

## **A The Beginning of the Cosmic Conflict:**

### **❖ The originator of the Conflict.**

- Did God create an evil being?
- Ezekiel 28:12-15 sheds light on the nature of Satan when he was created.
- This perfect being inexplicably sinned and was cast out of Heaven (Ezek. 28:16; Is. 14:12). The Bible only tells us that it was pride that led his heart astray, and that he decided to slander God and set himself up as the new ruler of the Universe (Ezek. 28:17-18; Is. 14:13-14).

## **B The development of the Cosmic Conflict:**

### **❖ Conflict comes to Earth.**

- Did God create Adam and Eve with a tendency toward evil?
- After creating the world and everything in it, God clearly states that “what He had made [...] was very good” (Genesis 1:31). This included, of course, Adam and Eve.
- After gaining Eve's trust, Satan, the ancient serpent, raised doubts about God's character: “He said to you that you would die, that he might terrify you, and that you might not receive the knowledge of good and evil, and become like him” (Gen. 3:4-5).
- Now, Eve was faced with a dilemma: who to believe, God or the serpent? The same dilemma that every angel had to face. The very root of the Cosmic Conflict.
- Despite their wrong choice, God did not abandon mankind. He promised that Jesus would crush Satan and end the Conflict. Because of Him, we can have hope.

### **❖ Jesus and Satan face to face.**

- Despite his delusions of power, Satan had no chance against the Almighty God, who was far superior to him.
- But things changed when God became man. Now, in certain ways, Jesus was inferior to him. Satan tried to receive what had been denied him in Heaven: worship (Mt. 4:8-9).
- He could not derail Jesus by feeding him (as he did Eve, Mt. 4:3-4). Nor could he derail him by inciting him to presumption (a reflection of his own character, Mt. 4:5-7). Finally, Jesus also resisted direct attack: “If you worship me, I will give you back what you came for” (Lk. 4:6-7).
- Jesus won the battles of the Conflict with a weapon that is at our disposal, and we must use it as He did: The Bible.

## **C The resolution of the Cosmic Conflict:**

### **❖ The nature of the Conflict.**

- The Conflict is a dispute over the character of God. Is God loving, or is He a capricious tyrant? Do the laws He imposes on us arise from His love, or from His zeal to maintain authority over His subjects?
- The Devil (the adversary) has slandered God. His favorite weapon in this Conflict: lies (John 8:44). But lies so subtle that even the angels –with their great intellect– were not able to differentiate them from the truth.
- Satan's strategy has been to project his own character onto God, presenting Him as selfish, oppressive, lying, vengeful, cruel... And he seems to have been quite successful in our world!
- The Cosmic Conflict is not a physical war. It has to do with beliefs. Who are we going to believe, the one who only thinks of harming us, or the one who, out of love, gave himself to save us?

### **❖ Why isn't it over yet?**

- Through a parable, Jesus clearly explained the nature of the Conflict and its final resolution (Mt. 13:24-30).
  - (1) God created everything perfect, but someone planted the seed of evil (Mt. 13:27)
  - (2) The only one responsible for evil is the one who planted it (Mt. 13:25)
  - (3) The author of evil is identified as “an enemy” of God, Satan (Mt. 13:28a)
  - (4) The angels, not understanding the nature of evil, wanted to eradicate it (Mt. 13:28b)
  - (5) God does not want to put an end to evil before it is fully understood (Mt. 13:29)
  - (6) God allows evil to develop so that there is no doubt among His children (Mt. 13:30a)
  - (7) Finally, the time will come to eradicate evil, its author, and all who cling to it (Mt. 13:30b)