. Here is seen the work of Satan in the degradation and ruin of the race by sin, and, on the other hand, the work of God in man’s recovery and uplifting through the grace of Christ. **Every soul that develops a righteous character and withstands the power of the wicked one is a testimony to the falsehood of Satan’s charges against the Divine government.** Through the eternal ages the exaltation of the redeemed will be a testimony to God’s love and mercy.”⁹

5. *Ibid.*, vol. 2, 343.

6. *Ibid.*, vol. 5, 273.

7. *Ibid.*, vol. 12, 112.

8. *Ibid.*, vol. 14, 294.

9. *Ibid.*, vol. 17, 338.

The Great Controversy Theme Is the Grand Central Theme of the Bible • 3

“The science of salvation is a **grand theme**, and all **the glory of restoring the image of God in man** is to be laid at the feet of the Eternal.”¹⁰



“That which our people must **have interwoven with their life and character is the unfolding of the plan of redemption** and more elevated conceptions of God and His holiness, brought into the life. The washing of the robes of character in the blood of the Lamb is a work that we must attend to earnestly while every defect of character is to be put away.”¹¹



“Between the laws of men and the precepts of Jehovah will come the **last great conflict of the controversy between truth and error. Upon this battle we are now entering**—a battle not between rival churches contending for the supremacy, but between the religion of the Bible and the religions of fable and tradition. . . . Many have come to deny doctrines which are the very pillars of the Christian faith. The great facts of creation as presented by the inspired writers, the fall of man, the atonement, the perpetuity of the law—these all are practically rejected by a large share of the professedly Christian world. **Thousands who pride themselves on their knowledge regard it as an evidence of weakness to place implicit confidence in the Bible**, and a proof of learning to cavil at the Scriptures and to spiritualize and explain away their most important truths.”¹²



“In the great controversy between good and evil, **Satan must be given every opportunity to develop his true character**, that the heavenly universe, and the race for whom Christ was giving His life, might see the righteousness of God’s purposes. Those under the control of the enemy must be allowed to reveal the principles of his government.”¹³



“There is no warfare between Satan and his agents, between fallen angels and those who have yielded themselves to evil. Both possess the same attributes, both through sin are evil. But between Christ’s followers and the powers of darkness there is an **unwearied conflict**, which is to have no end till Christ shall come the second time without sin unto salvation, to destroy him who has destroyed so many souls through his deceptive power.”¹⁴



“To secure peace and unity they were **ready to make any concession consistent with fidelity to God; but they felt that even peace would be too dearly purchased at the sacrifice of principle**. If unity could be secured only by the compromise of truth and righteousness, then let there be difference, and even war. Well would it be for the church and the

10. *Signs of the Times*, May 24, 1899.

11. *Counsels to Writers and Editors*, 81.

12. *Prophets and Kings*, 625.

13. *Signs of the Times*, March 28, 1900.

14. *Ibid.*, October 17, 1900.

4 • THE GREAT CONTROVERSY THEME IN THE WRITINGS OF ELLEN G. WHITE

world if the principles that actuated those steadfast souls were revived in the hearts of God's professed people. There is an **alarming indifference in regard to the doctrines which are the pillars of the Christian faith**. The opinion is gaining ground, that, after all, these are not of vital importance. This degeneracy is strengthening the hands of the agents of Satan, so that false theories and fatal delusions which the faithful in ages past imperiled their lives to resist and expose, are now regarded with favor by thousands who claim to be followers of Christ."¹⁵



“The great sin of the Jews was their rejection of Christ; **the great sin of the Christian world would be their rejection of the law of God**, the foundation of His government in heaven and earth.”¹⁶



“In all ages, through the medium of communion with heaven, God has worked out His purpose for His children, **by unfolding gradually to their minds the doctrines of grace**.”¹⁷

A. **The Great Controversy Theme (GCT) explains the larger purpose of the plan of salvation.**

1. **The entire universe needed to see all the issues in the Great Controversy caused by rebellion.**

“God, the One infinite and all-wise, sees the end from the beginning, and in dealing with evil His plans were far-reaching and comprehensive. **It was His purpose, not merely to put down the rebellion, but to demonstrate to all the universe the nature of the rebellion**. God's plan was unfolding, showing both His justice and His mercy, and fully vindicating His wisdom and righteousness in His dealings with evil.”¹⁸

“The Christian is a **spectacle to the world, to angels, and to men**. Singular?—Yes; he has a most singular, peculiar character, because his life is worked out after the divine similitude. **The inhabitants of unfallen worlds and of the heavenly universe** are watching with an intense interest the conflict between good and evil. They rejoice as Satan's subtleties, one after another, are discerned and met with ‘It is written,’ as Christ met them in His conflict with the wily foe. Every victory gained is a gem in the crown of life. In the day of victory all the universe of heaven triumphs. The harps of the angels send forth the most precious music, accompanying the melody of the voice.”¹⁹

“This world is a theater. The actors, the inhabitants of the world, are preparing to act their part in the last great drama. God is lost sight of. . . . A power from beneath is working

15. *The Great Controversy*, 45, 46.

16. *Ibid.*, 22.

17. *The Acts of the Apostles*, 564.

18. *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 78.

19. *Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 6, 1088.

The Great Controversy Theme Is the Grand Central Theme of the Bible • 5

to bring about the last great scenes in the drama—Satan coming as Christ, and working with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in those who are binding themselves together in secret societies. Those who are yielding to the passion for confederation are working out the plans of the enemy. The cause will be followed by the effect.”²⁰

“The controversy that began in heaven was to be continued on the earth. In this controversy much was to be involved. **Vast interests were at stake.** Before the inhabitants of the heavenly universe were to be answered the questions: ‘Is God’s law imperfect, in need of amendment or abrogation, or is it immutable? Is God’s government in need of change, or is it stable?’ . . . It was not merely the interests of one world that were at stake. This earth was the battle-field, but all the worlds that God has created would be affected by the result of the conflict. . . . **Satan sought to make it appear that he was working for the liberty of the universe.** He was determined to make his arguments so varied, so deceptive, so insidious, that every one would be convinced that God’s law was tyrannical.”²¹

2. The entire universe will see God’s fairness when the controversy is over.

“By the facts unfolded in the progress of the great controversy, God will demonstrate the principles of His rules of government, which have been falsified by Satan and by all whom he has deceived. His justice will finally be acknowledged by the whole world, though the acknowledgment will be made too late to save the rebellious. **God carries with Him the sympathy and approval of the whole universe as step by step His great plan advances to its complete fulfillment.** He will carry it with Him in the final eradication of rebellion. It will be seen that all who have forsaken the divine precepts have placed themselves on the side of Satan, in warfare against Christ. When the prince of this world shall be judged, and all who have united with him shall share his fate, **the whole universe as witnesses to the sentence will declare, ‘Just and true are Thy ways, Thou King of saints.’** Revelation 15:3.”²²

“The heavenly worlds and heaven itself were amazed at God’s long forbearance.”²³

3. The plan of salvation includes more than the salvation of men and women.

“Through the plan of salvation **a larger purpose is to be wrought out even than the salvation of man** and the redemption of the earth. Through the revelation of the character of God in Christ, the beneficence of the divine government would be manifested before the universe, the charge of Satan refuted, the nature and results of sin made plain, and the perpetuity of the law fully demonstrated.”²⁴

20. *Ibid.*, 1106.

21. *Signs of the Times*, August 27, 1902.

22. *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 79.

23. *Signs of the Times*, August 27, 1902.

24. *Ibid.*, February 13, 1893.

6 • THE GREAT CONTROVERSY THEME IN THE WRITINGS OF ELLEN G. WHITE

4. God made this world of human beings to enlarge heaven.

“God made the world to **enlarge heaven**. He desired a larger family. And before man was created, God and Christ entered into a covenant that if he fell from his allegiance, Christ would bear the penalty of transgression. Man fell, but he was not left to the power of the destroyer. ‘God so loved the world that He gave his only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.’ To the Redeemer was given **all power to impart to fallen human beings** for their benefit and blessing.”²⁵

B. The GCT gives us the dual purpose of the gospel: to reveal the true character of our maligned God and to restore the image of God in men and women.

1. The biblical definition of the gospel is found in Romans 1:16, 17—“For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ for it is **the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes** [Gr. “has faith”], for the Jew first and also for the Greek. For **in it the righteousness of God is revealed** from faith to faith; as it is written, “The just shall live by faith.”

“Study Christ. Study His character, feature by feature. He is our Pattern that we are required to copy in our lives and our characters, else we fail to represent Jesus, but present to the world a spurious copy. Do not imitate any man, for men are defective in habits, in speech, in manners, in character. I present before you the Man Christ Jesus. **You must individually know Him as your Saviour before you can study Him as your pattern and your example.** . . . (Romans 1:16-19).”²⁶

“Truth is inspired and guarded by God; it will live, and will succeed, although it may appear at times to be overshadowed. **The gospel of Christ is the law exemplified in character.** The deceptions practiced against it, every device for vindicating falsehood, every error forged by satanic agencies, will **eventually be eternally broken, and the triumph of truth will be like the appearing of the sun at noonday.**”²⁷

2. **The plan of redemption would vindicate the character of God who had been so maliciously challenged.**

“But the plan of redemption had a yet broader and deeper purpose than the salvation of man. It was not for this alone that Christ came to the earth; it was not merely that the inhabitants of this little world might regard the law of God as it should be regarded; but it **was to vindicate the character of God before the universe.** To this result of His great sacrifice—its influence upon the intelligences of other worlds, as well as upon man—the Saviour looked forward when just before His crucifixion He said: ‘Now is the judgment of this

25. *Ibid.*, December 25, 1901.

26. *Selected Messages*, bk. 3, 170.

27. *Manuscript Releases*, vol. 17, 10.

world: now shall the prince of this world be cast out. And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all unto Me: John 12:31, 32. The act of Christ in dying for the salvation of man **would not only make heaven accessible to men, but before all the universe it would justify God and His Son in their dealing with the rebellion of Satan.** It would establish the perpetuity of the law of God and would reveal the nature and the results of sin.²⁸

3. **The plan of redemption would also restore the image of God in the redeemed.**

“The central theme of the Bible, the theme about which every other in the whole book clusters, is the redemption plan, **the restoration in the human soul of the image of God.** From the first intimation of hope in the sentence pronounced in Eden to that last glorious promise of the Revelation, ‘They shall see His face; and His name shall be in their foreheads’ (Revelation 22:4), the **burden of every book and every passage of the Bible is the unfolding of this wondrous theme,—man’s uplifting,—the power of God, ‘which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.’ 1 Corinthians 15:57.** He who grasps this thought has before him an infinite field for study. He has **the key** that will unlock to him the whole treasure house of God’s word.”²⁹

“The very essence of the gospel is **restoration.**”³⁰

“He came to the world to display the glory of God, that man might be uplifted by its **restoring power.**”³¹

“We can see in the cross of Calvary what it has cost the Son of God to bring salvation to a fallen race. As the sacrifice in behalf of man was complete, so the **restoration of man** from the defilement of sin must be thorough and complete.”³²

“**The restoration and uplifting of humanity** begins in the home. The work of parents underlies every other.”³³

“By infinite love and mercy the plan of salvation had been devised, and a life of probation was granted. **To restore in man the image of his Maker,** to bring him back to the perfection in which he was created, to promote the development of body, mind, and soul, that the divine purpose in his creation might be realized—this was to be the work of redemption. This is the object of education, the great object of life.”³⁴

28. *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 68, 69.

29. *Education*, 125, 126.

30. *The Desire of Ages*, 824.

31. *Ibid.*, 664.

32. *Christian Education*, 112.

33. *The Ministry of Healing*, 349.

34. *Education*, 15, 16.

8 • THE GREAT CONTROVERSY THEME IN THE WRITINGS OF ELLEN G. WHITE

4. **God's plan for our redemption is never forced on anyone and He never uses coercion or capricious punishment.**

“After God sends **light and evidence, calculated to convince any rational, unprejudiced mind**, and it is not received or acted upon, but rather treated with contempt, resisted, and refused, **the Holy Spirit is withdrawn, and men are left in their chosen obstinacy.**”³⁵

“We are not to regard God as waiting to punish the sinner for his sin. The sinner **brings the punishment upon himself**. His own actions start a train of circumstances that bring the sure result. Every act of transgression reacts upon the sinner, works in him a change of character, and makes it more easy for him to transgress again. By choosing to sin, men separate themselves from God, **cut themselves off from the channel of blessing, and the sure result is ruin and death.**”³⁶

“Unless we **understand the terms of our salvation, and are willing to be wholly obedient** to the Word of God, we can never be admitted to the city of God. Could this be possible, and those who refuse to comply with the conditions of salvation be admitted to the home of the redeemed, they would **introduce their own unsanctified ideas into the heavenly family, and a second rebellion would be created.**”³⁷

5. **In His plan for our redemption, God has provided everything necessary for restoring His image in men and women.**

“Through the plan of redemption, **God has provided means for subduing every sinful trait, and resisting every temptation, however strong.**”³⁸

“By transgression, man became his captive, and man's kingdom also was betrayed into the hands of the archrebel. Now the way seemed open for Satan to establish an independent kingdom, and to defy the authority of God and His Son. But **the plan of salvation made it possible for man again to be brought into harmony with God, and to render obedience to His law**, and for both man and the earth to be finally redeemed from the power of the wicked one.”³⁹

“**The Lord's purposes for His people have ever been the same.** He desires to bestow on the children of men the riches of an eternal inheritance. His kingdom is an everlasting kingdom. When those who choose to become obedient subjects of the Most High are finally saved in the kingdom of glory, **God's purpose for mankind will have been fulfilled.**”⁴⁰

35. *The Youth's Instructor*, November 30, 1893.

36. *Selected Messages*, bk. 1, 235.

37. *Manuscript Releases*, vol. 10, 147.

38. *Selected Messages* bk. 1, 82.

39. *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 331.

40. *Review and Herald*, December 26, 1907.

6. **The plan of redemption is the center of all truth but is often buried in the rubbish of error.**

“It was the plan of redemption, which was to call forth the intellect, to thrill the soul, and prepare it for the great power of God, which is salvation to all who believe—a **truth so large, so deep, so full and complete, it could be the center of all truth** hitherto revealed, presenting in a more exalted manner that which had been **buried beneath a mass of rubbish and error**. The work of Christ was to **replace old truths in the framework of the gospel**, and by bringing clearly to view neglected obligations, renovate the world.”⁴¹

7. **God always gives sufficient evidence to satisfy those who honestly seek the truth (John 7:17).**

“God never asks us to believe, without giving **sufficient evidence** upon which to base our faith. His existence, His character, the truthfulness of His word, are all established by testimony that appeals to our reason; and this testimony is abundant. Yet God has **never removed the possibility of doubt**. Our faith must rest upon evidence, not demonstration. Those who **wish to doubt will have opportunity**; while those who really desire to know the truth will find plenty of evidence on which to rest their faith.”⁴²

“But there came the unbelieving question, ‘What sign showest Thou then, that we may see, and believe Thee? what dost Thou work?’ Had not the Jews just had fresh evidence in the feeding of the five thousand? What work, what sign, could Christ present before them to increase their faith? If evidence should be piled upon evidence, it would not, could not, do more for them than had the evidence which had already been given. **It was not evidence that they wanted; it was an excuse to avoid the cross involved in the acceptance of the Gospel.**”⁴³

“The Gospel of Christ was a stumbling-block to the Jews, because they required signs instead of a Saviour; but the **Lord would not have His people rest in signs and outward forms**. He would not have them wait until every seeming objection is removed before they believe. God will never remove all seeming difficulties from our path. **Those who wish to doubt may find opportunity; those who wish to believe will find plenty of evidence on which to base their faith.**”⁴⁴

8. **God had eternal purposes that allowed for both a rebellion and His remedy.**

“God had a knowledge of the events of the future, even before the creation of the world. He did not make His purposes to fit circumstances, but He allowed matters to develop and

41. *Manuscript Releases*, vol. 16, 95.

42. *Steps to Christ*, 105.

43. *Signs of the Times*, November 3, 1898.

44. *Ibid.*

10 • THE GREAT CONTROVERSY THEME IN THE WRITINGS OF ELLEN G. WHITE

work out. **He did not work to bring about a certain condition of things, but He knew that such a condition would exist.** The plan that should be carried out upon the defection of any of the high intelligences of heaven—this is the secret, the mystery which has been hid from ages. And an offering was prepared in the eternal purposes to do the very work which God has done for fallen humanity.”⁴⁵

9. Men and women are the target for both good and evil angels.

“**Either the evil angels or the angels of God are controlling the minds of men...** We must make every preparation in our power in order to resist the enemy of souls. Every provision has been made; everything in God’s plan has been arranged so that man should not be left to his own impulses, to his own finite powers, to carry on the warfare against the powers of darkness in his **own finite strength**; because he would certainly fail if he were thus left to himself.”⁴⁶

C. The Great Controversy Theme is revealed throughout the Bible.

1. The Bible unfolds a grand central theme.

“The Bible is its own expositor. Scripture is to be compared with scripture. The student should learn to view the word as a whole, and to see the relation of its parts. He should gain a knowledge of its **grand central theme**, of God’s original purpose for the world, of the rise of the great controversy, and of the work of redemption.”⁴⁷

2. The Bible provides the insights of how to study history.

“[The student] should understand the nature of the two principles that are contending for supremacy, and should learn to **trace their working through the records of history** and prophecy, to the great consummation.”⁴⁸

“The Bible is the most instructive history that men possess. It came fresh from the fountain of eternal truth, and a **divine hand has preserved its purity** through all the ages. It lights up the far-distant past, where human research seeks vainly to penetrate. In God’s word we behold the power that laid the foundation of the earth and that stretched out the heavens. **Here only can we find a history of our race unsullied by human prejudice or human pride.** Here are recorded the struggles, the defeats, and the victories of the greatest men this world has ever known. Here the great problems of duty and destiny are unfolded. The curtain that separates the visible from the invisible world is lifted, and we **behold the conflict of**

45. *Ibid.*, March 25, 1897.

46. *Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 6, 1120.

47. *Education*, 190.

48. *Ibid.*

the opposing forces of good and evil, from the first entrance of sin to the final triumph of righteousness and truth; and all is but a revelation of the character of God.”⁴⁹

3. **The Bible explains how each person is involved in the Great Controversy.**

“[The student] should see how this controversy enters into **every phase of human experience**; how in every act of life he himself reveals the one or the other of the two antagonistic motives; and how, whether he will or not, he is **even now deciding upon which side of the controversy he will be found**.”⁵⁰

4. **The Bible sets forth the great themes of redemption.**

“In order to grow in grace and in the knowledge of Christ, it is essential that you meditate much upon the **great themes of redemption**. You should ask yourself why Christ has taken humanity upon himself, why he suffered upon the cross, why he bore the sins of men, why he was made sin and righteousness for us. You should study to know why he ascended to heaven in the nature of man, and what is his work for us today. . . . We think that we are familiar with the character of Christ, and we do not realize how much is to be gained by the study of our glorious Pattern. We take it for granted that we know all about him, and yet we do not comprehend his character or mission.”⁵¹

“Truth in Christ and through Christ is measureless. The student of Scripture looks, as it were, into a fountain which deepens and broadens as he gazes into its depths. As he searches the Word of God, the grand theme of redemption opens to his research. What subject is so vast and mysterious as the manifestation of God’s compassion for man?”⁵²

5. **The Bible possesses the essential elements necessary for the formation of a perfect character.**

“The Word of God should be our counselor in all difficulties, our guide in all the relations of life. **In the heart, the home, the place of business, the living oracles of God should reign supreme**. When alone, when no human eye sees, no human ear hears, the truth is to be our companion. Ever the soul is to be subject to its control. Upon thought, word, and deed it is to stamp its divine impress. To those who obey, the Word of God is the tree of life. It possesses the elements necessary for the formation of a perfect character, and on the effect which its teaching produces in us depends our destiny for eternity.”⁵³

49. *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 596.

50. *Education*, 190.

51. *Signs of the Times*, December 1, 1890.

52. *Ibid.*, June 16, 1898.

53. *Ibid.*, October 3, 1900.

6. The Bible provides our food and drink.

“By offering Himself on the cross of Calvary, Christ gave His flesh and blood for the salvation of the world. Those who believe in Him as a personal Saviour, those who work His works, **receiving His words and practising His principles, are eating the bread of life. Christ’s lessons are their food and drink.** They constantly seek to do Christ’s will. Under all circumstances they strive to do as He would do. They look to Him who is the Author and Finisher of their faith, inquiring earnestly, What would Jesus do? What words would He speak? If I speak words that He would not speak were He in my place, I am not abiding in Him, or He in me. . . . Christ supplies the **life-blood of the heart, and the Holy Spirit gives nerve power.**”⁵⁴

7. Christ’s words, believed and lived, mean eternal life.

“As our natural life is sustained by physical food, so our spiritual life is to be sustained by spiritual food, even the words of Christ. The Gospel, believed and lived, means eternal life. It gives spiritual health and vigor. It enables us to show in the daily life the fruits of the Spirit. . . . These words are not merely to be read as a lesson. They are to be **understood, believed, and lived. They will give us spiritual life.** Christ’s teachings are to be brought into the daily experience. We have redemption through His blood, even the forgiveness of our sins.”⁵⁵

8. We converse with God when we read the Bible.

“**He who converses with God thru the Scriptures** will be ennobled and sanctified. As he reads the inspired record of the Saviour’s love, his heart is melted in tenderness and contrition. He is filled with a desire to be like the Master, to live a life of loving service.”⁵⁶

9. The Bible was not written in superhuman language.

“God committed the preparation of His divinely inspired Word to finite man. . . . Simplicity and plain utterance are comprehended by the illiterate, by the peasant, and the child as well as by the full-grown man or the giant in intellect. . . . We thank God that the Bible is prepared for the poor man as well as for the learned man. It is fitted for all ages and all classes. . . . The writers of the Bible had to express their ideas in human language. . . . These men were inspired of the Holy Spirit. . . . The Scriptures were given to men, not in a continuous chain of unbroken utterances, but piece by piece through successive generations, as God in His providence saw a fitting opportunity to impress man at sundry times and divers places. Men wrote as they were

54. *Ibid.*

55. *Ibid.*

56. *Ibid.*, June 26, 1901.

moved upon by the Holy Ghost. . . . There is not always perfect order or apparent unity in the Scriptures. The miracles of Christ are not given in exact order, but are given just as the circumstances occurred, which called for this divine revealing of the power of Christ. . . . **The Bible is not given to us in grand superhuman language.** Jesus, in order to reach man where he is, took humanity. The Bible must be given in the language of men. Everything that is human is imperfect. Different meanings are expressed by the same word; there is not one word for each distinct idea. **The Bible was given for practical purposes.** The stamps of minds are different. All do not understand expressions and statements alike. Some understand the statements of the Scriptures to suit their own particular minds and cases. Prepossessions, prejudices, and passions have a strong influence to darken the understanding and confuse the mind even in reading the words of Holy Writ. . . . The Bible is written by inspired men, but **it is not God's mode of thought and expression. It is that of humanity.** God, as a writer, is not represented. Men will often say such an expression is not like God. But **God has not put Himself in words, in logic, in rhetoric, on trial in the Bible. The writers of the Bible were God's penmen, not His pen.** Look at the different writers. **It is not the words of the Bible that are inspired, but the men that were inspired. Inspiration acts not on the man's words or his expressions but on the man himself, who, under the influence of the Holy Ghost, is imbued with thoughts.** But the words receive the impress of the individual mind. The divine mind is diffused. The divine mind and will is combined with the human mind and will; thus the utterances of the man are the Word of God.”⁵⁷

10. The Bible explains how this planet was created and how these details will be remembered.

“[Genesis 1:26, 27quoted] Here is clearly set forth the origin of the human race; and the divine record is so plainly stated that there is no occasion for erroneous conclusions. God created man in His own image. Here is no mystery. **There is no ground for the supposition that man was evolved by slow degrees of development from the lower forms of animal or vegetable life.** Such teaching lowers the great work of the Creator to the level of man's narrow, earthly conceptions. **Men are so intent upon excluding God from the sovereignty of the universe that they degrade man and defraud him of the dignity of his origin.** He who set the starry worlds on high and tinted with delicate skill the flowers of the field, who filled the earth and the heavens with the wonders of His power, when He came to crown His glorious work, to place one in the midst to stand as ruler of the fair earth, did not fail to create a being worthy of the hand that gave him life. The genealogy of our race, as given by inspiration, traces back its origin, not to a line of developing germs, mollusks, and quadrupeds, but to the great Creator. Though formed from the dust, Adam was ‘the son of God.’”⁵⁸

57. *Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 7, 944-946 (see *The Great Controversy*, v-xii).

58. *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 44, 45.

