

**WAR IN HEAVEN: A DISQUISITION,
BIBLICAL AND RATIONAL, CONCERNING
ANGELS, DEVILS, AND MEN, AND THE
CREATION, FALL, AND REDEMPTION OF
THE HUMAN SOUL. PP. 1-311**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649731152

War in Heaven: A Disquisition, Biblical and Rational, Concerning Angels, Devils, and Men, and the Creation, Fall, and Redemption of the Human Soul. pp. 1-311 by James P. Simmons

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Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.
Cover @ 2017

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JAMES P. SIMMONS

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"Many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased."—DANIEL, 12: 4.

"For there is nothing covered, that shall not be revealed; and hid, that shall not be known."—MATT. 10: 26.

BY JAMES P. SIMMONS,

Lawrenceville, Georgia.

CINCINNATI:

ROBERT CLARKE & Co., PRINTERS.

1871.

Entered according to Act of Congress, prior to July 8, in the year 1870, by

JAMES P. SIMMONS,

In the Clerk's Office of the District Court of the United States for the Northern District of
Georgia; and before publication, entered and copies deposited in the office of
Librarian of Congress at Washington, as provided by law.

PREFACE.

It is considered, by the writer, due alike to the reader and himself that a brief statement of the circumstances under which the peculiar views in the following pages presented were first, by him, conceived.

Having been blest with Christian parents, who required of all their children, as soon as they were able to do so, that each should read a prescribed portion of the Sacred Scriptures on every Sabbath, he acquired, in early life, a habit of frequent and careful reading of that good Book, and which grew with his growth and strengthened with his strength. At the early age of seventeen, he united with the Church of Christ. When about twenty-one years old, the little society of which he was a member dissolved for want of numbers sufficient to work efficiently, and each member was furnished with a letter of dismission. He had already engaged in the practice of his profession, and within a few years became so completely absorbed in such duties, and in the care of an increasing family, that he found but little time, Sundays only excepted, for theological reading. For some thirteen years he held such Church letter, and was deprived of all those blessed privileges and safeguards which can only be found inside of regular Church membership.

As is usual with young Christians who suffer themselves too much involved in the cares and business of this world, he became far too careless of his dearest interest. His mind was led off and off from the subject of religion; his attention to private devotion and public worship grew less and less, and, as a natural sequence, he began to doubt the truth of first one, then of another, and yet another, and so on, of the fundamental doctrines of our holy religion, until he had neared the awful whirlpool of infidelity.

It may be well, even here, to mention a few of the questions which gave him great trouble. 1. The doctrine of original sin, and the consequent total depravity of man. 2. Of eternal punishment in HELL of all who do not repent and believe the Gospel; and, 3. Of the necessity of Jesus Christ, being himself God, coming into the world and suffering as he did, for our redemption.

These and other kindred truths were not only admitted by all orthodox Christians, but appeared from the most careful reading to be clearly taught by the pen of Inspiration; yet they struck his mind as wonderfully strange, to say the best for them. How it was that the Great

Omniscient, Omnipotent, and All-merciful Creator of the universe—of man and Satan—should create this world, as it was, in all its primeval beauty, and make Adam, and of him Eve, perfect, holy, and pure as they were before their fall, and prepare for them a home—AN EDEEN—any tolerable description of which defies all created power—and put them there subject only to the law of their own will, with one single exception only, and that of easy observance; and that He should have permitted Satan, a creature of His own power and fully subject to His control, to beguile, deceive, and utterly ruin that hitherto innocent, confiding, and happy pair, I could not understand. Why it was that we of this remote age, as well as those of all subsequent and future ages of the world, should be held, by a just and merciful God, so far responsible for their sin as to be doomed to that eternal punishment denounced against all, save the elect few, how uprightly, morally, and honestly soever they might live, was, to my mind at least, very mysterious.

After the perfect work of God had been so unaccountably marred by the vile touch of the devil, I could not comprehend why it became necessary that an atonement should be made at such cost.

He could, simply by an act of His will, have pardoned that sin and purified the fountains of life so perfectly, that the whole Adamic race would have been as pure, holy, and good as the angels of heaven, and thereby not only have thwarted the whole scheme of Satan, and achieved a glorious victory over His enemy, but have averted all the ensuing calamities which have befallen this sin-smitten world.

Oppressed with such doubts, I became seriously alarmed about my own spiritual condition, and plied myself with renewed anxiety and zeal to searching the Scriptures in quest of more light. All my labors in that direction, had been for years unsuccessful. My mind was but the more vexed, and my fears the more aroused, until, as intimated above, I was closely verging upon infidelity.

Under these fearful circumstances, I was one Sabbath evening alone in my room, engaged carefully and prayerfully reading the Apocalypse. I read: "And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels, and prevailed not; neither was their place found any more in heaven. And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him," etc. As I so read, the great truth, which is considered in the following pages, as lightning, flashed upon my mind.

The Apostle Paul, after his memorable trip to Damascus, could have fully appreciated my feelings on that occasion; but I can not describe them. I closed the book, and gave myself up, for once, to *honest* thought. Such an idea had never crossed my mind before, although I had often read that chapter. In quick succession, such questions and answers

flitted across my mind, as: Can it be so? Impossible! or everybody would have so understood it long since. But, what else can it mean? I read it over again and again, and then turned rapidly to the several passages noted in the margin, where the same names appeared, or similar language was used. I saw clearly that if the impression then upon my mind as to the meaning of that Scripture was true, all such doubts and difficulties were together and at once removed. In that view, I could readily understand why all these things were so.

The next resolve was to make a thorough examination of that question. For more than three years, all the time I could snatch from my business engagements was employed in that inquiry. The Bible, from first to last, was critically examined, and notes entered in a blank book (which is now before me), of such passages as appeared to bear upon it. Such other helps as came within my reach were also brought into requisition. And the result was, I became *satisfied* that the solemn impression so made upon my mind was but the fearful truth of the case.

My troubled soul was at ease, I then could believe all the important truths taught in the Bible, and give a *reason for my faith*. During all that time I had not communicated to any human being even the fact that I entertained such views. The note book mentioned had been carefully concealed from every eye but my own.

Another subject of doubt soon beset me. That was, as to whether I should give the result of my labors to my fellow-prisoners, or keep them to myself, as theretofore. On that question I have bestowed the most anxious thought for many years. My desire was and is, to do my duty without regard to consequences, as to myself.

In July, 1852, I published an article in a religious paper of this State, headed, "ANGELS, DEVILS, AND MEN," and over the *anonymous* signature, "LAYMAN," in which a number of naked and crude propositions were submitted with references to such passages of Scripture as it was thought might lead to an investigation of the subject. But, beyond a bewildered sort of notice by the editor, I heard no more of it. About the same time I communicated the simple fact that I entertained such opinions to a few friends, but under the most stringent obligations to inform no one else that I had done so. With that, for a great while, I felt disposed to let the matter rest where the Bible leaves it. More serious impressions and anxious thought of late years have, however, satisfied me that I should give the world the humble offering, though poor it may be, of my faith, with the leading reasons for it upon this subject, and which I esteem as second in importance to but one other. Convictions of duty require no less, more I can not do.

A newspaper article having failed to direct public attention to the theory herein presented, I have concluded to pursue a middle ground between that and a full argument, as preferable to either. A careful arrangement and analysis, with a fair construction and application of

all the Scriptures, under the surface of which this important truth lies concealed from the careless reader, would necessarily fill a volume of such bulk that it would only be read by comparatively few while but a brief treatise would be cheap, could be soon read, and yet may prove sufficient to satisfy many, and put others fairly on the way to a more perfect investigation of the subject in its totality.

With these statements in explanation, dear reader, and without other apology, I proceed, invoking the aid of my heavenly Master, to the task which lies before me, and hopefully leave all the issues with Him, who, knowing all the facts, will judge between us righteously.

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