

Th131 God's Plan

Lesson Th131-45 Review

Before anything existed, God existed. He is eternal. He was not born or created. God has no beginning and will never end. This is hard for us to understand. We are born, grow, mature, then age and eventually die. But God has always existed and will always exist.

God is all powerful. He has the power to do whatever He wants to do. God knows everything. He knows everything that is in the past, the present, and the future. God knows the very thoughts and desires of every man, woman, and child. God is everywhere at once. There is no place to go to hide from God.

Light describes God's being, holiness describes God's character, and love describes God's heart. The Bible tells us that God is love. His love is perfect. Now love is made perfect when there is someone to love. Perfect love is freely given, freely received, and freely returned. Perfect love is not forced upon someone, nor is it ever demanded in return.

It was God's perfect love that led Him to decide to have children. These children would be created in His image and likeness. God would freely love the children and wanted the children to freely choose to love Him in return. But in the place that God exists, there is only one choice—Him. If God created His children in His place, the love would be lacking choice. So God made a plan to create a place where He could create children and there would be the opportunity for choice.

And so God created the universe as a place for His children to live. The universe was the perfect place for God to create His children. But the universe was not ready for the children yet, as there was still only one choice, God. So God created spirit beings we call angels. The angels would be caretakers for the universe until God's children were born and came of age.

There is another order of angelic beings called cherubim. The cherubim are usually associated with the presence of God. There are four cherubim that fly above God's throne at all times crying out "Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord God Almighty, who was, and is, and is to come."

One of these cherubim flying above God's throne was called Lucifer. One-third of all the angels in the universe were under his authority. He was perfect. He faithfully served God for countless millennia until sin was found in his heart. Since God is holy and will not allow sin to exist in His presence, He expelled Lucifer from the throne room. Although Lucifer maintained his power and authority over one-third of the universe, he no longer had the honor and position as an anointed cherub flying above God's throne. Lucifer, embarrassed and angered by this,

chose to become the opposite of God. Since God was good, Lucifer would become the opposite. He would be evil. Since God was love, Lucifer would become hate. And by this choice evil, hatred, darkness, and lies entered into God's perfect universe. Since God is the fair and just judge, God would have to wait for Lucifer, known as Satan, to break a law before he could be condemned.

The entire universe was thrown into chaos at Satan's fall. But God was not worried. He knew in advance that this would happen. His patient waiting was over. There were now two choices in the universe: God or Lucifer.

God then created and formed the earth as the place where his children would exist. He created Adam and Eve as his first children and placed them in the Garden of Eden. But Satan, disguised as a serpent, tempted them to eat of the tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil. Upon eating the fruit, Adam and Eve sinned and were separated from God. Their punishment was banishment from Eden, lest they eat from the Tree of Life. They would grow old and die.

The 'grave' was divided into two places—a hot place we call 'hell' for the wicked, and a pleasant place called 'Paradise' for the righteous. The souls and spirits of everyone who died went to one of these places in the grave. God's holiness demanded that there was a payment or penalty for sin and we learn from the apostle Paul that "the wages of sin is death." Although the righteous offered sacrifices for their sins, the blood of an animal could never pay the price for a human's sin. And thus Satan battled against God by corrupting mankind, God's ultimate creation, and the grave grew larger and larger.

But God had promised Adam and Eve that one day one of her descendants would destroy the power of Satan. In the fullness of time God's Son left heaven to be born as a human, named Jesus. Satan tried to tempt him and destroy him, but Jesus always did what was right. He never sinned and thus, never came under Satan's authority. Finally, Satan determined to destroy Jesus once and for all. He entered into one of Jesus disciples, named Judas, and betrayed Jesus to His death. Jesus was crucified and died. He was then buried in a borrowed tomb. But Satan made a crucial mistake. He had murdered an innocent man. And thus, for the first time in history, he had committed a punishable crime. Jesus was raised from the dead and Satan was condemned.

Jesus gave His power and authority to the church, which for the past 2000 years has practiced this power and authority over Satan by making disciples and being witnesses for Christ. One day Jesus will return for all Christians. We call this event the 'Rapture.' In a single moment every righteous believer will suddenly be changed and the righteous dead will come back to life, all with brand-new immortal bodies. They will then meet Jesus in the clouds.

A terrible time of judgment will come upon the earth called the ‘Tribulation.’ This will last for seven years. Satan and his fallen angels will be cast down to the earth halfway through the Tribulation. At the end of the Tribulation, Jesus and all of the saints will come back to the earth. Satan will be locked into the bottomless pit for 1000 years while Jesus and the saints rule in peace upon the earth. During these 1000 years the saints are learning how to use God's power and authority in government.

At the end of the 1000 years Satan is released from the bottomless pit for a short season. He will deceive all of the wicked from around the earth and lead them as an army to try and destroy Jesus and the saints. But fire will come from heaven and destroy all of them. Satan and his angels are then thrown into a lake of fire. There they will be tormented day and night forever.

All of the wicked are then raised from the dead. They stand before God and are judged for their lives and actions. Anyone who has not been forgiven through faith in Christ will be cast into the lake of fire where they will burn along with Satan for all of eternity.

The saints will also have a judgment—not to determine whether they are God's children or not, but rather they are judged according to how they used God's power and authority upon the earth. This will be a judgment of their works. Those who were faithful upon the earth will be given great authority in heaven. Others will be saved, but will have little or no reward.

Finally, God's plan to have children of love will come to completion as Jesus receives His inheritance. Jesus will inherit everything. This includes heaven, the physical universe, and all of the angels. Jesus will share His inheritance with us, His brothers and sisters. Each will receive a portion of the inheritance according to their faithfulness in this life. And with the children receiving their inheritance, God's plan for all of creation becomes complete.

The **purpose of this course** was to establish an overview of God, His purposes, and His relationship with mankind. From this course the student should be able to grasp the uniqueness of Christianity and be able to be a witness of Christ to the unbeliever. Every student should study the lessons of this course until they are able to tell the whole story of “God’s Plan.”