

Pine Knoll Sabbath School Study Notes
First Quarter 2019: *The Book of Revelation*
Lesson 8 Satan, a Defeated Enemy

Read for this week's study

Revelation 12; Genesis 3:15; Isaiah 14:12–15; Daniel 7:23–25; 2 Thessalonians 2:8–12;
Revelation 13:13, 14; 19:20.

Memory Text

“ ‘And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, and they did not love their lives to the death’ ” (Revelation 12:11, NKJV).

Lesson Outline from Adult Sabbath School Study Guide

- I. Introduction
- II. The Woman and the Dragon
- III. Satan's Permanent Expulsion From Heaven
- IV. The War on Earth
- V. War Against the Remnant
- VI. Satan's End-Time Strategy
- VII. Further Study

Questions and Notes for Consideration

Facilitator: Jon Paulien

1. Read Revelation 12 as a whole. Note all the different terms used for Satan in this chapter. Notice also the movement in time through the chapter as the actions of Satan take place in the course of human history. What is the main purpose of chapter twelve? (Sabbath afternoon)
2. Read Revelation 12:1-4. What two great symbolic signs appear in this passage? Notice that the appearance of each character is accompanied with a bit of history or background and then the character is seen acting in the context of the vision. What do the woman and the dragon represent? Read Revelation 12:1-5. Since the dragon is also called “the ancient serpent” can you see any connections between this passage and Genesis 3? How are God's people to overcome Satan in their lives (Revelation 12:11)? What is the role of the cross in this? (Sunday's lesson)
3. Read Revelation 12:7-10. Jesus' ascension to God's throne (Revelation 12:1-5) precipitates the war in heaven. What is the nature of that war that results in Satan's final expulsion from heaven? Why is this war and the casting down of Satan placed in the context of the cross? Read John 12:31, Luke 4:6 and Job 1:6-12. How do these

texts help us understand the war in heaven? What kind of war does the dragon wage? (Monday's lesson)

4. Read Revelation 12:13-14. When he realizes that he has been finally expelled from heaven, Satan continues his attack on the church during the prophetic 1260 days. How was God involved with the church during that period? Does the length of that period of persecution have any implications for the delay in the Second Advent of Christ? (Tuesday's lesson)
5. Read Revelation 12:17. Who does Satan war against at the end of time? What does "remnant" or "rest" mean in Scripture? What two characteristics of the remnant can be found in this verse? What role do the commandments of God have in Revelation 13? What is the "testimony of Jesus?" (Wednesday's lesson)
6. Does Revelation 12:17 mark a shift in the strategy of the dragon (Satan)? Compare Revelation 13:13-14 and 2 Thessalonians 2:8-12. What is the nature of the end-time deception? (Thursday's lesson)
7. In what ways do Seventh-day Adventists fulfill the characteristics of the end-time remnant as described in the book of Revelation? (Friday's lesson)
8. Is there a tendency in today's world to deny the reality of Satan? What are the consequences of such a denial? On the other hand, is it possible to overplay the role of Satan in the world today? If Satan quit tomorrow, how would the world of today be different? (Friday's lesson)

Thoughts from Graham Maxwell

But then as the audience listened on through chapters 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, and 11, they came to this extraordinary description in 12. The first mention of the war up in heaven in all sixty-six books. And I wonder if there was a ripple of interest over that crowd as they listened. Verse 7:

War arose in heaven, Michael and his angels fighting against the dragon [and if they had read the book of Daniel they knew who Michael was]; and the dragon and his angels fought, but they were defeated and there was no longer any place for them in Heaven [and they wondered who the dragon might be; or if they did wonder, they'd know now].

The great dragon was thrown down, that ancient serpent [Genesis], who is called the devil and Satan, the deceiver of the whole world [and his methods are now exposed]—he was thrown down to the earth, and his angels were thrown down with him. And I heard a loud voice in heaven, saying, "Now the salvation and the power and the kingdom of our God and the authority of his Christ have come, for the accuser of our brethren has been thrown down, who accuses them day and night before our God."

And if the members of the audience had been reading the thirty-nine books of the Old Testament through the years, they knew of many other occasions where Satan had been the accuser of both God and the brethren. Can you mention some places? Where is the first mention of Satan accusing, in scripture? {Graham Maxwell. Excerpt from the audio series, *The Picture of God in all 66 – Revelation*, recorded August, 1982, Riverside, California} *To listen to the entire audio of the above reference, click on the following direct links:*

<http://pkp.cc/79MMPOGIA66> (Part 1) <http://pkp.cc/80MMPOGIA66> (Part 2)

Lou: Now that ties into another question that has come up. If God is going to run the universe the way he wants to run it, consistent with his character; why should a God of power, sovereign of the universe, allow a conflict such as we are reading about here in Revelation the twelfth chapter; this picture of war in Heaven. Why should he allow that even to develop, to happen?

Graham: That fits very well with the last point, doesn't it? See, if he has that much authority and power, how could a war even take place? And this is why those who stress the sovereignty of God (and surely it is right that we should stress that) have great difficulty allowing for a war. And that's why many of the reformers really couldn't use that sixty-sixth book. Luther says, "It was fancied that there was a war." Just couldn't wrap his mind around the idea. But to me, it's one of the most wonderful things about God, that though he had the infinite power necessary to nip that war in the bud, to stop it before it ever started, he did not do so. There must be something of more value than our subservience and our submission to his power, because he allowed that thing to grow and to grow. Now, by our assessment of good administration, God was weak. It was bad management. I mean, how long would we tolerate a leader—how long would the pastor last in our church, if there was such chaos in the membership? The committee would meet!

Lou: The person would move on, wouldn't he!

Graham: Yes. Are we going to move our God on, and suggest it was weakness on his part? We know he has infinite power. But in his infinite power, he allowed this war to develop. He allowed the questions to arise. Now that says that there is something of even greater importance than even our mere submission to his infinite power.

Lou: There is a question that ties in with the matter of the war. You have this one who seems to start the war—*Day Star, Lucifer*. "If God knew that there would be all this trouble, and that Lucifer would be at the center of it, why did he create Lucifer?"

Graham: And of course it raises the question as to whether God *does* know everything in the future. And there are good saints who wonder about that. I would rather find an explanation that would allow me to say God can see the end from the beginning. The past, the present, and

the future: they're all alike to him. And yet I'm still free. My understanding would be that when God created Lucifer, he knew what Lucifer would do. And yet he went ahead anyway. He knew what it would cost him. He knew what it would cost his children. And yet he went ahead. And when you think of the history of the anguish that has been involved in solving this problem and settling this war, there must be something of infinite value at stake, or God would not have done this.

Because he had other options, some rather easy ones. When Lucifer began to entertain these rebellious thoughts, he could have eliminated him right there and then. What damage would that have done? Well, we might say the angels looking on would think, "I'd better not have bad thoughts or I might get eliminated, too." But after eliminating Lucifer, God could then have blotted out all memory of the elimination and no one would know. And he could do that an infinite number of times; no one would know but our God.

Now why didn't he do it? Is it he couldn't live with the fact he was doing that? Or is it that he wants us to know what he *did* do? What he did do was not to take a shortcut. He allowed Lucifer to develop these thoughts, and to spread them among the angels, knowing what it would cost him and cost his friends on this planet. We've all participated a little; it's an honor to do so, in the larger view. But knowing the thousands of years it would take, and all the misunderstanding and the anguish, God said, "I will go ahead this way." And the angels understand this and tell him, "You did this magnificently. And we're with you for the rest of eternity." So what was at stake? That's the big thing.

Lou: This perspective that you're sharing with us includes a war, a crisis of distrust, and whether God can be trusted!

Graham: See, it's not over power; that's the big thing. If it were over God's power, who has more power?

Lou: It would be easy.

Graham: He could do that in a second. And when you stop to think of it, why preach about God's power, since even the devil is already convinced? You remember James says that when the devil thinks about the power of the one who hung the whole vast universe in space, it scares him. He shudders with fear. So I don't think we should spend too much time arguing about God's power. *Of course* he's infinite in majesty and power.

Lou: But you've said that the issue has to do with trust, and who's telling the truth.

Graham: That's right. The conflict is not over *who has the power*, but over *who's telling the truth*. God has been accused of the abuse of power. {Graham Maxwell. Excerpt from the audio series, Conversations About God, #1 with Lou Venden, "The Conflict in God's Family" recorded

January, 1984, Loma Linda, California} *To listen to the entire audio of the above reference, click on the following direct link: <http://pkp.cc/1MMCAG>*

We need to share this more urgently than ever before as we humans, all together, face the closing events of human history. Because before Christ returns, the Bible describes—in fact Jesus describes—a time of confusion and deception such as the world has never seen. All of that will be leading up to Satan’s final attempt to win the whole world to worship him, to trust him. He even asked Jesus to get down on his knees and worship him in the wilderness of temptation. Revelation 13 says that when Satan’s campaign is over, the whole world will be worshipping him, except those few who have not been deceived. So it should not surprise us, if we are as near the end as we believe we are, that we find ourselves surrounded on all sides by conflicting claims to religious authority. Certainly the development of modern media has made us more aware of this than ever before. As we see and listen to all these conflicting claims, how often they are supported by position, or power, or miracles, or claims of special communications from the Lord.

How Satan would enjoy it if he could turn God’s friends on this planet against their heavenly Father!

Or even more seriously, how he would love to deceive God’s friends even as they continue professing to be his commandment keeping people. That would be the most destructive.

No wonder Paul said that we should grow up and not be so easily swayed to and fro by every wind of doctrine (Ephesians 4). Again in Hebrews 5 he says we should grow up and have our faculties trained by practice to distinguish between good and evil, right and wrong. These are two passages we will look at much more another evening. {Graham Maxwell. Excerpt from the audio series, Conversations About God, #7, “The Question of Authority” recorded February, 1984, Loma Linda, California} *To listen to the entire audio of the above reference, click on the following direct link: <http://pkp.cc/7MMCAG>*

Further Study with Ellen White

As far as evil extends, the voice of our Father is heard, bidding His children see in its results the nature of sin, warning them to forsake the evil, and inviting them to receive the good. {Ed 27.3}

The tempter has no power to control the will or to force the soul to sin. He may distress, but he cannot contaminate. He can cause agony, but not defilement. {FLB 327.6}

God in His great love is seeking to develop in us the precious graces of His Spirit. He permits us to encounter obstacles, persecution, and hardships, not as a curse, but as the greatest blessing

of our lives. Every temptation resisted, every trial bravely borne, gives us a new experience and advances us in the work of character building. The soul that through divine power resists temptation reveals to the world and to the heavenly universe the efficiency of the grace of Christ. {MB 117.1}

Live in contact with the living Christ, and He will hold you firmly by a hand that will never let go. Know and believe the love that God has to us, and you are secure; that love is a fortress impregnable to all the delusions and assaults of Satan. "The name of the Lord is a strong tower: the righteous runneth into it, and is safe." Proverbs 18:10. {MB 119.2}

In our own strength it is impossible for us to deny the clamors of our fallen nature. Through this channel Satan will bring temptation upon us. Christ knew that the enemy would come to every human being, to take advantage of hereditary weakness, and by his false insinuations to ensnare all whose trust is not in God. And by passing over the ground which man must travel, our Lord has prepared the way for us to overcome. It is not His will that we should be placed at a disadvantage in the conflict with Satan. He would not have us intimidated and discouraged by the assaults of the serpent. "Be of good cheer," He says; "I have overcome the world." John 16:33. {DA 122.3}

And the same compassion that reached out to rescue Peter is extended to every soul who has fallen under temptation. It is Satan's special device to lead man into sin, and then leave him, helpless and trembling, fearing to seek for pardon. But why should we fear, when God has said, "Let him take hold of My strength, that he may make peace with Me; and he shall make peace with Me?" Isaiah 27:5. Every provision has been made for our infirmities, every encouragement offered us to come to Christ. {COL 156.1}

The teaching of this parable is illustrated in God's own dealing with men and angels. Satan is a deceiver. When he sinned in heaven, even the loyal angels did not fully discern his character. This was why God did not at once destroy him. Had He done so, the holy angels would not have perceived the justice and love of God. A doubt of God's goodness would have been as evil seed that would yield the bitter fruit of sin and woe. Therefore the author of evil was spared, fully to develop his character. {UL 77.5}

Through long ages God has borne the anguish of beholding the work of evil. He has given the infinite Gift of Calvary, rather than let any be deceived by the misrepresentations of the wicked one, for the tares could not be plucked up without danger of uprooting the precious grain. {UL 77.6}

The omnipotent power of the Holy Spirit is the defense of every contrite soul. No one who in penitence and faith has claimed His protection will Christ permit to pass under the enemy's power. It is true that Satan is a powerful being; but, thank God, we have a mighty Saviour, who cast out the evil one from heaven. {MH 94.3}

Even when it was decided that he could no longer remain in heaven, Infinite Wisdom did not destroy Satan. Since the service of love can alone be acceptable to God, the allegiance of His creatures must rest upon a conviction of His justice and benevolence. The inhabitants of heaven and of other worlds, being unprepared to comprehend the nature or consequences of sin, could not then have seen the justice and mercy of God in the destruction of Satan. Had he been immediately blotted from existence, they would have served God from fear rather than from love. The influence of the deceiver would not have been fully destroyed, nor would the spirit of rebellion have been utterly eradicated. Evil must be permitted to come to maturity. For the good of the entire universe through ceaseless ages Satan must more fully develop his principles, that his charges against the divine government might be seen in their true light by all created beings, that the justice and mercy of God and the immutability of His law might forever be placed beyond all question. {GC 498.3}

Satan's rebellion was to be a lesson to the universe through all coming ages, a perpetual testimony to the nature and terrible results of sin. The working out of Satan's rule, its effects upon both men and angels, would show what must be the fruit of setting aside the divine authority. It would testify that with the existence of God's government and His law is bound up the well-being of all the creatures He has made. Thus the history of this terrible experiment of rebellion was to be a perpetual safeguard to all holy intelligences, to prevent them from being deceived as to the nature of transgression, to save them from committing sin and suffering its punishments. {GC 499.1}

Yet Satan was not then destroyed. The angels did not even then understand all that was involved in the great controversy. The principles at stake were to be more fully revealed. And for the sake of man, Satan's existence must be continued. Man as well as angels must see the contrast between the Prince of light and the prince of darkness. He must choose whom he will serve. {DA 761.3}

In the opening of the great controversy, Satan had declared that the law of God could not be obeyed, that justice was inconsistent with mercy, and that, should the law be broken, it would be impossible for the sinner to be pardoned. Every sin must meet its punishment, urged Satan; and if God should remit the punishment of sin, He would not be a God of truth and justice. When men broke the law of God, and defied His will, Satan exulted. It was proved, he declared, that the law could not be obeyed; man could not be forgiven. Because he, after his rebellion, had been banished from heaven, Satan claimed that the human race must be forever shut out from God's favor. God could not be just, he urged, and yet show mercy to the sinner. {DA 761.4}

But even as a sinner, man was in a different position from that of Satan. Lucifer in heaven had sinned in the light of God's glory. To him as to no other created being was given a revelation of God's love. Understanding the character of God, knowing His goodness, Satan chose to follow

his own selfish, independent will. This choice was final. There was no more that God could do to save him. But man was deceived; his mind was darkened by Satan's sophistry. The height and depth of the love of God he did not know. For him there was hope in a knowledge of God's love. By beholding His character he might be drawn back to God. {DA 761.5}

God in His great mercy bore long with Lucifer. He was not immediately degraded from his exalted station when he first indulged the spirit of discontent, not even when he began to present his false claims before the loyal angels. Long was he retained in heaven. Again and again he was offered pardon on condition of repentance and submission.—GC 495, 496. {TA 40.2}

The records of some are similar to that of the exalted angel who was given a position next to Jesus Christ in the heavenly courts. Lucifer was enshrouded with glory as the covering cherub. Yet this angel whom God had created, and entrusted with power, became desirous of being as God. He gained the sympathy of some of his associates by suggesting thoughts of criticism regarding the government of God. This evil seed was scattered in a most seducing manner; and after it had sprung up and taken root in the minds of many, he gathered the ideas that he himself had first implanted in the minds of others, and brought them before the highest order of angels as the thoughts of other minds against the government of God. Thus, by ingenious methods of his own devising, Lucifer introduced rebellion in heaven. {4BC 1143.1}

God desired that a change take place, and that the work of Satan be brought out in its genuine aspect. But the exalted angel standing next to Christ was opposed to the Son of God. The underworking was so subtle that it could not be made to appear before the heavenly host as the thing that it really was; and so there was war in heaven, and Satan was expelled with all who would not stand on the side of loyalty to God's government. The Lord God stood forth as Supreme Ruler. {4BC 1143.2}

This condition of things had existed a long period of time before Satan was unmasked and the evil ones expelled (Letter 162, 1906). {4BC 1143.3}

It was God's purpose to place things on an eternal basis of security, and in the councils of heaven it was decided that time must be given for Satan to develop the principles which were the foundation of his system of government. He had claimed that these were superior to God's principles. Time was given for the working of Satan's principles, that they might be seen by the heavenly universe. {DA 759.2}

Not until the death of Christ was the character of Satan clearly revealed to the angels or to the unfallen worlds. Then the prevarications and accusations of him who had once been an exalted angel were seen in their true light. It was seen that his professedly spotless character was deceptive. His deeply laid scheme to exalt himself to supremacy was fully discerned. His

falsehoods were apparent to all. God’s authority was forever established. Truth triumphed over falsehood. {RC 60.3}

The heavenly universe had witnessed the weapons that were chosen by the Prince of life—the words of Scripture, “It is written”; and the weapons used by the prince of the world—falsehood and deception. They had seen the Prince of life deal in straightforward lines of truth, honesty, and integrity, while the prince of the world exercised his power of cunning, artful secrecy, intrigue, enmity, and revenge. They had seen the One who bore the banner of truth sacrifice everything, even His life, to maintain truth, while the one who bore the banner of rebellion continued to strengthen his accusations against the God of truth. {RC 60.5}

I saw a covering that God was drawing over His people to protect them in the time of trouble; and every soul that was decided on the truth and was pure in heart was to be covered with the covering of the Almighty. {EW 43.2}

Satan assailed Christ with his fiercest and most subtle temptations, but he was repulsed in every conflict. Those battles were fought in our behalf; those victories make it possible for us to conquer. Christ will give strength to all who seek it. No man without his own consent can be overcome by Satan. The tempter has no power to control the will or to force the soul to sin. He may distress, but he cannot contaminate. He can cause agony, but not defilement. The fact that Christ has conquered should inspire His followers with courage to fight manfully the battle against sin and Satan. {GC 510.3}

When Christ took human nature upon Him, He bound humanity to Himself by a tie of love that can never be broken by any power save the choice of man himself. Satan will constantly present allurements to induce us to break this tie—to choose to separate ourselves from Christ. Here is where we need to watch, to strive, to pray, that nothing may entice us to choose another master; for we are always free to do this. But let us keep our eyes fixed upon Christ, and He will preserve us. Looking unto Jesus, we are safe. Nothing can pluck us out of His hand. In constantly beholding Him, we “are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.” 2 Corinthians 3:18. {SC 72.1}

God has angels whose whole work is to draw those who shall be heirs of salvation. Whenever one takes a step toward Jesus, Jesus is taking steps toward him. The angels’ work is to keep back the powers of Satan (MS 17, 1893). {7BC 922.5}

We shall meet with opposition of every description, as did the builders of the walls of Jerusalem; but if we watch and pray, and work as they did, God will fight our battles for us, and give us precious victories (RH July 6, 1886). {3BC 1138.2}

Had Satan revealed himself in his real character, he would have been repulsed at once, for Adam and Eve had been warned against this dangerous foe; but he worked in the dark, concealing his purpose, that he might more effectually accomplish his object. {GC 531.2}

In the truths of His word, God has given to men a revelation of Himself; and to all who accept them they are a shield against the deceptions of Satan. {GC 465.1}

Satan's policy in this final conflict with God's people is the same that he employed in the opening of the great controversy in heaven. He professed to be seeking to promote the stability of the divine government, while secretly bending every effort to secure its overthrow. And the very work which he was thus endeavoring to accomplish he charged upon the loyal angels. {GC 591.1}

God never forces the will or the conscience; but Satan's constant resort—to gain control of those whom he cannot otherwise seduce—is compulsion by cruelty. Through fear or force he endeavors to rule the conscience and to secure homage to himself. To accomplish this, he works through both religious and secular authorities, moving them to the enforcement of human laws in defiance of the law of God. {GC 591.2}

The study of God's word is continually expanding the mind and strengthening the intellect. There is nothing that will so refine and elevate the character, and give vigor to every faculty, as the continual exercise of the mind to grasp and comprehend weighty and important truths. {4T 545.3}

God takes men as they are, and educates them for His service, if they will yield themselves to Him. The Spirit of God, received into the soul, will quicken all its faculties. Under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, the mind that is devoted unreservedly to God develops harmoniously, and is strengthened to comprehend and fulfill the requirements of God. The weak, vacillating character becomes changed to one of strength and steadfastness. Continual devotion establishes so close a relation between Jesus and His disciple that the Christian becomes like Him in mind and character. Through a connection with Christ he will have clearer and broader views. His discernment will be more penetrative, his judgment better balanced. He who longs to be of service to Christ is so quickened by the life-giving power of the Sun of Righteousness that he is enabled to bear much fruit to the glory of God. {DA 251.1}

As we near the time when principalities and powers and spiritual wickedness in high places will be brought into warfare against the truth, when the deceiving power of Satan will be so great that if it were possible he will deceive the very elect, we must have our discernment sharpened by divine enlightenment, that we may know the Spirit that is of God, that we may not be ignorant of Satan's devices. {MR311 49.1}

The subtlety of Satan will not decrease, but the wisdom given to men through a living connection with the Source of all light and divine knowledge will be proportionate to his arts and wiles. {FLB 312.6}

God is able and willing to bestow upon His servants all the strength they need and to give them the wisdom that their varied necessities demand. He will more than fulfill the highest expectations of those who put their trust in Him. {AA 242.1}

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. {RH, July 17, 1888 par. 4} {FE 124.1}

The law of love being the foundation of the government of God, the happiness of all created beings depended upon their perfect accord with its great principles of righteousness. God desires from all His creatures the service of love—homage that springs from an intelligent appreciation of His character. He takes no pleasure in a forced allegiance, and to all He grants freedom of will, that they may render Him voluntary service. {GC 493.2}

Through the ministry of the angels the Holy Spirit is enabled to work upon the mind and heart of the human agent and draw him to Christ. . . . But the Spirit of God does not interfere with the freedom of the human agent. The Holy Spirit is given to be a helper, so that man may cooperate with the Divine, and it is given to Him to draw the soul but never to force obedience. {TMK 57.2}

God had power to hold Adam back from touching the forbidden fruit; but had He done this, Satan would have been sustained in his charge against God's arbitrary rule. Man would not have been a free moral agent, but a mere machine (RH June 4, 1901). {1BC 1084.2}

Today the truths of Scripture are to be brought before the great men of the world in order that they may choose between obedience to God's law and allegiance to the prince of evil. God sets everlasting truth before them—truth that will make them wise unto salvation, but He does not force them to accept it. If they turn from it, He leaves them to themselves, to be filled with the fruit of their own doings. {AA 241.2}

Our will is not to be forced into co-operation with divine agencies, but it must be voluntarily submitted. Were it possible to force upon you with a hundredfold greater intensity the influence of the Spirit of God, it would not make you a Christian, a fit subject for heaven. {MB 142.1}

God does not force the will or judgment of any. He takes no pleasure in a slavish obedience. He desires that the creatures of His hands shall love Him because He is worthy of love. He would have them obey Him because they have an intelligent appreciation of His wisdom, justice, and benevolence. And all who have a just conception of these qualities will love Him because they are drawn toward Him in admiration of His attributes. {GC 541.3}

Christ does not drive but draws men unto Him. The only compulsion which He employs is the constraint of love. {MB 127.1}

The Lord will not compel men to deal justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with their God; He sets before the human agent good and evil, and makes plain what will be the sure result of following one course or the other. Christ invites us, saying, "Follow Me." But we are never forced to walk in His footsteps. If we do walk in His footsteps, it is the result of deliberate choice. {CS 138.1}

In matters of conscience the soul must be left untrammelled. No one is to control another's mind, to judge for another, or to prescribe his duty. God gives to every soul freedom to think, and to follow his own convictions. "Every one of us shall give account of himself to God." No one has a right to merge his own individuality in that of another. In all matters where principle is involved, "let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind." Romans 14:12, 5. In Christ's kingdom there is no lordly oppression, no compulsion of manner. The angels of heaven do not come to the earth to rule, and to exact homage, but as messengers of mercy, to co-operate with men in uplifting humanity. {DA 550.6}

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. {RH, July 17, 1888 par. 4}

Recommended Reading:

Patriarchs and Prophets, Chapter 4 "The Plan of Redemption"

Prophets and Kings, Chapter 47 "Joshua and the Angel"

<https://egwwritings.org/>