

Lecture 10: Supernatural Beings

“Good morning, class,” Professor Grimes said cheerfully. “Today we’re going to talk about supernatural beings.”

“You mean superheroes?” Wally asked. “I’m a big fan of Superman. Is he in the Bible?”

“Not exactly,” the professor replied. “Now, Samson is in the Bible, and he is probably the closest thing you will find to a real-life superhero. His strength was quite astounding! Sadly, his morals were terrible and his life didn’t turn out well. But we’re not going to talk about supermen, or X-Men, or anything of that nature. Instead we are going to talk about supernatural beings – namely, angels and demons.”

“My grandfather is an angel,” Isaac commented. “He died a year ago.”

“I’m sorry for your loss, young man, but I’m afraid that your grandfather is *not* an

angel. Despite what most people think, human beings do not become angels when they die. You see, angels are a special class of beings that were created by God for a particular purpose. It is impossible for anyone to become an angel.”

Wally spoke up. “But what if you earn your wings?”

The professor sighed. *This is going to be a long day*, he thought to himself. “As I said before, angels are a separate type of being. You can no more become an angel than you could become a tiger or an ostrich. People *cannot* change their species. Second, most of the angels that appear in the Bible don’t even have wings. The seraphim and the cherubim have wings, but the angels that God uses as messengers are never described as having wings.”

“Then—” Wally began, but the professor interrupted him.

“As I was saying, God created angels on the first day of the Creation week, and they witnessed God’s creation of the world. Job 38:7 tells us that they actually shouted for joy as they witnessed that glorious moment.

Angels are both immortal and very powerful. Also – and I want to emphasize this – they do *not* spend their time in Heaven floating around and playing harps. Instead they are *warriors*. They protect the people of God and they resist the forces of the devil.

“I’d also like to point out that all angels mentioned in the Bible are male. There is no hint that female angels even exist.”

“Then how do they reproduce?” Brad asked.

“They *don’t* reproduce. Every single angel was formed by a divine act of creation by God Himself. In Mark 12:25 Jesus told us that angels do not marry or have children. Their purpose is to serve God, and God uses them to protect His people.”

Iris spoke up. “Don’t angels do miracles?”

“Absolutely! Angels are both wise and powerful, and God has used them at key moments all throughout history. For example, in Matthew 28:2 we are told that an angel rolled away the stone from Christ’s tomb. Acts 12:5-10 tells us of a time when an angel freed the apostle Peter from prison. 2 Kings 19:35 recounts the time when an angel

assassinated the entire army of the king of Assyria in a *single night*, killing 185,000 people. Yet, the power of angels is not unlimited. During the time of Daniel an angel tried to get to him to deliver a message, but was unable to do so. Daniel 10:13 says that Michael the archangel had to come and help in order to break through the satanic line.”

“Why didn’t one of the other archangels come?” Wally asked.

“Because there is only *one* archangel, and that is Michael. He is the captain of the angels. Jude 1:9 even mentions a time when he stood against the devil himself.”

“Isn’t the devil a fallen angel?” Iris asked.

“That is correct. In fact, all of the demons were originally angels. Lucifer – who fell and became the devil – was originally created as the highest angel. Ezekiel 28:16 says that he was the ‘covering cherub’. All of the other cherubs were positioned below the throne of God, but Lucifer was positioned above the throne – as a type of covering, you might say. The Bible says that Lucifer was full of beauty and wisdom and was clothed with precious gems – but that beauty corrupted him. He led

a revolt against God and a third of the angels joined him. That is when some of the angels became demons.”

“And God threw them out of Heaven,” Brad said.

Professor Grimes shook his head. “While it is true that Satan spends his time roaming over the Earth, seeking to cause harm to those who live there, it is *not* true that his access to Heaven has been revoked. In Job 1 we are told that Satan regularly goes to Heaven and stands before God, and while he is there he accuses God’s people and tries to get God to curse them. In fact, the name ‘Satan’ actually means ‘the accuser’. Revelation 12:7-10 tells us that Satan will not be cast out of Heaven until midway through the Tribulation. That is when he will lose his ability to accuse God’s people.”

Iris spoke up. “Is it true that we have guardian angels?”

“That’s a good question,” Professor Grimes said. “The Bible does tell us that God uses His angels to guard His people. However, the Bible *doesn’t* say that each person has their own angel assigned to them who

watches over them 24/7. In the case of Lot, God sent a pair of angels to him when he was in danger, and they dragged him out of Sodom right before God destroyed it. It's possible that we do have angels who watch over us all the time, but it's also possible that God only sends His angels to us when we actually need them. In either case God does use His angels to protect us.

“However, Revelation 22:8-9 tells us that we are *not* allowed to worship angels. Prayer and worship are reserved for God alone. Angels are quite powerful and they have done amazing things, but they are not deity and should not be treated as deity.”

“Doesn't 'angel' mean 'messenger'?” Iris asked.

“That's correct. Angels delivered God's messages quite a few times. For example, in Luke 1:26-38 the angel Gabriel told Mary that she was going to give birth to Christ. In that same chapter an angel told Elizabeth's husband Zecharias that Elizabeth was going to give birth to John the Baptist – and then took away Zecharias' power to speak when he doubted the angel's word. In Luke 2:9-14

angels announced the birth of Christ to shepherds – but, and I want to emphasize this, they did *not* sing. They *said* that Christ was born but they did not *sing* about it. People attribute far too much singing to angels. They are not some sort of musical group.”

The professor glanced through his notes. “One other thing about angels that might interest you is that they occasionally assist God in forming His plans. I Kings 22 records a time when God asked the angels in Heaven what they thought would be the best way to have King Ahab die in battle. God then took their suggestions, picked the one that He liked the best, and had the angel execute that plan.

“Now, I want to emphasize that God did *not* do this because He was confused, or because he didn’t have any good ideas, or because he wasn’t sure how to handle the situation. God has all knowledge and all power and is perfectly capable of carrying out His affairs without the help of angels – or without *our* help, for that matter. But just as God chooses to work through us to spread the gospel, God also chooses to work His will

through angels.”

“That is really weird,” Wally said.

“The Bible is full of amazing things,” the professor replied. “People who don’t read their Bibles miss out on all sorts of astonishing truths. For example, Daniel 4 tells us that there are times when angels actually take the initiative to do things on behalf of the glory of God. In other words, although angels do carry out God’s commands, they are not unfeeling robots who simply wait around until they get an order. They are capable of taking the initiative and being proactive.

“Which brings us to demons. They, unfortunately, are very proactive in the spread of evil. As I said earlier, demons are angels who rebelled against God and chose the path of evil. They are *not* some kind of separate species. Also, despite what Mormons will try to tell you, the devil is *not* the brother of Christ. Jesus is the uncreated God; the devil is a created angel.

“It’s also worth noting that Revelation 12:4 indicates that only one-third of the angels participated in Satan’s rebellion. This

means that angels outnumber demons 2-to-1.”

Brad interrupted. “Don’t the demons run Hell and torment people and stuff?”

Professor Grimes sighed. “Haven’t we already covered this? Demons only torment people in *this* life. They do not run Hell, and the devil is not Hell’s CEO. In fact, God created Hell as a place to torment demons. Demons do not want to go to Hell any more than you do; in fact, Matthew 8:29 tells us that when Jesus walked the Earth the demons were terrified that He was going to begin tormenting them ‘before the time’.

“Demons know their fate. One day Jesus will cast them into the Lake of Fire, where they will be tormented day and night, forever and ever. They will *not* be tormenting others; instead they will be endlessly tortured. Satan’s reign will last for a while longer, but Revelation 20:10 tells us that he will join the damned in the eternal flames. His doom is assured and they know it.”

Isaac spoke up. “You know, I bet the war in Heaven was really something. I wish I had been there to see it.”

Professor Grimes looked at him. “The war in Heaven hasn’t happened yet. That battle takes place halfway during the Tribulation, after the Church has been raptured and is in Heaven. If you are a genuine Christian then you will be in Heaven when it occurs. You aren’t going to miss it.”

“But I thought it happened when Satan rebelled,” Isaac replied.

“I’m afraid not – and that is why it is so important for people to read their Bibles, instead of just believing everything they are told. Revelation 12 clearly indicates that the famous War in Heaven has *not* happened yet. First of all, Revelation puts it chronologically in the middle of the Tribulation, and the Tribulation hasn’t happened yet. Second, when Satan is cast out of Heaven he no longer has access to Heaven and he can no longer accuse the saints – and yet in the book of Job the devil had no problem going before God and accusing Job. Since the rebellion of Satan took place long before Job was born, that means Satan had not yet lost his Heavenly access – and therefore the war couldn’t have taken place yet. Third, we are told that the

moment this war happens and Satan is evicted, the saints in Heaven rejoice because the accuser of the brethren is cast out. If that war happened at the beginning of time, there wouldn't have been any saints in Heaven to rejoice, and Satan couldn't possibly have earned the label of the accuser because there wouldn't have been any people around to accuse!"

"Oh," Isaac said.

"One thing I want to emphasize is that the devil is our adversary. I Peter 5:8 says he is a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour. He is your enemy and he very much wants to destroy your life. He actively resists the gospel and he has the power to cause great disasters. As we can see in the case of Job, not only did he strike Job with a terrible and painful illness, but he also killed Job's servants and children. In other words, Satan has the power to cause both illness and death – but only if God allows it."

Iris spoke up. "So Satan has to get permission from God before he does things?"

The professor nodded. "Job 1:10 tells us that God puts a hedge around His people, and

Satan can only get through it with God's permission. Now, there are times when God allows Satan through the hedge in order to further His plans or test His people. In the case of Job, God allowed him to be afflicted in order to test his faith. This goes back to another important truth – sometimes God's plan is carried out through pain and suffering. Joseph went through years of both slavery and prison in order to save the life of millions of people in the seven years of famine. Jesus Himself was tortured to death in order to save the souls of men. God's road for us is often a painful one.

“Now, I want to emphasize that not all illness is caused by the curse of Satan. There are a lot of things that happen because we live in a fallen world. But there are other times when our lives are touched by evil and we fall under satanic attack. That is why Paul said in Ephesians 6 to put on the full armor of God, so we can resist the devil's attacks.”

Iris spoke up. “But how can we tell the difference between ordinary suffering and demonic suffering?”

“Well, young lady, the truth is that

suffering is suffering. It's really not that important to determine *why* a tragedy happened to us – that is, as long as it wasn't caused by our own stupidity. If we burn our own house down, recognizing that and correcting it is *very* important. And if we become ill because we abused drugs and destroyed our body, then we need to learn from that as well. But when something that is beyond our control afflicts us and makes our life hard, the important thing is to trust God and use His grace to work our way through it – not to try to guess what God is doing. Leave God's purposes up to God. Your job is to be faithful in all circumstances of life.”

“So how do we fight the devil?” Iris asked.

“With the armor of God,” the professor replied. “It's all in Ephesians 6. I don't have time here to do a thorough exegesis of that passage, but you should definitely read it when you have a chance. The key to fighting the devil is *resisting him*. Know what the Bible really says and stand firm in its truth. When you are tempted, stand on the commands of God and refuse to give in to evil. When you are tempted to doubt, choose instead to have

faith in God. The great problem that many people have when fighting the devil is that they don't put up a struggle. When the devil tempts them they just give right in without even thinking about it. But if you fight him – if you believe what the Bible says and choose to stand your ground – you *will* win, because the devil does not have any power over Christians. Satan *cannot* force you to sin. All he can do is ask you to sin, and you must then agree. If you don't agree then there's nothing he can do."

Wally spoke up. "So where do aliens fit into all this?"

Professor Grimes hesitated. "Aliens and ghosts are both covered in my Paranormal Studies 313 class. In that course I cover both of those groups in detail. However, since this is probably going to be the last semester that this university ever sees, I suppose it wouldn't hurt to mention them briefly.³⁴"

³⁴ This section is a brief summary of the chapter on aliens from *Paranormal Studies 313*. That same material can also be found in my book *Class 4: Supernatural Beings*. (In fact, this entire chapter is really a brief summary of that book.)

“What is there to say?” Brad asked. “They’re imaginary. UFOs are all a hoax.”

“It’s not quite that simple,” the professor replied. “I agree that UFOs aren’t what they appear to be, but I think that makes them *more* dangerous, not less. There are a number of characteristics of UFO sightings and abductions that are fairly striking. First of all, the supposed aliens have a deep hatred for Christianity. They have no interest in talking about science, or their home planet, or anything that you would naturally expect that an alien would want to talk about. No, the aliens prefer to spend their time talking about religion – and there is only one religion that they want to talk about. That would be the tenants of Christianity.

“The aliens *hate* Christianity and go out of their way to try to discredit it. They claim that the Bible is not reliable. They say that Jesus was an alien. They say that aliens created humans. They make a whole host of claims that are calculated to make people doubt the Word of God. Now, they’re not interested in trying to discredit *other* religions; they just oppose Christianity. They hate that

one particular religion with a passion.

“The other odd thing is that aliens only seem to abduct people who have had some prior contact with the occult. No born-again Christian has ever been abducted. Even more interesting, there is only one known way to stop an alien abduction that is in progress. The only people who successfully escaped an abduction attempt did so by calling on the name of Jesus. When that name was uttered the aliens got scared and fled.”

Brad spoke up. “You can’t possibly be serious!”

“Oh, but I am – and it is all documented. Aliens are *terrified* of the name of Jesus. So, what we seem to have here are a group of powerful beings who hate Christianity, who cannot abduct Christians, who are terrified of the name of Jesus, and who enjoy abducting and torturing people. In other words, aliens are a perfect match for demons.”

“So you think demons have spaceships?” Wally asked.

“No, I don’t. But I do know that Satan is the father of lies, and that demons have vast powers of deception. It wouldn’t be very hard

for a supernatural being to create a convincing illusion – especially since virtually all the physical evidence for UFOs involves bright lights, electrical disturbances, broken branches, and burn marks. That sort of thing would be a pretty easy trick for a demon to pull off.”

“But what would be the point?” Iris asked. “Why bother?”

“Because of the tremendous impact it has on people! When a person comes into contact with an alien and is fed their lies, it radically changes their belief system. Contacts like that have led many people deep into paganism and the occult. It is a very effective tool for the devil to lead people away from God.”

“So what about ghosts?”³⁵ Brad asked. “Are they demons too?”

Professor Grimes glanced at his watch. “Well, let’s stop and think about that. The Bible says that when people die they either go to Heaven or to Hell. Nobody is given the

³⁵ This also came from my book *Class 4: Supernatural Beings*, which has more to say about ghosts.

option of wandering around the world as a disembodied spirit, so ghosts can't be the departed spirits of the dead. No holy angel of God would ever pretend to be a dead person – that would be a lie, and angels don't lie.

“Therefore there are only two possibilities. One is that all ghost sightings – and there have been many – are a hoax. I think that is rather unlikely, since I have personally encountered such situations and can vouch that some hauntings are quite real.³⁶ The second possibility is that ghosts are demons, who are trying to trick people into believing lies about the afterlife. I think that is far more likely.”

Brad spoke up. “Is there anything that you *don't* blame demons for?”

The professor looked at him. “I'm pretty sure that they aren't responsible for the grades you've been getting on my exams. I think that is entirely the fault of your study habits – or perhaps your *lack* of study habits.

³⁶ I have encountered two buildings in my life that were genuinely haunted by demons. You do *not* want to *ever* visit places like that. They are bad news.

Blaming the devil for your grade point average isn't going to get you very far.

“And that's all the time we have for today. Class dismissed!”

