9. WHEN WILL IT ALL END?

The last act in God's rescue plan is the best. Jesus is coming to earth again. Literally and visibly. Right now He is giving humanity time to decide whose side they want to be on, and then He is coming back for His people. He will take them to be with Him in heaven, the place where it all began (see **John 14:1–3**). And there will be no more rebellion!

Many of His people will be in their graves when He comes. No problem. He is going to raise the dead.

"For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord" (1 Thessalonians 4:16,17).

10. WHAT HAPPENS TO LUCIFER?

Finally he receives justice for his crimes. He and all his supporters wind up perishing in a lake of fire. *"The devil, who deceived them... And anyone not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the lake of fire"* (**Revelation 20:10,15**). At last the great conflict will be over. Lucifer and all his evil angels will never trouble anyone, anywhere, ever again.

"The entire universe will be clean. One pulse of harmony and gladness will beat through the vast creation. From a minuscule atom to the greatest world, all things in their unparalleled beauty and perfect happiness will declare that God is Love!" ¹.

11. SO THEN, WHAT CAN YOU DO NOW?

It's not rocket science. In your own words tell God that you want to accept Jesus as your Saviour and follow Him.

He won't forget you. Your name is engraved in the scars He carries. Be faithful and obedient to Him and you can't lose. A meaningful life now, along with a Heaven of glory and peace, awaits you.

Scripture taken from the New King James Version. Copyright © 1982

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1. E.G.White, "The Great Controversy". p 383.

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INSIGHT Why do Bad things Happen?

1. WHAT IS WRONG WITH THE WORLD?

Just about every person you meet wants to live in peace. So why is the world full of conflict and trouble?

It started a long time ago—in the most unexpected place—at the centre of the Universe. "And war broke out in heaven" (**Revelation 12:7**). Hard to imagine, but there it is. All the trouble began in Heaven.

The warring parties?-Satan and the Creator God.

The Issue?—Who would rule the Universe. This was serious!

2. WHO IS THIS ENEMY OF GOD – SATAN? In Heaven his name was Lucifer. "How you are fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning!" (Isaiah 14:12).

He was the *"anointed cherub who covers"* (Ezekiel 28:14).

His problem? *"I will be like the Most High"* (**Isaiah 14:14**). He wanted God's position and power.

Lucifer, a created angel (see **Ezekiel 28:15**), wanted the position of the Creator. His first step was to work on the other angels to enlist their support. He was successful in his deceptive arguments, convincing one third of them to take his side (see **Revelation 12:4**).

3. THE CONFLICT MOVED TO THIS EARTH

With the support of his angels, Lucifer openly challenged God. This led to a terrible revolt, resulting in Lucifer and his supporters being banished from Heaven. Lucifer then came to this newly created earth, with a plan to establish his kingdom here (see **Revelation 12:12**).

First he had to overpower the original two human beings. To accomplish this he used an adaptation of the same subtle strategy he used so successfully on the angels in Heaven. He determined to pursuade Eve to eat the fruit that God had said they could not eat. If you eat it *"you will be like God,"* he told her (**Genesis 3:5**). He knew that would appeal to her.

Eve liked the idea and took Lucifer's side. Eating the forbidden fruit symbolised her central shift of loyalties. Adam joined her, and this Earth was plunged into the experience of sin and suffering that so characterises the world we live in today.

4. WHY DIDN'T GOD GET RID OF LUCIFER BEFORE HE DID SO MUCH DAMAGE HERE ON OUR EARTH?

He could have, of course. But there was a bigger

picture to consider. Lucifer had made some serious charges against the way God was operating, accusing Him, amongst other things, of being selfish, unreasonable, and arbitrary in His demands.

If Lucifer "disappeared" before the fruits of his rebellion were clearly revealed, many among God's vast creation would wonder if, maybe, he was right. The Universe would never be secure again.

So God has given Lucifer time to clearly reveal how he would operate the universe. This earth's woes tell the full story. There can be no doubts about Lucifer's character and intentions now.

5. WHAT WAS GOD DOING WHILE LUCIFER WAS TAKING OVER EARTH?

God was putting into operation a rescue plan. A very costly rescue plan—for God that is.

God gave the best He had. It involved His Son, Jesus, coming to earth as a human being, and personally taking responsibility for humanity's part in the rebellion. It would cost God's Son His life.

There was no other way. The consequence for sin and rebellion is death. *"For the wages of sin is death"* (**Romans 6:23**). The Infinite One would accept those consequences and die in our place.

6. WHY WOULD HE DO THAT?

"For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life" (John 3:16).

We are invited to accept Jesus, the Son of God, as our Saviour, and He will become our lifeline in this troubled world.

7. SO WHO CAUSES ALL THE TROUBLE AND DISASTER IN THE WORLD NOW?

This is the work of Lucifer and his assistants—the fallen angels (demons). Jesus said Lucifer (Satan, the devil) is a murderer and a liar (see **John 8:44**). He causes the disasters and then heaps the blame on God. The Bible says Lucifer is *"the prince of the power of the air"* (**Ephesians 2:2**). He is dangerous.

8. WHAT PROTECTION CAN WE HAVE AGAINST LUCIFER?

Two things. God's very name has a power that can protect us. *"The name of the Lord is a strong tower; the righteous run to it and are safe"* (**Proverbs 18:10**). We can call to Him for safety and help at any time.

In addition, every one who believes in Jesus has a guardian angel by their side, 24/7. *"The angel of the Lord encamps all around those who fear Him,*