

# Religious Liberty and the Eternal Gospel



2

Opposing Principles: The Mind  
of God or the Mind of Satan

# Revelation 14:6, 7

Then I saw another angel flying in the midst of heaven, having the **everlasting gospel** to preach to those who dwell on the earth – to every nation, tribe, tongue, and people –<sup>7</sup>saying with a loud voice, “Fear God and give glory to Him, for the hour of His judgment has come; and worship Him who made heaven and earth, the sea and springs of water.”

# Foundational Principles

- The very first line of the three angels' messages, proclaims that the gospel is "everlasting" – eternal.
- It is given in the context of the final battle over worship – between freedom to worship as we choose and forced worship of the beast.
- The gospel had no beginning and has no end; it is a core component of God's character.

# Foundational Principles

- Paul defined the gospel as “the power of God unto salvation” [Rom 1:16].
- If there were no need for salvation, there would be no need for the gospel.
- The “eternal gospel” saves unfallen beings from sinning just as it saves man from sin and sinning.

# Foundational Principles

- Lucifer lost sight of the fact that he was wholly dependent on God's power for life itself.
- Lucifer need not have fallen had he depended on God's power rather than his own.
- Had he held fast to the gospel, "the power of God unto salvation," he would have been saved from sin and its ruin.

# Foundational Principles

- There would be no gospel, not even a need for the gospel, without the underlying principle of religious liberty – freedom of choice.
- Without the religious liberty that God established before time began, there would have been no need for the plan of redemption because, there could have been no sinners!

# Foundational Principles

- The plan of redemption is as eternal as the gospel with its inherent principle of religious liberty – free will, freedom of conscience, etc.
- Although the plan is eternal, it did not need to be, nor was it, implemented until sin entered.
- The plan of redemption also includes protecting the universe from sin through the future eternity.

# Desire of Ages, 22

The plan for our redemption was not an afterthought, a plan formulated after the fall of Adam. It was a revelation of “the mystery which hath been kept in silence through times eternal.” Romans 16:25, R. V. It was an unfolding of the principles that from eternal ages have been the foundation of God’s throne.

# Signs of the Times, 4/25/1892

God knows the end from the beginning;  
“known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world.” Therefore redemption was not an afterthought – a plan formulated after the fall of Adam – but **an eternal purpose** to be wrought out for the blessing not only of this atom of a world but for the good of all the worlds which God has created.

# Foundational Principles

- To preserve liberty of conscience – a foundational principle of His government – God “gave His only begotten Son.”
- Your religious liberty is so precious to God that He determined it was worth dying for!
- Not surprisingly, “the everlasting gospel” is at the center of Earth’s final conflict between Satan’s forced compliance and God’s liberty.

# Opposing Principles

Last time, we saw that religious liberty, on this earth, was intentionally established by God Himself in the Garden of Eden before the fall.

Today, we will further explore God's gift of religious liberty by first looking back at Lucifer's fall and then contrasting his mind (his character and thinking) with that of God.

# Isaiah 14:12-14

“How you are fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, . . .

<sup>13</sup>You have said in your heart:

‘I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God; I will also sit on the mount of the congregation on the farthest sides of the north; <sup>14</sup>I will ascend above the heights of the clouds, I will be like the Most High.’”

# Psalm 48:1, 2

Great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised

In the city of our God,

In His holy mountain.

<sup>2</sup>Beautiful in elevation,

The joy of the whole earth,

Is Mount Zion on the sides of the north,

The city of the great King.

# The Mind of Satan

- Lucifer, thinking he was self-sufficient – independent of God’s power – developed a spirit of self-exaltation.
- This included envisioning himself on the throne, “on the mount of the congregation.”
- His mind is the mind of self above others, the idea of supremacy and authority over others.

# Ezekiel 28:12, 13

You were the seal of perfection, full of wisdom and perfect in beauty. <sup>13</sup>You were in Eden, the garden of God; every precious stone was your covering: the sardius, topaz, and diamond, beryl, onyx, and jasper, sapphire, turquoise, and emerald with gold. The workmanship of your timbrels and pipes was prepared for you on the day you were created.

# Ezekiel 28:14, 15

You were the anointed cherub who covers; I established you; you were on the holy mountain of God; you walked back and forth in the midst of fiery stones. <sup>15</sup>You were perfect in your ways from the day you were created, till iniquity was found in you.

# Ezekiel 28:17

“Your heart was lifted up because of your beauty; you corrupted your wisdom for the sake of your splendor . . .”

Lucifer exchanged his God-given wisdom for his own. Thus, he developed a mind of his own—the mind of selfishness. Feeling self-sufficient, he became self-centered, and self-exalting.

# Genesis 3:1

Now the serpent was more cunning than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made. And he said to the woman, “Has God indeed said, ‘You shall not eat of every tree of the garden’?”

# Signs of the Times, 6/18/1894

The very work that Satan did in Eden he is doing today. He persuaded Adam and Eve that God had withheld some great good from them, and, while insinuating that God had not their welfare at heart, he pretended to have a deep interest in their advancement.

# Genesis 3:2, 3

And the woman said to the serpent, “We may eat the fruit of the trees of the garden; <sup>3</sup>but of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God has said, ‘You shall not eat it, nor shall you touch it, lest you die.’ ”

# Genesis 3:4, 5

Then the serpent said to the woman, “You will not surely die. <sup>5</sup>For God knows that in the day you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.”

Once Satan’s word was accepted over God’s word, the mind of Satan immediately became the mind of humanity.

# Genesis 3:11, 12

God asked Adam, <sup>11</sup>“Have you eaten from the tree of which I commanded you that you should not eat?”

<sup>12</sup>Then the man said, “The woman whom You gave to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I ate.”

This is the mind of self over others.

# Genesis 3:13

And the Lord God said to the woman, “What is this you have done?”

The woman said, “The serpent deceived me,  
and I ate.”

This is the mind that pretends to admit fault  
but in reality, places the blame on others.

# Ecclesiastical Empire, 583

by Alonzo T. Jones, 1901

“No such disposition as that was ever put into mankind by the Lord. Yet everybody knows that this very disposition is in all mankind, even at this present day.

# Ecclesiastical Empire, 583

Everybody knows that it is not in human nature openly, frankly, and at once to confess a fault. But that the first and spontaneous impulse in every human soul is to dodge and shelter himself behind anything or anybody in the world, and seek to clear himself by involving another.

# Ecclesiastical Empire, 583

And if through all he can not fully escape, yet when he does come into it, it is with the least possible degree of blame upon himself.

# Ecclesiastical Empire, 583

It is the spirit that holds tenaciously that *our self* is the last one that can possibly be wrong or do wrong; and even when we have done wrong, argues, “We would never have done it had it not been for somebody or something else,” and are therefore not really to blame, and so are right anyhow.

# Ecclesiastical Empire, 583

Or it will excuse self from wrong, because somebody else does or has done the same thing or worse. **It is the very essence of the claim of infallibility.**”

The mind of Satan — the spirit of self-exaltation — by its very nature, puts itself above others. This is the root of persecution and the system of force rather than religious liberty.

# The Spirit of Persecution

Once I have convinced myself that I cannot be wrong and that you're the "troubler", I must bring you into line with my right thinking.

If your mind cannot be changed, then I must *force* you to comply.

Then, if you still will not submit to my way of thinking, I must eliminate you because you *are* the problem.

# Genesis 4:3-5

And in the process of time it came to pass that Cain brought an offering of the fruit of the ground to the Lord.<sup>4</sup> Abel also brought of the firstborn of his flock and of their fat. And the Lord respected Abel and his offering,<sup>5</sup> but He did not respect Cain and his offering. And Cain was very angry, and his countenance fell.

# Genesis 4:8

Now Cain talked with Abel his brother; and it came to pass, when they were in the field, that Cain rose up against Abel his brother and killed him.

# 1888 Materials, no. 123, 1013

The first thing recorded in Scripture history after the fall was the persecution of Abel. And the last thing in Scripture prophecy is the persecution against those who refuse to receive the mark of the beast. We should be the last people on the earth to indulge in the slightest degree the spirit of persecution against those who are bearing the message of God to the world.

# 1888 Materials, no. 123, 1013

This is the most terrible feature of unchristlikeness that has manifested itself among us since the Minneapolis meeting. Sometime it will be seen in its true bearing, with all the burden of woe that has resulted from it.

Message to Uriah Smith, Aug. 30, 1892

# Philippians 2:3-5

Let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit [vainglory; self-glorification], but in lowliness [humility] of mind let each esteem others better than himself. <sup>4</sup>Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others.

<sup>5</sup>Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, <sup>6</sup>who, being in the form of God, . . .

# Philippians 2:5-7

Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, <sup>6</sup>who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery [something to be grasped and held on to] to be equal with God, <sup>7</sup>but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, and coming in the likeness of men.

# Philippians 2:8

And being found in appearance as a man [in man's condition or circumstances], He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross.

The humility we see in the incarnate Christ on this earth is the humility of pre-incarnate Christ and His Father on display.

# Micah 6:8

He has shown you, O man, what is good; and what does the Lord require of you but to do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly **with** your God?

# John 1:14

And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.

God's glory is the glory of His humility.

It is the glory of His character,  
the glory of His mind that He offers to us.

# Humility and Liberty

- Religious liberty is the product of humility – lowliness of mind, the mind of Christ.
- The principle of true religious liberty is held only by those who do nothing “through selfish ambition or conceit”
- It is held only by those who always “esteem others better than” themselves.

# 2 Corinthians 3:17

“Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty.”

Where the mind of Christ is, there is liberty.

Wherever religious liberty is restricted, and we find a spirit of control and striving for authority,

**the Spirit of the Lord is absent,  
The mind of Christ is being rejected,  
and the mind of Satan is in control!**