

Th131 God's Plan

Lesson Th131-42 The Last Battle

Have you ever wondered what causes iron or steel to rust? Unpainted steel rusts very slowly in dry climates, but rusts very quickly when there is a lot of rain. Is it the water that causes steel to rust? Actually, the oxygen in the air we breathe is what causes steel to rust. The oxygen causes a chemical reaction with the iron in the steel and the result is rust. Why then does steel only rust when there is water present? The water acts like a catalyst that greatly speeds up the chemical reaction. Without water there is little or no rust.

In the same way, Satan and his fallen angels act as a catalyst with humans. A great theologian, named Augustine, once wrote that within every man is a God-shaped hole. Nothing can fill that emptiness but God. The human being was created to have relationship with God. We are all born with selfish instincts. Without God we are out of balance and pursue our selfish desires, which lead to sin. Satan and his fallen angels recognize this in humans and tempt us to pursue our selfish desires to a destructive end. They are the catalyst of sin and evil. This is why there is such evil, anger, and war upon our planet.

But when Jesus returns and sets up His earthly kingdom, Satan is bound and locked into the bottomless pit for 1000 years. Christ's brothers and sisters, resurrected with immortal bodies, serve as His distributed government across the earth. Together they will rule over all of the earth for 1000 years. Remember, God has a distinct purpose for these 1000 years. It is when His children get their university education in the proper use of power and authority in government. Whereas power and authority in war is simple and can be wielded without finesse, the proper use of power and authority in government must be used gently and with wisdom. A heavy hand will result in tyranny; too light a hand will result in chaos. As mentioned in previous lessons, God does not want us practicing on each other and thus the saints will learn power and authority in governing by ruling over the wicked who have survived the seven years of the Tribulation. Although the wicked still have their sinful natures, without the catalyst of Satan and his fallen angels to accelerate wickedness, the earth and its inhabitants live a life of peace under the rule of Jesus and His brothers and sisters.

What do you think would happen if Satan were released from his prison? (Pause)

The Bible tells us exactly what will happen. At the end of the 1000 years, God's children have completed their training. Prophecies and promises to Israel have also been fulfilled. All of God's purposes upon the earth are complete. It is time for the children to graduate. And thus all of the saints return to Jerusalem, the seat of Jesus' throne, and Satan is released from his prison. He and his fallen angels immediately set about accelerating the evil of the wicked that have remained on the earth. All of the nations of the world rise up in one massive rebellion and march towards Jerusalem. Armies beyond number surround Jerusalem with the sole intent of destroying Jesus and all of the saints. But the Bible tells us the outcome of this war. For Jesus calls down fire from heaven and all of the armies are wiped out.

And with this God's plan for the earth is complete.

In this lesson we have learned a tremendous truth about the nature of mankind. It is our own selfish desires that lead to sin. But satanic temptation amplifies our selfish desires that lead to all kinds of evil and wickedness. Thus we must be aware that there is an enemy to our soul and to our relationship with God. Satan has been defeated by Jesus through His death upon the cross. But Satan is an ancient creature with vast experience and knowledge which he uses to tempt and seduce men and women. We must be on the alert to his devious plans and take authority and use the power of the Holy Spirit to defeat him. God's Word tells us to resist the devil and he will flee.

This lesson is **important** because it tells you what happens at the end of the 1000 years, when God's children have completed their training on ruling the earth.

The **main truth** of this lesson is that at the end of the 1,000 years, Satan raises an army to defeat Christ and His saints, which is destroyed by fire from heaven.

Let's **review** what you learned in this lesson.

1. The theologian Augustine said that within every man is what? [Pause 5 seconds]
A. If you said that within every man is a God-shaped hole, you are correct.
2. Without God to balance man's desire for self, what happens? [Pause]
A. If you said that without God to balance man's self, sin and wickedness results, then you are correct.
3. Satan and his fallen angels are a catalyst for what kind of behavior in mankind? [Pause]
A. If you said that Satan and his fallen angels accelerate man's selfish desires which lead to sin and wickedness, then you answered correctly.

Your **assignment** is to review this lesson at least three times. Discuss what you have learned with someone else. Include in your discussion how you can implement the power and authority of Jesus Christ in your own lives.