

Th131 God's Plan

Lesson Th131- 20 God Creates the Earth

"In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth." These are the very first words in the Bible. The all-powerful, all-knowing, holy God, who is light, truth, and love, had set into motion His plan to express His love by having children. This created universe would be the place where His children would live and come to know Him.

Spirit beings we call angels would be caretakers of His creation. The greatest of the angelic orders are cherubim. Lucifer was among the greatest of these and had authority over one third of all the angels and one third of the universe. He had an honored position in the throne room of God. Lucifer served God faithfully until sin was found in his heart, which resulted in his losing his position of honor and being expelled from God's throne room. Lucifer chose to become the opposite of God and, by so doing, created something that it was impossible for God to create; Lucifer created evil. On that day Lucifer became Satan, which means 'the adversary.'

Now Satan had authority over one third of the angels and over that part of the universe that they were caretakers of. All of these angels were under his delegated authority. The lesser angels obeyed the greater angels who obeyed the angelic princes who obeyed Satan. The values of a leader are slowly adopted by all of his followers. Satan's angels had been created good and pure. But when Lucifer chose to be evil and thus became Satan, he set into motion the corruption of all of the angels under his authority.

Over many millennia his evil influenced his angelic princes which in turn influenced his greater angels which finally influenced even the least of his angelic orders. All of the angels were obeying the commands of the angelic leadership above them. And since Satan was the source of the commands, all of his angels eventually followed him in his sin and became evil. Thus, one third of all the angels in creation became evil like their master, Satan. And now the universe was thrown into chaos. Satan and his angels continued to rule over their third of the universe and they were adversaries of God's plans and purposes.

This did not surprise God for He knows all things, including what will happen in the future. Satan would serve a temporary purpose in God's creation. God wanted children that He could love, and who would freely choose to love Him. This required that they have a choice. With the fall of Lucifer there was now choice in the universe. There was God and there was the adversary Lucifer who had become Satan.

We do not know how long it was between the creation of the universe and when sin was found in Lucifer's heart. Since time does not matter to an eternal God, it might have been billions of years. We do know that God then began the formation of that single place in His universe that is important to us—the formation of our earth. The Bible explains what happened next: "Now the earth was formless and empty, darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters. And God said 'Let there be light,' and there was light" (Gen 1:1-3).

God had begun His development of the earth, the moon, the sun, and all of the visible stars in the sky. He then created all of the plants and the trees and then the birds to fly in the sky and fish to dwell in the seas. Upon the land He created all of the animals. Everything that He created was designed to reproduce itself. Among all of the animals, fish, and birds He made male and female. And all of these produced offspring like their parents. Birds would hatch birds and fish would hatch fish and animals would give birth to animals like their parents. Even the plants created seeds that would grow into the same type of plant. This was all by God's design. And so the earth sprang forth with the great variety of life that God had designed and created. This life quickly spread and filled the earth.

God had one more act of creation to do. But first He would plant a garden. In the east, in a place called Eden, God planted a garden that would be called both 'The Garden of Eden,' and 'God's Garden.' Every type of plant and tree was planted in the garden. Trees that were beautiful and produced fruit that was good to eat were planted. He also planted two unique trees in the Garden that did not exist anywhere else on earth. God planted a Tree of Life and, in the middle of the Garden, He planted a Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil. There was also a river that flowed out of the garden that kept it watered and green. This river would be the headwaters of four major rivers that would water the land outside of the Garden. The Garden would be a special place created for a special purpose. The Garden would be the home of God's expression of love. It would be the home of His children.

Now all of God's creative work had not gone unnoticed. The universe is vast beyond imagination, with angels working as caretakers. One third of the universe was under Satan's authority and it was in that part of the universe that God chose to create the earth. Satan and his angels watched intently. "What was God doing? Why, all of this creative activity on this one small planet on the edge of one galaxy in this distant corner of God's massive universe?" Something significant was taking place, but for what purpose, neither Satan nor any of his angels could imagine. But if this planet earth was important to God then it would become important to Satan. Perhaps it would upon earth that Satan would get an opportunity to get revenge for the embarrassment that God had brought upon him when he was expelled from God's throne room.

Finally all of creation was ready for God to accomplish His purpose for the universe. It was time for Him to create His children. In our next lesson we will learn about the creation of God's children.

This lesson is **important** because it explains how God created the earth and the Garden as a place for His children, so they could experience His love.

The **main truth** of this lesson is that God created the earth as the place where His creation would choose to follow either God or Satan.

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

1. What is the meaning of the name Satan? [Pause 5 seconds]
 - A. If you said that Satan means 'adversary,' you are correct.

2. Why was the earth created? [Pause]

A. If you said that the earth was created as a place for God to create His children, then you are right.

3. What was the name of the garden that God planted? [Pause]

A. If you said the place was called the 'Garden of Eden' or 'God's Garden,' you answered correctly.

Your **assignment** is to review this lesson until you remember the sequence of events and are able to repeat the story to someone else. Then, tell someone this story and afterwards ask them questions to see if they understand these important truths.