***Angels, No. 3

Colossians 1:15-20

COL-121***

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2 Timothy 3:16: "All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for rebuke, for correction, for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work."

2 Peter 2:1-3: "But false prophets also arose among the people just as there will be false teachers among you, who will secretly introduce destructive heresies, even denying the Master who bought them, bringing swift destruction upon themselves. And many will follow their sensuality, and because of them, the way of truth will be maligned. And in their greed, they will exploit you with false words. Their judgment from long ago is not idle, and their destruction is not asleep."

2 Timothy 1:13-14: "Retain the standard of sound words which you have heard from me in the faith, and love, which are in Christ Jesus. Guard through the Holy Spirit who dwells in us."

2 Timothy 2:24-26: "The treasure which has been entrusted to you. And the Lord's bond servant must not be quarrelsome, but be kind to all, able to teach, patient when wronged, with gentleness correcting those who are in opposition. If perhaps God may grant them repentance leading to the knowledge of the truth. And they may come to their senses, and escape from the snares of the devil, having been held captive by him, to do his will."

Please open your Bibles to the Word of God in Colossians 1:15-20: "Hymn in Honor of Christ," segment number 11.

Angels, are rational beings created by God before the creation week began. In Colossians 1:16, Jesus Christ, Who is been being exalted as the preeminent one of the universe in reference to creation, Paul says, "For by Him all things were created (in an instantaneous moment of time, the Greek indicates), both in the heavens and on earth – the visible things of earth, and the invisible things of heaven. And then he gives a series of categories of angelic beings (various ranks): "Whether thrones, or dominions, or rulers, or authorities."

We had therefore been pausing to review the doctrine of angels – these wonderful, wonderful beings that God has created, before there was anything else in the universe, and who affect our lives on a daily basis. The average Christian probably knows very little about angels. And a great deal of what he knows about them are human viewpoint misinterpretations and misconceptions. So, this is a very important subject, and we're bringing together whatever the Bible has to say on it.

**The Doctrine of Angels**

1. **Messenger**

We have learned thus far: first, the word "angel" means "a messenger," both in the Hebrew and in the Greek – one who is sent.

1. **Innumerable**

Secondly, angels were all created by the Lord Jesus Christ at one time as spirit beings. They are innumerable, and their number does not change, for they neither die, nor do they reproduce. So, stop sending the Christmas cards with those baby angels flying around, because there aren't any.

1. **Demon Angels**

Third, all the angels were sinless at creation, but apparently one-third followed Satan in his rebellion against God, and they became the demon angels.

1. **Eternity in Heaven or Hell**

Fourth, the holy angels will spend eternity in heaven, while the demon angels will be in the lake of fire with Satan.

1. **Agents of Revelation**

Fifth, the holy angels are the agents of divine revelation from God to man.

1. **Normally Invisible**

Sixth, angels are normally invisible to man, but can make themselves seen as themselves or as adult male human beings.

1. **Names of Angels**

Seventh, some of the names of angel beings that we have in the Bible are Lucifer, the devil, Satan, Beelzebub, Michael, Gabriel, Abaddon, Belial, and the great dragon.

1. **Ranks**

Point number eight, continuing in the doctrine of the summary of angels" there are various ranks of power and authority among the angels. These are described as the archangel (that originally was Satan, and then when he fell, he was replaced by Michael in that category), thrones, dominions, rulers, and authorities. We have these described for us in 1 Thessalonians 4:16 and in Colossians 1:16. These are comparable to military ranks among the angelic hosts. This is true both among the holy angels and among the demon angels and with each rank goes a certain level of power and authority which can only be exercised if you hold that rank. It's a very military-like structure.

1. **Other Biblical Terms for Angels**

Then the next point: there are other biblical names (other biblical terms) which are used for the holy angels, and these are instructive. We'll look through several of those in Scripture now.

**The Sons of God**

First of all, they are called "the sons of God." And it's important that you understand that that term does apply to angels. We have this, for example, in Genesis 6:2-4. This is the incident which is recorded for us in the Old Testament of the time when Satan came up with the idea that he could frustrate the plan of God to send a Savior to this earth Who was both God and Man. The Savior had to be not only God, but He had to be 100% pure perfect humanity. Satan came up with the idea: "If I can contaminate the human race such that there's not one pure clean-cut human being left, there can't be a Savior to fulfill Genesis 3:15: "Born from a virgin woman from the city of Bethlehem," as the Bible predicted. Therefore, you send the delegation of his angels, which incidentally are now restricted in a segment of Hades called Tartarus, and therefore they cannot do this again. And since we have all already indicated that while, angels are always males (they are not sexless), Satan had them intermarry with human women. And this expression, in Genesis 6:2-4, "sons of God" refers to those demon angels: "That the sons of God saw that the daughters of men were beautiful, and they took wives for themselves, whomever they chose. Then the Lord said, 'My spirit shall not strive with man forever because he also is flesh. Nevertheless, his days shall be 120 years. And Nephilim (giants) were on the earth in those days, and also afterward, when the sons of God came into the daughters of men, and they bore children to them. Those were the mighty men who are of old: men of renown." This historical fact is, of course, preserved in the Greek and Roman mythology, where you have gods interrelating sexually with human women and producing a race of super beings.

Well, these people did exist for 120 years until the flood came. And God countered Satan's plan. And for all we know, Satan may have been successful to the point of having only eight people left who were pure human beings, and who were not in that prediluvian world, halfbreed demons and human beings. We do know that there was a ninth person, Methuselah, the oldest man who ever lived, but he died the week that the rains began to fall. Before the rains began to fall, Methuselah died that day, and then the reigns began to fall.

So, God frustrated that plan; incarcerated those angels in Tartarus; and, though they were sons of God here by this title, they were evil demonic beings. And God preserved the human race through Noah and his family.

Then there is Job 1:6, where this term is also used for angels: "Now there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the Lord. And Satan also came among them," because Satan is also an angel. He is also one of the sons of God. And periodically, he reports into heaven. He has access to heaven now. His access there will not be closed off until the middle of the tribulation period when Michael, who is the archangel of the holy angels now, has the great battle in space with Satan and his demon angels, and Satan loses. Then he is cast out of heaven, and he can never enter that place again. But now, this is what he does. He goes in there, and every time you and I sin, he calls attention to the whole court of heaven, and he says, "There you are. There's your Christian. Why don't you send him into hell? And that's why the Bible says that Jesus Christ is our lawyer in heaven, Who immediately pleads our case before God, the universal judge, on the basis of the wounds that He bears in His body, and the fact that He paid for that sin, so God says, "Not guilty." And we are protected from his accusations. Nevertheless, they are there. And Satan here is reporting in to God as one of the sons of God.

Job 2:1: "Again there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the Lord, and Satan also came among them to present himself before the Lord." The first time he said to God, "Sure, Job is a faithful man because You bless him, but if you take away his blessings, I'll show you what he really will be." So the second time God said, "Okay, you couldn't get Job to turn against me. Now you may do whatever you want to him, but you can't kill him." And you know the rest of the story.

**Sons of the Mighty**

Another reference in the Bible to angels are "sons of the mighty." Look at Psalms 29:1 for that: "Ascribe to the Lord, oh sons of the mighty. Ascribe to the Lord glory and strength." That is a term for the angelic beings. Also, we have the same thing in Psalm 89:6: "For who in the skies is comparable to the Lord? Who among the sons of the mighty is like the Lord?" So, angels are sons of God. They're also mighty beings – very powerful being. So, they're called mighty in themselves, but also because they belong to God, the Almighty.

**Morning Stars**

Angels are also called "morning stars." In Job 38:4-7, God says to Job, who begins to complain, "Where were you when I laid the foundation of the earth? Tell me if you have understanding. Who set its measurements, since you know? Or who stretched the line on it? On what were its bases sunk? Or who laid its cornerstone when the morning stars (the angelic hosts) sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy?" There you have angels referred to in both ways: as the morning stars and as the sons of God. Before there was anything else, God first created these rational beings called angels. And then God proceeded, at some point in time, to create the universe. And as the angels sat there and watched Him do it, they were blown out of the water. It just blew their minds, to see the magnificence of what God was bringing into being. And remember that we've already read in Colossians that this was done "in Christ;" that is, He was the designer. He was the One who was putting it together. He was the architect who was on site. And the angels rose in a magnificent chorus of praise to God for this thing that He had done. They were the morning stars.

**The Holy Ones**

Angels are also called, in the Bible, "the holy ones." In Psalm 89, we have this term used. Psalm 89:5: "And the heavens will praise Your wonders, O Lord – Your faithfulness in the assembly of the holy ones." And in Psalm 89:7: "A God greatly feared in the council of the holy ones, and awesome above all those who are around Him." The holy angels fear God, as indeed we should fear God, in the sense that we have great respect and great awe for Him. That's what we're going to try to create at the banquet Friday night – a deeper sense of awe for God Who is there.

**Awesome**

The angels are declared to be awesome above all others in the whole universe that are around God. These are magnificent creatures of God.

**Watchers**

Angels are very prominent in the book of Daniel. In Daniel 4:13, Daniel says, "I was looking in the vision in my mind as I lay on my bed. And behold, an angelic watcher (angels are called watchers), a holy one descended from heaven." Here two terms are used. Angels are called holy ones. But here's another term. They are also called watchers. That's why the angels are here this morning. They're watching. Their eyes are roaming about on each one of you. They can't enter your mind unless God gives them information, but they're very interested in what goes on – what kind of a church service, and what kind of a gathering around Christ is one that the angels rejoice to see; and, what kind makes them ashamed that they're there, and humiliated by what is being done in the name of Christ, Who is so magnificent, and Whom they know in such intimacy.

Daniel 4:17: "The sentence is by the decree of the angelic watchers, and the decision is a command of the holy ones, in order that the living may know that the Most High is ruler over all the realm of mankind, and bestows it on whom He wishes, and sets over it the lowliest of men." Yes, the devil does control society. Yes, the devil runs every nation on the face of the earth. And to the extent that there are not doctrinally oriented people in a nation, and to the extent that there are not super-grace-level believers in the nation, as that decreases, the level of corruption rises. As the height of competent super-grace believers, who have been taught doctrine, and are competent to be able to be super-grace-level people, that nation is restricted in the hands of Satan. But the lower that level gets, the higher the evil gets, because now it can run rampant without anybody silencing the opposition of Satan. And here, therefore, the Bible tells us that you'll get in public office what you deserve as a people in a particular society. And God says that He sets over it (the nations), the lowliest of men. The basest of people are given the levers of power when that's what a society deserves, when it forgets the God Whose rules are to count.

The background of this passage is that Nebuchadnezzar has built a mighty empire. He's very proud of his hanging gardens at Babylon. He has created a magnificent society. And he is the head of gold of the image that he saw on the plane of Duma. He is very proud. He looks upon what he has built with great satisfaction. Daniel comes to him, and he warns him: "Nebuchadnezzar, there's a God up there. He is the One that has enabled you to do all this. If you forget Him, you are going to be brought down. Do not play foolish. You are not almighty. He is." Unfortunately, Nebuchadnezzar did not take his advice.

So, this passage is preliminary to a dream that Nebuchadnezzar has. He sees a tree. He sees the fruit shaken off from it, and all that. And he thinks: "This is great. I'm the tree, and this is prosperity." Then, indeed, the tree is cut down. That alarms him. And then He puts a band of protection around it, and he wants to know: what in the world does this mean? In fact, Daniel does not want to tell him, and the king senses this. And Nebuchadnezzar says, "Go ahead, Daniel, tell me the way it is. What's the word that has been given to you?" So Daniel builds up his courage and tells the king: "You're the tree. You're going to be cut down. But the bands have been put around it because it's not going to be destroyed. It's going to come to life again. But for seven years, you are going to be out in the field like an animal. Your hair is going to grow, so that it'll be like long feathers on a bird. You are going to get long claw fingernails that aren't cut. You're going to eat grass. You're going to be smelly and sweaty. And God's going to show you how magnificent you are as you wander around your hanging gardens."

This was a horrible blow to Nebuchadnezzar. And this sentence, in Daniel 4:17, is by the decree of the angel watchers. The angels who've been watching all this have brought this information to Daniel, and they are watching the scene now of seeing God's judgment upon this man. And the decision is a command of the holy ones (there's our title again for the angelic hosts) in order that those who are alive may know it. Now, they probably try to hide Nebuchadnezzar, but the word got out: "Our king has become an animal." And sure enough, for seven years, to the very day, he was animal-like in his lifestyle. And the Most High (he makes it clear) is the ruler of the realm of mankind. He is superior to Satan who runs the governments of this world. And He bestows authority in those governments on whom He wishes, and He sets over it the lowliest of men. . .

Now here, Babylon, a magnificent culture has got a ruler who's running around like an animal. But thank God, seven years later, when he came to his senses, there was no more question in his mind. He stood up. He understood what the angelic message was, what the watchers had given him, and he praised God, and declared Him to be the God of the universe; the God who is all powerful; and, the God who is sovereign. And I think we have good reason to believe that the subsequent testimony of Nebuchadnezzar, as you read it, would indicate that he became a believer, and that he trusted in the coming Messiah Savior Jesus Christ. So, he will be one that we will have an interesting experience to meet someday in heaven.

Daniel 4:23 also speaks of the watchers: "And in that the king saw an angelic watcher, a holy one, descending from heaven, and saying, 'Chop down the tree and destroy it, yet leave the stump with his roots in the ground, but with a band of iron and bronze around it, in the new grass of the field, and let him be drenched with the dew of heaven, and let him share with the beast of the field until seven periods of time pass over;" that is, seven years. And there's a Scripture predicting what was going to happen.

**Heavenly Host**

Another term referring to angels is that they're called the "heavenly host." We are more generally acquainted with this. You'll find this, for example, in Luke 2:13, upon the birth of Jesus Christ, to the shepherds in the fields: "And suddenly, there appeared with the angel, a multitude of heavenly hosts, praising God, and saying, "Glory to God in the highest," and so on. So, they are referred to also as the heavenly host. What does the word "host" mean? It means army – warriors. This is God's heavenly army. This is God's heavenly warriors. These are the beings that are constantly out there protecting you. You talk about guardian angels. Yes, you probably do have a single one, but you have a host of guardians or the angelic hosts that are protecting you. And sometimes we become very much aware of the fact that (like with Job), God allows Satan to hit us in some situation, and we become aware that, in spite of that, we were carried through magnificently. And we look back, and we see the hands of the angelic host who were there protecting and carrying us through.

**The Hosts**

They're also simply called sometimes "the host;" that is, the army. 1 Samuel 1:11: "And she made a vow (this is Hannah, the mother Samuel, who wanted a daughter) and said, "O Lord of Hosts (Lord of the angel army), if You will indeed look on the affliction of Your maidservant, and remember me, and not forget Your maidservant, but will give Your maidservant a son, then I will give him to the Lord all the days of his life. And a razor shall never come on his head" – totally separated to the service of God.

1 Kings 22:19 uses this term "hosts" in terms of the angels also: "And Micaiah the prophet said, 'Therefore, hear the word of the Lord. I saw the Lord sitting on His throne, and all the hosts of heavens standing by Him on His right and on His left." Elsewhere in Scripture, we're told that the angelic hosts in heaven, around the throne of God, amounts to millions of them. It is always an awesome magnificent scene. And that's why John was so struck when he had insights, in the book of the Revelation, of what was taking place in heaven. And certainly the apostle Paul, who upon his stoning to death in Lystra, and for the period that he went into the presence of God in heaven, and was told that he had to go back – he was going to be brought back to life, and complete his mission, but he was never to tell people what he saw there in heaven. The angels are part of what make that so awesomely magnificent.

**Ministers**

Hebrews chapter 1 also gives them one other title, and that is "ministers." This one is of very much interest to us as Christians. Hebrews 1:7: "And the angels, He says, ‘He makes His angels winds, and His ministers a flame of fire.’" Angels are ministers who are a flame of fire. And they are ministers to whom? They are ministers to us. They are flames of fire in behalf of service to us.

1. **Seraphim Angels**

There are two classes of angels we haven't exactly touched on. There are the seraphim angels and the cherubim angels. The seraphim angels are the ones who have six wings. Not all angels have wings. The seraphim angels have six wings. And the word "seraphim" means "the fiery ones." And they are associated with the honor of God. They're the ones that are standing around that throne of God up in heaven as Satan once used to do. And they are the magnificent angels that are particularly close as an honor guard of God.

1. **Cherubim Angels**

Then there are the cherubim angels. "Cherubim" means "diggers" or "workers." They're the ones who are the powerful ones. They have four wings. The cherubim angels are the ones who were put in charge of the Garden of Eden, so that man could not get back in to get at the tree of life. Also, the cherubim angels are the type that were on the ark of the covenant, where their wings were touching, and they were looking down toward the sin represented by the contents of the ark of the covenant: the 10 commandment stones; the manna; and, Aaron's rod that budded. And the blood that was sprinkled upon the top of this box once a year on the great day of atonement symbolized the blood of Christ that God has to look through to justify a believer for the sin represented by the contents of that box. So, we have these marvelous angels who are there also in special capacities.

1. **The Duties of Angels**

Now the next point is that we are interested in the duties of these holy angels.

**Delivering Announcements and Warnings**

First of all, their duties include delivering announcements and delivering warnings. For example, in Luke 2:9-11, we have a classic example of an angel being used to deliver an announcement: "And an angel of the Lord suddenly stood before them. And the glory of the Lord shown around them, and they were terribly frightened. And the angels said to them (that is, to the shepherds), 'Do not be afraid, for, behold, I bring you good news of a great joy, which shall be for all people.'" Before the Bible was written, a great deal of information was brought from God via angels. But if you hear somebody claiming that he's getting information from angels today, you want to help him find a good doctor. God no longer speaks to us through angels who materialize at the foot of our bed some night in a glowing glory light around them. God now has the Scriptures. And the Bible is complete, and that's what He speaks through.

Here's Matthew 2:13: "Now when they had departed (here is where Mary and Joseph they are fleeing into Egypt to save the baby Jesus from Herod) into Egypt, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in his dream saying, 'Arise and take the Child and his mother and flee to Egypt, and remain there until I tell you. For Herod is going to search for the Child to destroy Him." So, angels are used to bring announcements, and to forewarn.

**Guiding and Instructing**

They also have a very important duty of guiding and instructing. For example, in Exodus 23:20: "Behold, I'm going to send an angel before you to guard you along the way, and to bring you into the place which I have prepared." To the Israelites, as they were leaving Egypt, He said, "I'm going to send an angel. He will guide you, and he will instruct you along the way."

In Matthew 1:20, we see angelic guidance once more in this respect: "But when he had considered this, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream saying, 'Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife, for that which has been conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit.'" Here is Joseph being assured that the pregnancy of his fiancée is legitimate of God, and that he should not hesitate to take her as his wife.

Acts 8:26 is another example of angelic information: "But an angel of the Lord spoke to Phillip, saying, "Arise and go south to the road that descends from Jerusalem to Gaza." This is a desert road. How does God tell us what to do now? He moves us in a very gentle way within our thinking. And a Christian who is oriented to the Word of God, and who is in temporal fellowship, I guarantee you, is not going to play the fool's game. You will choose the right thing because you are in control of the Spirit of God. You're not out there flapping in the breeze on your own. And today, that's the same thing that told Philip how to go to a person to minister the Word of God to, that same kind of ministry is there, but in a little different context.

Also in Acts 10:1-6: "Now there was a certain man at Caesarea named Cornelius, a centurion of what was called the Italian cohort – a devout man, and one who feared God, and with all his household, and gave many alms to the Jewish people, and prayed to God continually. About the ninth hour of the day, he clearly saw in a vision an angel of God who had just come into him, and said to him, 'Cornelius.' And fixing his gaze upon him, and being much alarmed, he said, 'What is it Lord?' And he said to him, 'Your prayers and alms have ascended as a memorial before God. And now dispatch some men to Joppa, and send for a man named Simon who is called Peter. He is staying with a certain tanner named Simon whose house is by the sea.'" And Cornelius did. And with this event, seven years after Pentecost, the Gentiles experienced the baptism of the Holy Spirit, and were brought into the body of Christ. It was a magnificent moment of information that an angel was dispatched to bring.

Now, Satan, of course, understands this principle. And angels have a certain influence by guiding us to the Scriptures in one way or another. So what does Satan do? The Word of God tells us that he disguises himself as an angel of light. And he comes along and says, "I have information for you. And those who do not match Satan's information, which comes from a variety of sources in your life, to the principles of the Word of God, you will be led astray, because you'll think that this is of God. It sounds so right; it cannot be wrong. This is Satan's way of substituting for the good work of angels who deliver the message of God. That message is recorded in Scriptures, but the angels move us to the Scriptures we need, unless you're some idiot who doesn't know doctrines of Scripture. You know the doctrine of salvation, and that's all you've ever learned. From then on, your life as a Christian has been a bunch of hoopla. But if God has blessed you with a source of information of the divine institutions, and of the depth of the Word of God, and you are careful to maintain that temporal fellowship, you're going to find yourself with an enormous personal understanding of the Word of God.

In Acts 27:21-24, Paul receives a very clear message from God: "And when they had gone a long time without food, then Paul stood up in their midst and said, 'Men, you ought to have followed my advice, and not to have set sail from Crete, and incurred this damage and loss.'" He is on his way, being taken to Rome for trial under Nero, and a storm comes up. He said, "Don't go. God has informed me that you won't make." But why should they listen to this Christian? What does he know? Well, he's just had an angelic message. So, consequently Paul is not above saying, "I told you so."

Acts 27:22: "And yet now I urge you to keep up your courage for there shall be no loss of life among you, but only of the ship." Everybody's going to live, but the ship is going to go down. How does he know that? "For this very night, an angel of God to whom I belong, and whom I serve, stood before me, saying, 'Do not be afraid, Paul. You must stand before Caesar, and behold, God has granted you all those who are sailing with you.'" Did it happen? Absolutely. Just exactly that way. Angels bring us information from God. They no longer appear to us directly. We don't hear their voices directly. But their movement is very definite upon our lives guiding us to the Scriptures for the information we need.

So what do you do on Sunday mornings and Sunday nights that is a better exchange than having the orientation of the Word of God in your thinking, even if you have to sit and think for a little bit? Nothing. Matthew 4:4: "You will not live by bread alone," the Scripture says, "but by every word that comes from the mouth of God."

John 14:15: "Jesus said, 'If you love Me, you will obey My commandments. And if you do not know My commandments, you certainly cannot obey them, and therefore, you cannot love Me.'"

**Angels Guard and Defend us**

Angels also guard us. They defend us. This is something most people have heard about and talked about, the protection of the angels – the guardian angels. Psalm 91:11: "For He will give His angels charge concerning you, to guard you in all your ways." That is a principle of almighty God. . . You and I have no idea what we have escaped in life, of one thing and another, that would've been a disaster except for the fact that there was the angel of God on the scene guarding us, if not entirely, at least from the deadly consequences that could have taken place.

Matthew 26:53, "Or do you think?" Here we have the Lord Jesus betrayed, and Peter gets his sword out and he's ready to charge in against this crowd that Judas said to the Pharisees; the religious authorities; and, to the Romans, "I know where they're going to be tonight. I'll show you where they're going to be. I'll bring you in, and without them knowing it, I will take you in to where they are." So he was all set, as you know. He came to the Lord, and, of all things, what does he do? He kisses Him. Here he is. Well, as soon as that happened, Peter pulls his sword and he said, "That's it." And the first thing he does is cut off poor Malchus' ear, which Jesus then puts back on.

Now about that time, if I were there, I'd have thought to myself, "Something is wrong here. We're going to take this man and charge him with a crime, and here he can put a human ear back on that was torn off by a sword before our very eyes." Let alone when Jesus said, "Who are you looking for?" They said, "Jesus of Nazareth." And when they said that, He said, "I am He." And they all collapsed to the ground with a force of the presence of something so powerful that a thoughtful person would have said, "God is here." But they didn't.

So Jesus turns to Peter and says, "Just a minute. Put your sword back into its place for all those who take up sword shall perish by the sword. Or do you think that I cannot appeal to My Father, and He will at once put at My disposal more than 12 legions of angels?" A Roman legion was a table of organization compartment of the Roman army. A legion consisted of 6,000 men. 12 times that is 72,000. Jesus said, "I can simply ask My Father, and in a moment, there'll be 72,000 flaming angels surrounding Me. Do you think that will be impressive enough to counter this crowd?" He said, "Peter, I don't need your help. I have plenty of reinforcements in reserve if I need to call upon them. But this is Satan's moment, and I'm not going to call up the reserves now. That's going to come later when everybody has had a chance to do right.

**Minister to the Saints in their Need**

It is the place of the angels also, then, to minister to the saints in their need, but they do not minister to unbelievers. Here you are. Your ship has sunk. You're in the middle of the ocean. And you're floating around. You're an unbeliever. And you call upon God to save you from this disastrous situation. God doesn't minister to unbelievers with His angels. That is an honor and a privilege only for those of us who are in the family of God. Luke 22:43: here is Jesus, in agony in the garden: "Now an angel from heaven appeared to Him, strengthening Him." It is the angels who come to those of us who are in the family of God to give us the strength at any point in our life when we need something that is beyond what our human capacity can perform.

I had to attend a sad funeral recently – a father and mother whose baby had died. And as people came by, expressing their commiserations, and their condolences. And I noticed that there was sadness and weeping. The parents were really under a great agony. And then Mrs. Danish and I came by, and the lady looked up, and then she recognized me. She reached up; pulled me down; and, kissed me. And I said to them, "Remember that this is the moment now when you must fall back upon doctrine to carry you through as it did Christ on the cross. All of the good wishes of your friends here, and all of the human emotion, will not bring you any significant comfort. But if you fall back upon what really has happened, which only doctrine can tell you, you'll realize, someday, that you have not lost this son. But from this little spot, right here, at the rapture of the church, he's going to come out, and he's going to meet you in the air, and that's when you'll meet him again, and he'll be a handsome young man." The faces of both of them broke out into a smile like the sun had dawned. What had done it? Some emotional message from me? No, just a little bit of reminder of what doctrine can do in your life. That's what angels come to do. They come to help us to move toward the doctrines of the Word of God. They don't do this for unbelievers. There is no comfort. But for believers, there is.

2 Kings 6:15-17 is another example from the Old Testament of ministering to the people of God. This is the prophet Elisha. He is surrounded by the king of Aram. The Arameans have him and his servant boxed in. The situation is desperate: "Now, when the attendant of the man of God (that is, of Elisha) had risen early and gone out, behold, an army with horses and chariots was circling the city. And his servant said to him, 'Alas, my master, what shall we do?' So he answered, 'Do not fear, for those who are with us are more than those who are with them.'" The servant is puzzled: "Who's with us? All I see is you and me:" "And then Elisha prayed and said, 'O Lord, I pray open his eyes that he may see' (that is, that he may see what Elisha was seeing). And the Lord opened the servant's eyes, and he saw, and, behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire all around Elisha." The fiery hosts, the angelic host of God, the fiery army of God, was surrounding them, and the servant immediately saw that they outnumbered the enemy by an infinite number. There was nothing to fear.

I have to remind you again that it is a very serious matter not to understand the doctrine of angels, because you will miss the importance of their ministry to you, personally. These fiery (meaning: holy) people of God – these personalities that God has created are there constantly, on the job, caring for you. You are never out there alone. You have the angels standing by for the indwelling Jesus Christ, who indwells you, to tell them what to do, and the indwelling Holy Spirit to give them the power to execute the mission. Now that I consider great good news.

These angels are going to assist in the divine judgment. We have this in Acts 12:23. We also have this in a classic example of Revelation 20:1-3. They're going to carry out all that God has promised to do to the demon angels and to unbelievers who follow them and Satan. Acts 20:1-3: "And I saw an angel coming down from heaven, having the key of the abyss, and a great chain in his hand. And he laid whole of the dragon, the serpent of old, who is the devil and Satan, and bound him for 1,000 years." This is at the beginning of the millennium: "And he threw him into the abyss, and shut it, and sealed it so that he should not deceive the nations any longer, until 1,000 years were completed. After these things, he must be released for a short time." This is the last dispensation – the last arrangement of history that God has, when Jesus Christ will be ruling from Jerusalem, and all the nations of the world will be under His authority in a true world government, not the satanic world government, which is coming together now. And He will reign over all these nations without Satan going around to deceive people anymore. Yes, they'll have their old sin nature, and that will deceive them. Yes, there will be children born in the millennium who will be in a perfect environment of perfect context of life like another Garden of Eden. And what will they do at the end of 1,000 years? They who were born, who have lived for hundreds of years, will turn against Jesus Christ. They will rebel against Him because Satan is released, and they will join him once more. And Satan will find that the angels finally are there to execute God's judgment for the last time, and put him into the lake of fire.

**Angels Execute Divine Judgments**

One more passage: 2 Samuel 14:17. Angels execute divine judgments: "Then your maidservant said, 'Please let the word of my Lord the king be comforting, for as the angel of God, so is my Lord the king to discern good and evil. And may the Lord your God be with you."

2 Samuel 14:20, "In order to change the appearance of things, your servant Joab has done this thing. But my Lord is wise, like the wisdom of the angels of God, to know all that is in the earth." Because the angels are wise, they are capable of executing judgment, and to do it right. And that's why Deuteronomy 32:35 in the Bible says, "'Vengeance is mine,' says the Lord, 'I will repay.'" Leave your vengeance to the Lord. He's got angels who will go out there, and they'll straighten out things with those who have mistreated you for the unfair suffering you have received at somebody's hands, and put them there into their hands.

Finally, it is the angels who will gather the saved, we're told, at the end of the tribulation and bring them to the Lord. All those who are born again during the tribulation seven years are going to be gathered by angels from the four corners of the earth, many of them from where they are in hiding, and brought to the Lord.

So, we have a variety of duties in the Scriptures about the angels, and that very often is directly what happens to us in our daily lives. These angels are doing the same thing. Tonight we shall continue.

God our Father, we thank You for the ministry of angels to us in the lives of believers today. We thank You for this day, and we pray that we'll have a new respect for these powerful agents of God. And we thank You that, wonder of wonders, we will someday be higher in authority than they are, because we are related to Your Son Jesus Christ. We pray for Your blessing and Your gracious provision for Your people financially this week. And we pray for Your blessing upon the offerings which we bring to You.

Dr. John E. Danish, 1995

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