

MAILBOX BIBLE COURSE

LESSON 1: SPIRIT WORLD BIBLE STUDY

Welcome to our Mailbox Bible Study Course. We trust you will enjoy these lessons as much as we did composing them. We are glad to be able to serve the Lord and you in this way. Many are being saved and helped through these simple Bible lessons. We suggest that you try to do one lesson each week; this will keep your interest in them active. This particular course contains eight lessons on Spirit World Bible Studies. Please save this lesson onto your computer, read the lesson carefully, full in the answers in the blocks provided then attach this lesson into an email addresses to us biblelessons@uniserve.com and then push your send button. We will then evaluate and return any corrections to you with your next lesson. On completion of the full course, you will receive a beautifully presented certificate. Should you have difficulty opening or sending this file to us, please let us know by return email. We suggest that you print these lessons and put them in a binder for future studies.

May God richly bless you as you proceed?

Your Instructor

Harold Smith

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LESSON 1: SPIRIT WORLD

Student Update

We are deeply grateful to the author, Melvin Jones, for permission to make this material available through Source of Light Ministries. In light of the tremendous inroads being made by the occult in United States and around the world, this should be a vital study. In an effort to preserve the author's work in this material, make note of more recent developments since the writing of this study, especially Lesson 7, "Witchcraft and Occultism Today." The first and most obvious update is to note that in all areas discussed, the number of persons involved has greatly increased. While it is difficult to determine accurate counts, every report indicates that Satan is extending his influence in the areas of the occult to millions. The second observation is that while all of the forces discussed in Lesson 7 are still active and influential, new developments, movements and personalities are emerging. For example, in recent years the use of heroin and cocaine has become more widespread. Cocaine in crystalline form, "crack," is equally addictive and destructive. Marijuana continues to be a popular reliever of tension and inhibitions, as is alcohol. Drug use and trafficking is an atmosphere in which the spirit world thrives. "Guru" followers, eastern religions and "world unification" groups are captivating the spirits of thousands as magnetic leaders seek more converts. The lyrics of popular music, especially "rock," declare a new philosophy of life and society, which denies a personal salvation through Jesus Christ. Thirdly, the New Age Movement, promoted by popular media personalities, is perhaps the most pervasive modern movement to make use of the powers of the spirit world. New Age shifts the source of spiritual power from God to man and opens the minds of individual spirit-world influence. Many people see a strong link between the New Age Movement and the philosophy called "humanism" which tries to infiltrate education and social thought with a man-as-God centeredness. A personal God is denied and a world- spirit that will guide to whatever is good for the individual is promoted. The natural desire we all have for world peace, and for harmony with nature and the environment, is exploited by these movements. The authority of God-

revealed truth through the Bible is replaced by each person seeking his own kind of truth through oneness with the spirit world.

How to Study the Course

You will need a Bible, a pen (or pencil and this lesson). Be sure to study each lesson carefully. Each Lesson includes:

1. Bible Study assignment called "Self Check"
2. Key Verse from the Bible to be memorized.

Read each lesson several times. Underline important words phrases, and be sure to look up all Bible references. Read the passages as you are studying the lesson. This will help you to see what God has to say on that particular point. This is very important. After you feel that you have learned the material, fill in the ' Check. But **DO NOT** send the answers to these questions to us. Answers to these questions will be found at the bottom of the test page. Be sure to memorize the Key Verses, as you will be tested for these on the test at the end of the lesson. To help in memorizing, write out the memory verse on a blank card or paper. When you have completed the Study of one lesson in this Course,

review the materials, then fill in the test questions. It is impossible to understand the Bible without the aid of the Holy Spirit. That is why prayer is so important. As you study and complete the examinations, pray that the Holy Spirit will guide and teach you these Bible truths. We want everyone to do as well as possible, so do not rush through the lesson. if some part of the study is not clear to you, write us. Read and follow the instructions very carefully. If you have questions as you study, please write. Your instructor wants to be helpful to you.

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THE ORIGIN AND CHARACTER OF ANGELS

In the scientific age in which we live, people have little understanding of angels, and many people do not believe in them. People speak of angels in a light manner and call certain humans beings "angels," using the word in an endearing sort of way. But, by large and far, people do not believe such spirit beings really exist. Generally speaking, people throughout the centuries believed in spirit beings of some sort. People in all parts of world have worshiped such beings, usually the bad spirits demons. It is said that the great philosopher Socrates often spoke of a "good demon" attending him, guiding him and directing wise thoughts. It is also said that Plato taught that there were beings of a higher kind, who were appointed as guardians to men. Unbelievers usually think of these spirit beings as having been human beings who have died and whose spirits have been released to come back and either help or hinder people on earth.

GOD'S WORD, OUR SOURCE OF INFORMATION

God's Word gives us some definite and clear information about spirit beings, among whom are those called "angels." We need not take man's ideas about this matter; rather, we can believe God's revelation, for God Himself is a Spirit (John 4:24) and is Creator of angels (Ps. 148:2-5). The existence of angels is clearly taught in the Bible (Hebrews 1:4-7). Angels are mentioned nearly 300 times in the Scriptures. While angels exist, we cannot see them, for they are spirit beings. In this way they are unlike us, for we possess both spirits and bodies. In their ordinary form, angels have no physical appearance, being without flesh and blood (Psalms 104:4; Hebrews 1:14) However, on certain occasions they have been given power to appear in human bodies. The two angels who were sent to deliver Lot from Sodom were in human form (Gen. 19:13, 15-17). The angel who appeared to Manoah and his wife, promising them a child (Samson), appeared to be a human messenger of God (Judges 13:2, 21). The angels who were at the empty tomb after the resurrection of Christ appeared as men in shining garments (Luke 24:4)

THE ORIGIN OF ALL ANGELS

All angels, whether now good or bad, were created by God: "For by Him all things were created, both in the heavens and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or ruler or authorities--all things have been created by Him and for Him. (Col. 1:16). We do not know when God created the angels, but it must have been a long time ago, before He created the earth (Job 38:6, 7). The angels were created as God's servants, or messengers. The Bible mentions a number of instances when these messengers appeared to men to bring them some word from God Himself. The word "angel" means "messenger," and it seems that angels were meant to be available to do God's bidding.

UNIQUENESS OF ANGELS

Angelic beings are not spoken of as "sons of angels," although human beings are called "sons of men." This is because angels are not like human beings, where succeeding generations produced by their parents. Rather, each angel is a unique permanent being, created individually by God at some time in distant past. Angels have personalities and are intelligent able to think and act as independent beings. They are not omniscient (Matthew 24:36; 1 Peter 1:12), but they do have great intelligence. They have greater power than man has (Psalms 8:4, 5; 2 Peter 2:11. Angels are interested in mankind (I Corinthians 4:9; 1 Peter 1:12). They rejoice when people turn from their sin and personally trust Christ as their Saviour. (Luke 15:10) Angelic beings often praise God (Psalms 148:2; Revelation 5:11, 12.)

GOOD AND BAD ANGELS

Some of the angels rebelled against God and chose to follow Satan (or Lucifer, as he was then called). In doing this, they became the messengers of Satan rather than the messengers of God. We do not know just when this rebellion took place, but it was apparently long before God created man and placed him on the earth. We will speak of the angels who remained true to God as holy, or good, angels and the ones who followed Satan as fallen, or bad, angels. This matter will be taken up in more detail when we study about Satan in later lessons, because he led the rebellion against God. Some of these bad angels are what we now speak of as "demons" and peak mainly of the good angels who did not rebel against God but are His messengers today.

THE NUMBER OF ANGELS

The Word of God does not tell us how many angels God created but we know that He must have created millions upon millions of them, perhaps billions. In Hebrews 12:22 we read of myriads angels. In Revelation 5:11, John wrote: "I heard the voice of many angels around about the throne and the beasts and the elders: and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands" (KJV). These figures also would indicate something over 100 million angels. Thus we can see that there must be a great host of angels, certainly enough for God to assign a guardian angel to

each one who believes in the Lord Jesus Christ. When we get to heaven, it will be wonderful to see these beautiful creatures, millions upon millions of them, eager to do God's bidding. What a sight it will be to see this great host someday! Angels do not increase or decrease in number, because God does not create more, and they do not marry or die. Because angels do not have material bodies, they do not experience growth, old age or death. Angels are immortal (not subject to death) because God made them that way. They worship God and work for Him forever. When the Lord Jesus Christ was discussing the future life, He indicated that angels do not marry (Matthew 22:30). Jesus also indicated that angels do not die (Luke 20:35, 36). Man dies because of the sinfulness of the human race, resulting from Adam's fall. Of course, some angels also sinned, as we have already mentioned. However, since they are spirit beings, they were not judged by physical death, but they will be judged in a special way sometime in the future. Some of the wicked angels are now being held in chains and in darkness awaiting judgement (Jude 1:6) while others, called "demons," obey Satan's commands.

WHERE ANGELS DWELL

The Word of God indicates that angels inhabit the entire universe. We know that they dwell in heavens (Mark 12:25; 13:32; Luke 2:15; John 1:51) and many of them are in the very presence of God. Others are found throughout the vast expanse of the universe. No doubt angels have fixed places of abode and assigned places, or areas of activity.

RANK AND CLASSIFICATIONS OF ANGELS

Angels are classified in different ranks, such as thrones, dominions, principalities and powers (Colossians 1:16; Romans 8:3). Scripture specifically mentions two groups of angels. The cherubim's are guardians of God's holiness (see Genesis 3:24; Exodus 25:1) The other group--the seraphim's - are involved in cleansing God's people (Isaiah 6:6, 7). The Bible also mentions two specific angels by name. Michael, which means, "who is like God," is referred to in Daniel 12:1, 1:9 and Revelation 12:7. The name Gabriel means "man of God." He is always connected with a special mission (see Daniel 8:16; Luke 1:19, 26). Another angel mentioned in the Old Testament is "the angel the Lord." He appeared to Hagar (Genesis 16:7-11), Abraham, Moses, (Exodus 3:2) and David (1 Chronicles 21:15, 16). Most Bible scholars believe that the term "the angel of the Lord" refers to God the Son before He took on human form.

REDEMPTION NOT FOR ANGELS

Great and powerful as angels are, many of them sinned and rebelled against God, as we mentioned earlier. We will study about this in more detail in a later lesson. The amazing thing is that God did not provide redemption for these fallen angels. The only thing that awaits them is certain, terrible judgment. God in His love and mercy provided salvation for us human beings, who also sinned and rebelled against Him. It seems too good to be true, but the Word of God declares that this is so. He loved us enough that He gave His only Son, who is higher, the angels, to come and die on the cross to redeem us from our sins so that we need not face God's judgment. When He died on cross, He took the punishment that we deserve. If we have trusted Jesus Christ as our personal Saviour, we can rejoice that our sins have been forgiven. We do not know why God has not provided redemption for angels, but He has provided redemption for us, and we should never cease to thank Him for this. He could have left us in our sins, facing judgment, just as He did the angels, but He chose otherwise. Have you trusted Jesus as your Saviour? If not, do it now! Then someday, when you see Christ, you will see these glorious angelic beings who did not sin, the ones who remained true to God. You will see them in heaven around His throne worshiping the Lord Jesus Christ, who loved us and gave Himself for us them.

SELF-CHECK

1. What does the word "angel" mean? _____

2. How did angels originate? _____
3. What did some angels do that made them "fallen" or "bad angels"? _____
4. Name two angels mentioned in the Bible. _____.
5. What has God provided for us but not for angels? _____

Memorize Luke 15:10.

TEST PAGE OF LESSON 1 OF SPIRIT WORLD BIBLE STUDY

Fill in the blanks:

1. The existence of angels is clearly taught in the _____
2. The word "angel" means “_____”
3. All angels, whether now good or bad, were _____ God.
4. Angels have personalities and are _____ and able to think and act as independent beings.
5. Some of the angels’ _____ against God and chose to follow _____.

TRUE (yes) or FALSE (no)

6. The Bible tells us, "God created possibly one billion angels" - TRUE FALSE
7. Angels do not experience growth, old age or death. - TRUE FALSE
8. God created each angel individually. - TRUE FALSE
9. Angels are organized into various ranks. - TRUE FALSE
10. God has provided salvation for human beings, but no redemption was provided for fallen, sinful angels. - TRUE FALSE

Write Luke 15:10 from memory on the lines below.

ANSWERS TO SELF-CHECK LESSON 1

1. Messenger
 2. God created them
 3. They rebelled against God and followed Satan
 4. Michael, Gabriel and the Angel of the Lord
 5. Redemption or salvation
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Email Bible Lesson 26
Spirit World Bible Study - Lesson 1 of 8 (spirit-world-01)

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QUESTIONS & COMMENTS:

Once you have completed this lesson, please attach it to an email addressed to us, and send it. We will then check it, send through any corrections and send you the next lesson. If there is something that you do not understand, please send us an email for an explanation. If you do not hear from us within two days of emailing us, please re-send it. Do you have a friend that would like to do these lessons? If so, email us their details and we will send them the list. Thank you.