

MAN: A HEAVENLY BEING UNDER SIEGE

by

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Dedicated to my father Helmuth Schledermann (1905-1979)
who introduced me to this little book many years ago.
I hope it enlightens others as it did for me.

—Annelise Schledermann

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FORWARD

The reason for this little book is to get people to stop for a moment in life's haste and give pause to think not about oneself, but *above* oneself. This could happen in a train station, a streetcar, at work, in church, in the cinema, at a bar, on a farm, before one goes to sleep, while getting up – in short, it can be done anywhere as long as one is *awake*, if one *dares*, and if one is *willing*. Most people sleep their lives away and, moreover, are afraid and lazy. If they finally begin to think, and the thoughts go along entirely new paths, they are scared stiff of what others will think of them. Mostly, they want others to think *for* them so they will avoid a lot of effort and trouble.

On the following pages many things may be shocking and may offend the reader. Some readers may even become angry with me. But so be it. The truth –as I understand it– bids me to write as I do. But please wait with laying judgment on this book until it is read to the end.

You can choose to believe this or not, however, whether it is true or not, is **not** up to you.

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this book is to explain the journey of people away from God, through this life on Earth, and back to God.

The Bible describes how we originally all began together with God in Heaven. Jesus is the closest one to God. Then there are four special Animals closest to God. Below the Animals are twenty-four Elders over all the Angels. Finally, below the Angels are all the Humans.

Then, a battle in Heaven began where a mighty Angel, Lucifer, became Satan the Tempter by deciding to go against God. Satan tried to convince the Humans to also go against God.

So, God created this Universe and the Earth to make a place where the Human souls could choose freely between God or Satan. People could freely choose between being selfless (love) or selfish (evil). Choosing Love leads back to God while choosing Evil leads to Satan.

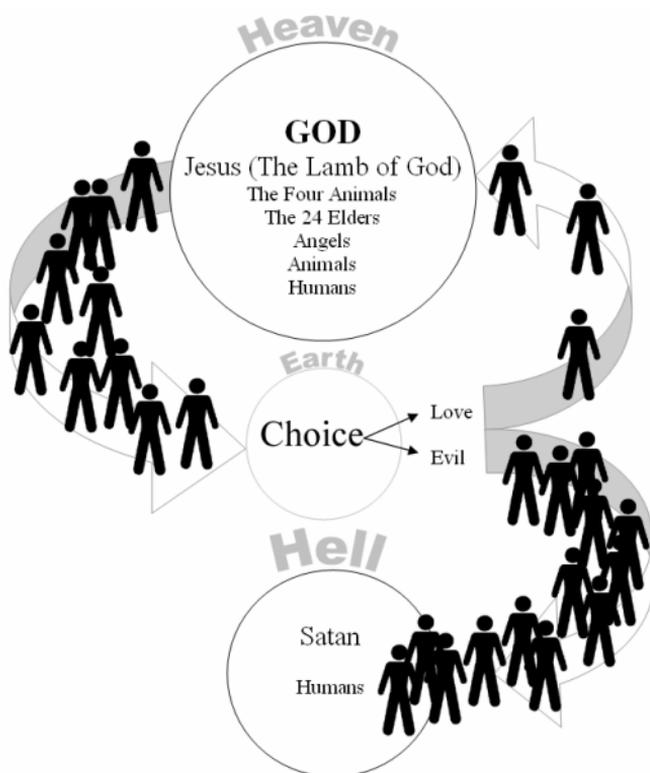


Figure 1. Starting from God, people move to Earth to make a Choice, and return to God or join Satan.

After everyone has made their choice, then this Universe will have served its purpose and those who chose to be selfish (evil) will be together in Hell with Satan and those who chose to be selfless (love) will be together in Heaven with God.

This is the basic structure for the resolution of the Heavenly conflict as explained in the Bible.

WHAT IS LOVE?

Before we can speak about these lofty ideas, we must clarify what is meant by the terms we will use, since they are often used by people to mean many things.

Empathy:	Love starts with empathy: realizing that others have feelings.
Sympathy:	Once you realize that others have feelings, you can have a feeling of Sympathy: the capacity to share the feelings of another.
Compassion:	Compassion is the feeling of sympathy together with the desire to help.
Love:	Love is Unselfish Compassion, where you realize that others have feelings, feeling sorry for them if they need help, having a desire to help them, and wanting to help without getting anything in return.

Table 1. The Four Steps to Love

Many people use the word “love” to mean one thing when speaking about their parents, and a different thing for their children, or their friends, or pets, or for their husband or wife. Some people may even say they love ice cream or chocolate. But this is just a manner of speaking –a way of expressing extreme delight.

Regardless of its common uses, the meaning of the word Love remains the same:

Love is **unselfish compassion**.

There are four steps to developing this feeling of Love: (1) empathy, (2) sympathy, (3) compassion, and finally, (4) unselfish compassion, that is, love.

For example, if you see someone cut their finger, you may experience a number of feelings.

Empathy

Empathy is a very simple feeling. It is the feeling that the person who cut their finger has their own feelings and that they are in pain from the cut.

Most people develop some sense of empathy. However, some people seem to have no empathy and abuse others without realizing that they may be hurting them, physically or emotionally. Even though empathy is a very basic feeling, many people are very selective in who they may feel empathy towards. For example, many people may have empathy for their pets, realizing they can feel pain, fear, or happiness, but have no empathy for a cow or a pig or a chicken, who feels the same pain, fear or happiness as their pet does.

Sympathy

If you feel empathy, you may also feel sympathy, that is, you may feel sorry for the person that cut their finger. Someone that has no sympathy would see the person who cut their finger and would not feel sorry for them at all. With respect to animals, an unsympathetic person may see a factory farm on T.V. but they don't feel sorry for the animals suffering inside even though they know animals have feelings. Furthermore, they don't realize that by eating burgers, steak, or chicken, they are the cause of the suffering.

In the news, people often hear statistics about war or famine overseas. Some people may have sympathy for the victims of these disasters but many simply hear the statistics and feel nothing.

Compassion

Compassion is the feeling of sympathy together with a desire to help. When seeing someone who has cut their finger, you may feel that you want to help them. This is compassion; sympathy together with a desire to help. Again, if you feel sorry for the person who cut their finger but you don't feel like helping them, then you don't have compassion for them.

Love or Charity

Finally, if you want to help the person with the cut finger, even though you will get nothing in return, this is an expression of Love. In the Bible this is also called Charity. Nowadays, Charity is often thought to mean "giving money" when really it is "Benevolence or generosity toward

others.” Of course, helping the needy is charitable, but we should extend Charity to every living being.

If the person who cut their finger was a friend of yours and you just wanted to help them so they would still be your friend, then the compassion you are feeling is not unselfish because you receive their friendship in return.

True love is found in unselfish compassion where you help others without receiving anything in return.

In the Bible there is a chapter called The Way of Love that explains how Charity, which is Love, is our **purpose** and that we are nothing without it.

Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal.

And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing.

And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity. (1 Corinthians 13:1-2, 13)

Love is most common in a family. But it is often difficult for people to feel Love for those outside their family circle. That is, you may feel Love for family members but not for friends, co-workers, strangers, foreigners, pets, or wildlife and insects. People typically have limits on their love and compassion and often only include one or two

other people in their innermost Circle of Love. Rare is the person who expresses Love to many. Still more rare is a person who expresses Love evenly to all they encounter, as Jesus did.

*Circles of Compassion:
Extending Love Beyond the Family*

Albert Schweizer, winner of the Nobel Peace Prize in 1952, coined this phrase.

“Until we extend the circle of compassion to all living things, we will not find peace.”

—Albert Schweizer

Few people ever develop a true sense of compassion. Compassion requires action. You may see an elderly person on the bus who could benefit from sitting in your seat. You may feel sorry for them but a compassionate person will actually stand up and offer their seat to the elderly person. It is even more difficult for people to express compassion to people or animals who are far away. People may have sympathy for people suffering in hospitals or for people in poor countries but they do not volunteer to help them. They may be aware of the suffering of animals in a factory farm but don't care enough to want to help them by choosing a vegetarian diet.

Since Love and Charity is our purpose, our goal is to include all living beings in our inner circles of Love. However, we typically exclude others from our inner Circles of Compassion as shown in Figure 2.

Even fewer people truly feel love for others. They don't feel unselfish compassion. They don't want

to help without getting something back, like money, recognition for being good, or love.

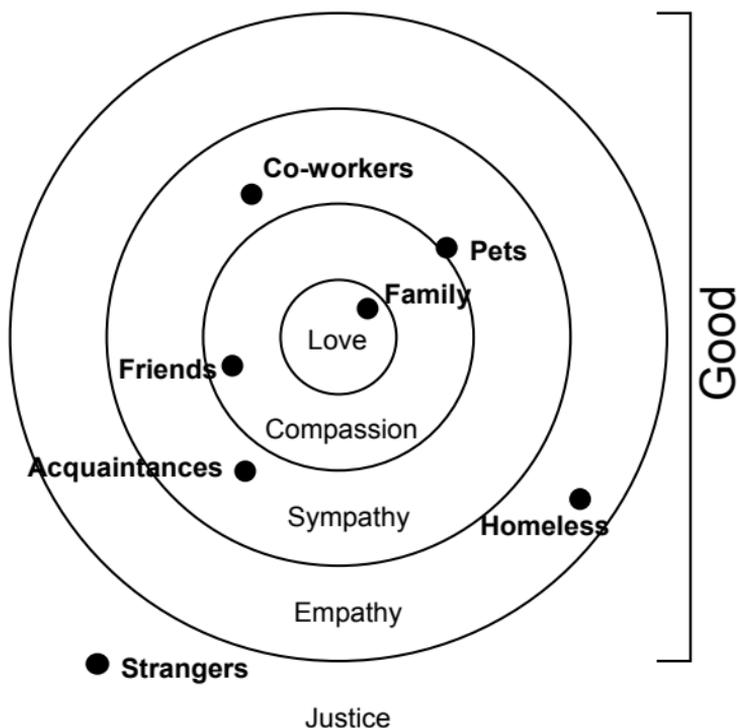


Figure 2. Circles of Compassion

Even in a relationship, many people want a “fair” or “balanced” relationship where the love they give to others is returned in an equal quantity. But this is not unselfish compassion. It is simply a balance. It is only justice. Justice is zero. It is neither good nor bad. There is no love in justice.

The strongest example of love we can find in the world is the feeling a father and mother has for their child. We know the parent’s compassion for the baby is unselfish because the baby cannot express love back to them for many years.

WHO IS GOD?

Now that we have defined “love”, we can also define who is “God”.

God is the **Expression of Absolute Love**.

That is, God is all that is loving but there is more. He is also the Expression of Love, that is, He wants to share that love and have it shared amongst us. And He wants to share this compassion for us in a completely unselfish way. The Bible states this:

He that loveth not, knoweth not God;
for God is love. (1 John 4:8)

For God so loved the world, that he gave his
only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth
in him should not perish, but have everlasting
life. (John 3:16)

If you truly know the feeling of Love, then you know who God is. If you lose the feeling of Love then you know what life is like without God.

It is also said, among other things, that God is *almighty* and *all-knowing*. The fact that God is *almighty* cannot be disputed if we also acknowledge Him as the creator of Heaven and the whole Universe. Then He truly must be almighty!

We say that God is *all knowing*. I believe He is but only up to the point of what is *knowable*. There is a subtle but important point here. For Love to be real, there must be Choice. Love only exists if it is voluntary, that is, if we have the Free Will to choose it.

By giving His creations free will, He explicitly allowed the possibility of not knowing in advance what choices individuals would make. For example, Lucifer, the Angel of Light –God’s excellent creation– had a choice, as all beings do, to choose Love, or to choose the path away from Love toward selfishness (evil). The Bible tells that Lucifer was a good and loving angel for some time. But eventually, for some reason, he came to choose the opposite path and eventually became the most outspoken of selfish beings; the Devil. People often ask, “If God is Love, why did he create the Devil?” Now we can see that God simply created Choice, and Lucifer eventually chose the path of evil on his own.

And as for people: doesn’t God know in advance which people would choose love and which people would choose evil? Obviously not, because if He knew this beforehand, then He would not be a *loving* God because then it would not be necessary for us to suffer through this life. But He is a loving God. God is *Love*! And so, it

must be necessary for us to be here. It is all part of Choice so that there can be Love. Of course Choice can also lead to Evil, see Figure 3.

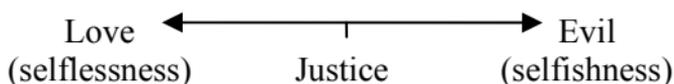


Figure 3. Choice

Many people would like to avoid making any choices and live their life in the middle –in indecision. This is where Justice lives. Justice is fairness. Some may say that “God is *just*”, but there is no Love in Justice, it is simply a balance. Justice is zero; a return to balance from an imbalance. Love is much greater than justice. God is much greater than justice. Love is an unselfish giving, and God is an infinite source of love, trust, patience and hope towards us all.

What does God want from us? He wants us to choose the path of Love so that we will return to Him in Heaven. When Jesus was asked what is the most important wish from God, the answer was Love.

Master, which is the greatest commandment in the law? Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and the greatest commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets. (Matthew 22:36-40)

The answer was to “love God and love others”. This may seem like two answers instead of one but if we think about it, the only meaningful way for us to express love back to God is for us to express it here in our daily lives to everything around us.

WHAT IS EVIL?

The opposite of Love is Evil. Love is unselfish compassion (service to others) while Evil is selfishness (service to self). When most people think about the word Evil, they probably think of extremes like Hitler, rape, torture, and murder. And surely, these are the extremes. However, in the same way as there is a path toward Love, there is also a path toward Evil.

Circles of Compassion can be used to show how Love can be extended to others but are also used to show how cruel acts are related. For example, child abuse, domestic violence, and animal cruelty are all linked and have the same source. Cowardly acts of aggression against vulnerable beings are power and control issues. The abusive person doesn't care whether their victims are women, children, or animals.

The path of Evil has four stages: apathy, malice, sadism, and seduction. Apathy is the lack of sympathy. If someone is apathetic, they simply don't care. Malice is used to describe a hurtful act

done intentionally, knowing full well that you are inflicting pain on others. Sadism is the enjoyment of inflicting pain. Finally Seduction is the intentional desire to spread evil to others. To seduce someone is to lead them astray, entice them into wrong, or to tempt them to choose evil. This could also be called corruption, see Figure 4.

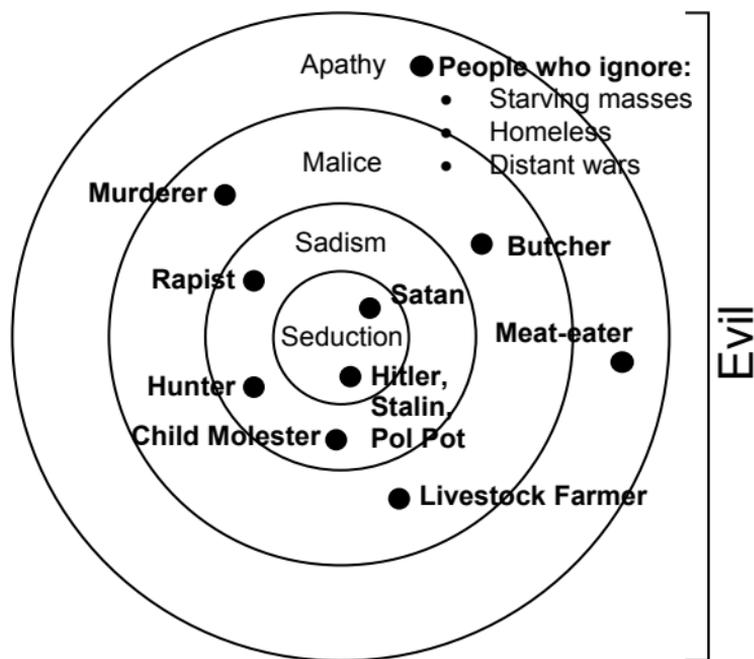


Figure 4. Circles of Evil

Apathy

Choosing Apathy may not seem like any choice is being made at all, but it is worse than the desire for Justice –the desire for balance. Simply not caring is the most common form of Evil. In Revelations, the Bible tells that being apathetic,

or lukewarm, is the same as choosing evil. God says:

I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would rather you were cold or hot. So then because you are lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spit you out of my mouth. (Revelation 3:15-16)

For example, many people don't care about homeless people, starving masses overseas, eating animals and factory farming, distant wars, or disease-ridden areas.

People who are apathetic see the suffering of others but feel no pain themselves; they feel no sympathy. In some ways, this is the most significant form of Evil since most choices people make are apathetic. Every time you eat a burger, tuna sandwich, fried chicken, lobster, etc. you are apathetic toward the animal you are eating. You don't care that the cow, chicken, fish or lobster suffered and died before it got to your mouth. If people actually cared about others, they would only be one step away from feeling Compassion. Instead, they are one step away from Malice.

Malice

More evil than Apathy is Malice: the intentional infliction of pain and suffering of others. At this level, we find people who are cruel. We find murderers, hunters, livestock farmers, butchers, and scientists performing cruel experiments on animals or on involuntary people, and others who purvey torture. They are inflicting pain and suffering on people and animals on purpose.

Large groups of people can work together on evil deeds. For example, the media is often accused of being malicious, intentionally trying to create fear and mistrust in people.

Sadism

Sadism generally refers to deriving any pleasure from inflicting pain. Sadistic people are those who are Malicious who also take pleasure in their evil deeds. They enjoy inflicting pain and suffering on others. Rapists, hunters, and child molesters are examples of people who take pleasure in aggressive acts against others. Sadistic people would typically go beyond individual acts of Maliciousness and would try to “legitimize” their repetitive evil behavior by making it into their hobby or their job, or by finding work where they can more easily commit their evil deeds.

Seduction or Corruption

Finally, Seduction is the most extreme form of Evil since it is the active desire to spread itself to others, to tempt people to become Apathetic, Malicious, or Sadistic. To influence people to choose to be Apathetic, seducers may tell people that “one person can’t make a difference so there’s no point in trying to be good.” They will try to convince people who feel wronged to “fight back” to become Malicious. A meat-eater who tries to convince a vegetarian that they are stupid and should eat meat is trying to corrupt a good person. Taking a groom to a strip club before his wedding is an attempt by his “friends” to corrupt him. Again, in the extreme, infamous dictators like Hitler, Stalin, and Pol Pot indoctrinated

thousands to help them make people apathetic, malicious, and sadistic. They corrupted their soldiers as well as ordinary people –even children– to be sadistic.

Ten Commandments

As people seem to choose Evil quite readily, most commonly Apathy and Malice, God gave Moses the Ten Commandments, written by the finger of God on two stone tablets. This is the only time in the Bible that God communicates directly with people in a written form so this document must be extremely important.

The Ten Commandments do not tell people how to be good, but simply tells people how to avoid being bad (see Table 2 below). The original Commandments were written in Hebrew, the language of Moses and the Jews, his people whom he brought out of slavery.

Jesus reiterated the importance of observance of the Commandments.

If ye keep the Commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's Commandments, and abide in His love. (John 15:10)

The Commandments are consistent with contemporary values. Almost everyone would agree that it is wrong to swear, to not respect your parents, to kill, to cheat on your spouse, to steal, lie or envy. These behaviours are unacceptable in society. The Commandments are as valid today as the day they were given to Moses.

אַנְכִי יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ

(1) Thou shalt have no other gods before me.

לֹא יְהוָה לְךָ אֱלֹהִים

אַחֲרַיִם עַל פָּנָי

(2) Thou shalt not make any graven image.

לֹא תִשָּׂא אֶת שֵׁם יְהוָה

אֱלֹהֶיךָ לְשׁוּא

(3) Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord your
God in vain.

זְכוֹר אֶת יוֹם

הַשַּׁבָּת לְקַדְּשׁוֹ

(4) Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy.

כְּבֹד אֶת אָבִיךָ

וְאֶת אִמְךָ

(5) Honour thy father and thy mother.

לֹא תִרְצַח

(6) Thou shalt not kill.

לֹא תִנְאָף

(7) Thou shalt not commit adultery.

לֹא תִגְנוֹב

(8) Thou shalt not steal.

לֹא תִעֲנֶה בְרַעְףְךָ עַד שָׁקֵר

(9) Thou shalt not bear false witness.

לֹא תַחְמֹד

(10) Thou shalt not covet.

THE NATURE OF EVIL

Evil wants to spread itself. If someone is apathetic, they'll try to discourage people from actually caring about something. They'll say, "It's not worth it" or "don't bother." They want to encourage apathy in others. And if they meet someone who actually **does** care about something, they'll say "you're strange" or "that's not normal."

Malicious people intentionally inflict pain and suffering on others. Murderers, butchers, and livestock farmers know what suffering they cause but don't feel any pain themselves. They are fully aware of what they are doing and choose to be cruel regardless. Moreover, they actually benefit from performing cruel acts, and so, are only one step away from Sadism. Here the benefit is typically money and power. Society generally considers malicious acts against animals to be acceptable and normal and, in fact, encourages them by promoting animal flesh as healthy and necessary food, even though it is not. Some

malicious acts against people are considered to be crimes but sentences can be very small. Popular films glorify serial killers and murderers. Western society seems to be fascinated with evil and addicted to fear.

Sadistic people take pleasure in performing cruel acts. In this group we find child molesters, hunters, and rapists. In most cultures, these acts are socially discouraged and are often categorized as punishable crimes. Still, sentences are small and so, these acts are not seriously discouraged by society. Also, this kind of cruelty is glorified on T.V. and in films. Young children want to pretend to be serial killers, like the murderer from the “Scream” movie or Freddy from the “Friday the 13th” series of films. Thousands of their costumes are sold to young children at Halloween every year. People have become so desensitized to evil that issues of “right” or “wrong” have become impractical theoretical concepts.

In this way, media, news, and merchandise corporations, promoting their products, attempt to directly spread evil. Evil leaders like Hitler understood the power of the media as well. Hitler, Stalin, and Pol Pot recruited thousands upon thousands of merciless soldiers to perform tens of millions of killings of men, women, and children. Satan is the king of corruptors wanting to spread evil to all.

One can think of evil as a cancer. Cancer begins with a few bad cells that then spread throughout the body. If it were not controlled, it would spread to every cell until the body was dead. Evil too tries to corrupt every soul and spread throughout

the world. Like cancer, there will come a point where there is no hope and all will be lost. When evil has spread enough so that evil deeds seem normal, and good deeds are considered to be strange and are discouraged, then it will be extremely difficult for a good soul to not be corrupted. In fact, the Bible predicts that evil will spread this way. To save the last few worthy people, who are called “the elect”, the Bible says that those people will be saved from this horrendous horrible time by the return of Jesus. This time, called the time of Tribulation, will be a full scale world war during the last seven years of the testing of people on Earth.

And unless those days had been cut short, no life would have been saved; but for the sake of the elect those days shall be cut short.
(Matthew 25:23)

Because you have kept the Ten Commandments, the word of My perseverance, I also will keep you from the hour of testing, that hour which is about to come upon the whole world, to test those who dwell upon the earth. (Revelation 3:10)

The Bible also speaks about the nature of evil at the end times with warnings.

For false Christ's and false prophets will arise and will show great signs and wonders, so as to mislead, if possible, even the elect.
(Matthew 24:24)

Let no one in any way deceive you, for it will not come until people renounce their faith, and the man of lawlessness (Satan) is revealed, the

son of destruction, who opposes and exalts himself above every so-called god or object of worship, so that he takes his seat in Jerusalem, the temple of God, displaying himself as being God. (2 Thessalonians 2:3-4)

The saving of these last few good souls is nowadays called the “Rapture.” It is described as an instant raising of people to meet Christ:

For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. (1 Thessalonians 4:16-17)

Then shall two be in the field; the one shall be taken, and the other left. Two women shall be grinding at the mill; the one shall be taken, and the other left. (Matthew 24:40-41)

This is the hope of those who suffer now, and the hope of those who see the suffering of others: that they should be granted freedom from the last seven years –the Tribulation. Those who don’t suffer, and don’t see the suffering of others, just think life is great and see no need for Jesus to come back to save anyone.

But those who suffer heed and hope:

Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man. (Luke 21:36)

WHAT IS THE BIBLE?

The Bible consists of two sections: the Old Testament and the New Testament. The Old Testament is written by many prophets and tells about the history of the world from Adam and Eve in the beginning, to Noah, to Moses and the Ten Commandments, up to the time before Jesus. The second section is called the New Testament and begins with the story of Jesus and ends with Revelations about the end of the world.

Over time, God has informed the prophets what they should write. Therefore, consider the Bible, even though it is composed of accounts that are thousands of years old and changed over time by sinful people, as the container of God's own word. Inside the Bible, light shines through the darkness. It contains hidden treasures! But the Bible is difficult to understand. When reading the Bible, one needs to think about what is being said. A good way to judge whether the text contains truth is to weigh it against the Ten Commandments. If it agrees with the Ten

Commandments, then the text **does** reflect the words of God. If the text goes against the Ten Commandments, then it must have been changed, or mistranslated, and is **false**.

For example, in Genesis, God said:

Behold, I have given you every **herb bearing seed**, which is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree, in which is the **fruit** of a tree yielding seed; to you it shall be for food. (Genesis 1:29)

This is consistent with the Ten Commandments and so, this is **true**. However, another part of the Bible states:

Thou mayest eat flesh or whatsoever thy soul lusteth after. (Deuteronomy 12:20)

Not only does this contradict the previous line from Genesis, it also goes against the 6th Commandment: Thou shalt not kill. Therefore, the line from Deuteronomy is **false**. Poor translations and misinterpretations may have caused these inconsistencies in the Bible but there are still many beautiful and inspirational passages throughout.

But how did God communicate with these particular inspired people who had originally written the Bible? It happened through revelations, visions or dreams:

And he said, Hear now my words: If there be a prophet among you, I the Lord will make myself known unto him in a vision, and will speak unto him in a dream. My servant Moses is not so, who is faithful in all mine house.

With him will I speak face to face, even apparently, and not in dark speeches; and the likeness of the Lord shall he behold.
(Numbers 12:6-8).

Since Moses is the only one that God speaks directly with, his message must be exceptionally important. He was given the Ten Commandments directly from God.

The Bible's last chapter is called "The Revelation of St. John the Divine" which further underscores the fact that revelations are a normal method through which God communicates Himself to people.

One can really call the Bible a "supernatural book" built from the books of the prophets and the apostles, and here we can find answers to the big questions of the Hereafter.

WHAT IS A PERSON?

In 2005, the number of people on Earth is about 6,500,000,000. And of that number, half of the Earth's people starve or suffer in some other way. The First World War took, directly and indirectly, about 20 million human lives. The Second World War killed 5 times that amount, amongst who were 6 million Jews that died in Hitler's gas chambers. How many millions of unfortunate people died in 1952 in Stalin's work camps? In 1978 how many millions were killed in Pol Pot's revolution in Cambodia? How many millions have perished from AIDS in Africa? In addition, another billion people suffer in other ways. This is people's fate: to be born, suffer and die.

But what is the purpose that billions suffer? What does it mean that one person suffers? One can best understand this if we put ourselves in the place of the sufferer and then multiply this by a billion. Then you will have a clear picture of the human condition on Earth.

But there are one billion people that are relatively fine –except that all people, sooner or later, must suffer and die! But don't **they** have grounds to be satisfied? Possibly, but at the moment, most people are afraid of crime, war, disease, environmental damage, even the possibility of a third world war and this fear is a bitter taste in the cup of happiness and satisfaction.

There are a lot of Christians that claim that life is God's good gift to people! But is it really? Isn't this just fiction made by well-off selfish people, invented in good times, who have no compassion for the suffering of others?

The billion people that live in suffering at the moment will not see life as God's loving good gift. And these people that are well off, will they always see life as a gift? No! Because for every person –even for those who are too occupied enjoying the good life– one day, these words shall sound:

You fool! This night thy soul shall be taken.
(Luke 12:20)

and then it often goes the way that when they are most happy and grateful, they become a victim of bitterness and defiance because the gift has been suddenly and inconveniently taken back. Life therefore cannot be called a gift as such, but can at most be called a loan of bad and good days over a fixed period of time. One cannot hide the fact that there is something humiliating, even directly degrading, about people's physical life. Consider reproduction! There is, as the old doctors pointed out hundreds of years ago,

something humiliating in the fact that people – without consideration for male or female, ability, rank and standing– come to this world in the middle of the channels for urine and feces as an absolutely helpless and defenseless being, covered in blood and filth. But enough of that. It is soon forgotten and the newborn often develops into a bright and strong person that will make himself master over the Earth, and has a body that is indeed God’s masterpiece. The end of life is also traumatic as this wonderful body may be ravaged by sickness followed by death, and then, to undergo a rotting dissolving process.

Since people are born without memory, and as most people’s lives are full of sorrow, pain, and death, life’s sum total can be seen to have a negative value. Billions of people have had this sad experience, and so it could hardly be God’s intention that people’s physical existence should be thought of as a good gift. The way most peoples lives turn out, it is more like a chore. People don’t seem to be a free being but are more like a slave, a prisoner of life serving a hard and awful sentence.

Our body, as we have discussed, can quickly be finished with. It is only physical. It has come from dust and will become dust. But what of the soul that lives in the body? Has it had a pre-existence as Plato taught? Has it existed as a Heavenly being with a home in another place, before it got its home here on Earth in a temporary body?

Even though science has discovered many of life’s secrets, there is still an important question

that we don't investigate: the question about ourselves, that is, our soul and our Heavenly heritage.

In the following presentation, I will investigate clues for this line of thought by considering the facts about peoples lives and deeds –written in blood, sweat, and tears in history books and daily papers– together with the clear knowledge we have gained from the Bible. Concerning the hypothesis about the pre-existence of the souls of people, I will explore God's thoughts to help us to understand people's place in the eternal cycle. By that, we will get to the basis of our existence as Earthly beings and, in this way, I will try to find an answer to some of life's big questions.

I am not a theologian. It should be underscored here that I am a medical doctor. Without prejudice and in an undogmatic way, I explore the Bible, as with many other books, and this is my right as a person and as a Christian. As a medical doctor, I know through my work, life's humble way, the suffering of many, and death's reality as well as anyone. I would like to say I truly believe that my search for an answer has not been in vain because life's reality and the Bible message together gives evidence of a human preexistence as Heavenly beings before Earth was created. A catastrophe, in that time, has put these Heavenly beings seriously under siege, and as a direct result of this siege, our pitiful Earthly realm has been created. We will now look all the way back to before the Earth's creation, and one can begin to find an answer to life's big questions: From Where? Why? Where to? and How long?

WHO IS JESUS?

Jesus was a messenger from God whose purpose was to teach the message of Love to all people. Jesus is often called Jesus Christ as the word Christ means “chosen one.” Jesus was born of Jewish parents named Mary and Joseph and was raised and lived as a Jew. Even though Jesus was later prosecuted by Jewish priests and killed by Romans over 2000 years ago, he had such a large influence over the entire world that Christianity, a major world religion, our modern global moral structure, our charity practices, and our calendar are still based around his life. Almost all of our knowledge of the life and teachings of Jesus comes from a surprisingly small chapter in the Bible which is about 20 pages long in the New Testament. It is repeated four times as the Books of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. Each one recounts the same story from their own point of view. What did Jesus teach in those 20 pages?

Keep the Commandments. (Matthew 19:17)

The Romans killed many Jews and Christians and other non-Roman people as they strived to conquer and rule the world. And even though the Romans killed Jesus and many Christians, Jesus' message was so popular that many people still became Christian and followed his teachings after his death. The Romans tried to kill the new followers too and the act of "throwing Christians to the lions" has become a well known old Roman practice. Still, so many people became Christian that the Romans could not kill them quickly enough and could not maintain control. In order to keep the tax payments coming in, the Romans created the Roman Catholic Church to take over Christianity and make it their own. The Romans renamed the ruler "Caesar" to "Pope" (which means Father). Tax payments then became payments to the Church. After 1400 years, a number of groups in Europe protested against the ongoing payment of taxes to the Roman Church and so, were called Protestants. The Protestants rejected the idea that Caesar or Pope was divine. Also, the Protestants rejected that payments could be made to absolve sins. A third major group of Christians, often called the Orthodox Eastern Church, are like Protestants in the way that they reject the Pope and the payments, except that they honor Mary, the mother of Jesus, as being a primary figure.

So, the life and teachings of Jesus created the major Christian religions, Roman Catholics, Protestants, and the Orthodox church.

But who is Jesus? Jesus is called the Son of God, the Savior, the right hand of God, and the

Messiah (Hebrew word for “anointed one”). The Bible often says that we are all children of God so the description of Jesus being the Son of God really means that he is the closest one to God, closer than any other soul. One day as Jesus had been baptized, God spoke to a group of people there explaining who Jesus is:

A voice from heaven said “This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.” (Mat. 3:17)

What was his purpose? On the first page of the New Testament, his purpose is given:

He shall save his people from their sins.
(Matthew 1:21)

His people, the Jews, had received the Ten Commandments from Moses but they did not follow them. Jesus came to show the Jews how to live while following the law of Moses, the Ten Commandments. Jesus said that his people had grown tired of being good, helping each other, and caring. He said that people should understand with their heart, that they should listen to their feelings about what is right and wrong. Jesus says:

For the people’s heart is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; lest at any time they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and should understand with their heart.
(Matthew 13:15)

“Understanding with the heart” is an important lesson. It is only by understanding with the heart that we can see right from wrong, good from evil.

Without it, we can't feel compassion for those suffering around us. The way to understand with the heart is to be innocent as a child. If you show a child a cruel thing and ask them if it is right or wrong, they will often answer with an honesty that adults have lost. Jesus said:

Except ye become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven.

Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as a little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven. (Matthew 18:3-4)

PRE-EXISTENCE OF JESUS

According to the Bible, Jesus Christ has been in existence long before the foundation of the World. And because of this, he must know the whole Universe story and its timeframe: before the foundation of the World. He says this in his Heavenly prayer to God.

I have glorified thee on the earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do. And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was. (St. John 17:4-5).

and further:

Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me: for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world. (St. John 17:24).

This declaration from Jesus is evidence of his own pre-existence. His pre-existence as a Heavenly being before his Earth-life is clear since

Jesus had a wonderful and glorious place with God.

Paul says the same with these words:

For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him. And he is before all things, and by him all things consist. (Colossians 1:16-17)

Jesus had a very clear memory of his pre-existence, and his time in Heaven before his life on Earth. He recalled his Father's house with many mansions (John 14:2). He had been there! And Jesus says:

Verily, verily, I say unto you, before Abraham was, I am. (John 8:58)

If one can calculate Abraham's days to be 1900 BC, then this means that Jesus, at least, has had a pre-existence of more than 1,900 years before he came to Earth in human form.

The Baptist John said about Jesus, before he baptized him in Jordan:

He that cometh after me is preferred before me: for he was before me. (John 1:15)

and lays down a clear proclamation about Jesus' pre-existence.

Aside from the earlier citations, there are many other places in the Bible that tell about Jesus' pre-existence. Jesus also says:

I am the living bread which came down from heaven. (John 6:51)

What and if ye shall see the Son of man ascend up where he was before? (John 6:62)

And no man hath ascended up to heaven, except he that came down from heaven, the Son of man which is in heaven. (John 3:13)

And also clearly, Jesus states:

I came forth from the Father, and am come into the world: again, I leave the world, and go to the Father. (John 16:28)

It has been 2005 years since Jesus came to Earth, according to God's will and plan, and here he lived for about 35 years. But this visit was already decided before the foundation of the World.

God gave Jesus a very specific mission to be performed on Earth. His mission was to show people **by example**, how to live a loving righteous life in keeping with the Ten Commandments. About this mission, Jesus says:

For I came down from Heaven, not to do my own will, but the will of him that sent me. And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day. (John 6:38-39)

And Paul says:

Who, first being in the **form of God**, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: but made himself no reputation, and took upon him

then, the **form of a servant**, and was made in the likeness of men. (Philippians 2:6-7)

Through these words, the picture of the eternal Heavenly Kingdom begins to take shape. We see that Jesus, before Earth was created, had a Heavenly glory that God gave to him. Jesus gave away his Godly form and then became human. It was then God's will that Jesus would regain this glory. Jesus performed not his own, but God's will, and he took a servant's form and came down to Earth, where he let himself be born as a human. Here, he lived and died as a human and fulfilled God's will and could then regain everything that he had lost –his immortal Heavenly place at the right hand of God– which is an example to teach us the way that all people have the chance of returning to Heaven, by keeping the Commandments.

PRE-EXISTENCE OF PEOPLE

The next question which comes up is a natural one: have people also had a pre-existence, a life before, together with Jesus, and existed as a Heavenly being before the foundation of the World? Or are humans –that is to say the soul, the part of ones personality that is responsible for it's actions, that part that will be judged on the last day– is the soul first created when a human is born?

Several Bible passages show that the soul has existed before birth. For example, the archangel Gabriel announces to Zechariah that his wife Elizabeth will be fruitful and bear a son who will be a great prophet:

For he shall be great in the sight of the Lord,
and he shall be filled with the Holy Ghost,
even from his mother's womb. (Luke 1:15)

These thoughts give, beyond question, a certain respect for the unborn human life and one would need to acknowledge the important consequences

of disturbing this process. For example, the Catholic Church disallows any form of abortion. No one can know if, through an abortion, one hinders or harms God's plan.

For example, Jesus had a pre-existence but came to earth to perform a mission decided by God billions of years in advance. Imagine if people had interfered with Mary carrying Jesus. This kind of thinking Peter describes when he is writing about Jesus:

...who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you. (1 Peter 1:20)

And Paul says the same:

According to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord. (Ephesians 3:11)

But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world, unto our glory. (1 Corinthians 2:7)

One can find evidence that speaks about the soul's pre-existence, like these words from Paul:

According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the World, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love. (Ephesians 1:4-6)

Be thou partaker of... the gospel according to the power of God; who hath saved us, and called us with a holy calling... which was

given us in Christ Jesus before the world began. (2 Timothy 1:8-9)

For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them. (Ephesians 2:10)

This shows that the human soul originally existed as a Holy and blameless Heavenly creature that belonged to Jesus Christ.

Other writings explain that people are known by God –even by name– as individuals “from before the foundation of the World.”

And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship the beast, those *from the foundation of the world* whose names are not written in the Book of Life... (Revelation 13:8)

Exactly the same thought is expressed in Revelation 17:8 that, definitely, people have existed before the foundation of the World.

Doubtless thou art our father... our redeemer; thy name is from everlasting. (Isaiah 63:16)

The Lord hath appeared of old unto me, saying, Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love. (Jeremiah 31:3)

Before the foundation of the World, people didn't just exist as Heavenly beings, they were also implicated in the awful event that was the cause for the necessity of Jesus' coming. People were drawn into a situation where, while they may not have sinned, they could no longer stay in Heaven, and, for a time, people were moved to Earth.

It was according to God's will that Jesus came to Earth. However, it must have been our will to come here to toil on Earth. Since God is Love, he would want to be with us all the time. God didn't leave us. We must have left him and chosen to come here. Jacob says that God misses us:

With zealous devotion, God longs for that spirit that dwelleth in us. (James 4:5)

But, even though we chose to leave Heaven, we still want to return.

For we know that if our earthly house were dissolved, we have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.

As long as we are in an earthly body, we are earnestly desiring to be clothed with our dwelling in heaven. (2 Corinthians 5:2)

These words explain very clearly that people's original home is in Heaven, and that the human body is only a temporary home.

"The kingdom we belong to" says Paul, "is in heaven." (Philippians 3:20)

But whether we are present in Heaven, or absent from Heaven and in the body, our purpose is the same, to work for Jesus helping others, showing Love.

Whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord: for we walk by faith, not by sight. We are confident, *I say*, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord. Wherefore **we**

labour, that, whether present or absent, we may be accepted of him. (2 Corinthians 5:7)

One can also see that certain people, in the time before they had life here on Earth, lived in Heaven as *special* spiritual beings, and who were known and loved by God. Naturally God would grant a special mission to these people, to carry out during their Earthly life. This is the case with the prophets, to whom God has revealed his truth. One can understand this when God says to the prophet:

Before I formed thee in your mother, I knew thee; and before thou camest forth from your mother, I sanctified thee, and I ordained thee a prophet unto the nations. (Jeremiah 1:5)

The same thought is found with the Psalms:

Before I camest forth from my mother, God's eyes saw me. And in God's book all of them were written, what days they should be were fashioned, before there was even one of them. (Psalms 139:16)

From all this knowledge, one can see that God, Jesus Christ, and the people, existed in Heaven long "before the foundation of the World".

The next task will be to discover where the pre-Earthly catastrophe was and what consequences it had for those Heavenly beings involved. But now another face is revealed in this vast drama, namely Satan, the Devil, that old snake, God's enemy, and people's tempter and accuser. Let us therefore look a little closer at this awful creature.

WE FORSAKE THE DEVIL AND ALL HIS DEEDS AND ALL OF HIS ESSENCE

With these words begin the Christian creed and these words are to convey a strong declaration of war on the Devil, who is God's and Jesus Christ's enemy number one, and people's mortal enemy. Holy day after Holy day, the sound of these words, all over the country, in churches and Christian gatherings, underline that the problem – the Devil– is of great importance. In our time, even amongst priests and Christian scholars, people are clearly unwilling to approach this issue, which must be acknowledged as a very important question. One could say that this is the basis for the Christian belief, because people fell and thereof follows the possibility for salvation or damnation as the fruit of the Devil's actions. Without the Devil, there would be no fall, salvation, or damnation. The Devil's deeds are the reason for people's conflict with God. Therefore the question of the Devil is very important.

According to the Bible, the Devil that is called Satan was originally a mighty angel of God named Lucifer. He was created by God and therefore is not eternal, as eternity is without beginning or end. The Devil has his beginning and his time will have an ending too, when God will destroy him and his followers. But for now, he lives and spreads evil on the Earth and therefore, people cannot avoid him and must take a stand, for or against –an indecisive position is not possible.

After God created Lucifer, he became the Angel of Light. But he sinned! He was the leader of a revolution against God and so became the Devil, God's enemy, Satan. Some of the lower angels participated in the revolt and became subjects of the Devil.

The Devil's revolt –the unbelievable Heavenly catastrophe– shows that one of God's creations, a mighty angel together with all his subjects can make a revolt against God. And seemingly, he can get away with it with his life intact. Despite the revolt, the Devil and all of his angels are still not destroyed. This surprising situation must have a reason.

The Devil and his group of evil angels were expelled to Earth instead of being destroyed immediately. And here, they eagerly continue the fight against God, spreading evil in its various forms across the whole world.

And we (who love God) know that we are of God, and that the whole world lieth in wickedness. (1 John 5:19)

The Devil still exists today and is here on Earth. He lives and reveals himself everyday through the evil deeds that are done by people. The Devil is a king, a ruler; he is this World's leader (John 12:32, 14:30, 16:11). When the Devil tried to tempt Jesus in the desert, he said that God had given him, the Devil, power over all the Earth's Kingdoms, together with all its wonders. (Luke 4:1-13)

For the apostles, the Devil's revolt in Heaven is an undeniable fact. Peter says:

God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast them down to hell, and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment. (2 Peter 2:4)

The apostle Judas speaks in agreement and says:

And the angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, he hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day. (Jude 6)

The prophet Isaiah speaks about Satan's revolt with imagery and says:

How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! How art thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations! For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north: I will ascend above the heights of the clouds: I will be like the most High. (Isaiah 14:12-14)

When Ezekiel speaks about the King of Tyrus, he uses also a picture of Satan's revolt and fall:

Thou art the anointed cherub that covereth; and I have set thee so: thou wast upon the holy mountain of God; thou hast walked up and down in the midst of the stones of fire. Thou wast perfect in thy ways from the day that thou wast created, till iniquity was found in thee. By the multitude of thy merchandise they have filled the midst of thee with violence, and thou hast sinned: therefore I will cast thee as profane out of the mountain of God: and I will destroy thee, O covering cherub, from the midst of the stones of fire... I will cast thee to the ground... (Ezekiel 28:14-16)

Now the questions are, when did Satan's revolt take place, and when were Satan and his group of angels thrown out of Heaven and trapped on Earth? Jesus says:

And he said unto them, I beheld Satan as lightning falling from heaven. (Luke 10:18)

Jesus has obviously seen it, and it must have been in Jesus' pre-existence, because Satan has been on Earth for a long period of time before Jesus was on Earth. But when did this take place? When did Satan take the Earth as his realm and begin his rule here? Some clear answers can be found to these questions.

When the Devil was in Paradise and tempted the first two people, Adam and Eve, he was already known as God's enemy and accuser, and so must

have had his fall in the time before people were on Earth.

It is understandable that God had thrown Satan and his group of angels out of Heaven to end the revolt, and this was so severe, that Jesus remembers it as a picture of “lightning falling from heaven”.

Jesus talks about the Devil from time to time, in the four gospels. The apostles warn strongly against Satan. Peter says:

Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour. (1 Peter 5:8)

John writes:

Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and of the sea! for the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time. (Revelation 12:12)

John describes Satan’s revolt against Heaven:

And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels, and prevailed not; neither was their place found any more in heaven. And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him. And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ: for the accuser of our brethren is

cast down, which accused them before our God day and night.

And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death.

Therefore rejoice, ye heavens, and ye that dwell in them. Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and of the sea! for the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time.

(Revelation 12:7-12)

The fight in Heaven was the final battle that the Devil will fight against God's throne, before God brings him and all of his angels to destruction. When the Devil is talked about as the whole World's tempter, the World and all its inhabitants must be tempted, and so, the Devil will exist so long as the World exists.

The failed war in Heaven means that the Devil's power in Heaven is finally broken, and that the time is near, and that judgement over him will be fulfilled. But he is still this World's ruler, and his anger and harmfulness against the *Brothers* rages on, who he has put under siege day and night.

We will now discuss the questions about 'who are the *Brothers*' and 'what accusations the Devil has against the *Brothers*'.

WHO ARE THE BROTHERS?

Why is the Devil angry over the Brothers? Why does this last battle between the Devil and his angels on one side, and Michael and his angels on the other side, not involve the *Brothers*? One can suppose that it is the *Brothers* who are the cause of the battle. The Brothers, or the Brethren, are us, the people. The people are talked about in many places in the New Testament, as Jesus' brothers, where the author of the Hebrew Letters writes about Jesus and says:

For both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one: for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren. (Hebrews 2:11)

For verily he took not on him the nature of angels; but he took on him the seed of Abraham. Wherefore in all things it behooved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make

reconciliation for the sins of the people.
(Hebrews 2:16-17)

Abraham's descendents, who are the people, are described by these writings as Jesus' brothers with the same Father.

Jesus Christ, God's son, in his Earthly form was lower than the angels (Hebrews 2:7), though in his pre-existence, he was higher than the angels. In Heaven, he was the right hand of God. When Jesus came down to Earth, he was transformed from God-like to human. People –Jesus' brothers– also have had a pre-existence, and in their pre-existence, they were high-standing Heavenly beings with a special connection to Jesus. When they came to Earth, they were also degraded down to be people. Jesus says:

For whosoever shall do the will of my Father which is in heaven, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother. (Matthew 12:50)

Along with this, Paul says:

For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren. (Romans 8:29)

One can name more places in the Bible where Jesus calls people his *Brothers*. Just the fact that Jesus calls himself 'the son of man' is a sign that he acknowledges the people as family.

For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost. (Luke 19:10)

Paul explicitly calls Jesus a 'man':

For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus; who gave himself a ransom for all. (1 Timothy 2:5-6)

When Satan was trying to tempt Jesus in the desert, Jesus answered as a man:

Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God. (Matthew 4:4)

To the Jews, Jesus said:

But now ye seek to kill me, a man that hath told you the truth, which I have heard of God. (John 8:40)

In 1 Romans 5:15, Paul calls Jesus 'one man'.

And who is the brother of the people, the one man, the Son of man, Jesus Christ:

Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high; being made so much better than the angels, as he hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they. (Hebrews 1:3-4)

For by (God) were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by Him, and for Him: And He is before all things, and by Him all things consist. And (Jesus) is the head of the body,

the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence. For it pleased the Father that in him should all fullness dwell. (Colossians 1:14-20)

Jesus is truly “the image of the invisible God”, and as people are made in God’s image, and as Jesus acknowledges people as his brothers, one sees the Heavenly origin of people. Because of the battle in Heaven, God moved people down onto the Earth to be tested and to earn, by being good, their home back in Heaven. When Jesus was in Heavenly form, he renounced his High Position and “took the role of a servant and became human” and allowed himself to be born here on Earth and to live and die with his *Brothers*, and to be an example for people to live by the Ten Commandments and to love one another. After he was the ultimate example and teacher for the *Brothers*, through having lived this life, he was raised over all angels. God had decided that through Jesus:

By him to reconcile all things unto himself; by him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven. (Colossians 1:20)

SATAN'S SIEGE AGAINST THE BROTHERS

Here on Earth, the *Brothers* (humans), are under siege day and night in front of God, and Satan is the accuser!

“What is Satan accusing people of?” one would ask. “Satan is accusing people of being sinners,” is the answer that would return. But what sins are these?

“For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God,” says Paul (Roman 3:23) and everyone has, according to Christian teachings, inherited the “original” sin. And so, we must clearly admit that Satan is correct, if his only accusation is to tell God, that all people are sinners. It is odd that Satan would bother since, of course, the *all-knowing* would not need to be told this and that God’s judgment will reach the sinners nonetheless. God doesn’t need Satan’s help to be made aware of people’s sins; they scream to Heaven from every corner of the Earth. So, one cannot take the question of Satan’s accusation too

lightly and simply say, "People are sinners!" The answer must be found much deeper.

Satan has, at all times here on Earth, been an accuser, and moreover is a double accuser. In the Garden of Paradise, he accuses God of lying to people (Genesis 3:4-5), and later accuses people of turning against God (Job 1:9-11, Rev. 12:10).

As earlier said, the unthinkable happened. Not only did one of God's Heavenly beings sin, but one of God's utmost mighty angels, Lucifer, the Angel of Light and all the angels under him, went into an open fight against God. There are very few details mentioned in the Bible about this awful event, which truly must have shaken Heaven. The result of this vast battle was that Satan and his angels were thrown down to Earth, where they must stay until the judgment on the last day (Jude 6). This day can be recognized as the Judgment Day for all people, but also as the sentencing day for Satan and his angels. On that day, for all those who have ignored Jesus' teachings about the Ten Commandments and disregarded God, Satan awaits.

After the battle in Heaven, Satan was already judged, judged to destruction and eternal death. God must have some special purpose as He is postponing the fulfillment of this judgment until the day that all people will be judged. The connection between people and Satan is that the judgment over both Satan and people is to be done at the same time. Satan, aside from being the intruder sentenced to eternal death, also has the important role of being the accuser.

To develop an idea of the meaning of this strange play, we will consider the time before the World was created, and imagine how Heaven might have been. Heaven was an enormous kingdom without bounds but different from what it is now. God, the Father of forever, the creator of everything, with supernatural powers, was the bright center of Heaven.

Jesus, being God's son, must have had the greatest flock of angels and humans. But then the war in Heaven began! This unreal catastrophe may have happened the following way. It seems that Lucifer had free reign to plan his revolt. He was able to convince his own followers to participate in the revolt against God, where his goal was to throw God from the throne to take his place as the Almighty. Lucifer boldly reveals his plan:

I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north: I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the most High.

But Isaiah sees that Lucifer's plan will not work:

Yet thou shalt be brought down to hell, to the sides of the pit. (Isaiah 14:12-15)

As his own angel following apparently wasn't strong enough to defeat God's guards, perhaps represented by the archangel Michael and his angel following, Lucifer sought allies and enticed other angels with promises just as he later tried to tempt Jesus in the desert.

Some refused him, others joined him, and still others were undecided and refused to commit themselves. When all the preparations were finished, the day finally came. The Angel of the Light and his followers became God's irreconcilable enemies, Lucifer became Satan, and the peace in the Kingdom of Heaven was broken by the terrible battle of life and death.

God's guards prevailed. Michael caught and disarmed Satan and his followers. One may have expected that Jesus and his angels had stopped Satan's revolt but the Bible does not report anything of this. Instead, we are told that God had a plan for the Heavenly beings who later become people. By this, people have been somehow involved in the big battle, and are directly or indirectly implicated.

Then God created a new Universe separate from Heaven. God commanded, and it was! God created the Earth, and it was. Heaven had an enormous amount of creatures, full of superior and subordinate Heavenly beings: archangels, cherubs, seraphs, and billions of smaller angels. The archangels have rule over many angels, and other Heavenly beings. And the Angel of Light, Lucifer, was probably one of the highest angels, before falling from Heaven. Isaiah asks:

How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer,
son of the morning! how art thou cut down to
the ground, which didst weaken the nations!

So the question now is: why did God decide that people, after Satan's revolution, should be placed in the middle of Satan's new domain? Why didn't

God let his dear children (people) inhabit a world –that God has billions and billions of– where Satan didn't rule? Why did people need to be brought into contact with Satan who “accuses the *Brothers* against God day and night”?

By looking at Satan from this point of view the *Brothers* almost give the answer themselves.

In a trial, where a criminal group's guilt is so obvious that a death sentence is clearly foreseen, the group leader –to gain time– will throw guilt on bystanders and seemingly guiltless people. To reach the truth in the accusation, and to be fair to the accused –who naturally want to be cleared– the judge gives them, one at a time, the opportunity to stand face-to-face with the convicted accuser, to prove their innocence. By this, the execution of the sentence will be postponed by the time it takes to try all of the accused people.

If we apply this situation to the Heavenly battle, the accuser is Satan, and the accused are the *Brothers*, i.e. the people. In one way or another, Satan must have accused people to have taken part in the battle in Heaven. The people cannot have openly taken part in the battle, because then they would have immediately been discovered. But they may have, in advance, promised Satan that they would remain neutral, and would join him if he won. They could have had sympathy with Satan because they felt closer to him than to God. If that was the case, they should also be thrown out of Heaven and suffer the same fate as Satan and his followers.

An effective and righteous way for God to find the truth in such an accusation against the people, is to postpone the execution of Satan and his followers until all people, one by one, choose between Satan and God using their own free will!

Satan and his followers were thrown down on Earth, and people received their home on Earth, and the human soul received its perishable body.

Satan is the accuser of the creations. First, he accuses the people as a Heavenly being for unfaithfulness against God. Then, when people were placed here on Earth, Satan came up with a new accusation. And this time, Satan was right, because people overstep God's law on a daily basis. With this second accusation Satan proves that the first accusation was true. Paul explains how most people follow the wicked way of the world:

You hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins; wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others. (Ephesians 2:2-3)

Satan's accusations are right, and Paul clearly admits that people's nature is angry, meaning people are Satan's –and not God's– children! Satan has pointed a guilty finger at people! How could any human possibly get around this

punishment, which has been decided for Satan and his angels?

God has decided to perform this trial before the foundation of the World, and by this, created the possibility for all people to choose good over evil to be saved from eternal death. But it is not everyone that will use this possibility! Many will fall, but happily, others will win in the fight against Satan. Since people were to be placed in Satan's evil presence, God sent a message of goodness –Jesus– to show people how to live and how to be good. Then people would have both sides to choose between. This is why Jesus is called the Savior. He was sent to save people from evil by showing them the good path.

He that overcomes temptation, the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life, but I will confess his name before my Father, and before his angels. (Revelation 3:5)

We have come to a new chapter: The Book of Life, where Jesus crosses out the names of those people who give up against Satan's accusation, but where Jesus lets those people's names remain in the Book who overcome. What is The Book of Life, this strange and –for people's eternal destiny– deciding and conclusive book?

“THE BOOK OF LIFE” AND “THE BOOKS”

“The Book of Life” is a book in Heaven in which God has written the names of all people. If people do not follow God’s laws, the Ten Commandments, then God crosses out their name from the book. On the last day, Judgment Day, all the people whose names are not crossed out of the Book of Life will be granted eternal life in Heaven.

The Book of Life is first mentioned in the Old Testament of the Bible.

And the Lord said unto Moses, Whosoever hath sinned against me, him will I blot out of my book. (Exodus 32:33)

The Book of Life contains people’s names. In connection with this, Moses talks about the sinful Israelis who dance around the golden calf. Moses says that all Israelis’ names were written in The Book of Life. He then says to God:

Yet now, if thou wilt forgive their sin—; and if not, blot me out of thy book which thou hast written. (Exodus 32:32)

This means that Moses name was written in the Book and that it was the sin of the Israelis of that time that God would not forgive, and resulted in God crossing out their names.

People from lands other than Israel are also written in the Book of Life, along with the names of the Godless, which will be crossed out of the Book forever. With respect to these Godless people, the Psalms pray:

Let them be blotted out of the book of the living, and not be written with the righteous. (Psalms 69:28)

and uses here the saying: “the book of the living”.

The prophet Daniel says in his prophesy about the end time:

...and at that time thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book. (Daniel 12:1)

The most descriptive words of the Book of Life is found in Revelations:

And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and

they were judged every man according to their works. And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.
(Revelation 20:12-15)

Two different books are mentioned here:

1. **The Books** wherein every persons deeds are written, and
2. **The Book of Life**, where the names are written of all people, with the names crossed out of the people whose chose evil during their life on Earth.

Jesus tells the disciples that they could perform miracles in his name, but that the real gift was having their names written in the Book of Life.

Notwithstanding in this rejoice not, that the spirits are subject unto you; but rather rejoice, because your names are written in heaven.
(Luke 10:20)

In this passage, we see that the names of the people he has sent to do his works, in his name, are written in the Book of Life. But it doesn't mean that the names cannot be crossed out; because the traitor Judas was one of his disciples but later is called 'the lost child' implying that his name has been stricken from the Book of Life.

Paul talks about people whose names are in the Book of Life. He says here about his Greek fellow workers:

Euodias... and Syntyche... which laboured with me in the gospel, with Clement also, and with other my fellow labourers, whose names are in the book of life. (Philippians 4:2)

This underscores the fact that the Greeks too, converted pagans, were written in the Book of Life.

In the Old Testament, it was only God that crossed out names from the Book of Life. He crossed out the names of the Godless and people whose sins He could not forgive.

Later, Jesus received this forgiving power. This is shown in the following:

But that ye may know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins. (Matthew 9:6)

Jesus received the full power to decide whose names will be crossed out, and whose names will stay in the Book of Life (Revelations 3:5). Because of this, he can say with certainty:

Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me. (John 14:6)

From then on, Jesus is the only door through which the lost can return to the Father's house, with the many mansions in Heaven.

In modern times, religion is blamed for many of today's problems. People are even made to feel guilty for believing in God! Because of this, some people are afraid or ashamed of being Christian, but they should be proud to have chosen love over

hate, life over death, and Jesus as a brother, and should not be ashamed.

For whosoever shall be ashamed of me and of my words, of him shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he shall come in his own glory, and in his Father's, and of the holy angels. (Luke 9:26)

“The Books” are recordings of all people's deeds, good and bad.

Then they that feared the Lord spake often one to another: and the Lord listened, and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon his name. (Malachi 3:16)

“The Books” are the foundation from which Jesus decides if he will let a name stay in the Book of Life and open the door to Heaven. If he crosses out the name, the door to Hell will open for that person.

THE FALL OF MAN

Let us look at the Bible's teachings about the first human's lives in the Garden of Eden.

When God had created Heaven and Earth with all its wonders and its multitudes of creatures on earth and in the sea, he made the Garden of Eden and placed two humans to keep it. He created these two people in His image from the dust of the ground, and breathed into their nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul (Genesis 2:7). As male and female, He created them, and God blessed them, and said, "Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth." (Genesis 1:27-28) In the Garden, He made all types of plants and trees with wonderful fruits. In the midst of the Garden, God planted two trees: the Tree of Life, and the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil. Adam and Eve were allowed to eat from all fruits, but they were not allowed to touch the fruits from the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil. The day they would touch these fruits and eat them, they would surely die!

What does it mean that God planted a Tree with tempting but deadly fruits in the midst of the Garden, wherein he left Earth's first, inexperienced people to start life? When God had allowed people to eat from all the Garden's other trees, why did he forbid them to touch or eat from this one tree's fruits? Wouldn't it have been more considerate to Adam and Eve if God had placed the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil outside the Garden, out of the reach of Adam and Eve? If God had done this, there would not have been any possibility for temptation. But when everything was good, before Adam and Eve ate of the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil, why did God let Satan come into the Garden? Didn't God have enough power to stop it, that the snake could sneak into Paradise? God, as the All-knowing, would have known it, that the snake was also in the Garden! God let it happen.

Why would God want to test people? Most probably because He felt He could not trust people! But why didn't He trust His own creation? Why didn't He trust the first people? Most probably because they were under accusation! But who was the accuser? It was the Snake, Satan, God's unruly angel that was thrown down on Earth! And what did the Snake accuse people of? He accused them of being untrustworthy, unreliable, and against God!

If these answers are right, then one can understand that people were created and put in the Garden of Eden for the sole reason for testing Adam and Eve as the first people. God made something forbidden with the penalty of death for

disobeying! So serious was the test that the accusation –the reason for the test– must be as serious.

As long as the serpent was not in the Garden, everything was good. Nothing went wrong. Adam and Eve did not do anything forbidden. God let Adam and Eve be alone in the Garden, and still they didn't fall. Everything was very good, people didn't overstep God's laws but then the actual test came. The accuser got a chance to be alone with the accused. Satan was let into the Garden and was alone with Adam and Eve. Then they fell, first the woman, then the man. They overstepped God's commandment, even though they knew that the penalty was death. Their fall was the evidence that there was a reason for the accusation, and that the accusation was true.

The test of Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden is analogous to the test for all people on the Earth. We are alone with the accuser and we must choose to follow God's Commandments or to break them.

As it was with Adam and Eve in Paradise, so too was it with all their descendants. No person in their Earthly life has not been face-to-face with Satan. And all had fallen and so, must come here for this trial, except one, Jesus. Jesus states:

If ye keep the Commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's Commandments, and abide in His love. (John 15:10)

SATAN TRIES TO TEMPT JESUS

No one knows for certain what the accusation was that Satan made against the “brothers”. We assume the accusation must be that “people are evil,” because when God created this world and we chose to be evil and eat the forbidden food, we showed that the accusation was true, which made it necessary for everyone to be tested.

Jesus so loved the Brothers that he wanted to go through the same human life that we do to show us that it is possible to live through this life and stay in God’s love at the same time. So, in his life on Earth, Jesus was tested, like everyone else. From Jesus’ own mouth, he describes the promises and offers that Satan placed in front of him, when he was alone with him and tried to tempt him in the desert. (Matthew 4:1-12; Mark 1:13, Luke 4,1-13).

Jesus was led by the Holy Spirit to a deserted place, and the angels that had been with him constantly, left him. And he stood alone against Satan confronted with a trial of strength. The

temptation comes to a climax when Jesus stands on a high mountain and, for a moment, Satan shows him all of Earth's beautiful and wonderful kingdoms:

And the devil said unto him, All this power will I give thee, and the glory of them: for that is delivered unto me; and to whomsoever I will I give it. If thou therefore wilt worship me, all shall be thine. (Luke 4:6-7)

One sees here that Satan declares that God has given him power over all Earthly wonders and Kingdoms. Jesus does not deny this, so it must be true. God has given Satan the power over Earth. Satan is the ruler here. With this knowledge Jesus tells his disciples that Satan has power over the Earth:

For the prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in me. (John 14:30)

When Jesus finds that it is necessary to underscore that nothing in him belongs to Satan, one must imagine that somebody –and that can only be Satan– has put forward this blasphemous notion. The Pharisees blamed Jesus for being in league with Beelzebub, that is, Satan.

When Satan tries to tempt Jesus to deny God and follow him, Jesus answers:

Then saith Jesus unto him, Get thee hence, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve. (Matthew 4:10, Luke 4:8)

With this answer, the temptation ordeal was finished for this time. Satan dared to point this

high treason accusation against Jesus too. But through this test, Jesus showed that the accusation against him was false.

Then the devil leaveth him, and, behold, angels came and ministered unto him.
(Matthew 4:11)

The ordeal in the desert showed that Jesus was stronger than Satan. But he would again be all alone and it was when he, on Long Friday, was nailed to the cross and in his suffering said:

My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? (Matthew 27:46)

This feeling of loneliness and being forsaken did not last long; it was shortly after that he said:

It is finished! (John 19:30) Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit. (Luke 23:46)

And then he died and left his earthly body. He had refused all Satan's accusations and with his victory, won his place in Heaven at the Father's right hand. And so, Jesus has opened the door to Heaven for the Brothers who choose Love.

SATAN SIFTS PEOPLE LIKE WHEAT

It is frightful to us to realize that Satan is the “prince of the world,” as he is called by Jesus (John 14:30), and all the more frightful when Satan –uncontradicted– can say to Jesus, that God has given him, Satan, the power and glory over all Earth’s Kingdoms (Luke 4:6), that is, over all people. And Satan wants as many people as possible in his evil domain, Hell. Jesus says to Peter:

Behold, Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat: but I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not: and when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren.

Then Peter said to Jesus:

Lord, I am ready to go with thee, both into prison, and to death.

But Jesus answered:

I tell thee, Peter, the rooster shall not crow this day, before that thou shalt thrice deny that thou knowest me. (Luke 22:31-34)

Jesus prays for people, the same way he prayed for Peter, that the belief would not falter, but stand strong! Jesus wants us to choose Love but doesn't prevent people from being tempted by Satan. Peter was tested, and he fell because he denounced Jesus. But Jesus' prayer for Peter was heard, because Peter's belief stood strong. He later became one of Jesus' pillars in God's flock. Peter, for the sake of Jesus, both went to jail and suffered in death. Despite his many serious faults, that showed that Satan's accusations against him were right, Peter's name was not crossed out of the Book of Life because he changed his ways and chose to follow Jesus.

As it went with Peter, so goes it with all people. We are in Satan's power; we are sifted like wheat.

Paul, through his personal confessions, gives the clearest picture of Satan's terrible power over people. Paul writes:

For the good that I would, I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do. (Romans 7:19) I find then a law, that, when I would do good, evil is present with me. (Romans 7:21)

This bitter confession, this double admission of failure against evil, is an honest admission that Satan's accusations are right! What person doesn't experience daily, that evil is easier? The Christian perhaps most of all! But people have to go through this test. In this life, people must be brought into contact with both God and Satan,

and show clearly with whom he wants to belong. Therefore, people are born without preconceptions into a World often filled with frightful tragedies, where many will be shaken so strongly by Satan, that they swear at God and their parents that put them in this world, and wish that they had never been born. And Satan doesn't loosen his grip until death.

Many will fall but those who can simply keep the Ten Commandments will become good and righteous people, and will not be harvested by Satan but will join Jesus.

LET US NOT YIELD TO TEMPTATION

Jesus taught his disciples how to pray. This famous prayer is called The Lord's Prayer (Luke 11:2-4) and it is a direct and sincere prayer to God to give us strength to keep us from yielding to temptation.

Our Father who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name,

Thy kingdom come,

Thy will be done on earth
as it is in heaven.

Please give us each day our daily bread.

Forgive us our sins, as we also
forgive those who sin against us.

And let us not yield to temptation,
and deliver us from the evil one.

For thine is the kingdom and the power
and the glory for ever and ever. Amen.

God, Himself, does not tempt any one to do evil.
Here Jacob says:

Let no man say when he is tempted, I am
tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted
with evil, neither tempteth he any man. (James
1:13)

In the Book of Job, it is told that Job is a
trustworthy and believing man that otherwise was
under Satan's accusation. As a result of this
accusation, Satan led Job into temptation. God
didn't let this happen to be cruel to the good Job,
but obviously to show that Satan's accusation was
false. Christian's should not fear temptation but
should see it as a way to show our true colors; and
here Paul says:

There hath no temptation taken you but such
as is common to man: but God is faithful, who
will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye
are able; but will with the temptation also
make a way to escape, that ye may be able to
bear it. (1 Corinthians 10:13)

Temptations are a necessary step in the test here
on Earth, so that people could make a choice and
find a way to come back to the Heavenly home.

Blessed is the man that endureth temptation:
for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown
of life, which the Lord hath promised to them
that love him. (James 1:12)

And Jesus said:

He that overcometh shall be clothed in white
raiment; and I will **not** blot out his name out
of the book of life, but I will confess his name

before my Father, and before his angels.
(Revelation 3:5)

But what is temptation? Temptation is **choice**. It happens when we can choose between two things: right and wrong. Here on Earth, it is Satan who offers us this choice and he would like us to choose between selfishness or unselfishness –evil, or good. If there is only one option, then there is no choice and no free will. But when we have a choice, then we may be tempted. The good news is that we have a choice and will have assistance if we draw near to God:

Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.
Draw near to God, and He will draw near to you. (James 4:7-8)

THE TWO TREES – THE TREE OF LIFE & THE TREE OF DEATH

Temptation is a choice that people have to make. The first choice to be made was given to Adam and Eve when God created the Garden of Eden, and the choice was “what to eat”.

In the Garden, God created many trees and gave us permission to eat the **fruits** of these trees. For the animals, God gave them permission to eat any of the green herbs in the Garden.

And God said, Behold, I have given you every **herb bearing seed**, which is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree, in which is the **fruit** of a tree yielding seed; to you it shall be for food. And **to every beast** of the earth, and to every fowl of the air, and to every thing that creepeth upon the earth, wherein there is life, I have given every **green herb** for food: and it was so. (Genesis 1:29-30)

This was the first part of the choice, telling us that we could eat fruits from the trees, like apples and oranges. Now the other part of the choice of “what to eat” is explained. Two very **special** trees were also in the Garden: the Tree of Life, and the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil. These Two Trees did not come “out of the ground” but were in the **midst** of the Garden, meaning that they were **everywhere** in the Garden.

And **out of the ground** made the Lord God to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight, and good for food.

The Tree of Life was also in the midst of the garden, and the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil. (Genesis 2:9)

The Two Trees represent opposites to help us make a clear choice; the Tree of Life, on the one hand, and the Tree of Death, which the Bible calls the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil, on the other hand. Now we have to choose “what to eat”, life or death. The choice was spelled out clearly by God:

Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat. But of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.
(Genesis 2:16-17)

But even given this choice, Adam and Eve were still not tempted. God let Adam and Eve be alone in the Garden, and still they didn’t fall. It was only when Satan was alone with Adam and Eve that they were truly tempted. They were tempted by Satan to choose to eat from the Tree of

Knowledge of Good and Evil, instead of from the Tree of Life.

Perhaps Adam and Eve could resist choosing, and live forever in indecision. However, the very design of a human necessitates that we must eat. This creates the choice for us daily, from the cradle to the grave. Really, we cannot live without making this decision, and reinforcing it, every day. The dinner table becomes the trap where people make the greatest mistake:

Let their table become a snare before them:
and that which should have been for their
welfare, let it become a trap. (Psalm 69:22)

But what evil thing could they possibly eat? What evil thing could they eat that would cause death in a place where there is no death? What would be so horrible as to cause God to expel them from Paradise? God already outlined specifically what Adam and Eve were to eat: “Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat”. The only other things in the Garden were water, rocks, and **animals**. Truly, killing and eating an animal, one of God’s creations, would be the most serious sin that Adam and Eve could make, and obviously, this would be food from the Tree of Death. Proverbs tells us that a dinner of herbs is loving whereas a dinner of meat is full of hatred.

Better is a dinner of herbs where love is, than
a stalled ox and hatred therewith. (Proverbs
15:16-18)

Before this terrible sin was done, there was no death in the Garden. But by this sin, death was introduced. When they had sinned, they were

ashamed and tried to cover themselves with leaves:

And the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together, and made themselves aprons. (Genesis 3:7)

But when God later expelled them from the Garden, he clothed them with the skins of the dead animal to remind them of their sins.

Unto Adam also and to his wife did God make coats of skins, and clothed them. (Genesis 3:21)

This again shows that the forbidden food must have been an animal since there was no death before and so, obviously, no animal skins. This killing and eating of an animal is the so-called “**original sin**”.

As God has dominion over us and is the Father and cares for us and helps us, so too were we given dominion over the animals.

And God said “have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth”. (Genesis 1:28)

But we abused the trust placed in us by God to care for the animals. Instead of caring for them, we enslaved them, killed them, and ate their flesh, just as Satan hoped we would.

But even after Adam and Eve had sinned, God still offered the choice of eating from the Tree of

Life, to erase their mistake, but they did not accept it, so He sent them out of the Garden.

...**unless** he puts forth his hand, and takes also of the Tree of Life, and eats, and will live for ever, the Lord God will send him forth from the garden of Eden. (Genesis 3:22-23)

At the end of the Bible, in the Book of Revelations, Jesus tells us what reward awaits those who overcome this temptation to eat animals.

To him that overcometh temptation will I give to eat of the Tree of Life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God. (Revelation 2:7)

This “original sin” of not being vegetarian is still carried forward today, and often, we inherit this sin from our parents who fed us the flesh of animals. Many people wonder what the “original sin” may have been. But God only gave Adam and Eve two Commandments: (1) **be fruitful and multiply**, and (2) I have given you every **herb bearing seed**, and every **fruit** of a tree yielding seed; to you it shall be for food. Sadly, they broke the second Commandment and didn’t only eat herbs and fruits, they ate meat, and this was the original sin.

Again, in the Lord’s Prayer given by Jesus, we pray “God’s will be done, on Earth as it is in Heaven,” which obligates us to make merciful and loving choices as it was in the Garden before the Fall, when we still cared for the animals, where even the lion will lay down with the lamb.

The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them. And the cow and the bear shall feed; their young ones shall lie down together: and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. (Isaiah 11:6)

Here we see that the animals return to their vegetarian origins too since “the lion shall eat straw like the ox”. The animal’s souls are important to God too. God tells Job:

But ask now the animals, and they shall teach thee; and the fowls of the air, they shall tell thee: Or speak to the earth, and it shall teach thee: and the fishes of the sea shall speak unto thee... In God’s hand is the **soul** of every living thing, and the breath of all mankind. (Job12:7-10)

God also speaks to the animals directly:

Be not afraid, ye animals of the field: for the pastures of the wilderness do spring, for the tree beareth her fruit, the fig tree and the vine do yield their strength. (Joel 2:22)

God also instructed the animals to seek out Noah before the flood. And even though none of the people were worthy to be saved, except Noah and his family, God still wanted to save the animals from the flood. So he asked Noah to build an ark to keep the animals safe while the Earth was flooded.

But then, when people once again covered the Earth, they began anew with abominations against

God, once again sacrificing animals despite God's Laws. And God is greatly offended by the sacrifices:

Hear the word of God, ye rulers of Sodom; give ear unto the law of our God, ye people of Gomorrah. To what purpose is the multitude of your sacrifices unto me? saith the Lord: I am full (of sorrow) of the burnt offerings of rams, and the fat of fed animals; and I delight not in the blood of bullocks, or of lambs, or of goats. (Isaiah 1:10-11)

And when ye spread forth your hands, I will hide mine eyes from you: yea, when ye make many prayers, I will not hear: your hands are full of blood. (Isaiah 1:15)

In the Book of Micah, King Balam asks what will please God:

Wherewith shall I come before the Lord, and bow myself before the high God? shall I come before him with burnt offerings, with calves of a year old? Will the Lord be pleased with thousands of rams, or with ten thousands of rivers of oil? shall I give my firstborn for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?

and Balaak answers:

He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee: to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God. (Micah 6:6-8)

Having a deep reverence for life, and abstaining from polluting your soul by eating animals, one can be saved:

Then abstain from meats and from blood and from things strangled, and from fornication: from which ye keep yourselves, ye shall do well. Fare ye well. (Acts 15:29)

Behold, my soul hath no polluted: for from my youth up even until now have I not eaten of that which dieth of itself, is torn in pieces, neither came there abominable flesh into my mouth. (Ezekiel 4:14)

Finally, God will send the people who eat animals to Satan. Only those people who have not eaten meat will be worthy of God:

And I will take away his blood out of his mouth, and his abominations from between his teeth: but he that remaineth shall be for our God. (Zechariah 9:7)

Daniel would not eat meat—even the king’s meat—as he knew God would be offended.

But Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself with the king’s meat, nor with the wine which he drank: therefore he requested of the prince of the eunuchs that he might not defile himself... Thus Melzar took away the portion of their meat, and the wine that they should drink; and gave them legumes. (Daniel 1:8-16)

Paul told the Brothers that he who eats the flesh of animals is not the only one who offends God,

because those who witness it will believe it to be good, and will in turn, also offend God.

Wherefore, if meat make my brother to offend, I will eat no flesh while the world standeth, lest I make my brother to offend. (1 Corinthians 8:13)

Finally, God's Sixth Commandment given to Moses shows God's Law concerning all life:

Thou shalt not kill. (Deuteronomy 5:17)

And in the Revelations, we see that people who may pass through the gates of Heaven must follow the Commandments:

Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the Tree of Life, and may enter in through the gates into the city. (Revelations 22:14)

And in the new Heaven, there will be no more death, for people or animals, returning back to the way it was in the Garden of Eden before the Fall.

And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away. (Revelations 21:4)

GOD AND PEOPLE'S PLACE IN EVIL

When something evil happens –an awful crime, wars and such– a lot of Christians and non-Christians ask this question: “How can God let this happen?” as if God was in charge of all the evil. Really, Satan rules this earth and is the cause of disaster, war, and crime.

A question like that is in itself an accusation that will make God an accomplice with evil. One has to remember that God is the judge, the everlasting, righteous, and strict judge. It is people who are the accused. Satan is both the accuser and the accomplice with all the evil deeds that people do. God is the judge and can therefore not be an accomplice; because then the judgment would not be fair.

Remember, God created Choice. Since we are here, and a loving God would not want us to be here (He would want us to be in Heaven with Him), then we must have Chosen to come here. We ran away from home like silly teenagers

running away from their parents. We wanted to see if we could manage without God. So when someone asks “How can God let this happen?” they are trying to blame God for their own choices. Some people choose good and some people choose evil.

If all people simply lived by God’s law, the Ten Commandments, there would be no war, no social need, and no unrighteousness. These things are **our** doing and they are **our** choices to make. If God stopped these things, our choice to stop them would not exist. And again, if people lived by the Ten Commandments, they wouldn’t want to start wars and such in the first place. And the Ten Commandments are quite simple:

1. Thou shall have no other gods before me.
2. Thou shall not make any graven image.
3. Thou shall not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain
4. Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy.
5. Honor thy father and thy mother.
6. Thou shall not kill.
7. Thou shall not commit adultery.
8. Thou shall not steal.
9. Thou shall not bear false witness against thy neighbor.
10. Thou shall not covet anything of thy neighbor. (Deuteronomy 5:7-21)

In modern English, they are: (1) do not worship other gods (2) do not make idols (3) do not misuse the name of God (4) keep a day in the week Holy (5) honor your parents (6) do not kill (7) do not sleep around (8) do not steal (9) do not lie (10) do not be envious.

In our pre-existence, many people showed no allegiance with God, and so, we were all sent here to explicitly choose between Jesus and Satan; between the Tree of Life and the Tree of Death. God will not interfere with our deeds here so that we can show our true colors and our true allegiance. It is only here, in our Earthly misery, that we hypocritically blame God for our choices. This is also very disappointing for God.

And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. And it repented the Lord that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him at his heart. (Genesis 6:5-6)

FROM WHERE? WHY? WHERE TO? AND HOW LONG?

People came from Heaven where they were Heavenly beings under Jesus' glory. At that time, their names were written in the Book of Life.

People came to Earth according to God's will for this trial, because a selfish angel, Satan, had made serious accusations against people. People had to be taken out of Heaven and tested to see if the accusation was true. Here, Satan and his angels have the power to tempt people so, of their own free will, they can choose Love according to the teachings of Jesus, or they can choose Evil.

People don't stand alone in the test. Paul was not an exemplary person in his early years, but then became one of Jesus' primary supporters until he was killed, because he followed Jesus.

Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. Put on the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we

wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. Wherefore take unto you the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.
(Ephesians 6:10)

Those people whose name Jesus didn't cross out of the Book of Life, will –after Judgment Day– again become a Heavenly glorious being and go back to the Heavenly Kingdom. The rest of the people, those whose names Jesus has crossed out of the Book of Life, will get the same sentence that is waiting for Satan and his angels. Where will the people be, at the end, when leaving the Kingdom of the Dead after Judgment Day? There are only two possibilities: eternal life with Jesus in Heaven, or life with Satan in Hell to be destroyed.

And they were judged every man according to their works.

And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death.

And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.

(Revelation 20:13-15)

God wants us to make a clear choice and will reject those who are indifferent and have wasted their lives –their opportunity to choose.

I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou were cold or hot. So

then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth.
(Revelation 3:15-16)

How long would the individual person live on Earth? Life can be cut short in the beginning, Satan's servants can end it, and people may end it themselves. Life can be long or short, happy or full of sadness. One should wish for a long life so that one can be a greater help to others.

The only important thing is how life is lived, that is, **what works you have done**, and how you choose here on Earth.

For the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father with his angels; and then he shall reward every man **according to his works**.
(Matthew 16:27)

How long will it take before Judgment Day, the big day, comes? Jesus himself answers this question when he says:

But of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only.
(Matthew 24:36)

And this is clear; because Jesus walked as a human and gave the answer: it was only the Father that knows the number of the Brothers that had not yet gone through the human life. But the end will certainly come. One can assume that God has set a timetable for people's trials on Earth. One can also see that Satan's anger will increase and wars and natural disasters will be more devastating and more destructive when he sees that his time is running out.

Therefore you should not be worried about the question: “how long?” but be aware that as the end draws closer, the more difficult it will be to be a human on Earth. One has to hold on to the realization that the most important thing is to choose soon and to choose the right way, the way that Jesus says:

Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth,
and the life: no man cometh unto the Father,
but by me. (John 14:6)

The Ten Commandments

- (1) Thou shall have no other gods before me.
- (2) Thou shall not make any graven image.
- (3) Thou shall not take the name of God in vain.
- (4) Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy.
- (5) Honor thy father and thy mother.
- (6) Thou shall not kill.
- (7) Thou shall not commit adultery.
- (8) Thou shall not steal.
- (9) Thou shall not bear false witness.
- (10) Thou shall not covet.

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name,

Thy kingdom come,

Thy will be done on earth
as it is in heaven.

Please give us each day our daily bread.

Forgive us our sins, as we also
forgive those who sin against us.

And let us not yield to temptation,
and deliver us from the evil one.

For thine is the kingdom and the power
and the glory for ever and ever. Amen.