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Adapted from The Great Controversy
What does it take to live with hope amid epic-sized natural disasters, wars, terrorism, nuclear proliferation, political revolutions, constant awareness of global pain, and dizzying information overload?

While facing a future with so many unknowns, we need reminding of the old maxim “Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it.” But what will help us remember the past? Some wisdom from Albert Einstein comes to our aid: our great need for “holy curiosity.” Such a curiosity will drive us to understand our present and future in the light of our past.

The book you have is a sampling from The Great Controversy, a time-tested classic of both history and prophecy—exploring what God will do in the future in light of His past interaction with humanity. Although written more than a century ago, the insights found in The Great Hope offer cutting-edge direction for the twenty-first century. Its author, Ellen G. White, is considered the most widely translated American author, with one of her many books having been translated into more than 160 languages.

Generous donors made it possible for you to have a personal copy of The Great Hope.

Why?
Because it changed their lives for the better, and they believe it could change your life, too.

Why?
Because in these chapters you will travel in time through human
history, from humanity’s beginning until Jesus Christ’s promised return. On this adventure you will:

• find out what Christ offered to save us
• discover truths that will protect you from Satan’s lies
• come to understand life-changing spiritual realities
• sense God’s interplay in the cosmic history and where you fit in
• catch a glimpse of the most glorious picture ever portrayed to the human mind—the end of the human experience as we know it and the beginning of . . .

Well, we shouldn’t tell you how the book ends, because with “holy curiosity” you can discover it for yourself!
Chapter 1

**WHY IS THERE SUFFERING?**

Many see the work of evil, with its pain and loss, and question how this can exist under the rulership of One who is infinite in wisdom, power, and love. Those who are inclined to doubt take this as an excuse for rejecting the words of the Bible. Tradition and wrong interpretations have clouded the Bible’s teaching about God’s character, the nature of His government, and the principles of how He deals with sin.

It is impossible to explain the origin of sin in a way that gives a reason for its existence. Yet we can understand enough about sin’s beginning and final end to show clearly God’s justice and goodness. In no way was God responsible for sin. He did not remove His divine grace; nor was there anything lacking in the divine government that provided a cause for the rebellion. Sin is an intruder for whose presence no one can give a reason. To excuse it is to defend it. If we could find an excuse for it, it would no longer be sin. Sin is the expression of a principle that is at war with the law of love, which is the foundation of God’s government.

Before sin began, there was peace and joy everywhere in the universe. Love for God was supreme, love for one another unselfish. Christ the Only Begotten of God was one with the eternal Father in nature, in character, and in purpose—the only being who could enter into all the counsels and plans of God. “By Him all things were created that are in heaven . . . , whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers” (Colossians 1:16).

Since the law of love is the foundation of God’s government, the happiness of all created beings depended on their willing harmony.
with its principles of righteousness. God takes no pleasure in forced allegiance, and He grants everyone freedom of will, so that they can choose to serve Him voluntarily.

But one of God’s created beings chose to misuse this freedom. Sin originated with an angel who, next to Christ, had been the being God honored the most. Before his fall, Lucifer was chief of the covering cherubs, holy and pure. “Thus says the Lord God: ‘You were the seal of perfection, full of wisdom and perfect in beauty. You were in Eden, the garden of God; every precious stone was your covering. . . . You were the anointed cherub who covers; I established you; you were on the holy mountain of God; you walked back and forth in the midst of fiery stones. You were perfect in your ways from the day you were created, till iniquity was found in you. . . . Your heart was lifted up because of your beauty; you corrupted your wisdom for the sake of your splendor’” (Ezekiel 28:12-17). “You have set your heart as the heart of a god” (verse 6). “You have said . . . , ‘I will exalt my throne above the stars of God; I will also sit on the mount of the congregation . . . ; I will ascend above the heights of the clouds, I will be like the Most High’” (Isaiah 14:13, 14).

Coveting the honor that the Father had given His Son, this prince of angels wanted the power that was Christ’s alone to use. A note of discord now marred heaven’s harmonies. Seeing someone exalt himself gave the other angels, who held God’s glory as supreme, a strange dread of something evil. The heavenly councils pleaded with Lucifer. The Son of God showed him the goodness and justice of the Creator and the sacred nature of His law. In rejecting it, Lucifer would dishonor his Maker and bring ruin on himself. But the warning only stirred his resistance. Lucifer allowed his jealousy of Christ to control him.

Pride fed his desire for supremacy. The high honors God had given Lucifer did not make him grateful to the Creator. He wanted to be equal with God. Yet everyone recognized that the Son of God was the Ruler of heaven, one with the Father in power and authority. Christ participated in all the counsels of God, but Lucifer was not
allowed to enter into the divine plans. This mighty angel questioned, “Why should Christ have the supremacy? Why is He honored like this above Lucifer?”

**Discontent Among the Angels**

Leaving his place in God’s presence, Lucifer went out to spread discontent among the angels. With mysterious secrecy, hiding his real purpose under an appearance of reverence for God, he tried to make the angels dissatisfied with the laws that governed heavenly beings. He suggested that these laws were unnecessary and held them back. Since their natures were holy, he urged that angels should follow their own wills. God had dealt unfairly with him by giving supreme honor to Christ. He claimed he was not trying to exalt himself but was seeking to win liberty for every being in heaven, so that each one could reach a higher level of existence.

God was patient with Lucifer. He did not remove him from his honored position even when he began to make false claims to the angels. Again and again God offered him pardon if he would repent and submit. To convince him of his error, God made efforts that only infinite love could devise. Discontent had never before been known in heaven. At first, Lucifer himself did not understand the real nature of his feelings. As God showed that there was no reason for his dissatisfaction, Lucifer was convinced that the divine claims were right and that he ought to acknowledge them to all heaven. If he had done this, he would have saved himself and many angels. If he had been willing to return to God, satisfied to fill the place God had given him, God would have reinstated him to his position. But pride would not let him submit. He claimed that he did not need to repent, and he fully committed himself to the great controversy against his Maker.

He now applied all the powers of his master mind to deception, to gain the sympathy of the angels. Satan claimed that God had judged him wrongly and had restricted his liberty. After misrepresenting Christ’s words, he moved on to telling actual lies, accusing
the Son of God of plotting to humiliate him before the inhabitants of heaven.

All whom he could not win to his side he accused of being indifferent to the concerns of heavenly beings. He resorted to misrepresenting the Creator. He tried to perplex the angels with subtle arguments about God’s plans. Everything simple he shrouded in mystery, and by clever perversion he made the plainest statements of God appear doubtful. His high position gave greater credibility to his claims. He persuaded many to join him in rebellion.

Disaffection Ripens Into Active Revolt

God in His wisdom allowed Satan to carry on his work, until the spirit of dissent ripened into revolt. It was necessary for God to allow him to develop his plans fully, so that anyone could see their true nature. Lucifer was greatly loved by the heavenly beings, and his influence over them was strong. God’s government included the inhabitants not only of heaven, but of all the worlds He had created. Satan thought that if he could bring the angels with him in rebellion, he could also bring the other worlds. Using false reasoning and fraud, he had great power to deceive. Even the loyal angels could not fully discern his character or see where his work was leading.

Satan had been so highly honored, and he had cloaked all his actions with so much mystery, that it was difficult to show the angels the true nature of his work. Sin would not appear to be the evil thing it was until it was fully developed. Holy beings could not recognize what would be the results of setting aside God’s law. At first Satan claimed to be trying to promote God’s honor and the good of all of heaven’s inhabitants.

In His response to sin, God could use only righteousness and truth. Satan could use what God could not—flattery and deceit. Everyone needed to understand the true character of this angel who wanted God’s position. He must have time to reveal himself by his evil works.

Satan blamed God for the discord that his own actions had caused
in heaven. He declared that all evil was the result of God's government. So it was necessary that he demonstrate how his proposed changes in God's law would work out. His own acts must condemn him. The whole universe must see the deceiver unmasked.

Even after deciding that Satan could no longer remain in heaven, Infinite Wisdom did not destroy him. The loyalty of God's creatures must rest on the conviction that He is just and fair. The inhabitants of heaven and of other worlds were not prepared to understand the consequences of sin, so they could not then have seen the justice and mercy of God if He had destroyed Satan at that time. If God had blotted him out of existence immediately, they would have served God from fear rather than from love. God would not have fully destroyed the deceiver's influence nor wiped out the spirit of rebellion. For the good of the universe through eternal ages, Satan must develop his principles more fully. Then all created beings would be able to see his charges against the divine government in their true light.

Satan's rebellion was to be a testimony to the universe about the terrible results of sin. His rule would show the fruit of setting aside God's authority. The history of this terrible experiment of rebellion would be a safeguard forever to all holy beings to save them from sin and its punishment.

When the announcement came that the great usurper must be expelled from heaven with all his sympathizers, the rebel leader boldly swore his contempt for the Creator's law. He denounced the divine statutes as a restriction of liberty and declared his intention to abolish all law. Freed from this restraint, he claimed, the inhabitants of heaven could achieve a higher state of existence.

**Banished From Heaven**

Satan and his followers threw the blame for their rebellion on Christ. They declared that if they had not been rebuked, they would never have rebelled. Stubborn and defiant, yet blasphemously claiming to be innocent victims of oppressive power, the chief rebel and his sympathizers were banished from heaven (see Revelation 12:7-9).