

SOME QUOTATIONS FROM ELLEN WHITE REGARDING

THE PLAN OF SALVATION  
IN THE SETTING OF THE GREAT CONTROVERSY

The Bible -- all of it -- is the authoritative source of truth.

1. "The Bible, and the Bible alone, is to be our creed." Review and Herald Dec. 15, 1885 - 1RH 574:2:1; 1SM 416

2. "Every chapter and every verse of the Bible is a communication from God to men." PP 504 (1890)

This includes the book of Revelation with its picture of the war that began up in Heaven.

3. "The last book of the New Testament Scriptures is full of truth that we need to understand. Satan has blinded the minds of many so that they have been glad of any excuse for not making the Revelation their study." "The very name 'Revelation' contradicts the statement that it is a sealed book. 'Revelation' means that something of importance is revealed." "One thing will certainly be understood from the study of Revelation. . . A wonderful connection is seen between the universe of heaven and this world." "The universe is looking upon the controversy that is going on upon the earth." TM 116, 113, 114, 119 (cf. Review and Herald Feb. 18, 1890 - 2RH 368:3:4)

The Bible should be studied as a whole.

4. "Make the Bible its own expositor, bringing together all that is said concerning a given subject at different times and under varied circumstances." Review and Herald Oct. 9, 1883 (1RH 369:3:5; CG 511; CSS 42,43)

5. "Scripture is to be compared with scripture. The student should learn to view the word as a whole, and to see the relation of its parts. He should gain a knowledge of its grand central theme, of God's original purpose for the world, of the rise of the great controversy, and of the work of redemption. . . He should see how this controversy enters into every phase of human experience; how in every act of life he himself reveals the one or the other of the two antagonistic motives; and how, whether he will or not, he is even now deciding upon which side of the controversy he will be found." Ed 190 (1903)

The plan of salvation involves the whole universe.

6. "Through the plan of salvation a larger purpose is to be wrought out even than the salvation of man and the redemption of the earth. Through the revelation of the character of God in Christ the beneficence of the divine government would be manifested before the universe, the charge of Satan refuted, the nature and result of sin made plain, and the perpetuity of the law fully demonstrated." Signs of the Times Dec. 22, 1914 (4ST 529:1:4)

7. "But the plan of redemption had a yet broader and deeper purpose than the salvation of man. It was not for this alone that Christ came to the earth; it was not merely that the inhabitants of this little world might regard the law of God as it should be regarded; but it was to vindicate the character of God before the universe. To this result of His great sacrifice--its influence upon the intelligences of other worlds, as well as upon man--the Saviour looked forward when just before His crucifixion He said: 'Now is the judgment of this world; now shall the prince of this world be cast out. And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all unto me.' [John 12:31,32] The act of Christ in dying for the salvation of man would not only make heaven accessible to men, but before all the universe it would justify God and His Son in their dealing with the rebellion of Satan. It would establish the perpetuity of the law of God, and would reveal the nature and the results of sin." PP 68,69 (1890)

8. "By coming to dwell with us, Jesus was to reveal God both to men and to angels. . . Not alone for His earthborn children was this revelation given. Our little world is the lesson book of the universe. (God's wonderful purpose of grace, the mystery of redeeming love, is the theme into which 'angels desire to look', [1Pet. 1:12] and it will be their study throughout endless ages. Both the redeemed and the unfallen beings will find in the cross of Christ their science and their song.")  
DA 19 (1898)

9. "To the angels and the unfallen worlds the cry, 'It is finished,' had a deep significance. It was for them as well as for us that the great work of redemption had been accomplished. . .

"Not until the death of Christ was the character of Satan clearly revealed to the angels or to the unfallen worlds. The archapostate had so clothed himself with deception that even holy beings had not understood his principles. They had not clearly seen the nature of his rebellion." DA 758 (1898)

The security of the universe was even more important than the salvation of man.

10. "It was in order that the heavenly universe might see the conditions of the covenant of redemption that Christ bore the penalty in behalf of the human race. The throne of Justice must be eternally and forever made secure, even tho the race be wiped out, and another creation populate the earth. By the sacrifice Christ was about to make, all doubts would be forever settled, and the human race would be saved if they would return to their allegiance. Christ alone could restore honor to God's government. The cross of Calvary would be looked upon by the unfallen worlds, by the heavenly universe, by Satanic agencies, by the fallen race, and every mouth would be stopped. . .

"Who is able to describe the last scenes of Christ's life on earth, His trial in the judgment hall, His crucifixion? Who witnessed these scenes? -- The heavenly universe, God the Father, Satan and his angels. The Signs of the Times July 12, 1899 - 4ST 44:1:2

Christ died for sinless angels too.

11. "That which alone can effectually restrain from sin in this world of darkness, will prevent sin in heaven. The significance of the death of Christ will be seen by saints and angels. . . .(QOD 680)

"The angels ascribe honor and glory to Christ, for even they are not secure except by looking to the sufferings of the Son of God. It is through the efficacy of the cross that the angels of heaven are guarded from apostasy. Without the cross they would be no more secure against evil than were the angels before the fall of Satan. Angelic perfection failed in heaven. . . .

"The plan of salvation, making manifest the justice and love of God, provides an eternal safeguard against defection in unfallen worlds, as well as among those who shall be redeemed by the blood of the Lamb." Signs of the Times December 30, 1889 2ST 345:1:1 (5BC 1132, 7aBC 252)

Why the angels needed the message of the cross.

12. "For centuries God looked with patience and forbearance upon the cruel treatment given to His ambassadors, at His holy law prostrate, despised, trampled underfoot. He swept away the inhabitants of the Noachian world with a flood. But when the earth was again peopled, men drew away from God, and renewed their hostility to Him, manifesting bold defiance. Those whom God rescued from Egyptian bondage followed in the footsteps of those who had preceded them. Cause was followed by effect; the earth was being corrupted.

"A crisis had arrived in the government of God. . . All heaven was prepared at the word of God to move to the help of His elect. One word from Him and the bolts of heaven would have fallen upon the earth, filling it with fire and flame. God had but to speak, and there would have been thunderings and lightnings and earthquakes and destruction.

"The heavenly intelligences were prepared for a fearful manifestation of Almighty power. Every move was watched with intense anxiety. The exercise of justice was expected. The angels looked for God to punish the inhabitants of the earth. . . .

"The heavenly universe was amazed at God's patience and love. . . . To save fallen humanity the Son of God took humanity upon Himself. . . ." Review and Herald July 17, 1900 (4RH 201:1:4 - 201:2:1)

13. "For centuries God bore with the inhabitants of the old world. But at last guilt reached its limit. . . He came out of His place to punish the inhabitants of the earth, and by a flood cleansed the earth of its iniquity.

"Notwithstanding this terrible lesson, men had no sooner begun to multiply once more, than rebellion and vice became widespread. Satan seemed to have taken control of the world. The time came that a change must be made, or the

image of God would be obliterated from the hearts of the beings He had created. All heaven watched the movements of God with intense interest. Would He once more manifest His wrath? Would He destroy the world by fire? The angels thought that the time had come to strike the blow of justice, when, lo, to their wondering vision was unveiled the plan of salvation. (Wonder, O heavens, and be astonished O earth! -- God sent His only begotten Son into the world to save the world! Amazing Grace! 'Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us, and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins.')" MS 22, Jan. 10, 1890 (The EG White 1888 Materials p. 569,570)

14. "Before Christ's first advent, the sin of refusing to conform to God's law had become widespread. Apparently Satan's power was growing; his warfare against heaven was becoming more and more determined. A crisis had been reached. With intense interest God's movements were watched by the heavenly angels. Would He come forth from His place to punish the inhabitants of the world for their iniquity? Would He send fire or flood to destroy them? All heaven waited the bidding of their Commander to pour out the vials of wrath upon a rebellious world. One word from Him, one sign, and the world would have been destroyed. The worlds unfallen would have said, "Amen. Thou art righteous, O God, because Thou hast exterminated rebellion." The Signs of the Times Aug. 27, 1902 - 4ST 258:2-4

The Controversy is over the character of God.

15. "From the beginning it has been Satan's studied plan to cause men to forget God, that he might secure them to himself. Hence he has sought to misrepresent the character of God, to lead men to cherish a false conception of Him. The Creator has been presented to their minds as clothed with the attributes of the prince of evil himself, -- as arbitrary, severe, and unforgiving, -- that He might be feared, shunned and even hated by men. Satan hoped to so confuse the minds of those whom he had deceived that they would put God out of their knowledge." 5T 738 (1889)

16. "It is beyond the power of the human mind to estimate the evil which has been wrought by the heresy of eternal torment. The religion of the Bible, full of love and goodness, and abounding in compassion, is darkened by superstition and clothed with terror. When we consider in what false colors Satan has painted the character of God, can we wonder that our merciful Creator is feared, dreaded, and even hated? The appalling views of God which have spread over the world from the teachings of the pulpit have made thousands, yes millions, of skeptics and infidels.

"The theory of eternal torment is one of the false doctrines that constitute the wine of the abomination of Babylon, of which she makes all nations drink. [Rev. 14:8;17:2]." GC 536 (1888)

17. "Satan has ascribed to God all the evils to which the flesh is heir. He has represented Him as a God who delights in the sufferings of His creatures,

who is revengeful and implacable. It was Satan who originated the doctrine of eternal torment as a punishment for sin, because in this way he could lead men into infidelity and rebellion, distract souls, and dethrone the human reason.

"Heaven, looking down, and seeing the delusions into which men were led, knew that a divine Instructor must come to earth. Men in ignorance and moral darkness must have light, spiritual light; for the world knew not God, and He must be revealed to their understanding. Truth looked down from heaven, and saw not the reflection of her image; for dense clouds of moral darkness and gloom enveloped the world, and the Lord Jesus alone was able to roll back the clouds; for He was the light of the world. By His presence He could dissipate the gloomy shadow that Satan had cast between man and God. Darkness covered the earth, and gross darkness the people. Through the accumulated misrepresentations of the enemy, many were so deceived that they worshipped a false god, clothed with the attributes of the satanic character. Review and Herald November 17, 1891 - 2RH 529:3:1,2; FE 176,177

Christ came primarily to reveal the truth about God.

18. "The law of Jehovah was burdened with needless exactions and traditions, and God was represented as severe, exacting, revengeful, and arbitrary. He was pictured as one who could take pleasure in the sufferings of His creatures. The very attributes that belong to the character of Satan, the evil one represented as belonging to the character of God. Jesus came to teach men of the Father, to correctly represent Him before the fallen children of earth. Angels could not fully portray the character of God, but Christ, who was a living impersonation of God, could not fail to accomplish the work. The only way in which He could set and keep men right was to make Himself visible and familiar to their eyes. . .

"Christ exalted the character of God, attributing to Him the praise, and giving to Him the credit, of the whole purpose of His own mission on earth,—to set men right through the revelation of God. In Christ was arrayed before men the paternal grace and the matchless perfections of the Father. In His prayer just before His crucifixion, He declared, 'I have manifested Thy name. I have glorified Thee on the earth; I have finished the work which thou gavest Me to do.' When the object of His mission was obtained,—the revelation of God to the world,—the Son of God announced that His work was accomplished, and that the character of the Father was made manifest to men." Signs of the Times January 20, 1890 (2ST 351:2:0 - 3:1)

To see Christ is to see the Father.

19. "Had God the Father come to our world and dwelt among us, humbling Himself, veiling His glory, that humanity might look upon Him, the history that we have of the life of Christ would not have been changed. . . . In every act of Jesus, in every lesson of His instruction we are to see and hear and recognize God. In sight, in hearing, in effect, it is the voice and movements of the Father." Letter 83, 1895 (That I May Know Him p. 338)

God does not ask us to believe without evidence.

20. "God never asks us to believe, without giving sufficient evidence upon which to base our faith. His existence, His character, the truthfulness of His word, are all established by testimony that appeals to our reason; and this testimony is abundant. Yet God has never removed the possibility of doubt. Our faith must rest upon evidence, not demonstration. Those who wish to doubt will have opportunity; while those who really desire to know the truth, will find plenty of evidence on which to rest their faith." SC 107,108 (1892)

21. "I am afraid of anything that would have a tendency to turn the mind from the solid evidences of the truth as revealed in God's Word. I am afraid of it; I am afraid of it. We must bring our minds within the bounds of reason, lest the enemy so come in as to set everything in a disorderly way." MS 115, 1908 (2SM 43)

Jesus persuades by truth and evidence, not personal authority and power.

22. "He (Christ) maintained His disguise till He had interpreted the Scriptures, and had led them to an intelligent faith in His life, His character, His mission to earth, and His death and resurrection. He wished the truth to take firm root in their minds, not because it was supported by His personal testimony, but because the typical law, and the prophets of the Old Testament, agreeing with the facts of His life and death, presented unquestionable evidence of that truth." 3SP 214 (1878); 4ST 492:3:2 (5BC 1125; 7aBC 245)

The Holy Spirit also persuades by truth and evidence.

23. "The Holy Spirit will not compel men to take a certain course of action. We are free moral agents; and when sufficient evidence has been given us as to our duty, it is left with us to decide our course." FE 124

24. "Even the work of the Holy Spirit upon the heart is to be tested by the Word of God. The Spirit which inspired the Scriptures, always leads to the Scriptures." GC Daily Bulletin, Apr. 13, 1891

Love and Trust--the things that God desires the most--cannot be commanded or produced by force or fear.

25. "The earth was dark through misapprehension of God. That the gloomy shadows might be lightened, that the world might be brought back to God, Satan's deceptive power was to be broken. This could not be done by force. The exercise of force is contrary to the principles of God's government; He desires only the service of love; and love cannot be commanded; it cannot be won by force or authority. Only by love is love awakened. To know God is to love Him; His character must be manifested in contrast to the character of Satan. DA 22 (1898)

26. "In the work of redemption there is no compulsion. No external force is employed. Under the influence of the Spirit of God, man is left free to choose whom he will serve. In the change that takes place when the soul surrenders to Christ, there is the highest sense of freedom." DA 466 (1898)

27. "The shortness of time is urged as an incentive for us to seek righteousness and to make Christ our friend. This is not the great motive. It savors of selfishness. Is it necessary that the terrors of the day of God be held before us to compel us through fear to right action? This ought not to be. (Review and Herald Aug. 2, 1881) 1RH 273:1:6; That I May Know Him p. 320

There is no need to be afraid of God.

28. "We are not to regard God as waiting to punish the sinner for his sin. The sinner brings the punishment upon himself. His own actions start a train of circumstances that bring the sure result. Every act of transgression reacts upon the sinner, works in him a change of character, and makes it more easy for him to transgress again. By choosing to sin, men separate themselves from God, cut themselves off from the channel of blessing, and the sure result is ruin and death." Letter 96, 1896 (1SM 235)

29. "God does not stand toward the sinner as an executioner of the sentence against transgression; but He leaves the rejectors of His mercy to themselves, to reap that which they have sown." GC 36 (1888)

30. "By a life of rebellion, Satan and all who unite with him place themselves so out of harmony with God that His very presence is to them a consuming fire. The glory of Him who is love will destroy them." DA 764 (1898)

God does not desire obedience that springs from fear or obligation.

31. "The man who attempts to keep the commandments of God from a sense of obligation merely--because he is required to do so--will never enter into the joy of obedience. He does not obey. . . The essence of all righteousness is loyalty to our Redeemer. This will lead us to do right because it is right--because right doing is pleasing to God. COL 97 (1900)

32. "A sullen submission to the will of the Father will develop the character of a rebel. The service is looked upon by such a one in the light of drudgery. It is not rendered cheerfully and in the love of God. It is a mere mechanical performance. [If he dared, such a one would disobey. His rebellion is smothered, ready to break out at any time in bitter murmurings and complaints.] Such service brings no peace or quietude to the soul." MS 20, 1897 (MR # 970); Signs of the Times, July 22, 1897 - 3ST 400:2:1 - section in [ . . . ] omitted in That I May Know Him p. 120

God has made emergency use of law because we needed it.

33. "If man had kept the law of God, as given to Adam after his fall, preserved by Noah, and observed by Abraham, there would have been no necessity for the ordinance of circumcision. And if the descendants of Abraham had kept the covenant, of which circumcision was a sign . . . they would have kept God's law in mind, and there would have been no necessity for it to be proclaimed from Sinai or engraved upon the tables of stone. And had the people practiced the principles of the Ten Commandments, there would have been no need of the additional directions given to Moses." PP 364 (1890)

34. "In heaven, service is not rendered in the spirit of legality. When Satan rebelled against the law of Jehovah, the thought that there was a law came to the angels almost as an awakening to something unthought of. In their ministry, the angels are not as servants, but as sons. There is perfect unity between them and their Creator. Obedience is to them no drudgery." MB 109 (1896)

35. "I am asked concerning the law in Galatians. What law is the schoolmaster to bring us to Christ? I answer: Both the ceremonial and the moral code of the Ten Commandments. . . ." In this scripture, the Holy Spirit through the apostle is speaking especially of the moral law." 1SM 233 (1900), 234 (1896)

God values nothing higher than our freedom, dignity and individuality.

36. "Every human being, created in the image of God, is endowed with a power akin to that of the Creator,--individuality, power to think and to do. . . It is the work of true education to develop this power; to train the youth to be thinkers, and not merely reflectors of other men's thoughts. . . . Instead of educated weaklings, institutions of learning may send forth men strong to think and to act, men who are masters and not slaves of circumstances, men who possess breadth of mind, clearness of thought, and the courage of their convictions." Ed. p. 17 (1903)

37. "It is the first and highest duty of every rational being to learn from the Scriptures what is truth, and then to walk in the light. . . With divine help we are to form our opinions for ourselves as we are to answer for ourselves before God. GC 598 (1888)

Jesus will come when His people are ready.

38. "The long night of gloom is trying, but the morning is deferred in mercy, because if the Master should come, so many would be found unready. God's unwillingness to have His people perish, has been the reason of so long delay." 2T 194; Evan. 694 (1868)

39. "Just as soon as the people of God are sealed in their foreheads --it is not any seal or mark that can be seen, but a settling into the truth, both intellectually and spiritually, so they cannot be moved -- just as soon as God's

people are sealed and prepared for the shaking, it will come. Indeed, it has begun already; the judgments of God are now upon the land, to give us warning, that we may know what is coming. MS 173, 1902 (4BC 1161)

Where on earth are God's friends?

40. "Notwithstanding the spiritual darkness and alienation from God that exist in the churches which constitute Babylon, the great body of Christ's true followers are still to be found in their communion." GC 391 (1888)

What difference does it make to know the truth about God?

41. "The reason why it seems so difficult to win souls for Christ, is that Satan is continually engaged in misrepresenting the character of God to the human mind. Christ came to reveal the Father to the world in His true character, that the false conceptions which men entertained of the divine character might be swept away." Review and Herald May 31, 1892 - 2RH 573:2:2

42. "We are not to think of God only as a judge, and to forget Him as our loving Father. Nothing can do our souls greater harm than this; for our whole spiritual life will be molded by our conceptions of God's character." Review and Herald April 5, 1887 - 2RH 126:1:2

43. "Jesus said: 'This is life eternal, that they might know Thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom Thou hast sent.' All that was done and said had this one object in view,— to rivet truth in their minds that they might attain unto everlasting life. Jesus did not come to astonish men with some great announcement of some special time when some great event would occur, but he came to instruct and save the lost." Review and Herald March 22, 1892 - 2RH 553:3:1; 1SM 186-187

44. "It is growth in knowledge of the character of Christ that sanctifies the soul. To discern and appreciate the wonderful work of the atonement, transforms him who contemplates the plan of salvation. By beholding Christ, he becomes changed into the same image, from glory to glory, as by the spirit of the Lord [2Cor. 3:18]. The beholding of Jesus becomes an ennobling, refining process to the actual Christian. He sees the Pattern, and grows into its likeness, and then how easily are dissensions, emulations, and strife adjusted. The perfection of Christ's character is the Christian's inspiration. When we see him as he is, desire awakes to be like him, and this elevates the whole man; for "every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure [1Jn. 3:3]." Review and Herald Aug. 26, 1890 - 2RH 421:3:2

45. "Men put God out of their knowledge and worshiped the creatures of their own imagination; and as the result, they became more and more debased. The psalmist describes the effect produced upon the worshiper by the adoration of idols. He says, "They that make them are like unto them; so is every one that trusteth in them." Psalms 115:8. It is a law of the human mind that by beholding we become changed. Man will rise no higher than his conceptions of

truth, purity, and holiness. If the mind is never exalted above the level of humanity, if it is not uplifted by faith to contemplate infinite wisdom and love, the man will be constantly sinking lower and lower. The worshipers of false gods clothed their deities with human attributes and passions, and thus their standard of character was degraded to the likeness of sinful humanity. They were defiled in consequence." PP 91 (1890)

46. "It is a law both of the intellectual and the spiritual nature that by beholding we become changed. The mind gradually adapts itself to the subjects upon which it is allowed to dwell. It becomes assimilated to that which it is accustomed to love and reverence." GC 555 (1888)

47. "Merely to hear or to read the word is not enough. He who desires to be profited by the Scriptures must meditate upon the truth that has been presented to him. By earnest attention and prayerful thought he must learn the meaning of the words of truth, and drink deep of the spirit of the holy oracles.

"God bids us fill the mind with great thoughts, pure thoughts. He desires us to meditate upon His love and mercy, to study His wonderful work in the great plan of redemption. Then clearer and still clearer will be our perception of truth, higher, holier, our desire for purity of heart and clearness of thought. The soul dwelling in the pure atmosphere of holy thought will be transformed by communion with God through the study of the Scriptures." COL 59-60 (1900)

48. "The effort to earn salvation by one's own works inevitably leads men to pile up human exactions as a barrier against sin. For, seeing that they fail to keep the law, they will devise rules and regulations of their own to force themselves to obey. All this turns the mind away from God to self. His love dies out of the heart, and with it perishes love for his fellow men. A system of human intervention, with its multitudinous exactions, will lead its advocates to judge all who come short of the prescribed human standard. The atmosphere of selfish and narrow criticism stifles the noble and generous emotions, and causes men to become self-centered judges and petty spies.

"The Pharisees were of this class. They came forth from their religious services, not humbled with a sense of their own weakness, not grateful for the great privileges that God had given them. They came forth with spiritual pride, and their theme was, 'Myself, my feelings, my knowledge, my ways.' Their own attainments became the standard by which they judged others. Putting on the robes of self-dignity, they mounted the judgment seat to criticize and condemn.

"The people partook largely of the same spirit, intruding upon the province of conscience and judging one another in matters that lay between the soul and God. It was in reference to this spirit and practice that Jesus said, 'Judge not, that ye be not judged.' That is, do not set yourself up as a standard. Do not make your opinion, your views of duty;— your interpretations of Scripture, a criterion for others and in your heart condemn them if they do not come up to your ideal. Do not criticize others, conjecturing as to their motives and passing judgment upon them." MB 123-124 compiled by Dr Kenneth Hart