

Acts 12_pt1

by Bill Gallatin

God uses angels to protect and deliver the redeemed, even in the face of persecution and adversity.

Duration: 57:45

Scripture: Genesis 28:12, Deuteronomy 33:2, Psalm 91:11, Matthew 16:18, Acts 12:7, Hebrews 1:13-14

Topics: "Expositional"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher discusses the topic of angels and their role in the Bible. He explains that angels were created by God and came from heaven. Their purpose is to serve and carry out God's will. The preacher also highlights the relationship between angels and the redeemed, emphasizing how God uses angels to protect and guide believers. He shares the story of Peter's miraculous escape from prison, where an angel freed him from chains and led him to safety. The sermon concludes with the preacher encouraging the audience to reflect on their own experiences and consider the possibility of angels watching over them.

Transcript

This Bible study was recorded at Calvary Chapel of the Finger Lakes and was taught by Pastor Bill Gallatin. This evening we're beginning chapter 12 of the book of Acts. As we get into Acts chapter 12, and actually from here on in through the book of Acts, as we see the record of the church being developed, we see that God uses angels in a tremendous way.

And I don't know if I've ever really just spent a night and brought out the doctrine of angels, what they are, who they are, where they're from, what their purpose is, and what their connection with the redeemed in the world is. We know that they're mentioned in different places in the Bible, and so there's so much that has to do with angels in this particular chapter in the church that I thought we'd just kind of look at a few verses tonight to give you an idea. And as you maybe make notations of these, you can begin to do your own study.

But it should give us a general, accurate view of angels, when they were created, where they came from, what their purpose is, their relationship to the redeemed, how God uses them for the saved and the unsaved. And then look and see just in your own life and maybe reflect on some experiences or things that have happened to you, and you might just come to understand that maybe there's an angel that's watched over you. We know that they are created for specific purposes.

So we'll look at that. Now, what we'll see here in chapter 12 is Satan beginning to try and stifle the spread of the church in the land through the political leadership. We come on the scene here to Herod Agrippa I. Now, I just mentioned his name as Herod, but he is the grandson of Herod the Great, who Satan used to try and destroy Jesus at his birth.

And Satan's always using government to try and stifle the church. But the glorious thing is, you remember in Matthew chapter 16, verse 18, Jesus said, "...the gates of hell shall not prevail against my church." In other words, it doesn't matter what the government is, whether it's Nazism, democracy, communism, fascism, or whatever it may be, socialism that's spreading around the world today, it cannot hinder the church. No matter what we see, God and His providence have everything under control.

And as we see in this chapter, before it's over, what Satan tries to do through Herod, God uses it again for the good and causes the church to continue to grow. Even though God in His sovereignty and His providence allows one powerful figure of the church to go into glory, but then in another particular case, He frees Peter from jail by using an angel, a supernatural being. Now, they are always invisible unless they manifest themselves in this dimension and take on human form.

They can even adapt their bodies as they reveal themselves to us, maybe in a situation that none of us ever expect, and they'll even partake of that ability to swallow and eat food and fellowship with us. So, there are many, many accounts in the Bible. We're just going to look at a few.

Know this. If you're redeemed, if you put your faith in Jesus Christ, God has angels that He actually created to protect you, that are assigned to your life continually until you go into glory. You say, well then, why do terrible accidents happen and people lose their lives? It's just that the Lord says to the angel, hold back.

He's coming home. That's all. He's coming into glory.

But you may not even realize this, but you've had many, many close calls in your life. Now, you don't see the hand of the angel, maybe. You're not aware of it.

You just see maybe a close call where you just went through an intersection, you hit the brakes, something happened, and boy, you just go, how was I lucky? And you've probably got angels with smashed knuckles and kneecaps jumping in front of the car, you know, putting the brakes on for you or something in the invisible realm. So, we'll just get into it and see what the Lord shows us here. Again, Satan using the government to try and hinder the church.

Now, this Herod character was a half Jew. He was a Hasmonean. And he did everything that was politically correct to keep himself in office.

When he discovered as he began to persecute the Christians that it pleased the Jews, he intensified it because he felt it would give him that security of staying in office without having any trouble in the country, you know, maintaining the votes and the popularity of the people. So, it says, It was about that time Herod the king stretched forth his hands to vex certain of the church. And he killed James, the brother of John, with the sword.

This would be, you know, John, or James, the brother of John, one of the sons of thunder. You remember one of the brothers who were in that fishing business with James? He was the son of Zebedee, and they were all working together with Peter on the Sea of Galilee, you recall. And Jesus came along and called

them into the ministry.

And so, James, the brother of John, is killed with the sword. And because he saw it pleased the Jews, he proceeded further to take Peter also. Peter, at this particular time, was the significant one of the twelve.

He was the primary leader at that particular time, with the most importance and the most influence. God was using him. And he's already been in jail once, you remember.

And God used an angel to deliver him out of jail. But here he takes them again. And in this time, he's intending to kill him.

Satan is seeking to put him to death through the president or the king of the country in some way. Stop the move of this Christianity. Now, it's interesting.

Satan didn't care that Judaism spread. He didn't care about Judaism at all anymore, because remember, it's been disannulled and set aside. God's revealing himself now through Christianity, through Jesus Christ.

And Judaism is no longer the vehicle. And I find it interesting. He wasn't putting to death practicing Jews, but he was putting to death Jews that had become Christians.

So, he didn't care about Judaism, just as Satan doesn't care so much about Judaism today or any cult or any other false religion. His concern is Christianity, the true belief and following of Jesus Christ. Now, Satan hates Jews, but he doesn't care too much about Judaism, because God isn't manifesting himself through Judaism.

There's that letter to the Hebrews that states that it has been set aside or disannulled. It's time had come and Jesus Christ fulfilled all the things that Judaism was speaking of, the Mosaic institutions. So, when he put him in jail... Now, again, according to Jewish law, you could not put anybody to death during a high feast.

So, Herod, in his being crafty, rather than create any kind of alarm, when he put Peter in jail, he was going to wait until the Passover feast was over and then have him put to death. But he's got him incarcerated. When he saw it, pleased the Jews to begin to kill the Christians.

He proceeded further to take Peter also, and then were the days of the unleavened bread, or the seven days of unleavened bread, when all the Jews would begin to clean their homes, to take out any kind of unleavened or something that had to do with sin, to cleanse their places, in remembrance of their deliverance out of Egypt. And on that eighth day, they would celebrate the Passover in remembrance of their deliverance by God, the magnificent, miraculous deliverance from the Pharaoh and the bondage of the world. When he had apprehended him, he put him into prison and delivered him to four quaternions.

I don't know how you say that, quaternions? Quaternions. Actually, sixteen soldiers. What they were, they were four groups of soldiers that had six watches during the day, or 24-hour period, and they would watch over a prison.

You had one of those quaternions, or four soldiers in their ship, would watch the entrance of the prison. Then the second soldier would actually guard the prison door, or the door cell, where Peter or any prisoner was kept. Then the other two on their ship would be chained to the prisoner.

So here's the Apostle Peter in his jail cell, with two Roman soldiers chained to each arm. The third Roman soldier is guarding the door, and the fourth, or the quaternions, the fourth one would be guarding the actual entrance to the jail itself. And they would have these shifts 24 hours a day.

So here's these guys, that actually two of them, just like the Apostle Paul, that are chained to Peter, having to listen to the story of Jesus Christ. You know, you wonder whose prisoner is who here. You know, God has ways, you know.

And so here they are keeping him. Now, here's a mistake. Actually, it's a legitimate mistake.

You'll notice it says, "...when he had apprehended him, he put him into the prison, delivered him to the four quaternions of soldiers, to keep him intending after Easter to bring him forth to the people." Now, we must remember when the translators of the King James, or our English Bibles, brought the Scriptures into printed form. It was around 1300 to 1500 A.D. Now, there were manuscripts, or the letters, or the epistles, being transported around the known world then. But it hadn't been put together in Biblical form until around 1500.

At that particular time, the Christians, who were no longer keeping Passover, began to keep Easter. They made that their Christian holiday, celebrating the resurrection of Jesus Christ. Now, in the original text, in the Alexandrian text, the Greek manuscripts, this is the Passover.

The early church, the Apostle Paul, all the early apostles, never celebrated what we call Easter. In fact, the word Easter never came into being until about 325 A.D. The early church never celebrated it. Now, when they replaced the Passover with the celebration of Easter in 325 A.D., there was a pagan holiday that celebrated the spring, the coming of the spring.

And it's a German pagan holiday. And it's called the Feast of Ostrei, or the Spring Goddess, who brought new life. And what they did is they made that a Christian holiday.

And again, the early church, for 325 years, never celebrated Easter. The same as they never celebrated Christmas. That didn't come into being until after 312 A.D. And again, that came out of Rome.

It was a pagan holiday, you know, celebrating Saturnalia and the New Year, the rising of the sun, the lengthening of the days, the Yule log, the death of the pagan Messiah. And that was never a Christian celebration, but the Roman church Christianized it to bring the pagans into the ranks and call them Christians. And you can go into many of your historical books, even in the Encyclopedia Britannica, to research that if you'd like.

And the church began to celebrate Easter. Now, is it wrong to celebrate Easter? I have a problem with that. Our blessed Lord rose from the dead.

It just so happens here, the word should be Passover, because Easter was not celebrated at this time. And it's not a biblical feast or holiday. It's man-made by the church.

And it didn't come into being until 325 A.D. It was just a pagan holiday that was Christianized. And I know when I celebrate Easter, I'm not celebrating Ostre, the German pagan goddess. I'm celebrating the birth or the resurrection of my Lord Jesus Christ.

But anyhow, Peter, therefore, was kept in prison. But prayer was made without ceasing of the church unto God for him. So, in Jerusalem, the Christians who had been in the upper room and the different Bible studies and people had been fellowshiping together, found out, man, the apostle Peter's been arrested.

We're just going to keep praying, praying for his deliverance and his protection, because we know what the government's doing to these extreme fundamentalists, especially Peter. And knowing what kind of a man Herod was, they began to just pray, have a prayer vigil for his deliverance. And I think it's kind of, you know, interesting how God works, even in spite of our prayer.

You know, there's talk. It goes around and says, you know, if you don't have the faith and you don't believe when you pray, you are nullifying God. He can't do a thing.

We're going to find out here that these people were praying for the deliverance of Peter and then when he did get delivered, they didn't believe it. So, God overrides even our unbelief in his love so often. Whether we believe or not that he's going to do it.

When we're praying, God in his sovereignty and his providence so often will just go over us. I mean, we can fail miserably and God cares so much for us, he'll still answer our prayers to bless us and prove his love for us. But anyhow, they're praying.

And when Herod would have brought him forth the same night, Peter was sleeping between two soldiers. Now, again, there's a promise in the Old Testament. We touched on this a couple of Sundays ago.

Thou will keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed upon thee. Now, here's the guy. Now, stop and think of the peace and the relationship that Jesus must have had with the Lord.

And he knows that James has been beheaded. He knows why he's there and he's next. He's in prison and he wonders, maybe, why did God allow it? God has called him, you know, to be a sort of a leader at this particular time and yet he has so much peace in his confidence in God and God's love for him.

Even in this situation, he's asleep. He's lying asleep in prison, completely free from fear. It just shows you when you really do take God's promises and believe them and act upon them, he honors them.

Thou will keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed upon thee. It doesn't matter what the situation is. God will prove himself faithful.

It will keep our minds centered on him. So often, you see, we get carried away with the vain imaginations and the fears. Oh, what's going to happen to me next? Oh, and then Satan is going to tell you, this is what's going to happen to you next.

And then you get overwhelmed with it and then you're consumed with it and then you know that, yes, that's what's going to happen to me next. God's not going to help me. That's it.

It's over. And you start dying from the anxiety and it hasn't happened yet. Satan loves to get us into that kind of a realm and not believe the promises.

Start believing what our own thoughts are telling us or what he is putting in our minds. And sometimes we panic and overwhelm and our insides start churning and we break out in hives. The tension, the stress.

That's why it's so wonderful to know the promises of God, to plead the promises. And when the Spirit of God brings a scripture to our minds, start repeating it. If you have to, repeat it audibly because you know Satan is going to come in and say, oh, you can't believe that, and then put some thought in your mind, this is what's really going to happen to you.

And it's nowhere in the Bible to say things like that. To contradict or counteract what God has put in your mind. To keep you in peace and know that God's got things under control.

He's got the future. It doesn't matter what man says. Vain is the help of man.

It doesn't matter how intelligent man is, no matter what the experts tell you. God says, I'm going to keep you. It doesn't matter what man says.

Your life belongs to God. And when the Spirit of God brings you a promise, you rest in that. You repeat it.

You claim it. If you have to, audibly recite it. Open up the Bible.

Come against the vain thoughts. Your mind can just be filled with so much, so much fear. The psalmist said, Lord, protect me from the voice of the enemy.

It's just a voice. And so, Peter's absolutely at peace. He's not questioning why God's allowed him to be put in jail.

He's sleeping. Can't do anything else. I'll just sleep.

I've been preaching to these guys for four hours. Driving them crazy. They're chained to me.

They can't get away. I'll just, I'm going to sleep. With two chains.

One on his left hand, one on his right hand. Chained to the two guys. And the keepers before the door kept the prison.

And behold, the angel of the Lord came upon him. And a light shined in the prison. And he smote Peter on the side.

And he raised him up, saying, Arise up quickly. And his chains fell off from his hands. So here God sends an angel.

All of a sudden, Peter didn't know. Now remember, the believers, his friends, are in a house somewhere praying for his deliverance. We know later on in the book of Acts, God uses an earthquake.

I mean, you can't put God in the bus. He can use any method he wants to give us deliverance. We'll find out later on in the book of Acts when the apostle Paul was in that terrible typhoon in the Mediterranean.

An angel appeared to him to strengthen him and encourage him. To show him, to tell the people, don't you jump ship. You'll perish.

You ride out the storm. God will keep you and protect you. So often, you know, the enemy tries to get us to panic and to try and flee from the storm.

Run from the trouble. And we play right into his hands. We perish.

The Lord says, You ride this thing out. I'll be with you. You will perish.

In this particular case, he sends an angel. Now, I want to take you through some scriptures to show you where angels came from. What the Bible seems to indicate.

So, turn to Genesis chapter 2. And then you look at some of the things that God uses angels for. And when you understand the power of God and his ability to do things in the invisible realm, it gives us such security and it gives us a healthy fear of God. To think that I could ever, as a human being, work something and outsmart God, or maybe try and change circumstances when God has such power at his fingertips.

His realm. Far beyond human capacity. We know that at the end of Genesis chapter 1, the Bible says everything has been created.

And God says this is very good. Mankind, the universe, the stars, everything is in existence today before the fall. And it was very good.

Then in chapter 2, notice the first verse. Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the hosts of them. And that word host now means myriads or armies.

It doesn't mean just millions and millions of stars. But all the hosts of them. We'll find out that the angels are referred to many times as watchers, spirits, angels, the sons of God.

But they're all, as the Bible seems to indicate, the same beings used in different capacities. One thing we must remember, there are only three known angels, and they're major angels. One is Michael the archangel, the covenant angel of the nation Israel, of the Jewish people.

Gabriel, who is very prominent to Daniel in his life. A messenger angel, and was very prominent in the enunciation of Jesus Christ. And also that third angel, Lucifer, who became Satan, the devil, because of his rebellion.

No other angels are named in the Bible. Only those three. But then, as you go on to Genesis 18, something very interesting.

I'll just touch on one verse. You can read the whole chapter. You remember, Sarah and Abraham were in the plains of Mamre, where they lived, far above Sodom and Gomorrah.

And Sodom and Gomorrah was going to be destroyed because of their homosexuality. It spread through their whole society. Even the young people were in it now.

And God's patience had come to an end. It became accepted. So God sent two angels, and the Lord came with them to discuss with Abraham the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah because of their sexual perversion.

Principally, their pornography and their homosexuality. And it spread through all of their society. Now, Abraham was sitting in front of his tent, and he saw three men walk up to him.

And all of a sudden he realized that one of those men was the Lord himself in human form, with two angels in human form. And it's interesting, as he saw that, he wanted to invite them to have fellowship with him. And look at verse 8. It says, Abraham, as he prepared a meal for them, he took butter and milk and

the calf, which he had dressed, and set it before them, and he stood by them under the tree, and they did eat.

So the Lord and the two angels had a meal with Abraham. And then we know, as you go on into chapter 19, the Spirit of God reveals to us that the Lord discussed with Abraham the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah and the salvation of his nephew Lot, because he was elect. And he sent the two angels to deliver Lot and his family, whoever would believe in his family, out of the city.

And only, it turned out, his two daughters and his wife were taken out of the city, and then the two angels destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah because of their sexual perversion. I turn to Genesis 28, 12. Now, here's a saved man, Jacob, running from God.

He's been threatened by his brother, and he did practice deceit with his brother, and his mother told him to run and go up with his uncle, Laban, in the area of Lebanon. And on the way, he got exhausted, fell asleep one night, and the Lord gave him a dream and a vision. And the Lord showed him, you know, you don't have to run.

You're frightened, and God opened up the invisible realm around him because he's a saved person. He's a child of God. He was elect, and he had the protection of God.

He could stand and face the situation, not run. And so, look what the Lord showed him in verse 12. It says, he dreamed and behold a ladder, or a giant staircase, set up on the earth, and the top of it reached to heaven.

And this is very important to realize. Notice the order. Notice what it doesn't say.

It doesn't say, and behold the angels of God descending and ascending on it. What's it say? It reverses the order. The angels are ascending and descending.

In other words, Jacob, the angels are already all around you at all times to protect you, and they're coming up into my presence on your behalf and then coming back down. They're already there with you. They're not descending to help you.

They're already there around you. They ascend. They come up.

Jacob, you don't have to flee. But he shows them in this dream that his life is surrounded with angels. Just as your life is if you're a child of God.

Turn to Deuteronomy chapter 33. When the Lord Jesus appeared on Mount Sinai to give the law to the Jews before they began their 40-year trek through the wilderness on the way to the promised land, it was revealed to Moses that millions upon millions of angels came down on Mount Sinai with the Lord. In verse 1 and 2 of Deuteronomy 33, look what Moses tells us.

This is the blessing wherewith Moses, the man of God, blessed the children of Israel before his death. And he said, The Lord came from Sinai and rose up from Seir unto them. He shined forth from Mount Paran and he came with ten thousands, literally in Hebrew, thousands upon thousands upon thousands or millions and millions of saints, or his holy ones, his ones that were set apart, the angelic hosts.

From his right hand went a fiery law for him as he presented the law or the Ten Commandments to Moses. Now, we know by this already that there are millions upon millions and millions of angelic beings and they

were created. The Bible states in other places that they were created by God.

But now, look at some of the things that God uses angels for in the invisible realm to get his will accomplished. To deal with men, particularly with rebellious people. Not only does he have angels designed to protect his children, and we'll see those texts, but he also has spirits designed to punish rebellion.

Turn to 1 Kings chapter 22. There's an account here of an evil King Ahab. He ruled over Samaria.

Now, he was evil morally. His wife was very unclean and seduced him and caused him to do terrible things as a man. Now, as far as leadership politically, he was very brilliant.

He was very capable as a secular ruler. He was very capable in bringing a strong economy, but morally he was perverse. He was corrupt.

He was a liar. And so, God was going to deal with his evil ruler Ahab. And so, he used a prophet named Micaiah.

Now, what Ahab had done is he surrounded his life with false prophets. To hear nothing but false things. So, God sent a true prophet to tell him what really is going to take place.

And notice in verse 19, he said, I saw the Lord sitting on his throne and all the hosts of heaven. Now, here's a reference to Genesis 2 on the angelic host. The host of heaven.

Here's that word host again. Millions upon millions of angels standing by him on his right hand and on his left. All around the throne of God.

And the Lord said, Who shall persuade Ahab that he may go up and fall at Ramoth Gilead? In other words, God's going to design in the supernatural, invisible realm, the collapse of this leader. He's going to have a setback militarily. And one said in this manner, another said in that manner.

The spirits. And there came forth a spirit and stood before the Lord and said, I will persuade him. The Lord said unto him, wherewith? And he said, I will go forth and I will be a lying spirit in the mouth of his senators and his congressmen.

His prophets. And he said, Thou shalt persuade him to prevail. Also, go forth and do so.

So, we do know that God uses angels to deceive governments with false information. To put wrong thoughts in ambassadors. Foolish things in leaders to make agreements that will backfire.

That God can bring punishment and chastisement to a nation. The angelic realm. Turn to 2 Kings chapter 19.

And again, how wonderful to know that God is on my side. Now, in this particular portion of the Bible, Sennacherib, the Assyrian king, has surrounded Jerusalem during the reign of King Hezekiah, who was a very godly king. He had brought revival.

And so, Satan sent this king, Sennacherib, to destroy the Jews. Now, notice what God can do to protect just with one angel. Look at verse 34.

The Lord said, I will defend this city to save it. For mine own sake and for my servant David's sake. And it came to pass that night that the angel of the Lord went out and smote in the camp of the Assyrians 185,000 men.

And when they arose early in the morning, behold, they were all dead corpses. In other words, God used one angel to smite with some disease or something while the armies were sleeping. And when they got up in the morning, 185,000 people were dead.

Now, stop and think of somebody who hates God and is rebelling against God, does not want to yield to God, is maybe being used by Satan against the church of God. What God can do to that person in their sleep. Now, I'm sure they just read the newspapers in Hezekiah's day, horrible plague hits the Assyrian army.

185,000 people die of some strange disease. That's all you've seen in the newspaper. But the Spirit of God reveals that God used an angel for judgment.

And you see, you don't have to be awake to be judged by God. 185,000. Now, to show you the power, you see, that God has and the control that the angels have created and they're under the control of God Almighty for His kingdom, not only of the universe, this outer realm, but down here also.

Turn to Job chapter one. Look what the Spirit of God reveals to us concerning the angels. In this particular place, Satan himself.

In verse six, notice what the Spirit of God reveals to us. The responsibility that angels have to answer to God, the Creator. Now, there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the Lord and Satan came also among them.

In other words, they had to report to God. The sons of God being, that term is used there because God, as their Father Creator, He brought them into being. Just as you're referred to as a father when you birth children, you're a father or a mother because you birthed them.

Well, God created these angelic beings and as a military general calls people to order, they have to appear before God. In fact, it goes on right now on a regular basis. They're under the control of God.

Nothing happens in anyone's life without the sanction of God, the permission of God. Whether it's evil or good, God controls it all. And so here, the Spirit of God reveals to us that the created angels have to appear and report to God on a regular basis.

Now, notice what else the Spirit of God reveals to us in chapter four of Job. We'll find out later that many of the angels rebelled with Satan and are behind much of the evil in the world today. But look at verse 18.

Here's a reference where the Spirit of God reveals what God says about the angels that followed Satan in his rebellion. Verse 18. Behold, he puts no trust in his servants and his angels he charged with folly.

The foolishness of some of the angels to believe the lie of Satan and rebel with him against the Lord. To stop God's order on the earth. Now, here's something that reveals when the angels were created.

Turn to Job 38. Here, the Lord is speaking to Job. Asking Job if he was an eyewitness to the creation of the universe and the earth.

Job wasn't having a problem with evolution. He was just having a problem with the sovereignty of God in his life. Questioning God why God allowed this sickness, the trouble, and his friends to turn against him.

And he was struggling with his faith, which I think every single one of us would do. But then the Lord begins to speak to Job about the creation. He said in verse four, Where was thou when I laid the foundations of the earth? Before I even brought the earth into existence.

Where were you, Job? Declare if thou hast understanding. Give me understanding. Did you know how the earth is hanging in space? Who hath laid the measures thereof? If thou knowest, or who hath stretched the line upon it? Whereupon are the foundations thereof fastened? What's the earth fastened to that it stays in its orbit in this place? Who laid the cornerstone thereof? When the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy.

In other words, the angelic host that God created. Here it shows us that they were created before the world and the universe. Because when God brought the whole heavens and the earth and the universe into existence, the angels of God shouted for joy.

They saw it. They were already in existence. They were there before then.

These angelic beings. And so when God just spoke everything into existence, they were overwhelmed with the power and the glory, and they shouted for joy. The Spirit of God reveals itself.

So the angels were created before the earth. Now turn to Psalm 68, 17. Now remember, this is not exhaustive.

We would spend days if we wanted to go through, but this is enough, I hope, to whet your appetite, to give you an understanding of what angels are all about, where they came from, and what they can do. And it's wonderful as a child of God to know that they're on your side. Look at verse 17.

Now the Spirit of God reveals again the numbers and the myriads of angels that appeared on Mount Sinai with the Lord when He revealed Himself to Moses and the children of Israel. Verse 17. The chariots of God are 20,000.

Even thousands of angels. The Lord is among them as in Sinai in the holy place. In other words, He's making reference again to the millions and the millions of angels that God has around His throne that He can send out to do whatever He wants them to do.

Whether it's to protect you, to destroy an enemy, to smite, to deliver, to free someone from jail, to give someone a headache. It's amazing what we find out, what angels are used for. Turn to Psalm 78, 49.

The Spirit of God reveals here what God did to destroy the Egyptians. Psalm 79 or 78 is a commentary on the destruction of Egypt before God delivered the Jews. And again, using angels.

Look at verse 49. Speaking what He did to the Egyptians. He cast upon them the fierceness of His anger.

It's interesting how He affected their weather. In fact, you read some of the things that God did. It sounds like El Nino.

Just heating up things. Again, we look at our computer models and we watch the CBS Evening News and CNN and they talk about El Nino and they show the satellite pictures. And Rosemary and I are watching.

They have this three-dimensional stuff. Now it shows the heat from the ocean rising up and down and fluctuating. You know, this heat as it pulsates off the coast of South America and goes up towards the southern coast of Florida or California.

It's just the breath of God breathing on the oceans. But the secular man who leaves God out, everything has a scientific answer. But it would be so easy for God just to heat up the oceans.

To cool down things a little more than normal. Verse 49. He cast upon them the fierceness of His anger, wrath and indignation and trouble by sending evil angels among them.

And boy, you read the account in Exodus as the families woke up and found the firstborn of every family dead. Parents, children, cattle, using evil angels among them. Psalm 103, verse 20.

Bless ye the Lord, His angels that excel in strength, that do His commandments, hearkening unto the voice of His word. Again, you reflect on Job chapter 1, verse 6. How they obey His commandments. Make a little note of this.

Chapter 4 of Daniel, verse 16 and 17. We find out there that God had angels watching Nebuchadnezzar's life, the most powerful man on earth, and He used the angels to drive him insane. He had a nervous breakdown.

He was absolutely insane for seven years. No hope. He used angels.

They're referred to there as watchers. Just affecting his mind, his thinking, and he snapped and went insane. Star-craving man, living like an animal, eating straw like an ox.

He lost his personal hygiene. They had to lock him up for seven years. Daniel chapter 10 is another description of Daniel.

We learn when he was fasting, seeking revelation from God. And this is why I like to fast. He was at a point in his life where he wanted to understand Scripture and he was looking toward the future, wanting to know what was going to happen to mankind, what the end of the age was about, what would happen to the nation of the Jews.

And God honored that. After his 21-day fast, He sent an angel. Remember, an angel came to him.

And three times the angel said to Daniel, Oh man, greatly beloved of God. Do you realize how greatly beloved of God you are? If you're repurposed to see His face, if you need an angel, He'll send an angel to you. You're the same as Daniel.

You put your faith in Jesus Christ. It says you are accepted in the beloved. You're greatly beloved of God.

In this marvelous chapter 10, God sends the angel and gives Daniel the revelation. Everything, all the Gentile powers down to the end of the age and even shows Daniel the second coming of Jesus Christ by sending an angel to him. Just to bring information, to give understanding, to encourage.

Turn to Matthew chapter 18 and look at this, what the Bible says concerning the children of God. Jesus is speaking concerning the church. All of us, from children to you and I, when we put our faith in Him.

And notice what He says to anybody that would offend a child or deny them the right to know Jesus Christ or try to replace the truth of Jesus Christ with something false or fictitious. He says, Take heed, this is verse 10 of Matthew 18, Take heed that you despise not one of these little ones. For I say unto you that in heaven their angels do always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven.

In other words, the angels are always standing in attention, watching the face of God, waiting for directions or instruction what to do for the redeemed. And that's exactly what the angel received from God when he was sent to free Peter out of jail. He was beholding the face of the Father and God sent him to free Peter from that jail.

And you have angels created that stand before God's throne watching His face to receive directions how to protect you and come to your aid in any instant. They always behold the face of the Father. Let's quickly go to Luke.

We're almost to what I wanted to show you. Luke chapter 2. Now remember in Genesis 2-1, the Spirit of God reveals that God had created all the heavenly host. Everything is done in an order.

Here is where the shepherds in the field have the appearance of the heavenly host. Look at verse 13. Suddenly, there was with the angel, there was a principal angel, probably the choir director, and a multitude of the heavenly host praising God.

So here's the heavenly host of Genesis 2-1. God sent millions of angels, just a group of shepherds, in the fields outside of Bethlehem. Jesus Christ, the coming of the Lord, His birth, the heavenly host.

So He's got groups of them that will come and just sing. You remember, make a note of this, we won't spend time there. John chapter 20, verse 12.

What took place there? You remember at the resurrection, Mary ran into the tomb, and who was at either end where Jesus' body had laid? He was no longer there, just the empty grave clothes like a cocoon. Christ had risen and said there was an angel sitting at His feet and where His head lay, two angels at either end of the sarcophagus of Jesus Christ. You recall in the gospels that the Lord sent an angel to roll the mighty stone away from the mouth of Jesus' tomb that was there.

If He hadn't rolled the stone away, the women couldn't have moved it, even the men themselves, because it weighed probably seven to ten tons. Some nine feet in diameter rolled down and then sealed and cemented the opening of the tomb. We go into that tomb, an amazing tomb to walk into and see where Jesus had laid His body.

See the actual tomb. One of the great sites in Jerusalem. But the Lord used one angel trying to just roll the thing away.

There was an earthquake, an angel rolled away. Remember when the ladies got down there, Mary and Mary Magdalene, and said the angel was sitting on the stone. Say, hi, girl.

He's not here. He's risen. Turn to Hebrews, chapter 1. Again, putting the angels in their proper place in comparison with Jesus Christ, the Creator.

And the writer of Hebrews here brings out the deity of Jesus Christ. Verse 5, unto which of the angels said He, at any time Thou art my son, this day have I begotten Thee. And again, I will be to Him a father.

He shall be to me a son. And again, when He brings in the first begotten into the world, He says, and let all the angels of God worship Him. And that's why Jesus told that one angel, Satan, thou shalt worship the Lord thy God and Him only shalt thou serve.

When Satan offered Jesus, you know, all the powers of the world, if He would worship Him, and Jesus was His Creator, reminding Satan, you're supposed to worship Me. And the Spirit of God reveals here in verse 7, the angels, He saith, would worship Him. Let all the angels of God worship Him.

And of the angels, He saith, who maketh His angels spirits and administers a flame of fire. One of those angels, the Spirit went forth to be a lying spirit in the mouth of Ahab's prophets. Look at verse 14 of chapter 1, and here again is what the Spirit of God declares concerning your life if you're a born again Christian.

Verse 13 and 14. Which of the angels said He, at any time sit on my right hand, shall I make thine enemies thy foes? Showing the inferiority of angels compared to Jesus Christ. Are they not all ministering spirits sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation? If you put your faith and your trust in Jesus Christ, are you a born again Christian? If you ask Jesus Christ to forgive you of your sin and be your Lord and Savior, if you've done that in your heart, then you become an heir of salvation.

You have this marvelous inheritance waiting for you in glory. You're a child of God. And our angels created to minister to your needs and watch over you forever.

Now, let's just close with this. Look at verse 13. I find this interesting.

I've got some interesting things happen in my life. Rosemary and I both. My son.

Angels have appeared to my son Jeffrey. An angelic being appeared in the bedroom of my oldest son, Scott, when he was a young boy. We were in the living room having a Bible study one night.

I'll never forget this. We were up. It was about 3 o'clock in the morning.

We were just so excited about Jesus Christ after a Bible study night. We couldn't go to sleep. So we had our Bibles open sitting on the living room floor.

And all of a sudden, my son Scott, he was about 9 then, walked out and he said, the Lord just appeared or an angel just appeared in my room, Dad. At the foot of the bed woke me up. Oh, what room so shining.

We don't know. It's how you know. Nothing like that's ever happened to me.

But I had some interesting things on Rosemary and I both that we can't explain. My son Jeffrey had a very frightening experience in his life. He was running home one night trying to get home before dark and he fell down.

He was about, at that time, 3 or 4, I think. Or maybe older. And he fell down in the park across from our house and looked up and he was circled with giant angels with swords looking down on him.

He didn't have to fear. I mean, just to protect him. But look at this in verse 13 of Hebrews, chapter 1. Let brotherly love continue and be not forgetful to entertain strangers, for thereby some have entertained angels unawares.

So, you don't know who you're going to give a meal to. And they ate with Abraham. There may be a knock on your door.

Some guy may just want to work around the garage to earn a meal. Be alert. They might have that meal with you.

And then go on their way and you'll never see them again. Maybe until you get the glory. But it says, be careful to entertain strangers.

Because sometimes people have entertained angels unawares. So, they're very, very prominent in the Scriptures, very active in the believer's life. Let's go back to Acts, chapter 12.

The one thing I like about the angels are that you never have to call on them. God is always one or two steps ahead of us in our needs. And if an angel needs to come into our life and you need to see one, God will have it happen.

And another thing that took place for the children of God, when an angel appeared, there's naturally, there's fear. It's a supernatural, abnormal thing. And it affects the emotions.

And when that fear comes, it's interesting. The angel voice said, fear not, be not afraid. I'm from God.

I'm here to help you. God wants to encourage you. So, whatever your need may be.

And you don't have to worry about the enemy. God can take care of the enemy. So, the angel came and told Peter to wake up.

We're getting out of here. Bind thyself, bind on thy sandals, and so he did. And he saith unto him, cast thy garment about thee, and follow me.

And up he got, and out he went. And he went out and followed him and wished not that it was true, which was done by the angel, but thought he saw a vision. So, Peter was thinking he was probably having a dream.

And when they were past the first and the second word, so, not only did somehow a transfer the guys that were chained to him didn't realize the chain fell off Peter's hand, didn't fall off the Roman guards. You know, the angel probably could have had the chains wrapped around them and locked them up some way. Out Peter walked.

He walked right past the guard. The angel opened the door of the cell. That guard didn't see him.

Walked him right out of the prison into the street. And that guard didn't see him. When they were past the first and the second word, they came into the iron, unto the iron gate that leadeth into the city, which opened to them of his own accord.

And they went out and passed on through one street and forthwith the angel departed from him. When Peter would come to himself, he said, Man, it's cold out here. I better put my clothes on.

And all of a sudden, he's standing in the street and he's going, Well, this is real. I'm free, you know. Now, I know of a surety that the Lord hath sent his angel and hath delivered me out of the hand of Herod and from all the expectation of the people of the Jews.

And so, the gates of hell, you see, were opened. The gates of hell cannot prevail against the Lord's church. We'll finish this chapter next week.

It's nine o'clock already. Shall we all stand? Father, it's wonderful to know that you have angels created to watch over us. Lord, that when we have a need, we need not fear, you will have the help there instantly.

Whatever we may need. We thank you, Lord, you use angels to give us revelation of the future. To give us understanding of the Scriptures.

We thank you, Lord, that you use angels to give us deliverance and to protect us. To comfort us. To encourage us.

We thank you, Lord, you have these ministers of fire. Because we're heirs of salvation, we put our trust in you. We thank you, Lord, also that you can use angels to destroy our enemies.

We need not be concerned about vengeance or fear of the future. Lord, you have everything under your control. You're a great and awesome God.

We're so thankful, Lord, to be the heirs of salvation. To be your children. To be able to trust you.

And know, Lord, whatever our bondage may be, our captivity may be, in an instant, Lord, if we'll trust and rest in you, you can deliver us quite suddenly. Grant us, Lord, by your grace and your Spirit, to keep our minds stayed upon thee at all times. And trust in you.

In your love and your power. In your protection. That we take no anxious thought for tomorrow.

And, Lord, be able to sleep and rest, knowing that you have everything under your control. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

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