

The Great Controversy and the Vindication of God

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All humanity is now involved in a great controversy between Christ and Satan regarding the character of God, His law, and His sovereignty over the universe. This conflict originated in heaven when a created being, endowed with freedom of choice, in self-exaltation became Satan, God's adversary, and led into rebellion a portion of the angels. He introduced the spirit of rebellion into this world when he led Adam and Eve into sin. This human sin resulted in the distortion of the image of God in humanity, the disordering of the created world, and its eventual devastation at the time of the worldwide flood. Observed by the whole creation, this world became the arena of the universal conflict, out of which the God of love will ultimately be vindicated. To assist His people in this controversy, Christ sends the Holy Spirit and the loyal angels to guide, protect, and sustain them in the way of salvation.

There is no Biblical basis for concluding that any controversy has ever existed regarding "the character of God", "His law" or "His sovereignty over the universe". The book *Seventh-day Adventists Believe* (both the 1988 and 2005 versions published by the Ministerial Association of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists) makes no attempt to provide Biblical foundations for these ideas and instead simply states them as facts. Moreover, this official book fails to cite the real source of this doctrine, Ellen White's *The Great Controversy Between Christ and Satan*, her flagship book that defines Adventist doctrine. What we know about Satan's fall as found in Isaiah 14, Ezekiel 28, and Revelation 12 is that it was based on his pride. The content of this controversy is a fabrication of Ellen White that taints nearly every Adventist doctrine.

Furthermore, there is no Biblical evidence that God has to be vindicated from any charges made by Satan. Nevertheless, if one assumes that this vindication is reasonable, the fundamental belief significantly places this vindication in the future: "the God of love will ultimately be vindicated". The cross was not enough to vindicate God's love. Although *Seventh-day Adventists Believe* gives a nod to the "Cosmic Significance of the Cross", suggesting that Christ accomplished the vindication of God in His life and death, it fails to explain the true Adventist doctrine of God's vindication. Is the Adventist

administration actively hiding the organization's true beliefs in publications that other churches would routinely examine?

This fundamental belief and its commentary are silent about how God will be vindicated in the future. In order to learn what further vindication beyond the life and death of Jesus Adventists believe is necessary, one must dig into more obscure Adventist literature:

“In the last generation God gives the final demonstration that men can keep the law of God and that they can live without sinning. God leaves nothing undone to make the demonstration complete. The only limitation He puts on Satan is that he may not kill the saints of God. He may tempt them, he may harass and threaten them; and he does his best. But he fails. He cannot make them sin. They stand the test, and God puts His seal on them. Through the last generation of saints God stands fully vindicated” (M. L. Andreason, *The Sanctuary Service, Review and Herald*, 1969, p. 318-19).

Andreason, it must be noted, learned this model from Ellen White: “Just before us is the closing struggle of the great controversy when, with ‘all power and signs and lying wonders, and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness,’ Satan is to work to misrepresent the character of God, that he may ‘seduce, if it were possible, even the elect.’ If there was ever a people in need of constantly increasing light from heaven, it is the people that, in this time of peril, God has called to be the depositaries of His holy law and to vindicate His character before the world” (*Testimonies To the Church*, vol. 5, p. 746).

Ultimately within Adventism, it isn't God who saves man, but man who saves God from Satan's charges. Adventist doctrine contradicts Romans 3:21-26 and teaches instead that God is not fully vindicated by Christ's death. This may be the most blasphemous of their Fundamental Beliefs.

Published in the Winter Edition of Proclamation Magazine, 2013.

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