

Peace be with you. We greet you in the name of God, the Lord of peace. He wants everyone to understand and submit to the way of righteousness that He has established, and have true peace with Him forever. We look forward to presenting to you the third programme in our series *The Way of Righteousness*. Please don't worry if you've missed any of the other programmes; we always do a recap.

In our last program, we read the first verse in the Holy Scriptures, which says: *"In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth."* We saw that everything has a beginning except God. In the beginning, when there was nothing, only One was living. That One was **God**. Only He existed in the beginning. God is the Lord of Eternity. God is great and has no equal! He has no beginning and no end. He has no needs. He is not limited. God is spirit and can be everywhere at once. He is above everything and everyone. He fills everything. He sees everything. He knows everything. He is unique. God is great! That is why the Holy Scriptures say, *"He alone is immortal and lives in unapproachable light, whom no one has seen or can see. To him be honor and might forever! Amen!"*

Today we begin our third lesson in the Scriptures of the Prophets. We intend to consider what God's Word teaches about **the angels and Satan**. Do you know where angels come from? Or where Satan and demons come from? We could not know about such things if God had not told them to us. But God tells us about them in His Word. Let us therefore carefully examine the Holy Scriptures, so that we might know the truth concerning the angels and Satan.

We remind you that, in *The Way of Righteousness* series, we are doing a chronological study of the Writings of the Prophets-from beginning to end. That is why, in the last broadcast, we studied God Himself, because God is the One who existed in the beginning. And, God willing, in our next lesson, we will tell the story of how God made the world and all that is in it. However, before God created people and the world in which we live, there

was something else He created **first: the angels.**

The Word of God tells us much about angels. Today we will try to summarize the more important truths concerning these created beings. God's Word tells us that long, long ago, God, who is spirit, created **many other spirits** called *angels*. The Scriptures say, "*All the angels are spirits.*" "*[God] makes his angels winds, His servants flames of fire.*" Thus, the Scriptures teach us that the angels, like God, are spirits. Their form is compared with wind and fire. We cannot see the wind. No one can touch fire. That is how it is with the angels of God. God did not create them with bodies such as we have. We humans are made of body and spirit. However, the angels are only spirits. That is why we cannot see them.

How many angels did God create? What do the Scriptures say about this? It says that God created many, many spirits beyond what anyone can count. On high, in the presence of God, the Scriptures say there are "*many angels, numbering thousands upon thousands, and ten thousand times ten thousand.*"

God our Lord is great! God, who has no limit, created for Himself thousands and thousands of beautiful, good and wise angels. The Scriptures tell us that the angels of God have **great power**. They are more powerful than we are. Yet like all creatures, they have their limitations. They are **not all-powerful**. They cannot be everywhere and they do not know everything. They are merely creatures. Only One is without limits. That One is God.

Something else we must understand about the angels is this: When God created the angels they were **holy creatures**, all of them. In the beginning, there were no evil angels. In the beginning, the Devil, or *Iblis*, in Arabic did not yet exist. There were no evil spirits. God did not create any evil angels. We must retain this truth in our minds: God can do anything, except one thing. God cannot do what is evil. Let us not forget this. God cannot create what is bad because He is **good**. God cannot make mistakes because He is **perfect**. Sin cannot come forth from Him because He is **pure and holy**. Everything that

God thinks and says and does is good and perfect. That is why the Scriptures say: "*God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does he tempt anyone.*"

Well then, where does evil come from? We will see God's answer shortly. First, however, there is something else we must know about the angels.

Why did God create the angels? The Scriptures teach us that God created them so that they could be with God **to love Him, to praise Him and to serve Him** in the joy of heaven forever. God owned them, all of them, because He created them. They all dwelt in the "house" of God on high, in heaven, far beyond the sun, moon and stars. Did you know that there is **a special place where God dwells**? True, in our last lesson we learned that God is everywhere. However, the Scriptures also teach us about a wonderful place in the universe that is holy, full of light and beauty, where God lives and displays all His glory. This is the place that the prophets of God call *The presence of God* or *Heaven* or *Paradise*. This is where God dwells with His holy angels.

There is something else which we need to know about the angels. It is this: The angels are **not all the same**. Some angels are more beautiful and wiser than others. Some angels surround the throne of God in heaven. Others help and protect people. Other angels, like **Gabriel** and **Michael**, stand in the presence of God and are sent forth to accomplish special missions on the earth.

Some angels oversee others.

Have you ever heard the name **Lucifer**? The Word of God tells us that there was a time when Lucifer was the chief of all the angels. If you know the story of Lucifer, you know where **Satan** himself comes from.

The Scriptures tell us that when God first created the angels, **Lucifer was the most beautiful, the most powerful, and the wisest of them all**. Lucifer means *the shining one*. Lucifer was superior to all the other angels in knowledge and wisdom, and in power

and authority. God gave him beauty and intelligence beyond measure. Lucifer should have worshipped God, loved him and obeyed him forever, because God created him and greatly blessed him. However, in the Writings of the Prophets we read that one day Lucifer showed contempt for God, and his heart was filled with **pride**. Lucifer said in his heart, "**I will ascend to heaven; I will raise my throne above the stars of God; I will sit enthroned... I will ascend above the tops of the clouds; I will make myself like the Most High God!**"

Incredible! Lucifer, who had nothing apart from what God had given him, wanted to steal the glory of God, the Most High! And not only did Lucifer rebel against God, but the Scriptures say **one third of the angels** who were in heaven chose to turn their backs on the Lord God, and to follow Lucifer in his sin.

However God is God, and God knew everything that Lucifer and his angels intended to do. As we already learned in our last study, no one can do anything in secret before God, because God knows everything before it even happens! God saw the sin that was in the heart of Lucifer and in the hearts of the angels who followed him.

So what happened? What did God do? Would God allow Lucifer, who had rebelled against Him, to take His place? Could God condone sin? **Could God live together with the sin of pride and rebellion?** Never! The Writings of the Prophets teach us that God, our God, is holy and cannot look on evil. God cannot tolerate sin. He will not give His glory to another. God is unique; no one can replace Him! Thus, the Scriptures say that **God expelled Lucifer and his evil angels from His holy presence**. Lucifer and those who followed him could no longer live in heaven, in the house of God, because they had sinned by wanting to replace God. That is why God cast out Lucifer and his evil angels. God, who is holy, must judge and punish everyone who rebels against Him.

After Lucifer sinned, his name was changed. He was no longer called Lucifer, *the shining one*, but *Satan*. Satan means *Adversary*. Lucifer had become God's enemy. And, as you

know, Satan and his angels still reject God and all that is good. They reject the Word of God and deny it. Satan fights against God and tries to ruin and hinder God's plans. However, God is the great Judge, and no one can win against Him! As the old African saying goes: "An egg should not wrestle with a rock!"

The Holy Scriptures tell us that after God expelled Satan and his angels, He created for them **the fires of hell** which are never extinguished. There is a day coming when God will cast into that fire, Satan and his angels, and all who follow them. Thus, it is written: "*They will be tormented day and night for ever and ever.*"

However the Scriptures teach us that Satan is not yet in the fire. The Word of God says that **Satan is in the world** and fights against God. He is the Destroyer. He wants to destroy God's work. He wants men, whom God created, to perish and go to hell with him. The Word of God says that **most people are under the control of Satan, but they do not know it** because Satan is a **deceiver**. Thus, the Scripture says, "*Satan himself masquerades as an angel of light.*"

He tries to deceive men so that they will not pay attention to the Word of God. That is why one of God's prophets wrote, "*Be alert! Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour.*" Beware! The devil wants to destroy you forever!

But praise be to God! He has given us His Word so that we can escape the power of Satan. The Scriptures say, "*You will know the truth, and the truth will set you free!*"

Do you know the truth that can free you from the terrible devices of Satan? Let us not forget: **Satan** is wiser than we are. **But God** is wiser than Satan. **Satan** is stronger than we are. **But God** is stronger than Satan. Do you know the Word of Truth that can deliver you from Satan's power? Many people do not like to hear God's truth. Why do people refuse to listen to the truth? It is because the devil has deceived them. He encourages them to believe what is not true. To be sure, the truth is not always pleasant to hear. "Truth

is a hot pepper." However, if you know the truth of God's Word, and believe it, you will be freed from Satan's power. **God's truth** can free people from **Satan's lies**. But you must know the truth and believe it!

Listen to what the Word of God says: *"Dear friends, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God, because many false prophets have gone out into the world."*

"Do not treat [the words of the prophets] with contempt. Test everything. Hold on to the good. Avoid every kind of evil."

Do you really know what the prophets of God have written? Do you understand the Word of Truth? Do you believe it in your heart?

Thank you for listening. We invite you to join us in the next broadcast when we will study together how God created the world. If you have any questions about anything that we have studied today, please write to:

"The Way of Righteousness" PO Box 4766, Greenville, SC 29608, USA

That address again is PO Box 4766, Greenville, SC 29608

Or simply visit our website at TWOR.com that website again is TWOR.com

We look forward to being with you next time. May God bless you as you consider the wonderful promise in His Word that says,

"You will know the truth, and the truth will set you free!"