

Th131 God's Plan

Lesson Th131-13 Angelic Beings Created

Our last lesson discussed the fact that our God, who is love, devised a plan to create beings in His image and likeness. These beings would become His children. But He wanted their love to be a perfect love. You have learned that love must be freely given, freely received, and freely returned. This love cannot be forced, but must be of a free choice. And so God created the universe where the beings created to be His children would have the ability to choose to either love Him or reject Him.

You also learned that when God created the universe He also created heaven or the spirit world. Both the spirit world and the universe are tied together and have time. They both have a beginning and are marching forward towards God's fulfillment of His plan.

Now God created the universe a long, long time ago. How long ago does not really matter, because God is outside of time. Remember, a thousand years is like a day to God. When God created the universe only He existed. There still was only one choice in His created world and thus His creation was not ready for Him to create His children. So until His creation was ready for the children, His plan called for there to be spirit beings to live in the heavens or spirit world.

Thus God created angels to be His caretakers of creation. The word 'angel' literally means a messenger or envoy of God. The angels would live in the spirit world and would watch over creation as God's representatives. They were made to never wear out or die, but were made to live forever. Now God is eternal. That means that He has no beginning or end. He was not created or born, but always existed. Angels are not eternal. Every angelic being had a moment of creation. Because they were designed to never die they are said to be immortal. But because they were created and had a beginning, they are not eternal. Only God is eternal.

During the days of Abraham, God sent two angels down to the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah which were located on a flat plain alongside the Jordan River near the Dead Sea. The two angels arrived at Sodom in the evening. During these times wealthy businessmen would sit by the gates of the city to conduct business. Abraham's nephew, Lot, had been blessed by God during the time he had traveled with his uncle and was now a very wealthy man. His flocks and herds had become so great that there was not enough pasture and water for both his and Abraham's animals. So they had parted ways and Lot had moved his family into the city of Sodom. Lot was sitting near the gate of the city on the day that the angels arrived in Sodom. When Lot saw the angels, he got up to greet them. He bowed down with his face to the ground.

“My lords,” he said, “please come to my house. You can wash your feet and spend the night there. Then you can go on your way early in the morning.”

“No,” they answered. “We’ll spend the night in the town square.”

Lot knew this was not a good idea and so he pressed the men. "Please, I insist. Be my guests this night. The city square can be a dangerous place." Lot sensed that there was something different about these two men. They were just a little taller than the average man and they appeared young and strong and handsome. Lot did not notice that there were others at the gate who had also taken interest. These men of the city kept glancing over at the two angelic visitors.

"We will stay this night with you." One of the angels finally responded. So they went with Lot and entered his house. He prepared a meal for them of flat bread baked without yeast. After dinner everyone prepared to sleep for the night.

Suddenly there was pounding on the door of Lot's house. Voices of many men could be heard outside. "Who is there? What do you want?" Lot called out.

"Where are the men who came to you tonight? Bring them out to us. We want to have sex with them," a voice called back to Lot.

Lot went outside to meet them. He shut the door behind him. He was shocked. There was a mob of men outside his home—men young and old from all parts of Sodom. "No, my friends; don't do such an evil thing." Lot pleaded as he looked across the mob. This was not good. Lot was a man of the East. It was their culture to protect those that they had invited into their home. This responsibility was grave. And Lot knew that these two men were not ordinary men. He must protect them at all cost. "Look, I have two daughters that no man has ever slept with. I'll bring them out to you now. Then do to them what you want to. But don't do anything to these men. I've brought them inside so they can be safe." Lot said as he tried to calm the mob down. He did not want his daughters harmed, but his culture demanded that he protect his guests no matter the cost and Lot could not think of anything else that might dissuade the mob.

"Get out of our way!" the men of Sodom shouted to Lot. "You came here as an outsider. Now you want to act like a judge! We'll treat you worse than them." Suddenly the men rushed the door with the intent to break it down and drag the two angels out.

But the angels inside reached out and pulled Lot back into the house and shut the door. Up until this moment, the angels had appeared as mere men. There was nothing so extraordinary about them that anyone would suspect that they were angels. But the situation had become desperate. The men of the city were pounding on the door and threatening to force it open. The angels opened the door for just a moment and then with a brilliant flash they made the men who were at the door of the house blind. They blinded both the young and old men so that they couldn't find the door.

Early the next morning the two angels led Lot and his family out of the city. Lot and his daughters fled for their lives to the city of Zoar. Then the LORD sent down burning sulfur. It came down like rain on the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah. The LORD destroyed these wicked cities and the whole valley. All the people who were living in the cities were wiped out in judgment for their wickedness and immorality (Gen 19:1-26).

This story reveals a few truths about angels. First, angels appear like ordinary people in the Bible. In the New Testament book of Hebrews we read, "Don't forget to welcome strangers, for by doing that some people have welcomed angels without knowing it" (Heb 13:2). Secondly we find that the angels were not recognized to be angels until they did something supernatural. In our story about Sodom and Gomorrah it was not until the angels blinded the men of the city that it was apparent that they were not just ordinary men.

This lesson is **important** because it teaches that God created angels to be immortal and to watch over the creation, including His children.

The **main truth** of this lesson is that angels do God's work in this world. They work to rescue God's children from danger and to punish the wicked who reject God's Word.

Let's review some of the concepts learned in this lesson:

1. God is eternal and angels are immortal. What is the difference? [Pause]
A. If you said that God has no beginning or end, whereas the angels were all created, you are correct.
2. What does the word "angel" mean? [Pause]
A. If you said that the word "angel" means a messenger or envoy, you answered correctly.
3. What do angels look like? [Pause]
A. If you said angels often look like ordinary men, you are correct.

Your **assignment** for this lesson is to listen to this lesson until you understand the concepts and the story. Then, find someone and teach them what you have learned.