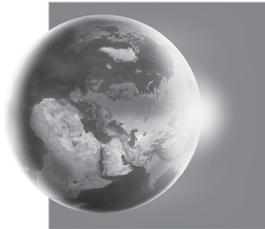


# **A BRIEF HISTORY OF GOD'S LOVE**

**FROM EDEN LOST TO EDEN RESTORED**



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**THE**

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**PATRIARCHS**

# Insights From *Patriarchs and Prophets*

## **Why Was Sin Permitted?**

The Bible says that God is love, yet history is full of good *and* evil. How can these two things coexist? It began in heaven when Lucifer, the leading angel, wanted to be like God. Lucifer rebelled against God and Christ, the Son of God. God the Father and His Son had created all beings in the universe, including us.

Lucifer was especially jealous of the Son of God and was determined to take His place. It wasn't enough that God had given Lucifer a high position in charge of all the other angels. There was no sense of gratitude in his heart. He thought himself the smartest, most beautiful, most important being in heaven. He began to plant seeds of discord among the angels. Some of them believed his lies, and they were ready to accept Lucifer as their leader instead of God.

As a result, God the Father had to remind them about Christ's true position, which had always been by God's side. He was one with God before anything was created. The Father was very patient with Lucifer and his bad attitude; if he had humbled himself and apologized, the Father would have given him back his position, but since he refused, he had to be sent out of heaven.

## **The Creation**

After Lucifer was gone, God and His Son decided to create this earth with its animals and then human beings. The first human created was Adam and then Eve as his companion. God brought them together and performed the first marriage. Both were to reflect God's character.

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God saw that the Sabbath was essential to help them stay close to Him, so He set it aside as a day of worship and fellowship with their Father.

God loved them and wanted them to love Him. He put Adam and Eve in charge of the Garden and all the animals. In return, God asked that they listen to and obey Him. Their commitment to their Father had to be tested. There was one tree in the Garden of Eden from which God told them not to eat.

### **The Temptation and Fall**

Satan was jealous of Adam and Eve's happiness, so he decided to get even with God. He would attack those who were created in His image. The angels warned Adam and Eve about the danger they faced and told them to stay together to safeguard against Lucifer's attacks. Sadly, Eve didn't listen and went wandering around the Garden of Eden by herself. Soon she found herself next to the forbidden tree. Nestled in its

branches was a beautiful talking serpent.

The serpent told Eve the tree had magical powers; he had eaten its fruit and received the ability to speak. Then he urged her to do the same so that she, too, would become wise and know as much as God. Eve believed what the serpent said rather than believing what God had said, and she took the fruit from the serpent and ate it. When she did, she felt invigorated and powerful.

She then took more fruit, ran with it to her husband, told him what had happened, and offered the fruit to him. He immediately knew that Satan had used this beautiful serpent to trick Eve into eating from the forbidden tree. He believed she would die. He couldn't bear the thought of being without her, so he took the fruit she

offered him and ate it, knowing he, too, would die. Satan was thrilled that his plan had worked.

When God came to see Adam and Eve, they both ran and hid. God said, "Why are you hiding from Me? Have you done something wrong?" They couldn't deny it. Adam blamed Eve, and Eve blamed God for creating the serpent. Then God decided to discipline the serpent by making it crawl on the ground rather than fly. He then told Adam and Eve the troubles they would have because of their sin and said that they could no longer stay in the Garden of Eden. An angel would see to it that they left.

After the plan of salvation had been devised, God, as we have seen, could still, through the ministry of His Son and the holy angels, communicate with men across the gulf which sin had made. Sometimes He spoke face to face with them, as in the case of Moses, but more frequently by dreams and visions.

—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, 21

### The Plan of Redemption

All heaven felt sick over what had happened. God and His Son were deeply hurt, and their hearts went out to Adam and Eve. Still, God knew that disobedience could not be allowed in any part of the universe and that lawbreakers would have to experience consequences. So Christ pleaded with the Father that they enact a plan of salvation for Adam and Eve and their children. The Father and the Son talked about this and about when and how to do it. The Father loved the human race so much that He was willing to sacrifice His Son for it.

When the angels learned about the plan, they were terribly sad. Not one of them could redeem man; only the Creator had the power to redeem creation. But the angels were told that they could be God's helpers in this. They were overjoyed.

When God told Satan that He would put a hatred of him in the heart of every human being and that his power over them would finally be broken, the universe heard the first whisper of the plan of redemption. The Son of God would come, and Satan, like a poisonous, snake would strike at Him, but Christ would crush his head. It was a marvel to the universe that the Son of God would humble Himself and willingly be crucified to save humankind and to defend the character of His Father.

The history of the great conflict between good and evil, from the time it first began in heaven to the final overthrow of rebellion and the total eradication of sin, is also a demonstration of God's unchanging love.

—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, 33

### Cain and Abel Tested

Adam's two sons, Cain and Abel, were very different. They both worshiped the Creator, but in not the same way. Abel believed that God and the plan of redemption were just. He sacrificed a lamb, as God had asked, to point to the death of Christ for sin. Cain resented the curse of sin. Instead of a lamb, Cain brought some grain that he had grown just to show his faith in God. Lightning flashed from heaven and burned up Abel's lamb but not Cain's grain offering. This made Cain angry, and he decided to kill his brother.

So Cain was the first murderer. God could have taken Cain's life for doing this, but He didn't. He hoped that Cain would change his mind and do what was right, but Cain didn't. So his rebellious spirit spread to his descendants, and Satan rejoiced and did all he could to deepen their spirit against God.

### Seth and Enoch

Adam had another son. His name was Seth, and he reflected his father's and his older brother Abel's commitment to God. Before the entrance of sin, Adam and Eve kept

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the Sabbath as God told them to do. Even after they left the Garden of Eden, they remained loyal to God and kept the Sabbath.

As the number of people on earth increased, some continued to follow Cain's example, and soon there were two groups of people. One group was loyal to God and the other did their own thing and disobeyed God. Cain and his descendants continued to disobey God, and soon there were murders, men taking many wives, and other evils.

The King of the universe  
summoned the heavenly  
hosts before Him, that in their  
presence He might set forth  
the true position of His Son  
and show the relation He sus-  
tained to all created beings.

The Son of God shared the  
Father's throne, and the glory  
of the eternal, self-existent  
One encircled both.

—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, 36

Unfortunately, when the descendants of Seth saw that the girls of Cain's clan were very beautiful, they began to marry them, and the wickedness of Cain's descendants spread into the villages of the good people. Adam lived for hundreds of years, and when he saw all this, he realized he was the cause of all this brokenness. He bowed down in anguish and pain, confessing his sin over and over again.

In spite of all the evil, there was a group who continued to obey God and be faithful to Him. One such man was Enoch, who lived for hundreds of years and always kept God's commandments. His love for God grew stronger as the years went by. Evil was everywhere, so he withdrew from the wickedness to spend time in meditation and prayer. However, he was passionate about telling people about God's love and never tired of begging them to repent and return to Him.

The world had gotten so wicked that God had to take action. He revealed to Enoch the coming of the Flood and beyond that to the coming of Christ, His crucifixion, death, resurrection, ascension, and eventual return. All Enoch's life he shared his faith with the people and lived so close to God that God decided to take him to directly heaven at the end of his life so Enoch would be with Him rather than dying and awaiting the Second Coming.

### The Flood

In the days of Noah, the earth was still beautiful, and men lived hundreds of years. The people were giants and had exceptional powers of wisdom and skill. But they gave in to their sinful nature and did things that weren't right in spite of their wisdom and power. They built beautiful houses for themselves and tried to outdo one another. They ended up worshipping what they could do and put God out of their thinking.

Their wickedness was open and defiant, criminal in nature. In addition, they had many wives, contrary to God's original plan. Iniquity had become so widespread that God as Judge had to do what He could to bring order back into society.

For 120 years Noah and others tried their best to keep the love of God and the call to obedience in front of the people. But it wasn't working. God told Noah to build a huge boat and get ready for a powerful flood. Up to that time it had never rained, because the earth was watered by a mist every night. When Noah told the people water would be coming down from heaven, they laughed at him. Noah believed God and, with the help of others, began building the huge ship called the ark. People laughed and made fun of him, but God had given Noah the exact dimensions so they kept right on building. The ark would be three stories high with only one huge door. Light would come into the boat from the top. Over and over, Noah invited people to repent of their sins, get on the boat, and be saved from the water.

The ark was finally finished and filled with food. Suddenly the laughing crowd was silent because they saw all kinds of animals, carefully selected by God, coming from everywhere, making their way to the ark. Then God invited Noah and his family into the ark, and the massive door was shut by unseen hands. For a whole week, nothing happened. On the eighth day, dark clouds appeared and it started to rain, and then it poured. As the storm increased, the terror of the people increased and they were frantic, trying to grab on to the ark to get in, but it was too late. The huge flood swept them away. Only eight people believed what Noah had told them for more than 120 years.

### **After the Flood**

The water rose up and up, more than twenty-two feet higher than the highest mountain peak. Noah's family rode the waves in the ark for five months. Finally, the rain stopped and the floodwater began to subside, and the Lord sent a strong wind to help dry things up, but oceans remained. Then God placed a brilliant rainbow in the sky and promised to never again destroy the whole world with a flood.

The flood changed earth forever. God covered all the bodies of dead people and animals with earth and trees. Whole forests were buried. The ground groaned with earthquakes and volcanoes, and these things will become even more frequent as the Second Coming draws near.

A compassionate Creator, in yearning pity for Lucifer and his followers, was seeking to draw them back from the abyss of ruin into which they were about to plunge.

—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, 39