***Holy Angels are our Fellow Servants of Christ

RV228-02***

Our subject is "The Marriage of the Lamb." This is segment number 3 in Revelation 19:7-10.

The apostle John, in his vision, hears the angel messenger call upon the saints in heaven to rejoice and glorify God. The reason, we are told, for this call to joy is that the time has arrived for the marriage supper of the Lamb. That is the time at the end of the seven-year tribulation period, and at the point of the imminent Second Coming of Christ to this earth. Christ and His bride, the church, have been united in marriage in heaven, following the rapture of the church during the tribulation period. The church bride has made herself ready for the celebration of her marriage now at the marriage supper of the Lamb to be held here on this earth.

**Marriage**

This also means that after many long centuries, the kingdom of God is finally going to replace the kingdom of man on this earth with the millennial kingdom of Christ. We have looked at the analogy of Christ and His bride (the analogy of marriage) in terms of the custom of the ancient world. As we pointed out in the previous session, that had three parts. You must not think of marriage in the Bible as you think about it in terms of our customs today.

**The Contract**

The first part of the ancient custom of marriage was the contract. At the point of salvation, the church-age believer is betrothed to Jesus Christ as His future bride. Positionally, at that point of betrothal, he is already the wife of Christ.

**The Presentation**

Secondly is the presentation stage. Christ, the bridegroom, comes at the rapture for His betrothed bride, the church, and takes her to His home in heaven for the marriage ceremony.

**The Marriage Supper of the Lamb**

The third stage is the one that we are particularly interested in because that is what is being referred to in Revelation 19:9-10. That is the marriage supper itself. At that point, Christ returns to the earth with His wife, the church, that His Second Coming, to celebrate their union at a wedding feast with friends and with the saints of other dispensations who will be there as guests.

So, Revelation 19:7-8 are dealing specifically with this third phase of the marriage custom, the wedding supper. The bride (the church), we are told, has been preparing a special gown to be worn at this wedding feast. This has been done by each individual believer during his period of life here on this earth.

**The Bride's Gown**

Her garment is described as made of fine linen which is both pure and holy. This wedding supper gown is a spiritual garment made up, we are told, of the believer's righteous acts of divine good works. We pointed out to you that Ephesians 2:10 tells us that every one of us, at the time that we are betrothed to Christ at the point of our salvation, has a preordained series of divine good works to produce. That is what your life is all about. If you have not yet awakened to the fact that you are here on this earth to produce that series of divine good works, which are up there in God's records for you to perform, then you are wasting your life. I am going to guarantee you that if there is anything true about the Word of God, this one thing is certainly true – that you can squander and waste your life. You may gain a lot in this world, but it'll be of nothing when you find how poor your eternity is.

So, we must seriously remember that we have been called to serve, and that we do have a mission. And there is no better concept toward the idea of a mission than that which every military person knows that in service of the military, the mission comes first. And Christians are soldiers of Christ, and the mission has to come first.

So, this wedding supper garment is made up of all of these divine good works produced by God the Holy Spirit through the believer, and that in keeping with carrying out his particular set of good works that God has ordained for him.

The bride receives the garment of absolute righteousness as a gift from God at salvation. When she is being married in heaven, this is the garment she wears. She wears the garment of absolute righteousness which Christ gives us at the point of salvation. But there is a different garment of righteousness at the marriage supper here on earth. That is produced by the believer himself through the righteous works that produce these acts of righteousness. This is the garment worn at the marriage supper. So, the garment of absolute righteousness for God is, in fact, what enables the believer to produce these acts of righteousness for weaving the wedding garment.

So, I direct your attention Revelation 19:8: "And it was given to her to clothe herself and fine linen, bright and clean, for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints." Here is the gathering of the materials. A wise Christian, I remind you once more, makes a career of serving God to accumulate acts of righteousness for his wedding garment. The Bible is explicitly clear that serving the Lord is what our life is all about.

Titus 2:14, for example, says, "Who gave himself for us (referring to Christ), that He might redeem us from every lawless deed, and purify for Himself a people for His own possession, zealous for good works." Christians should be zealous for doing the good works of God.

In Titus 3:8, we also read, "This is a trustworthy statement. And concerning these things, I want you to speak confidently so that those who have believed God may be careful to engage in good deeds. These things are good and profitable for men."

So, the Word of God even tells us as Christians that we must emphasize and remind each other that it is important that we go about our Father's business. Once a person is saved, he is engaged to Jesus Christ, and he'll spend the rest of his life, as do we all, either in adding to the beauty of our wedding supper garment, or just leaving it plain vanilla. A church-age believer's material possessions, of course, are our means for embellishing the beauty of the wedding supper garment. This is the one thing you will take into eternity with you. All of those acts of divine good righteousness – that goes into eternity with you. And our material possessions are the avenue by which we can create these divine good acts of righteousness. The more God prospers you materially, the greater is your opportunity.

That's one of the nice things about God prospering you financially. It gives you open doors if you are willing and capable of entering into those open doors. Have your eyes on the things of eternity, and not just on the temporal things. There are lots of things in the work of God that need your financial support. When you do that, this is one of the great ways you create these works of righteousness for your wedding garment.

A church believer's material possessions should be, therefore, viewed as belonging to God, and used at His guidance. The bride then wears the garment of absolute righteousness from God at the wedding in heaven. She wears the garment of her acts of righteousness at the wedding supper here on earth.

**"Compassion"**

Of course, the world that you and I move through does not esteem the divine good works of Christians. The world has a lot of esteem for what it calls compassion. That is one of the most twisted, distorted, perverted words in American society today. Just about any politician from whose lips passes the sacred word of "compassion" is an ignoramus who doesn't have the faintest notion of what compassion is on the terms of God's word.

Compassion, first of all, has at the heart of it the concept of responsibility. Compassion is to enable you to do the things you should do. It is not compassionate for you as parents to allow your children to get away with murder because you want to be kindly disposed toward them. That is not compassion. Compassion is when you bring them face-to-face with the consequences of their acts, and you put the monkey on their shoulders to take care of the problem that they are dealing with, and to solve it.

Our society is filled with people who are screaming "compassion" toward them, and what they're asking for is that they should live off the fruits of other men's labors, and that other people should solve their problems. So, when we Christians talk about divine good works, the people of the world don't think very much of it. They don't hold us in very high esteem. But I want to remind you that God values your every divine good work as a great beauty mark upon you. And it is going to beautify that garment that you will wear at that celebration.

Hebrews 6:10 puts it this way: "For God is not unjust so as to forget your work and the love which you have shown toward His name, in having ministered, and are still ministering toward the saints. One of the great areas in which your divine good service is to be found is what you do for other Christians. Most of us tend to think that our divine good works and kindnesses are to be out to other people – those who are in desperate situation. No, some of the great kindnesses are to be done to Christians first – those of the household of faith.

These are all kinds. These include all of those nice things that you should be saying to these men and boys who have been knocking themselves out for our gymnasium auditorium, and all the people who have contributed big sums of money, at great effort and personal sacrifice. That is going to give us such a great avenue of promoting and propagating the Word of God in an auditorium that you can really hear. When we get into that auditorium, the first Sunday, I'm going to line up every member on our church boards, and I'm going to ask them to come up to the microphone one-at-a-time, to express a great prayer of appreciation to Almighty God for what He has done out there. It is a work of divine good for you to encourage other believers. You get rewarded for that. If you encourage the pastor, it is triple coupon returns. So, be aware of that.

At the Judgment Seat of Christ, divine good works are identified as the material that you'll be able to use. A lot of us think that we've got material going up there that we're going to find is not material. At the Judgment Seat of Christ, all of the divine good is going to be identified. It's gold, silver, and precious stones in the analogy. But all of the human good that we haul up there with us, which Isaiah 64:6 says is our righteousnesses is filthy rags – all of that is going to be stripped. That's will be the final beauty treatment of the bride of Christ.

What's the wedding garment going to look like? We are dealing with an analogy. We are dealing with poetic ideas. We are dealing with symbols. Perhaps the wedding garment that we have will be varying degrees of glory light. Before the fall into sin, Adam and Eve did not wear clothing, but as creatures who are made in the image of God, they, like God, were encased in a glory light. In Psalm 104:2, the psalmist points out (saying about God), "Covering Yourself with light as with a cloak." God is surrounded by a cloud of great brightness and of light reflecting His glory. On the mount of transfiguration, when Christ pulled aside for a moment the shielding of His humanity, and let His glory of His deity shine through, the disciples couldn't look. They fell in the brilliance of that light.

So, perhaps what we're going to have is varying degrees of glory light. Daniel 12:3 tells us that the redeemed are going to shine as the luminaries in the sky: "And those who have insight will shining brightly like the brightness of the expanse of the heavens; and, those who lead the many to righteousness, like the stars forever and ever. So, we have a little indication there that there is going to be some kind of brilliant light emanating from believers, and we suspect that it will be in varying degrees.

Also, in Matthew 13:43, we have this pointed out: Jesus says, "Then the righteous will shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their father. He who has ears let him hear." This is very explicit. Believers are going to shine like the sun. On what basis? I suspect on the basis of this wedding supper garment that they have prepared themselves.

Well, it's obvious that that will be a very dramatic change, because Philippians 3:21 points out that our body is now under great humiliation. They're under anything but brilliance of light: "Who will transform the body of our humble state into conformity with the body of His glory (Christ's glory) by the exertion of the power that He has even to subject all things to Himself." So, here again, the ultimate thing of Christ is to make His bride a shining beauty.

In Revelation 19:9-10, we have the reaction of worship. In verse 9, we read, "And he said to me (referring to the angel informer who is speaking to John), 'Write.'" The voice from the throne of God that we have reference to in Revelation 19:5 is probably the angel that is commanding John to start recording. What you have here is that John has been so awed by this concept of being married to Christ, and having an eternity of that kind of a close, intimate relationship with the Son of God, that he's gotten sidetracked from recording the book of the Revelation. So, the angel reminds him to start writing this grand truth about the marriage supper of the Lamb. And John proceeds then to do that.

What he is told is that there is a special blessing: "Blessed are those who are invited to the marriage supper of the Lamb." A special great honor and joy are extended to those who are called to this marriage supper. This is the Greek word "kaleo." It's translated as "invited" (those who are invited), and it's the Greek word for "called." It's the same word that is used for your being called to eternal life. It is in what is called the Greek perfect tense, which tells us that this call (this invitation) was set up by God in eternity past, and it's going to continue until it's fulfilled at the Second Coming of Christ. In eternity past, God set up this invitation to you to be at the marriage supper of the Lamb, and it was R.S.V.P. At some point in time, you did respond and say, "Yes, I'll come." In your case, it was not simply to come to the supper as a guest, but to come as the bride herself.

It is in the passive voice, which means that you didn't invite yourself. You did not decide to do this on your own. That is why it is so awesome to realize that God calls us. God invites us to this great relationship with Christ. He is our Husband. How should you treat Him? How awful it is for a wife to treat a husband with anything less than respect; often even if perhaps that's not easy to do. How terrible to be unfaithful and to be untrue. How terrible to act without dignity, and to embarrass and to humiliate your husband.

When I was in Dallas seminary, there was a man in the class behind mine who would come to the seminary, and his wife was just awful. I mean, the poor man was humiliated. He was embarrassed. She would do terrible things, and she did some of the worst things. And one day, he was no longer there. One day, he had to face it. You can't terminate the marriage (the lifelong relationship), but it did terminate what he had hoped would be a life of ministry as a preacher and teacher of the Word of God.

So, this is no small thing to say that you've been invited to the supper of the Lamb, and to be invited as the bride. That calls upon us for a certain conduct. This marriage supper, of course, again, is different from the marriage, which establishes a marital relationship between a man and a woman. The wedding supper is the refreshment. It's the social time for the guests. It is specifically identified as the marriage of the Lamb, which refers to the Lord Jesus Christ.

**The Rapture**

The rapture of the church takes place before the tribulation. The church does not go through the horrors of the tribulation period. Revelation 3:10 is one verse that indicates that to us, where the Philadelphia church (the true church – the really faithful church of God) is told, "Because you have kept the word of My perseverance, I will also keep you from the hour of testing or tribulation – that hour which is about to come upon the whole world to test those who dwell upon the earth." That verse is talking about the tribulation. If there ever was a time when the phrase "hell on earth" applied, it will then. We Christians are not going to be part of that period. We will be removed from the earth before the antichrist takes over. Jesus Christ, as the Lamb of God, has removed us with the rapture.

**The Second Coming of Christ**

Seven years later, at the Second Coming of Christ, the church returns to the earth from heaven with Him to celebrate the wedding, which took place in heaven, at the marriage feast. So, the marriage takes place in heaven, while the marriage supper takes place on the earth. At the end of the millennium, the church is still called the bride of Christ. That tells us something about how long the marriage feast lasts.

Revelation 21:9-10: "And one of the seven angels, who had the seven bowls full of the seven last plagues, came and spoke with me saying, "Come here, I will show you the bride (the wife) of the Lamb." This is a description now of eternity: ""And he carried me away in the spirit to a great and high mountain, and showed me the holy city, Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God." The words "wife" and "bride" are the same thing. She comes as the bride of Christ. So, she's ushered into the new Jerusalem, her eternal home, still being treated as a bride. So, we suspect that the marriage feast is going to last through the 1,000 years.

John the Baptist describes himself and John 3:29 as a friend of the bridegroom. John the Baptist represents a group of humanity, the Jewish group. So, as an Old Testament saint, he's not part of the church, but he is going to be present at the marriage supper. So, he's there as a guest. Luke 13:28-29 reinforce the presence of Old Testament believers in the Millennial Kingdom. Therefore, they will be at the wedding supper as part of the guests: "There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth there when you see Abraham and Isaac and Jacob and all the prophets in the Kingdom of God, but yourselves being cast out (those who did not come prepared with salvation). They will come from the East and the West and from the North and South. They'll recline at the table of the kingdom so that the Jews from everywhere who have not rejected Christ are going to be there.

So, of course, the tribulation saints will be in the Millennial Kingdom. Revelation 24 tells us that. So, they'll be at the feasts as guests. There is the parable of the Ten Virgins which deals with Israel. Five go into the millennium; and, five are unprepared, they do not go in. They are part of the Old Testament saints (Matthew 25:1-13). Then there are the redeemed Jews who survived alive through the tribulation. They will attend the marriage supper.

I remind you that when the millennium begins (when the 1,000-year Kingdom of Christ begins), you have a marvelous condition worldwide. Everybody is born-again. There is not one single unsaved person on the face of the earth. All the unbelievers have been put to death, and the wedding festival begins entirely with redeemed people, and then continues through that whole period of the 1,000 years of the millennium. John is told that those who are invited to the marriage supper of the Lamb are uniquely honored by God: "Blessed are those who are invited to the marriage supper of the Lamb." These guests from, all the past dispensations, are not part of the body of Christ, but they are honored by being invited. Those who attend the marriage supper of the Lamb do so because they have submitted themselves to the Lamb. They have met the requirements of the invitation of trusting in the Groom for salvation.

It is true that some are excluded from the marriage supper. Matthew 22:10 tells us of people who say, "I don't want to come." There are others who want to come, but because of their negligence, like the five unprepared virgins without the oil that they needed, they, because of their negligence, are not permitted to come to the marriage supper (Matthew 25:10-12).

Jesus Christ, as the Groom, will, of course, be at the supper – at the head table, resplendent in all of His glory for all the world to see. The church, His bride, will be seated next to Him, and she will be a ravishing beauty by that time. She will be wearing her righteous, divine, good-works garments that she has put together, with each of us wearing our own garment individually. After nearly 2,000 years, Christ has been waiting to come to claim His bride. Finally, at the rapture, He does so. And now, they all look forward to the wedding supper.

This concept of a body of redeemed beings united with the second person of the Godhead, in the ultimate union comparable to a husband-and-wife marriage, is so astounding that the angel has to stress to John that it is true. He says, "Write, 'Great blessing upon those who are invited to the marriage supper of the Lamb.'" It is terrible to be left out: "And he said to me, 'These are the true words of God.'" That is a little phrase thrown in there.

When was the last time that somebody ridiculed something you said because it came from the Bible? Here's a phrase that Phil Donahue should learn and learn well. He will have all eternity to regret that he does not take seriously the fact that these are the true words of God, the words of Scripture. Here's a man who influences millions of people who repeatedly has shown his contempt for trying to prove anything and establish anything on the authority of what the Bible says. These *are* the true words of God. Don't try to hide because you hold a philosophy; you hold some beliefs that are dear to you; or, you hold some practices that are advantageous to you to achieve certain goals. Don't fool yourself and kid yourself by trying to defend your conduct when you know it is no keeping with the Word of God by dismissing the Bible as an unintelligible book. It is not. Anybody who has a frame of reference of Scripture will understand the Bible readily.

This is one of the things we regularly receive from our tapers, and what many of you come and tell me about. People to whom you have opened the Berean tapes suddenly get a frame of reference. They get a structure of doctrinal perspective. Then they are awed by what God has to say, and they are impacted that what God has is truth.

Today, Jack Smith said, "I had to call you today. I had to let you know once more that if it was not for you and for those tapes that I found in that Kentucky State Prison Library, I am at a point in life of such great oppression that I am aware of the fact that the devil has become aware of me and the impact of the areas that I'm working in." He said, "I could not continue except for one thing: the Word is the truth." That is exactly what's being said here. These are the true words of God. Don't play the fool. When you know the Scriptures, and you know what the Word of God says, the Bible does not contain the Word of God – the Bible is the Word of God, and it is true truth.

You're going to lose in eternity, and you'll pay a terrible price if you want to play that hazardous game of pretending that something that the Bible says is unclear and uncertain. The Bible condemns numerous abominations which, at the highest echelons of this government, are today being justified, and are being dignified. And those who are deceived, will pay the terrible price that will be paid for those who create the abominations. A number of those evil men on that Supreme Court that justify the execution and the murder of unborn children are now in the presence of God. Can you imagine their status in what they face? Can you imagine the compounded agony? If you're an unbeliever, your suffering is to the degree of the evil. And every time a baby is murdered in a mother's womb, you add to the agony of those men who pass that evil law. If any of those men were believers who went with that ruling, they have paid with a loss of rewards and relationships to God in an enormous way.

These are the true words of God, and you will not find the true words of God anywhere else. You're not going to find the true words of God from philosophy, psychiatry, or psychology. You're not going to find the true words of God from the preacher who has a mellifluous voice, and who can utter poetic sentences, and who can tickle your emotions, and make you go out and think that you've had a wonderful time in church. Those are the words of men. That is the wisdom of man. That will crash. And that's what Jack meant this afternoon: "If it were not for the true words of God," he is now a condition and status in life where he would crash.

The concept of a body of redeemed believers, forever united as the wife of the second person of the Trinity comes from God. We didn't make this up. It is a true relationship. These are the words which are inspired by God, 2 Timothy 3:16 tells us. And these are the words which God the Holy Spirit guided the authors to write, 2 Peter 1:21 tells us. There are many false words today being poured forth as the true words of God from a host of false teachers. The television airwaves are full of false prophets and full of false teachers. You don't know the difference unless you have been taught the Word of God. Of course, the general public is so ignorant of Scripture that they don't know the difference. And these false teachers are misguiding. The true words of God are important because they're the words that are going to be fulfilled. Prophecy is the word which God has spoken to us so that we may know the truth. The Bible is the Word of God, and therefore it is truth from God which we must learn, and which we must obey.

In verse 10, now John has become so euphoric; he has become so excited; and, his mind has been blown by the concept of a marital association of intimacy with the second person of the Trinity, that for a moment, he loses his perspective, or perhaps he thinks that the Lord is speaking to him. For in verse 10, suddenly says, "I fell at his feet to worship Him." He suddenly falls down and begins to worship the angelic messenger. The thrill of the moment perhaps causes him to mistake the angel for the Lord. Worship is bowing down in submission to the will of another who possesses the power and authority over you that merits that kind of devotion.

The angel reacts immediately to this act of worship: "He said to me, 'Do not do that.'" The Greek is even more succinct. The Greek there has only two words. It simply says, "Do not." It conveys the impact: "Just don't do that." The angel rebukes John's display of worship by ordering him to cease and desist. That means: "Stop; and, don't start again." Worship, of course is what Satan has always sought, and which he is still seeking. But he is only a created being. He's an angel. Therefore, he is not to be worshiped. He is not deity. Any angel of God recoils in horror from such an act of obeisance as John here commits before this angel.

But the angel explains why John should not do this. He says, "I am a fellow servant of yours, and of your brethren:" "I am a fellow slave (a fellow servant)." The angel, like John, is a creature made by God. He is not, therefore, deity to be worshiped. And while God is not making any more angels now, for every human being, at the point of conception in their mother's womb (Psalm 139 makes it very clear that God is putting it all together). That's why you can't kill that little thing that's in the mother's body, because it's a work of God in progress, and it is an act of murder.

**The Testimony of Jesus**

The angel indicates that he is a servant of God, along with John and other believers, all of whom hold as true the testimony of God about Jesus: "I am a fellow servant of God, and your brethren, who hold the testimony of Jesus." What is the testimony about Jesus specifically? Well, it's the one in this context that we've been talking about. He is returning now. The marriage supper signals that the marriage has taken place, and the marriage supper signals that the millennium is about to begin. The testimony refers to Christ as a future ruler of this world in the millennium.

Isn't that exciting? All around us today, the leaders of this world cannot wait to bring in a world government; to get people acclimated to that idea; and, to create such a structure – the creation of regional alliances that can be put together in greater alliances, and eventually to cover the whole world. People are getting used to the idea of having a world government. The angel says to John, "We share the testimony about Jesus, that He is going to be the ruler of a world government. He will be King of Kings and Lord of Lords."

**Worship God**

So, John is told that the angels serve God because He made them (Hebrews 1:14), whereas the Christians serve God because he saved them (1 Corinthians 6:19-20). But they are both servants of God. So, he says, "Worship God." Submission is to be only to God as the sovereign Lord. The Greek word for "worship" here is a command. This is an order from God.

Worship of an angel is idolatry. When people worship an idol, they are actually worshiping a demon god (a demon angel) behind that idol. Angels are not the equal of God, and that was Satan's big mistake. You remember that he said, "I will be like the Most High."

It says, "For the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy." The testimony about Jesus from God, which angels and saints hold true, is the prophetic revelation about Jesus Christ, and His assumption of world government in the millennial age. The spirit of prophecy is Christ, the world ruler. That is what prophecy ultimately is all about. The antichrist is going to do all that he can to destroy the testimony of prophecy about the victory of Jesus Christ over himself. The antichrist is not going to take kindly to allowing the information to go out about Jesus Christ as the one who indeed will be the world ruler. The kingdom of man will reach its epitome under the antichrist, who will, in the last three-and-a-half years of the tribulation, be the world ruler.

Revelation 12:17 says, "Then the dragon was enraged (Satan) with the woman (Israel), and went off to make war with her and the rest of her offspring, who keep the commandments of God, and hold to the testimony of Jesus." Here is Satan moving the antichrist to attack the Jews with one final push. These Jews who do what? These Jews who hold the testimony of prophecy about Jesus Christ, that He will be the ruler of the whole world.

1 John 2:22 also says, "Who is the liar but the one who denies that Jesus is the Christ? This is the antichrist, the one who denies the Father and the Son." So, the antichrist is going to lie through his teeth to try to undermine the truth about the prophecy concerning Christ. All mankind, however, in the end, is going to kneel before the Lord Jesus Christ.

I love that verse in Philippians 2:9-11, where Paul says, "Therefore, God highly exalted Him (Christ), and bestowed on Him the name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus, every knee should bow, that those who are in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of the Father."

What madness, isn't it, to reject Jesus Christ as Savior? What an eternal tragedy and loss it is to do that. If people only knew that the Word of God is the truth – the Bible is the true Word of God. If they only knew the prophetic Scriptures about Jesus Christ. And if only there was someone to teach people the Word of doctrine. Do you realize how few people there are in this world who are both competent and able and willing to teach the Word of God? You will not generally bring together a great congregation of people if you go through the Bible verse by verse in exposition of a book of the Bible, and tell people what is really in there on the authority of the languages. But those are the people who are the apple of God's eye. Those are the people who are going to shine with the greatest glory in eternity, who take that instruction seriously. But how few people there are that get that.

A man came by last week. He goes to a suburb nearby that's a huge church. It's a jumping and jiving church full of programs. They have a program for the people who are high IQ; a program for the people who are low IQ; a program for the people who are on in; a program for the people who are on the out; they have a program for the homeless people; and, they have programs of all kinds. And he said, "For the last three years, my wife and I have been getting our spiritual instruction and sustenance from the Berean tapes." And finally, he wanted to come by to meet me, because he said, "I wanted to be sure to set my tape recorder to the exact pitch of your voice." So, I said, "What did you say?" I mean, that's ridiculous. I mean, they can't build an auditorium big enough to hold these people that come flocking in, and boy, they're sweetness and light. But he loves it. But when he wants to know about God, he gets a Berean tape. There not many people to give you access to that. How sad it is to see the masses of mankind, as Jesus said, "Sheep without a shepherd to lead them to the green pastures of Bible doctrine."

**Angels**

Having made this stress upon the fact that we do not worship angels, we must not in any way imply that angels are not tremendous beings of God. I will not take you through the Scriptures tonight, but I do want to close tonight with a few things that you should know, and be reminded about angels. The word "angel" in the Bible means a messenger, and therefore sometimes it is even applied to pastor-teachers, as it is in the seven letters in the Revelation as messengers of God. But basically these are spirit beings that God created all at one time in eternity past. They were created by God, and their population is innumerable. They do not marry, so they do not reproduce, and they cannot die.

**Satan**

All angels were created as sinless, but Satan talked a third of them into joining him in his rebellion against God. Those who remained loyal to God are the holy angels; those who rebelled with Satan are now called the demons. Angels were created in a class above mankind. Therefore, they are free from time and space limitations. One day, the church-age believer will be superior to the angels. But angels are not to be worshiped, though they are superior to man. There are a variety of names for Satan. He is called by his original original name, Lucifer, and Satan was at one time the archangel. He is also called Satan; the devil; Beelzebub; Belial; and, the great dragon.

**Ranks of Angels**

There are various military ranks among the angels. They have different levels of power. These are described as archangel; thrones; dominion; principalities; and, power. This structure is adhered to strictly. Angels possess very great, but limited power. They can release people from prison. They are not omnipotent. They have superior intellect, but they're not omniscient. They are not omnipresent. They can perform miracles, and they can fly, which does not mean that they have wings. Angels are normally invisible to man, but they can make themselves be seen. The holy angels never appear in animal or material forms. Demon angels like to do that, but not the holy angels. They always appear as adult males, never as females or children. So, get rid of those little children angels off your Christmas tree.

Angels always appear clothed. They appear clothed in the garb of the era. And sometimes their visual appearance is very dramatic. On occasion, they actually appear as themselves. The language of angels conforms to the language of whomever it is that they're speaking to. Angels observe the creation of the universe, and they glorify God because they are holy. Angels are under the authority of Jesus Christ. They were at His call while He was here on the earth. At His Second Coming, they will accompany Him to this earth. They worship Jesus Christ.

Satan's power is subject to these angels. The demons are subject through Christ to these angels, and Christ gave His disciples authority over these demon angels. There are various duties that the holy angels perform. They deliver announcements for warnings. They guide; they instruct; and, they guard and defend. They act as your guardian angel. They minister to saints in their need. They never administer to unbelievers. And they assist in carrying out God's judgments.

It was the holy angels who announced the resurrection of Jesus Christ. The holy angels are the agents of divine revelation from the God-man. After the expulsion of Adam and Eve from the Garden of Eden, it was the angels who prevented them from reentering the garden. The holy angels protect our children.

Angels are going to regather the Jewish people to the Promised Land at the Second Coming of Christ. Angels rejoice when a sinner is born again. They know the terrible fate that awaits Satan; his demons; and, those who are unsaved in the lake of fire. This distinction between saved and unsaved, on the basis of your positive volition demonstrates to the angels of justice of God. He's fair. If you trust Christ as Savior, you go to heaven. If you reject Him, you go into the lake of fire. It is angels who carry a saved believer into heaven after he dies as a final expression of the dying grace of God.

Angels are present in every service of the local church. I guarantee you that they're all over this room right now. They're always interested in listening to what we have to say about God and Christ, and they're very much interested in your reaction. Maybe they can even know what you're thinking.

There are the biblical terms for holy angels. They're called Sons of God; heavenly beings; holy ones; heavenly hosts; and, hosts.

**The Angel of the Lord**

The Angel of the Lord was the title to be found in the Old Testament referring to the pre-incarnate. Jesus Christ. The Angel of the Lord possessed the qualities of deity. After the incarnation of Jesus Christ, the Angel of the Lord no longer appears.

Satan, who is the leader of the demon angels, has his headquarters in a realm between heaven and earth. Therefore, he's called the prince of the power of the air. Satan is in authority over all the nations on the face of the earth. He has secured this control after Adam gave it up – when Adam sinned. All unbelievers, therefore, are under Satan's power and deception. He is the father of all unbelievers, and he is the god of unbelievers – whatever they think, no matter how sophisticated they are. Satan's authority over the nations is delegated to his demons. There are an enormous number of demons who enable Satan to do his work. Satan's authority over a nation can only be neutralized in one way – with a maximum impact of positive volition of doctrinally instructed believers.

That is why the United States is going down the tubes so rapidly now, because it has diminished to the point of no return, in the number of doctrinally oriented, positive believers. Therefore, the Constitution of the United States is a meaningless document. Socialism is running rampant in the country, and all that made us a free people is being gradually stifled and destroyed. This is the work of Satan or our nation. Satan has the power to impose death upon the approval of God. Satan is such a cunning and subtle adversary that he is able to entrap believers into sin. That's a very important thing to observe. He hinders believers from following the will of God. When Satan is resisted by the spiritually mature believer, however, he takes his power, and he beats it. He leaves.

Satan calls attention to the sins of believers before the throne of God in heaven in order to challenge the justice of God every time we sin. Satan is going to empower the antichrist in his evil work. Satan the angel infiltrates the children of God with his children. So, even within a local congregation of any size, you may find the children of Satan looking like the children of God.

At the middle of the tribulation, Satan and his demons will be permanently denied access to heaven. Demons are unclean, sullen, violent, malicious spirits. Demons know that Jesus Christ is God, and they are in great fear of Him. All the activities of demons are evil. They spread false doctrine. They tempt man to do evil. They act as Satan's emissaries. They enter and control humans and animals. Demons always seek to be embodied in their evil work. There's a difference between demon influence and demon possession. A Christian can be demon-influenced, but he cannot be possessed, because he's already indwelt by the Holy Spirit.

They inflict physical maladies upon people. They see people into thinking that is possible to communicate with the dead through a medium. The demons control the forces of nature to do injury. They oppose Christians who are positive to the Holy Spirit and the Word of doctrine. They physically attack human beings whom they seek to bring down and to neutralize. They disguise themselves as holy angels. They are described as murderers and liars. They tempt human beings with evil thoughts. They perform miracles to deceive believers, like diagnosing illnesses that they have imposed upon a person – giving a cure. And demons promote the use of drugs under sorcery.

The sacrifice of pagan religions and the worship of idols are in reality directed to demons. All forms of fortunetelling; astrology; tarot cards; dreams; and, visions are demonic delusions condemned by God, and the demons will give you information through those means. Demons, in response to incantations, cause physical phenomena to occur such as levitation; telekinesis; materialization; voices; clairvoyance; and, magic.

A great horde of demons is to be turned loose upon the earth during the tribulation. Demons entered into sexual relations with human women before the Noahic flood. They produced the hybrid progeny which was destroyed in the flood. This is the progeny which is commemorated in Greek and Roman mythology of sexual relations between gods and humans. This portion of the demonic world is now imprisoned in the Tartarus section of Hades.

There are the biblical names for demon angels, like unclean spirits and evil spirits. The holy angels are at war with the demons. The climactic battle is in the future, near the middle of the tribulation. Christians face this angelic warfare daily. The holy angels one day are going to bind up Satan and his demons, and will cast him into the pit of the abyss, where Satan will be imprisoned for the millennium.

Finally, the Holy Angels will spend eternity in heaven, while the demon angels will spend eternity with Satan and unbelievers in the lake of fire.

All this brief review about angels is to impress you again as to what powerful, significant creatures these are. All these points that I've made, of course, are sustained by Scripture, which we have gone through in the past, and which we did not do today.

It is no wonder that John should be inclined to worship such a magnificent creature of God as a holy angel. They're ahead of us now, but once we become the bride of Christ, the angels take a notch below us, and we will be superior even to them. How great is the grace that has been ours.

Dr. John E. Danish, 1993

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