

What About the Angels?

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Most of us know the Christmas carol “Hark the Herald Angels Sing.” One Christmas we were using printed copies of some Christmas carols as we went caroling through the neighborhood. When we got to the song “Hark the Herald Angels Sing” I noticed a misspelling. Instead of Hark the Herald Angels Sing it read, “Hark the Herald Angles Sing.” I have seen angels misspelled for angles many times. In writing out my notes for this study I spelled angels as angles three times!



Has anyone ever asked you this question: How many angels can dance on the head of a pin? Many people are intrigued by questions such as this. However, if we are ever going to understand the real world of angels, and stopping joking around about angels, we will have to go to the Bible.

Many Christians are intrigued with angels but they know little about angels in relation to what their ministry is and how they function for us and against us. What does the Bible say about angels? There are seventeen Old Testament Books that make 108 reference to angels and 17 New Testament Books refer to angles 165 times.

In this study today we want to talk about angels. We want to pull back the curtain and look into the spirit world. From a Biblical perspective, we want to see the nature, works, and events occurring in an unseen world that lives and exists all around us. I can say this as we embark on this study. We are not alone! Human beings are not the only intelligent creatures in the universe who possess a higher form of life than the animal kingdom.

Beyond our natural curiosity, anything God reveals in the Bible should be an important subject of learning. It’s my prayer that what God reveals to us about angels will be a blessing to our hearts.

The Bible has much to say about the intriguing world of angels.

There are some key questions about angels that need to be answered.

I. When were angels created?

The Bible teaches that angels were created before the universe since they were pictured as singing before the creation of the universe and earth as we know it today.

Job 38:4-7

“Where wast thou when I laid the foundations of the earth? declare, if thou hast understanding. Who hath laid the measures thereof, if thou knowest? or who hath stretched the line upon it? Whereupon are the foundations thereof fastened? or who laid the corner stone thereof; When the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy?”

Job was absent when the morning stars (possibly Venus and Mercury) sang and the “the sons of God” (the angels) shouted with joy over God’s creation of the earth. The stars’ singing is a poetic personification. It is not a reference to the noise made by stars as detected by radio astronomy. But the shouting of the angels at the time of creation means that God had created the angelic order, prior to the creation of the universe. The Bible gives a special descriptive name to the angels. They are termed as the “sons of God” in Job 38:7 and are given a similar title in Genesis 6:2 and Job 1:6; 2:1.

Since angels are created by God, they are called “the sons of God” (Job 1:6; 2:1). The word “sons” seems to indicate a direct creation from God, even as believers are recreated (born again) in Christ and are termed as “sons of God” (John 1:12-13). When the “sons of God” or angels (in this case unfallen angels) came to present (station) themselves before God to report on their activities, Satan (“the accuser”) was with them. He had and still has some kind of access into God’s presence. Satan declared that he was roaming through and walking back and forth on the earth, apparently looking for those whom he could accuse and dominate (1 Peter 5:8). Satan’s going on the earth may also suggest his exercising dominion over it and its people. Satan is the god of this age (2 Cor. 4:4; Eph. 2:2) and the whole world is under the control of the evil one (1 John 5:19).

Why are angels called “the sons of God?” It’s because they do in some way reflect God’s image or likeness. As we will see in our next point, angels do not possess human bodies and they are not humans, but they do possess personality, something which is not just limited to human beings. God possesses personality but is not a created human being. Also, angels possess personality for they have a will to choose (Rev. 12:4), intelligence and desire to learn (2 Sam. 14:20; 1 Pet. 1:12), they possess emotions (Job 38:7; Luke 15:10), they speak (Matt. 28:5) and can worship (Job 38:4-7; Heb. 1:6). Angels are not some kind of ethereal, aerial spirits floating around without personalities, something like a squishy robot. They have personality. Every one of them is different from every other one. They’re unique in their creation. Angels possess all the qualities and requirements for being regarded as persons or as living beings that possess personhood. They are eternal beings like men (Luke 20:36).

It is apparent that angels are higher angelic beings than man since they are faster than men. Here is some angelic trivia for you. How fast are angels? Ezekiel 1:14 describe the Cherubim as leaving the throne and returning to the throne as lightening runs through sky. “And the living creatures ran and returned as the appearance of a flash of lightning.” Angels are very fast. They are even faster than the speed of light for they can be in the presence of the throne room (like the angel Gabriel - Luke 1:19) and immediately be at the exact point on earth to fulfill God’s will (Daniel 9:21). How strong are angels? They are much stronger than men. One angel by himself smote and killed 185,00 Assyrians who were the enemies of Israel. He did this in one night (2 Kings 19:35). Yes, angels are higher created beings than man but they were created to reflect their Creator God.

So what have we learned so far? We learn that angels were created to reflect the creative wisdom and power of God! Like the angels, we too are called upon to reflect God’s image as the Holy Spirit brings us back to a closer likeness to Jesus Christ (2 Cor. 3:18). Angels are somewhat mysterious and a wonderful attraction to us as human beings. As we reflect our God and Creator, we too should be a wonderful and somewhat mysterious person to the unsaved. The unsaved people of this world should see us reflecting God’s light and glory. We must remember that God has called us to be light and salt in the world (Matt. 5:13-14). Like the angels,

we are to reflect our Creator and we can only do this as we preserve truth and portray God's light of holiness to a lost world all around us (1 John 1:7).

Yes, the "sons of God" shouted at the time of creation (Job 38:7). Job's inspired record gives us an accurate conclusion as to when the angels were created. They were created before the universe and were watching God create, while at the same time they echoed forth their praises to the sovereign Creator for His magnificent work of creation. What a day it must have been when the angels started singing as God was creating! Today we should do some singing and rejoicing when looking at the marvels of God's creative wonders! The majesty of mountains and meadows, the beauty of butterflies and birds, and the breathtaking glory of the oceans and undersea world. Everywhere we look, into the sky, across the horizon, and down underneath the sea, we see the marvels of God's creation.

"This is my Father's world, and to my listening ears
All nature sings, and round me rings the music of the spheres.
This is my Father's world: I rest me in the thought
Of rocks and trees, of skies and seas;
His hand the wonders wrought.

This is my Father's world, the birds their carols raise,
The morning light, the lily white, declare their Maker's praise.
This is my Father's world: He shines in all that's fair;
In the rustling grass I hear Him pass;
He speaks to me everywhere."

There is far too much evidence in the Word of God to say there aren't any angels. There are angels. In fact, there are 273 references to angels in the Bible. Since angels are mentioned this many times; a study of angels is worthy of our attention. I think by the time we're done with this study, we are going to have a new sensitivity to an entire universe full of new creatures that we have never really understood before, but creatures with whom you will spend your whole eternity. So you might as well get to know them. We are going to be mingling around with angels forever in Heaven.

Einstein once said:

“It is very possible that in a different dimension right now, a railroad train is coming right through the middle of this room, only we can’t perceive it because it’s in an entirely different dimension.”

Well, I don’t think there are trains tooting their horns in another dimension but there are angelic beings that exist in another spiritual dimension that we cannot see. This room right now is probably loaded with angels; they’re all around the place. Just because we can’t see them doesn’t mean they aren’t there. They exist in a dimension that we cannot perceive, but they’re here. John Milton said, “Millions of spiritual creatures walk the earth unseen.” He is right. Our next point in our study of angels will bring this out.

Angels do exist. I believe it because the Bible says it, but I also believe it because I’ve encountered them. I’ve encountered the fallen ones (demons) as they seek to tempt me. But I’ve also encountered the holy ones and haven’t known it or have not perceived them since they work primarily behind the scenes performing God’s tasks. Well, we are about to take a trip into another world!

II. Do angels possess bodies like human beings?

Below is a Picture of an Angel

No, I did not forget to put the picture on the slide! The Bible does not teach that angels are like human beings in that they possess physical bodies like humans. They are invisible spirits. This is why angels cannot be seen to the mortal eye. Therefore, the picture on the left is a picture of an angel which is unseen to the mortal eye.

Hebrews 1:7

“And of the angels he saith, Who maketh his angels spirits, and his ministers a flame of fire.”

The name “spirits” (pneuma - winds or currents of air) and the expression “flame of fire” speaks of how fast these invisible spirits carry out God’s orders. They are like the blowing wind and spreading prairie fire.

This is a quote from Psalm 104:4 which states:

“Who maketh his angels spirits; his ministers a flaming fire.”

Hebrews 1:14

“Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?”

Jesus taught that by nature a “spirit” cannot be touched and handled, at least from a human perspective (Luke 24:39). Because angels are spirits, it is their nature to be invisible to humans.

Angels do not possess human bodies. They do not have a material or fleshly body. They are spirit beings or incorporeal. The Bible teaches that God created both the visible and invisible world and everything and everyone in them (Col. 1:16; Rev. 4:11).

The fact that angels are part of God’s creation that is invisible and unseen to the human eye, would include the angels. Everything from atoms to angels would be included in the invisible realm. So, according to the Bible, we are not alone! Angels or invisible spirits exist all around us.

Psalm 148:2 declares:

Praise ye him, all his angels: praise ye him, all his hosts.

Psalm 148:5 then adds:

“Let them (the angels) praise the name of the LORD: for he commanded, and they were created.”

The purpose for the creation of this invisible angelic order was to worship and serve God (Psalm 103:20-21; Heb. 1:6-7; Rev. 5:11-12).

Angels are stronger than man, but not omnipotent (Psalm 103:20; 2 Peter 2:11). Angels are greater than man in knowledge, but not omniscient (2 Samuel 14:20; Matthew 24:36) or omnipresent (Daniel 9:21-23, 10:10-14). Although they are spirit beings they cannot be everywhere at the same time like God who is omnipresent. They move about from one place to another (Daniel 9:21-23). They have limitations in space. One angel speaks of coming from God’s presence to Daniel but mentioned

how he was delayed by another evil angel or spirit being (Daniel 10:10-14). Angels cannot be everywhere at the same time. This would be true of the devil since he also is a created angel (Job 1:7; 1 Pet. 5:8). Angelic travels involve a time lapse. They are localized spirit beings. This reminds us that angels are not greater than their Creator God who possesses not only omnipresence (Zech. 4:10; Heb. 4:13) but also omniscience (Ps. 139:1-6) and omnipotence (Jer. 32:17; Matt. 19:26).

It's interesting that angels are always referred to in the masculine gender and always appeared to others in the masculine gender when revealing themselves in a bodily fashion to people. However, at the same time the Bible teaches that the angels are sexless beings (Matthew 22:28-30; Mark 12:25; Luke 20:34-36) which cannot reproduce. In other words, there was never any procreation among angels. There aren't mother and father angels, and a whole lot of little angels. They were all directly created by God. They have no capacity to reproduce. They do not reproduce, there is no increase in the number. They do not die. So there's no decrease in their number.

The Bible teaches that the angels are sexless beings even though they are repeatedly addressed in the masculine gender throughout the Bible (Gen. 19:5, 10, 12, 16; Dan. 8:15; 9:21; Luke 24:4; Mark 16:5; Acts 1:10). The only two angels mentioned by name are Gabriel (Luke 1:19; 26) in relation to the birth of Christ and Michael (Dan. 12:1; Jude 9; Rev. 12:7) in relation to a ministry with Israel. Both of these angelic names are men's names. We must understand that the Scriptures give no support that angels in their original created existence possessing either male or female bodily forms. They are sexless spirit beings.

Joseph Smith, the false prophet and founder of the Mormon Church taught otherwise: "Angels are resurrected personages, having bodies of flesh and bones." Smith claimed that the prophet Moroni had been transformed into an angel after death and appeared to him in a series of visitations. What Smith taught about angels being resurrected people was absolutely false. It does not follow the record of truth as found in Scripture. But did Joseph Smith really see an angel? Well, he may have, but it was not one of God's good angels. It was a demon. We will talk about this more in another question.

Although angels do not possess human bodies they can sometimes materialize and appear in human bodies. Again, angels do not have any essential physical form but

angels do have the ability to appear in human form. There are two exceptions to angels being invisible to mortal humans.

First, angels can temporarily take on human appearance. When angels appeared to humans in the Bible, they always resembled normal males. In Genesis 18-19 God and two angels appear as men and actually ate a meal with Abraham. Angels appear as men on various occasions throughout the Bible (Mark 16:5) but they never appear in the likeness of women. God is not a feminist!

Second, there were times when God gave a special vision of angels to humans. One good example of this is found in 2 Kings 6:15-17 where the eyes of Elijah's servant to the protective angelic world that was keeping them safe from the Syrian invaders. More on this later.

The Bible fact we need to remember is that angels are always referenced as spirit beings in their original creation and design. This is why we are told that we wrestle against "spiritual wickedness in high places" (Eph. 6:12) which means that our battle with wicked angels occurs with unseen spirit forces that reside in the spiritual realm ("spiritual") and they are wicked beings ("wickedness"). In fact, the word "high places" and "heavenly places" (heavenly) not only references the location of the angel's movements (the place of their activity in the atmospheric heavens above us) but also the incorporeal nature of angels who are invisible and cannot be seen with the human eye. They are part of the unseen world of spiritual reality.

What do we learn from this point about angels? We are reminded that God created everything, even the invisible angels. They are extraordinary created beings but they are not greater than God. This is something we must remember. Like the angels, we are the result of God's creative action and should worship and glorify Him for creating us.

I remember being at a concert. After the first part of the concert was finished the curtain was closed. Immediately you could hear the shuffling of feet, the banging of chairs, and the setting up of another special for the next part of the concert. What was going on behind the curtain was hidden to our eyes but something was surely happening or taking place behind the curtain. In a similar way, there is

something happening behind the spiritual curtain or veil. Our physical world is but one world. But behind the physical existence of our personal lives there is a whole other world, a spirit world, which is filled with wonder and amazement. In this study, we are taking a peek behind the veil of curtain that reveals the unseen spiritual world that is all around us. We are studying about the angels.

III. What do angels look like in the spirit world?

We have learned in answering the first question that angels are spirit beings that cannot be seen by the mortal eye (Heb. 1:7, 14). However, this does not mean that angels do not have a specific appearance in the spirit world in which they live and exist. We must remember that we only know and understand about the physical or material world and our physical bodies. But this does not mean there is no such thing as spiritual bodies which exist in another dimension of time and space. God is not limited to only the physical realm.

Although invisible spirits, angels can visibly see and interact with one another as we do in our own physical world. Although they are invisible to the material and mortal eye, angels do differ in appearance and are distinguishable one from another (Jude 9). Within the invisible world angels are able to see one another and battle or make war with one another in a world that is unseen to our human eyes.

Revelation 12:7

“And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels.”

There is a whole other world that exists beyond our material world in which created beings, both angels and the souls/spirits of deceased people (Heb. 12:23; Luke 16:23), function with normal capacities and senses that we possess with our human or physical bodies.

As spirit beings, angels possess all of the sensory perceptions we have on earth with our physical bodies, and yet they exist in another dimension that does not require a physical body. There is obviously some kind of observable structure even in the spiritual or immaterial world that is recognizable by spirit beings. They can see one another, talk to one another, and engage with one another as we would with physical bodies.

A. Their Description

- They have wings

Revelation 4:8 says:

“And the four beasts had each of them six wings about *him*; and *they were* full of eyes within: and they rest not day and night, saying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come.”

Do angels really possess wings or this Hollywood’s description of angels? Does Scripture verify this finding and appearance regarding angels? The Bible does give us enough information that God did create them with wings. Yes, angels do have wings. Many Bible passages, like Revelation 4:8, picture the angels with wings. The Seraphim who stood above God’s throne and attend the throne of God also have six wings (Isaiah 6:2,6). We will look at these verses later. These angelic creatures express praise to God for His impeccable purity and holiness.



Ezekiel’s vision also records of the Cherubim (Ezekiel 1:5-8) who are another high ranking order of angels that function as guardians of God’s holiness (Gen. 3:24). The images of cherubim on the ark of the covenant had wings that covered the mercy seat (Exodus 25:20).

Revelation 4:8 records a heavenly angelic scene:

“And the four beasts had each of them six wings about *him*; and *they were* full of eyes within: and they rest not day and night, saying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come.”

These are bizarre creatures, unlike anything that has ever existed on the earth. They are the same winged creatures that Ezekiel talks about. They are covered with eyes all over their bodies, even under their wings. Who are these creatures? What do they represent? They are a special created and exalted order or class of angels that serve, minister, and worship in the area of the throne of God. Apparently they were large giant winged angelic creatures that could easily be seen around the throne.

The Biblical data suggests that these creatures are a certain class of angels which are the cherubim or either a composite (combined or blended) picture of both the seraphim of Isaiah 6 and the cherubim of Ezekiel 1 and 10. In Revelation 4:6 they are called “beasts” (living beings or creatures - that which is vibrant with life) which are “in the midst of the throne” (immediate vicinity of the throne) and “round about the throne” (encircling the throne). What a scene and site this was to behold! We are going to see it someday! We are going to see these same living creatures or class of angelic beings that John saw and which brought amazement to him.

The description of these created angelic beings has a two-fold purpose 1) They are created to represent or reflect God and His attributes in some way 2) They are created to carry out God’s purposes. We will note this as we describe them. Their description is rather bizarre but in studying the Scripture we do see that angels do indeed possess wings. This special order of angels not only possessed wings but they also possessed eyes and faces.

- They are filled with eyes (vv. 6, 8)



These angelic creatures had eyes “before (in front of them) and behind (in back of them)” (vs. 6) and “full of eyes within” (vs. 8). Of course, John could not literally see inside of them. What this expression suggests is that John saw eyes all around their bodies – even on the inward parts of their body.

You men say that your wife has eyes behind her head! Well how would you like to be married to something like this!!

If we turn to the Old Testament book of Ezekiel we will find a close parallel to this description in the book of Revelation. Ezekiel had a throne room vision as well and it’s interesting to see the similarities between the two visions of God’s throne in Heaven. Ezekiel saw the same living beings. In fact, John takes their name from Ezekiel’s writings (see Ezek. 1:5 – “living creatures”).

Ezekiel 10:12 gives the same description of these living creatures or exalted angelic beings: “And their whole body, and their backs, and their hands, and their wings, and the wheels, were full of eyes round about, even the wheels that they four had.”

In Ezekiel’s vision of these living creatures, which are called cherubim (Ezek. 10:12-16), he envisions similar creatures around the throne of God and they are said to be full of eyes both on the outward and inward parts of their bodies. All of the eyes suggest that these creatures could move their wings in any direction and never have their vision blocked or blurred. This was important for they were guardians and custodians of the holiness of God. In other words, nothing unholy could barge into the presence of God.

Apparently these creatures were created to represent or reflect God and His attributes in some way. The many eyes are a reflection of God’s comprehensive knowledge (omniscience) that He has over His entire universe of creation. It’s not that these creatures are omniscient like God but they do represent God’s omniscience and they are given the gift of penetrating intelligence and insight. This is because they are apparently protective of God’s throne. They give attention to God and His holiness. Nothing is ever hidden from their sight within the scope of the throne room. Nothing pertaining to their duties escapes their scrutiny. These angelic creatures make sure that nothing unholy ever approaches the direct throne room of God. Therefore, with unsleeping watchfulness they guard the throne of God, vindicate God’s holiness, and fulfill their judicial responsibility.

Genesis 3:24

“So he drove out the man; and he placed at the east of the garden of Eden Cherubim, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life.”

The presence of the cherubim sent the message that God was holy and that man in his sinful state cannot fellowship with God. These angelic beings with all of their eyes were created to guard and protect the holiness of God. Their plentiful and penetrating eyes send the message that God cannot accept sin in His presence! If you think you can get into Heaven with sin in your life, then guess again. Do you really think that all of these eyes will miss you!

Remember Ezekiel for we will be coming back to it and make some comparisons between the two visions of John and Ezekiel.

- They have four faces (vs. 7)

Revelation 4:7

“And the first beast *was* like a lion, and the second beast like a calf, and the third beast had a face as a man, and the fourth beast *was* like a flying eagle.”



We are going to see that Ezekiel seems to point out that each Cherub had four faces. In Ezekiel 1:10 they were seen to have the faces of a man, lion, ox, and eagle and in Ezekiel 10:14 their faces are described as a cherub, man, lion, and eagle. This may demonstrate that there are a variety of these creatures. However, John in his vision may only have seen one side or angle of their faces as he records down his vision and therefore suggests these giant angels only had one face. This is because Ezekiel records them as each possessing all four faces on one angel.

Ezekiel 1:6

“And every one had four faces, and every one had four wings”

The faces represented on these creatures pointed to the attributes of the God who created them. The face of a lion represents God’s nobility, majesty or kingliness! A lion is king of the beasts. The lion would represent the One who sits on the throne and highlights the attributes of God’s majesty. God is king over all.

Psalms 21:13

“Be thou exalted, Lord, in thine own strength: so will we sing and praise thy power.”

Psalms 150:1

“Praise ye the Lord. Praise God in his sanctuary: praise him in the firmament of his power.”

1 Timothy 1:17

“Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be honour and glory for ever and ever. Amen.”

Jude 1:25

“To the only wise God our Saviour, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen.”

The face of an ox represents God’s strength and service. An ox is a strong animal but it is also a serving animal. God is almighty.

Revelation 1:8

“I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty.”

Revelation 16:7

“And I heard another out of the altar say, Even so, Lord God Almighty, true and righteous *are* thy judgments.”

But like the ox, God is also a servant to mankind.

Matthew 5:45

“That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust.”

Acts 14:16-17

“Who in times past suffered all nations to walk in their own ways. Nevertheless he left not himself without witness, in that he did good, and gave us rain from heaven, and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness.”

The face of man represents God’s wisdom and intelligence. The man’s face on this living creature reminds us that God created man and this is why man possesses superior intelligence to the animal kingdom. Man was created in the image of God and therefore possesses superior intelligence (Gen. 1:27). Man represents the

greatest part of God's creation. The man's face would then represent the One who created man – God who possess great intelligence and wisdom.

The face of an eagle represents God's sovereignty. The eagle is the sovereign of the skies and the fastest of the birds of prey. It represents sovereignty and speed. The eagle would represent the movements of a sovereign God who sits on the throne and rules the universe!

Psalm 103:19

"The Lord hath prepared his throne in the heavens; and his kingdom ruleth over all."

Psalm 115:3

"But our God is in the heavens: he hath done whatsoever he hath pleased."

The face of an eagle represents God's sovereignty and movements. In summary, these four faces on these living creatures (special group of angels) reflects God's attributes and personal being. God created them to reflect Him in some special way.

In Ezekiel's vision we observe some similar details to the angelic creatures mentioned in Revelation chapter 4. Let's break down this chapter with an outline.

➤ The whirlwind – vs. 4

Ezekiel 1:4

"And I looked, and, behold, a whirlwind came out of the north, a great cloud, and a fire infolding itself (flashing forth), and a brightness *was* about it, and out of the midst thereof as the colour of amber (a bronze color), out of the midst of the fire."

As Ezekiel peered to the north he noticed an approaching thunder-storm. In the storm were a big cloud, strong winds, and flashing lightning. As the cloud approached Ezekiel's gaze shifted from the darkness of the storm to the light emanating from its center. This light looked like glowing metal.

The whirlwind was designed to get Ezekiel's attention that something was approaching from the north – the direction of God's throne and Heaven! Let me tell you, it got the attention of Ezekiel. This vision of the chariot transport of God among the cherubim was designed to show that God was moving in judgment upon the nation and the judgment would come in the form of the Babylonian invasion. This whirlwind out of the north, indicates a tremendous movement from the throne of God and it is a judgment from God. Ezekiel is going to see a vision of God being transported on a type of chariot throne by giant angelic beings who were filled with wings, eyes, and faces. The vision is not only designed to reveal what the throne room of God is like in Heaven but it's also designed to demonstrate pictorially how God was moving in judgment upon the nation for their sins.

➤ The weird creatures – vs. 5-7



The matter of cherubim is an area of popular misconception. Many people think of cherubim (or "cherubs") as pudgy, naked baby angels who fly about with tiny wings, shooting people with Cupid-like arrows of love. But cherubim, as Ezekiel describes them, look different than this. Way different!

✓ They had Faces

In Ezekiel's vision each living creature had the overall likeness of a man (Ezek. 1:5) and yet four different faces (see Ezek. 1:6, 10). John seemed to describe them as having only one face. My guess is that John in his vision only saw one side of each creature. They may all have four faces depending which way you look at them, since Ezekiel suggests they had four sides (vs. 8 – "on their four sides"). In other words, they had a face on each side of their head and they never



needed to turn for their four faces could see in every direction (vs. 9, 17 – “they turned not when they went”). These are very weird beings. The faces are similar to those mentioned in Revelation 4 (see Ezek. 1:10). I find this is fascinating. Ezekiel was writing 600 years before Christ and John was writing about 100 years after Christ but very similar descriptions are given of these majestic angelic beings.

✓ They had Wings

There were some differences in the descriptions. In Ezekiel’s vision these living creatures had four wings (Ezek. 1:6) whereas in John’s vision they had six wings (Rev. 4:8). The difference in the number of wings may suggest that these creatures in Ezekiel’s vision are designed to perform different tasks or maybe the difference is explained by looking at the creatures from different viewpoints or angles in the visions that were given to the prophets.



Ezekiel then described the cherubim’s wings (Ezek. 1:9, 11). Two of the four wings on each cherub were spread out upward, or extended out above the cherub and were touching a wing of a cherub on either side. The effect was to form a large “box” with a cherub at each corner. The other two wings on each cherub were for covering its body (Ezek. 1:11). Because these creatures were ministering before God’s holy presence, they covered their bodies in reverence (Isa. 6:1–3).



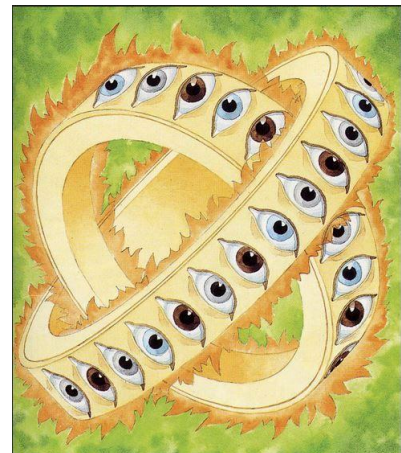
✓ They had Wheels

These living creatures of the angelic realm also possessed wheels (Ezekiel 1:13-20) which were not mentioned in John’s vision of these creatures. Their wheels and wings indicate the movements of God as they respond to God’s wishes and commands as He sits upon the

throne. In Ezekiel's vision it was a reminder that God was moving in judgment. Their description gets even weirder when contemplating their wheels. These wheels had rims or wheels inside their wheels (vs. 16 – “wheel in the middle of a wheel” - see also Ezek. 10:10-11), Perhaps one wheel was at right angle to the other and the whole appearance of the wheel structure was like a gyroscope. The wheel structures were high and awesome to look at (vs. 18). The largeness of these wheels were breathtaking and amazing to Ezekiel.

✓ They had Eyes

In John's vision eyes were also mentioned (Rev. 4:6, 8) and Ezekiel also has much to say about the eyes of these angelic creatures. These creatures actually had eyes on their wheels as they turned about (Ezek. 1:18). Even the rims or wheels inside the wheels had eyes on them (“full of eyes” - vs. 18b). These same wheels within wheels were said to be “so high that they were dreadful” (vs. 18).



“Ezekiel saw that wheel
Way up in the middle of the air
Now Ezekiel saw that wheel
Hurling way in the middle of the air
Now the little wheel run by faith
And the big wheel run by the grace of God
In the wheel and a wheel hurling
Way in the middle of the air!”

This old, folklore song does not do justice to what Ezekiel saw nor does it properly interpret it. The Bible goes on to also say that their whole body, back, hands, and wings possessed eyes (Ezek. 10:12). Now this is weird and strange. Once again, all of these eyes reflect the omniscience of God who is the One that sits upon the throne. Furthermore,



the wheels represent the movements of the sovereign God who sits upon the throne. This scene looks like an old science fiction movie!

➤ The winged-supporters of God's throne



Do angels really have wings? Yes, they Bible says they do. We have verified this already in our study. In Ezekiel's vision the angels had four wings to carry out God's tasks (Ezekiel 1:6) and Ezekiel describes how their wings worked (Ezek. 1:7-8; 23-24; 10:12-16). The task of these living creatures was evidently to support and protect God's throne as it was seen to be

transported to Ezekiel in this vision. The same mobile type of platform was seen in Chapter 10:16-18. It was a replica of the throne of God in Heaven that was carried or transported by these giant angelic creatures. This vision of Heaven's throne was seen to be transported to Ezekiel on earth and give the message that God was moving in judgment upon the nation.

Ezekiel 1:22 speaks of the throne of God which rested above them:

"And the likeness of the firmament upon the heads of the living creature *was* as the colour of the terrible crystal, stretched forth over their heads above."

In other words, the shining brilliance of the expanse above the cherubim reminded Ezekiel of ice crystals sparkling in the light of the sun. Interestingly the apostle John said the expanse around God's throne is "clear as crystal" (Rev. 4:6).

The throne is further described in Ezekiel 1:26-28:

And above the firmament that *was* over their heads *was* the likeness of a throne, as the appearance of a sapphire stone (azure blue color): and upon the likeness of the throne *was* the likeness as the appearance of a man above upon it. And I saw as the colour of amber, as the appearance of fire round about within it, from the appearance of his loins even upward, and from the appearance of his loins even downward, I saw as it were the appearance of fire, and it had brightness round

about (the man looked like glowing metal and fire which is a reflection of God's eternal glory on the throne). As the appearance of the bow (rainbow) that is in the cloud in the day of rain, so *was* the appearance of the brightness round about. This *was* the appearance of the likeness of the glory of the LORD (The multi-splendored colors of the rainbow were refracted from the blazing light of God's glory on the throne). And when I saw *it*, I fell upon my face, and I heard a voice of one that spake."

This is a similar description given of the throne room in Revelation 4:1-3 where a rainbow surrounds the throne room of God.

Revelation 4:3

"And he that sat was to look upon like a jasper and a sardine stone: and *there was* a rainbow round about the throne, in sight like unto an emerald."

So what Ezekiel was seeing in this vision was a picture of God's throne being transported through the heavens by these angelic beings in order to fulfill God's purpose on earth. Ezekiel's vision was of a throne-chariot of God, which was borne or carried along by cherubim.

Ezekiel 1:24 adds this description about their wings:

"And when they went, I heard the noise of their wings, like the noise of great waters, as the voice of the Almighty, the voice of speech, as the noise of an host: when they stood, they let down their wings."

When the wings of the cherubim moved to transport God's throne, their sound was like water rushing down a mountain stream, and was as intense like the voice of God. This reminded Ezekiel of the noise of an army in battle ("as the noise of an host"). When the cherubim stopped, they lowered their wings. The living creatures, or exalted angels of Ezekiel's vision, apparently support God's throne in Heaven and this is pictured in this vision by these angelic beings carrying a representation of God's throne throughout the heavens in order to bring it to Ezekiel and accomplish God's purpose on earth. In this vision, Ezekiel actually pictures the God of the universe on a mobile type of platform that was run by the wheels on the giant living

creatures (see Ezek. 1:19-21). This is a remarkable and breathtaking vision given to Ezekiel.

As God directs the cherubim or living creatures, the wheels on these creatures (not mentioned in Revelation – vv. 19-20) respond and the chariot like platform was propelled on its way through the heavens. All of this teaches that the good angels perform God’s tasks like a flash of lightening (Ezek. 1:14), they are before the throne to guard His holiness, and God gave them wings to do accomplish all of His purposes throughout the earth and universe.

Psalm 18:10

“And he rode upon a cherub, and did fly: yea, he did fly upon the wings of the wind.”

This is a repeated imagery the Bible gives of God being transported throughout the heavens on this portable and moveable throne platform. The vision is designed to show what the throne room in Heaven is like and how God is sovereign over the events that He allows to transpire on earth. It also demonstrates that the good angels do His bidding throughout the universe.

Revelation 4:8 again states this about the wings of these angelic beings:

“And the four beasts had each of them six wings about *him*; and *they were* full of eyes within: and they rest not day and night, saying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come.”

Here is where we once again see their wings! Do angels have wings? Yes, the Bible repeatedly supports this conclusion. The creatures in John’s vision had six wings. The ones in Ezekiel’s vision had four wings (Ezekiel 1:6). This may be due to Ezekiel’s perspective when looking at these winged creatures of there may be some slight differences in the way God created these creatures.

Some of these wings were used to give these creatures mobility to respond to God’s commands (Ps. 18:10; Ezekiel 10:16). Now here is an important question. What were these living creatures that Ezekiel and John saw? Were they Cherubim or Seraphim? Ezekiel said they were cherub in Ezek. 10:16. Some expositors try and separate the cherubim and seraphim but it’s not always easy to distinguish between

the two types of angelic beings. Ezekiel speaks of the cherubim having eyes and faces and this is what we see in Revelation 4. Isaiah speaks of the seraphim leading heaven in worship saying “Holy, holy, Holy” to God who sits on the throne and this is what we see these angelic creatures doing in Revelation 4:8 and Ezekiel 1:11. So there is some overlapping of their features and functions.

Perhaps there are different forms and orders of these Cherubim and this explains some of the similarities and differences in John’s and Ezekiel’s vision. It may also be that not all the cherubim are identical in their creative looks. However, it may also be proper to conclude that the Biblical data suggests that these angelic creatures in Revelation chapter 4 are a composite (combined or blended) picture of both the seraphim of Isaiah 6 and the cherubim of Ezekiel 1 and 10. To try and identify them as either one is perhaps not wise.

Some have suggested that both the cherubim (the root meaning is unknown) and seraphim (burning ones) are two expressions of the same living creatures. In other words, the seraphim and cherubim are creatures of the same order or kind with different names. There may be some validity to this interpretation since we see overlapping features and functions. However, in Isaiah’s vision of the seraph angels give us a more detailed picture of the purpose of their angelic wings on these bizarre creatures. They used their wings to convey their “burning” devotion to God.



Isaiah 6:1-3

“In the year that king Uzziah died I saw also the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple. Above it stood the seraphims: each one had six wings; with twain he covered his face (*denoting reverence and awe in God’s presence*), and with twain he covered his feet (*denoting humility in God’s presence – unworthy to stand in His presence - they stood on holy ground*), and with twain he did fly (*denoting obedience to carry out commands*). And one cried unto another, and said, Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of hosts: the whole earth is full of his glory.”

Should not we reflect the angels in this way? We should give worship to God for His holiness. We should sing about it, reflect upon it, practice it, and tell others about it. When was the last time we took time to sit down and reflect upon God's absolute holiness and purity and left His holiness impact our heart and life?

“Holy, holy, holy! Lord God Almighty!
Early in the morning our song shall rise to thee.
Holy, holy, holy! Merciful and mighty,
God in three persons, blessed Trinity!”

If you ask me how you should live the Christian life, I would tell you to look at the seraphim (burning or fiery ones – that reflect and display God's glory). We should show reverence in God's presence, humble ourselves before Him and follow His commands. We should fear God, fall before God, and follow God! You can't go wrong when you do these three things!

“Immortal, invisible, God only wise,
In light inaccessible, hid from our eyes.
How blessed, how glorious, the Ancient of Days,
Almighty, Victorious, Thy great name we praise.

Great Father of glory, pure Father of light,
Thine angels adore Thee, all veiling their sight;
All praise we would render, O help us to see
'Tis only the splendor of light hideth Thee!”

For just a moment in our study, let's set aside our study of the angels and ask ourselves as Christians "Are we, in the here and now, truly a worshiping people as God intended us to be?" We must remember that our first obligation in life is to worship God. And it's is amazing how much easier the wheels of mortal life spin when we take time to worship God!

B. Their duty (8b)

Revelation 4:8 describe the duty of these living creatures which is to give praise to God. These angelic creatures praise God day and night.

They praise God in three areas:

❖ Purity of being (“holy, holy, holy)

The three repeated words may reference the three Person of the Holy Trinity (trinity of God) or simply repeated for the sake of emphasis. God’s distance from an unholy creation is emphasized and highlighted in Heaven. God is holy which means He is separate from His creation and separate from all sin! They are said to “rest not day and night.” Heaven is a place of ceaseless praise to God’s matchless and holiness. No wonder Isaiah fell on his face and cried out that he was unclean, when he saw God sitting on the throne, and when he saw and heard the seraphs singing – “Holy, holy, holy.” The scene was too much for mortal man to bear. He knew that God was so infinitely holy that he could not face Him. Isaiah had a confrontation with the holiness of God. In the pure light of God’s presence, we can only say, “undone!”

Tozer said:

“The man who has gone into the throne room and seen Isaiah’s God can never be irreverent again.”

The Bible says that they “rest not day and night” in giving praise to God. Our life should be a life of ceaseless praise rendered up to God. Worship should be in our hearts and we should be ready to lift our hearts up to Him at any time to worship and praise Him.

Hebrews 13:15

“By him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips giving thanks to his name.”

❖ Powerful display (“Lord God Almighty” – see also Rev. 11:17; 16:7; 21:22)

These living creatures were praising God because of His great power. God is powerful for He has created all the universe of space and time as we know it. He is powerful for He keeps the world from exploding into oblivion (Heb. 1:3).

- ❖ Perpetual existence (“which was - past, and is - present, and is to come - future”).

God is the preeminent One for He is the eternal God. He never had a beginning and will never have an ending. He is the mighty and unchangeable God. King of kings and Lord of Lords, He reigns in majesty! This worship sets the stage for what is going to come in the next chapter. A holy, powerful, and eternal God has every right to move in judgment upon the world He created in order to eventually return the world to its original holy state.

These living creatures are the worship leaders of Heaven! This is their duty. Well, we viewed all the Biblical descriptions of these weird and winged angelic creatures to remind us that they did have wings which were designed and given to them to perform specific tasks of God and express reverent worship to God. Of course, there are other verses that talk about angels flying and we assume that their wings would be useful for this flight (Daniel 9:20-21). The message of the action of flying implies that Gabriel also had wings although the means of movement are not specifically suggested in the verse.

Revelation 14:6-7 records the vision of the apostle John concerning an event in the coming great Tribulation Period and says, “And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people, Saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to him; for the hour of his judgment is come: and worship him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters.”

We may surmise that this angel is a lesser angel than Gabriel or Michael (Rev. 12:7) and likely other angels, who are equal or lesser to these angels, also possess wings. Do all angels have wings? There seems to be enough Biblical evidence to conclude that they do possess wings for we know that angels are mentioned as having wings and move swiftly to do God’s bidding (Heb. 1:7).

One note of application we can take from learning about the angels is that we should be swift to perform His Will for our lives. Like the good angels, we should be

ready to move swiftly to perform the tasks that God has for us (Isa. 6:8). Many times we delay and miss doing God's will. Friend, like the good angels, we need to be on the move for Jesus Christ today.

Frequently I'm asked, "Do you believe that beings exist in other places than the earth?" I tell them, "Yes, I believe beings do exist elsewhere." The next question that usually comes is, "Oh, you believe in UFO's." And my answer is always, "Yes, of course they do exist. Yes, I believe in unidentified flying objects called angels – not those objects swirling around like glorified Frisbees. I believe that the Bible says that there are angelic beings occupying the universe, literally billions of them, filling the void around us. Their number is uncoun­ted, they live in the heavenly sphere, and they are amazing beings. The universe has a trafficking of beings, all through it. And since the creation of man, the angels have mingled in human affairs."

C. Their beauty

What do angels look like in the spirit world? They not only possess wings, as we have seen in various texts, but they also express magnificent beauty. God created the angelic order in this way. In their original creation they are a beautiful and fantastic part of God's creative order of living beings. Part of their beauty is their brilliance and shining which is designed to reflect God's glory (Luke 24:4; Acts 10:30; Rev. 10:1; 18:1) and therefore angels emanate light. Angels are elsewhere identified as "stars" in God's Word (Isa. 14:12; Rev. 9:1; 12:4) which means they shine or give off brilliance as the stars do. Angels are bright beings who were originally created to reflect the glory of God. Satan's fall (a created angelic being) from his role and the place of Heaven is pictured as a bright star and something of beauty of magnificence.

Isaiah 14:12

"How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! *how* art thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations!"

It's agreed that the historical king of Babylon is in view in Isaiah 14:1-11 for he is named in verse 4. However, what is said in Isaiah 14:12-19 references Satan and his fall from the



heavenly realm due to his sin of pride. Pride was part of the King of Babylon and was true of this King was also true of Satan. Therefore, Satan is now described in the following verses.

The name “Lucifer” means “morning star” and denotes a sense of brightness. Satan, like all of the other angelic order, possesses a radiance and brightness that emanates forth from his spiritual body. He was comparable to a shining star.

Jesus said in Luke 10:18:

“And he said unto them, I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven.”



This means that Jesus was in existence, as part of the eternal Trinity, when Satan fell. Jesus saw it. We know that Satan with all of his brilliance and brightness fell from Heaven because of the sin of pride.

This reminds us of Proverbs 16:18:

“Pride goeth before destruction, and an haughty spirit before a fall.”

Two wellborn and blue-blooded dogs were walking daintily along the street with their noses held high in the air. Along came a big alley dog of the Heinz 57 Varieties type. Embarrassed at being in the company of such a no—account dog, one of the lady dogs said, "We must go. My name is Miji, spelled M-I-J-I." The other blueblood said, "My name is Miki, spelled M-I-K-I." The low-class alley dog put his nose up in the air also and said, "My name is Fido—spelled P-H-Y-D-E-A-U-X."

Yes, pride can overtake our own hearts if we are not careful. Two Texans were trying to impress each other with the size of their ranches. One asked the other, "What's the name of your ranch?" He replied, "The Rocking R, ABC, Flying W, Circle C, Bar U, Staple Four, Box D, Rolling M, Rainbow's End, Silver Spur Ranch." The questioner was much impressed and exclaimed, "Whew! That's sure some name! How many head of cattle do you run?" The rancher answered, "Not many. Very few survive the branding."

We must beware of pride overtaking our own hearts and lives. We can exhibit pride in our accomplishments, our abilities, our wealth, and our status in life.

The five “I will” statements reveal Satan’s sin of pride.

Isaiah 14:13-14

“For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven” (Satan wanted to be equal with God), “I will exalt my throne above the stars of God” (Satan wanted to be in full command of the angels): “I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north:” (Satan wanted to rule in the place of God – usurp God’s throne) “I will ascend above the heights of the clouds” (Satan wanted to receive God’s glory who is above all in the created universe); “I will be like the most High” (Satan wanted to overtake God’s position of authority and replace God).

- a. Satan wanted to be equal God in every way – “I will ascend into heaven” (vs. 13)

Satan already had access into God’s throne room since He was created as the leading cherub (Ezek. 28:14, 16). This “I will” statement apparently refers more to just access into God’s throne. It means Satan wanted to be fully equal to God in every way possible.

- b. Satan wanted to be in full command of the angels – “I will exalt my throne above the stars of God” (vs. 13)

In other words, Satan was second in command to the angels (God being first in command) but this was not good enough for Satan. He wanted to be the sole ruler over the angels who are here referenced as shining stars (Job 38:7).

- c. Satan wanted to rule in the place of God – “I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north”

This apparently refers to the place of God’s presence (Ezek. 28:14,16). It was here that God ruled on His throne and Satan wanted to usurp God’s rule on the throne.

- d. Satan wanted to receive the glory that only God can have – “I will ascend above the heights of the clouds.”

This suggests Satan's craving to ascend up to God's level, not merely to sit upon the throne, as we saw in our last point. The emphasis on being "above" suggests that Satan wanted to possess all of God's glory, who is the One that sits upon the throne above all creation. He wanted the glory that God has above all His creation. Satan actually wanted to acquire the glory that was due only to God, as the King, who rules above the clouds on His throne (Ps. 104:3; Isa. 19:1). He wanted to ascend into the heights and receive the glory that God had.

1 Corinthians 1:30-31

"But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption: That, according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord."

Since Satan's fall, he has been constantly trying to shift the glory that due to God and placing it upon man. This is seen in the political world, the sport's world, and in just about every phase of life today. Satan wants to dethrone God and His glory and ultimately give himself glory through humanism, evolution and many other satanic philosophies which seek to remove and rob God of His glory and replace it with man's glory.

- e. Satan wanted to overtake God's position of authority – "I will be like the most High."

In this prideful statement, Satan reveals his obstinate defiance against God and his ambition to replace God, to usurp His power and authority over all the universe. If pride is deadly enough to destroy a most powerful and wise being (Satan), how much more should we mortals take heed not to walk independently of the Lord!

Satan was created as an angel of great beauty but his power and pride became his downfall. His beauty went to his brain. One of the most deceptive and persistent popular myths about Satan pictures him (complete with pitchfork, horns, and pointed tail) as being in charge of hell. In reality, Satan is not in hell; in fact, he has never been there. He will not be sentenced to the lake of fire until after his final



rebellion is crushed at the end of the Millennium (20:7–10). Furthermore, Satan is not an ugly red being. He is a creation of beauty. He was created as a shining star.

Those pictures that reveal Satan as a mythological and hideous creature holding a pitchfork do not reflect the way the devil looks today. Satan was a beautiful creation of God and He has not lost this beauty. This is important to understand when studying about Satan and angels in general.

2 Corinthians 11:13-15

“For such *are* false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ. And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed (masqueraded) into an angel of light. Therefore *it is* no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works.”

The way Satan exists in His creation, a being of beauty and splendor, is the way Satan and his ministers approach us today. They come to us as something that appears beautiful, wonderful, and right. And yet, Satan and his ministers (apostates who deny the truth), who wear beautiful religious caps and gowns, who have beautiful architectural buildings, and whose message is one of love and acceptance in spite of sin, come to us in a deceptive manner. They come with their beautiful messages and disguises only to lead Christians astray and ultimately damn unsaved souls to hell.

In understanding the beauty of angels, we consider Satan’s beauty. He was the most beautiful all the angels created by God. The Bible informs us that Satan was created as the great anointed cherub in Heaven. He is described as a created angelic being of fantastic beauty and splendor in the records of Ezekiel.

Ezekiel 28:13-15 describes Satan in this way:

“Thou hast been in Eden the garden of God (*heavenly garden in God’s presence*); every precious stone *was* thy covering, the sardius, topaz, and the diamond, the beryl, the onyx, and the jasper, the sapphire, the emerald, and the carbuncle, and gold: the workmanship of thy tabrets and of thy pipes was prepared in thee in the day that thou wast created. Thou *art* the anointed cherub (*the most exalted and highest rank of angels*) that covereth (*who has a function of covering the unique presence of God*); and I have set thee so: thou wast upon the holy mountain of God

(in God's presence within Heaven); thou hast walked up and down in the midst of the stones of fire (a manifestation of God's presence – Dan. 7:9-10; Ezek. 1:4-5). Thou wast perfect (upright) in thy ways from the day that thou wast created, till iniquity was found in thee" (turned against God's holy character).

In describing the King of Tyre (Ezek. 28:12) Ezekiel certainly goes beyond this man's description and actually describes Satan who was behind the King's evil. Like the evil King, Satan was filled with pride and fell. The language of this section of Scripture describes Satan's original creation and fall. In fact, some authors suggest (and I tend to agree with them) that the change from the description of the leader of Tyre (Ezek. 28:2-11) to the King of Tyre (Ezek. 28:12-19) presents only the picture of Satan, since various things are described in the following verses that do not associate with any human being = "thou hast been in Eden the garden of God," "anointed cherub," "perfect in thy ways." The language describes Satan is in his pre-fallen heavenly state of perfection and has no association with King Tyre. Ezekiel is giving a similarity between the leader of Tyre and Satan. Both fell because of their pride. But we can be sure that the full or entire description in these verses is referencing only Satan.

- Satan is described as living in Heaven.

Satan was in Eden (a reference to the heavenly garden of Eden that exists in Heaven). He existed in what was termed "the holy mountain of God" and "the mountain of God" (vv. 14, 16) which refers to the place of the throne room and God's presence. Satan is said to have walked up and down "in the midst of the stones of fire" (vv. 14, 16) which is likely a reference to some kind of fiery wall of protection that surrounds God on the throne.

There is some kind of fiery phenomena attending the divine presence and manifestation of God on the throne which may in some way be connected with these angelic beings (Ezekiel 1:13, Ezekiel 10:6) as they guard God's throne and represent God's absolute holiness. Apparently within the throne room there is some type of fiery blaze that surrounds God and Satan was said to dwell among this fiery blaze which portrays God's absolute purity and perfect or righteous judgment.

- Satan is described as a beautiful creation of God.

The stones mentioned in Ezekiel 28:13 remind us of Satan's creative beauty. He shined forth the colors of these beautiful stones in order to reflect God's glory and give Him the glory. Ezekiel actually lists nine gemstones in describing Satan's beauty. These were 9 of the 12 kinds of stones worn in the breastplate of Israel's high priest (Ex. 28:15–20; 39:10–13). The precious stones symbolized Satan's beauty and high position.

Ezekiel 28:12

"Son of man, take up a lamentation upon the king of Tyrus, and say unto him, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Thou sealest up the sum (a perfect example), full of wisdom, and perfect in beauty" (one of the most magnificent of God's creatures).

Satan was the model of perfection, full of wisdom, and perfect in beauty God did not create Satan to be some prime minister of evil. As with all God's Creation, Satan was a perfectly created being - one of the crowning achievements in God's angelic realm.

Ezekiel 28:17

"Thine heart was lifted up because of thy beauty, thou hast corrupted thy wisdom by reason of thy brightness: I will cast thee to the ground, I will lay thee before kings, that they may behold thee."

Whatever appearance angels take on, there is every reason to believe they are incredibly beautiful. In addition, being in the presence of God, one would expect them to have extraordinary beauty because God's glory is reflected upon all that is around Him.

- Satan is described as a cherub that was created to give praise to God musically and guard God's holiness.

In Ezekiel 28:14 he is called "the anointed cherub that covereth" (guards or protects God's holiness) and verse 16 "thou covering cherub" which probably is a reference to how this special class of angels would spread about their wings to protect and honor God's holiness by not allowing any intrusion of evil into God's presence. God is holy and these angels (the cherub) portray this in Heaven. The cherubim are God's inner circle of angels that surrounded the throne. They had the closed access to the throne and God's presence.

Ezekiel 28:13 goes on to say, “the workmanship of thy tabrets and of thy pipes was prepared in thee in the day that thou wast created.” This means that Satan was created to give praise to God and perhaps lead all of Heaven in worship of the great God and Creator. Satan is a musical being. He knows all about holy music and praise to God. Unfortunately, in his fallen state he has manipulated the order of music and created disharmony, confusion, and rebellion out of music. This is seen not only in secular society but also within the church. The praise leader of Heaven’s music has turned into a rebellious leader of hell’s music.

The description of angels is very fascinating. Some descriptions of the special classes of angels are more exotic and intriguing than others. But the Bible seems to unanimously conclude that the angelic order was created to glorify God and they are actually creatures of incredible amazement and beauty.

4. How many angels are there?



Daniel 7:9-10 reveals a heavenly scene. It is a magnificent spectacle in the heavens: “I beheld till the thrones were cast down, and the Ancient of days (God the Father) did sit, whose garment was white as snow, and the hair of his head like the pure wool (manifesting His absolute holiness and purity): his throne was like the fiery flame, and his wheels as burning fire. A fiery

stream issued and came forth from before him (God on the throne manifesting his glory and the movement of God [“wheels”] as Ezekiel had envisioned - Ezek. 1:4-28): thousand thousands ministered unto him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him (billions upon billions of angels who execute God’s will): the judgment was set, and the books were opened (the time when God moves in judgment over mankind – envisioning the destruction of the Beast up to the Great White Throne Judgment – Rev. 20:12).

The passage evokes the response in Faber's fine old hymn:

“My, God, how wonderful Thou art,
Thy majesty how bright,
How beautiful Thy mercy seat,
In depths of burning light!
How dread are Thine eternal years,
O everlasting Lord:
By prostrate spirits day and night
Incessantly adored!
Father of Jesus, love's reward,
What rapture will it be
Prostrate before Thy throne to lie,
And gaze, and gaze on Thee.

Revelation 5:11-12 is similar to Daniel's heavenly vision:

“And I beheld, and I heard the voice of many angels round about the throne and the beasts and the elders: and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands; Saying with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing.”

The expression “ten thousand” is the Greek word “murias” from which we get the word myriad (meaning a countless number). This again speak of an indefinite number of angels. They cannot be counted.

Hebrews 12:22

“But ye are come unto mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels.”

Hebrews 12:18-21 reveal the Law's condemnation. We cannot approach God without Jesus Christ. We are judged as a sinner by the Law and it keeps us out of Heaven! I cannot go to Heaven through Mount Sinai (which represents legalism, works, and the judgment of God for breaking His law). Hebrews 12:22 reveals heaven's proclamation. We have the privilege of approaching God and living in Heaven – the very presence of God. The heavenly Mount Zion speaks of the promise of salvation and grace through Jesus Christ. How can we already come into Heaven?

In the sense that we are so sure of Heaven, through grace and the redeeming sacrifice of Christ, we can live with this heavenly promise in our hearts.

Someone said:

“We *have* already arrived in principle where in full reality we shall be forever. The future is already the present. In today we possess tomorrow. On earth we own Heaven”

What is found in Heaven? There are many things but we can be sure that angels are there.

Hebrews 12:22

“But ye are come unto mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels.”

The expression “innumerable” means “without number, or unnumbered and is a metaphorical figure that suggests countless numbers of angels were created by God. I don’t know how many angels can sit on the head of a needle but I know that there are so many angels that their number cannot be calculated.

Jesus spoke about the number of the angels in relation to His approaching death upon the cross.

Matthew 26:53

“Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to my Father, and he shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels?”

The term “legions” speaks of a Roman regiment of soldiers which consisted of a number between 32,000 to 72,000 soldiers. Jesus taught that He could have summoned more than 12 legions of angels. He could call upon the great masses of good angels to come and rescue Him from the hands of the those who wanted to crucify Him. But instead of doing this He humbled Himself and died on the cross.

“He could have called ten thousand angels
To destroy the world and set him free
He could have called ten thousand angels
But he died alone, for you and me.”



When reflecting on the number of angels, we can only think of the stars in the heavens. Since angels are compared to the stars (Psalms Job 38:7; 148:1-3; Rev. 9:1-2; 12:4), it could be possible that God has matched the number of the stars with the angels. Scientists estimate that there are about 10 billion galaxies in the observable universe! The number of stars in a galaxy varies, but assuming an average of 100 billion stars per galaxy

means that there are about 1,000,000,000,000,000,000 (that's 1 billion trillion – a one followed by 21 zero's) stars in the observable universe! Such a great number is difficult to imagine. But our God is a great God and He can create such vastness with the breath of His mouth. And He did! It's possible that the number of angels is comparable to the number of stars since the angelic world is likened to the stars. This is an incredible number that is really unimaginable.

Blatner, a scientist, says the number of stars in the heavens is "an unbelievably large number," but then, very matter-of-factly, he adds that you will find the same number of molecules "in just ten drops of water." In other words, if you took 10 drops of water (not extra-big drops, just regular drops) and counted the number of H₂O molecules in those drops, you'd get a number



equal to all the stars in the universe. And all of this just happened by chance!! What a mighty God we serve! Blatner says in his book, "We are surrounded by vastness, high and low, and either way, we can't handle the biggitude."



Which are there more of — grains of sand on the Earth or stars in the sky? Obviously, grains and stars can't be counted, not literally. But you can guesstimate. Science writer David Blatner, in his book *Spectrums*, says that a group of researchers at the University of Hawaii, being well-versed in all

things beachy, tried to calculate the number of grains of sand. They said, if you assume a grain of sand has an average size and you calculate how many grains are in a teaspoon and then multiply by all the beaches and deserts in the world, the Earth has roughly (and we're speaking *very* roughly here) 7.5×10^{18} grains of sand, or seven quintillion, five hundred quadrillion grains. That's a lot of grains. And that's a lot of angels!

When I think of the vast number of angels that are created, perhaps as the sands of the sea, the amounts of stars in the heavens, and as molecules in droplets of water, I can only respond with great wonder, amazement and worship to the Creator God and say:

“I walk at night beneath majestic skies
And know behind them is a God all-wise,
Who fixed all stars, each in its lonely place,
And wrapped them in a darkened robe of space.
O mighty God, how wonderful art Thou
To love the world while heav'ns before Thee bow.
I fail to comprehend it all some how.
O mighty God, how wonderful art Thou.”

5. Are there different ranks of angels?

After pondering the number of angels, we should consider the different ranks of angels. The Bible teaches there is a hierarchy of different angelic beings. There are archangels (meaning “chief messenger” or ruling messenger” - 1 Thess. 4:16; Jude 9). Many feel that Gabriel is an archangel or chief messenger of God for the way he was repeatedly used by God (Dan. 10:12; Matt. 1:20; Luke 1:30). He has a favored position as an angel who “stands in the presence of God” (Luke 1:19). There are also greater angels such as the Seraphim and Cherubim which are the living angelic creatures that surround the throne of God and lesser angels that rank under the Seraphim and Cherubim. This seems to suggest that angels are actually organized into ranks and companies with specific functions, and each individual angel has his own work to do.

Twice the devil is called "the prince of devils" or demons (Matthew 9:34; 12:24). This means that Satan is the ruler over all the wicked angels. But under Satan there is a highly sophisticated organization of demons.

Colossians 1:16 speaks of the ranks of angels:

“For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether *they be* thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him.”

The classifications of “thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers” indicate that in the unseen world there are highly organized and sophisticated companies of angelic beings possessing different areas of rulership (“thrones, dominions, principalities”) and different realms of authority as seen in the word “powers.”

We do not have sufficient knowledge to distinguish between all of these except to conclude that they likely refer to spirit or angelic rulers with differing degrees of authority, such as presidents, governors, mayors on the human scale. Satan’s army is clearly defined here and it has a military-like discipline chain of command. The classifications of “thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers” indicate that in the unseen world there are highly organized and sophisticated companies of angelic beings possessing different areas of rulership (“thrones, dominions, principalities”) and different realms of authority as seen in the word “powers.”

These same terms are used for both holy and unholy angels throughout the Bible.

Ephesians 1:21

“Far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come.”

This verse reminds us that Jesus was raised to His heavenly throne and is superior to every ruler or authority both now and forevermore. These ruling authorities and powers certainly include angelic beings, as referenced elsewhere in Ephesians (Eph. 3:9-10; 6:12) – both good and evil. Jesus is Lord over all! He is risen from the dead and He is Lord!

Ephesians 3:9-10

“And to make all *men* see what *is* the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ: To the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly *places* might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God.”

God's purpose for the Church (uniting Jews and Gentiles together in one body) is to reveal His manifold wisdom to the angelic host. The universe is like a classroom to the angels. Angels are the students. The lesson is on "The multi-faceted wisdom of God." The Church (you and me) is the object lesson. Angels are compelled to admit and admire how God is working in the hearts and lives of His people today. They are amazed at what God's grace has done for the Church and how God's people are living today in this world.

The term "heavenly places" (literally – in the celestial regions or realms) describes the specific location where Christ is today (the third Heaven – Eph. 1:21) and also the stellar and atmospheric heavens where angelic hosts operate or move about to fulfill their missions on earth (Eph. 6:12). In the NT this phrase occurs 19 times, 5 of which are in Ephesians (Eph. 1:3, 20; 2:6; 3:10; 6:12). It often refers to a local sense, denoting the place where the exalted Christ is and the place from which believers derive their spiritual blessings in union with Christ (Eph. 1:3, 20; 2:6). But this phrase can also relate to the location where angels operate and move about as they follow their leader, whether that leader is Satan or God.

As you study the Bible, you will find that angels exist in the third Heaven where God lives and sits upon the throne. You'll find them in the second heaven, traversing or moving about the universe. You'll find them in the first heaven, which is the atmosphere of the earth. Sometimes they're before the throne of God. Sometimes they're in transit like Daniel chapter 10 reveals. In Revelation 4 and 5, they're by the throne of God. In Daniel 10, they're in transit through the universe. And many times they're on the earth. Angels are everywhere but they are specifically said to be moving about the heavens following their commands.

Ephesians 6:12 speaks of this same heavenly realm:

"For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high *places*."

The Bible repeatedly reaffirms the truth that angels exist "in high places" or in the celestial regions or realms (Eph. 6:12) which refers to the place or location that these wicked spirits move about (the stellar and atmospheric heavens) as they seek to follow their commander and leader which is Satan. It is here, the heavens which are above us, where Satan operates as their leader. This is why Satan is called "the

prince of the power of the air” – Eph. 2:2). There is an evil world of spiritual wickedness that surrounds us. It is all around us and it ever-seeking to tempt and defeat us as God’s children.

Paul is not describing a Sunday school picnic in this section of the Bible. He reminds us that we are in a battle with wicked forces that surround us in the heavenly realms (the first and second heavens) which are constantly seeking to swoop down and cause us havoc and harm.

“Principalities and powers
Mustering their unseen array,
Wait for thy unguarded hour;
Watch and pray.”

This is what Jesus taught.

Matthew 26:41

“Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation (that you are not caught off guard in the time of temptation): the spirit indeed *is* willing, but the flesh *is* weak.”

We are called upon to stay spiritually alert to the enemies that surround us and keep praying to God, staying close to Him, and trusting in His provision and victory.

Someone wrote:

“God expects us to use our God-given senses, led by the Spirit, so that we detect Satan when he is beginning to work.”

Stay spiritually alert and don’t let down your guard. Keep in contact with God and the truth.

“My Soul be on thy guard,
Ten Thousand foes arise;
The hosts of sin are pressing hard
To draw thee from the skies.
Oh watch and fight and pray,
The armour ne’er lay down;
The fight of faith will not be o’er
Till thou receive the crown.”

Principalities (governments) in Ephesians 6:12 refer to the high-ranking hierarchy of demonic authority. Powers refers to those angels that are invested with varying amounts of authority. Rulers of the darkness of this world and spiritual wickedness are descriptions of those wicked angels that exist within the hierarchy of angelic beings that are in revolt against God and spreading wickedness and sin throughout the earth today as they tempt, manipulate, and deceive people.

Although the ranks of satanic forces cannot be fully and intricately categorized with the information we have in the Bible, the first two (rulers and authorities) have already been mentioned in Ephesians 1:21 and 3:10. But Paul in Ephesians 6:12 now adds the rulers of this dark world and those demons that described as spiritual wickedness, which are part of the hierarchy of demons. Satan's army is clearly defined here and it has a military-like discipline chain of command.

Some commentators believe the four terms used of our spiritual angelic enemies in this verse do not identify four separate kinds of adversaries as much as they point out four characteristics of all of them and simply point to their wicked and evil influence they have in the world. However, like the previous descriptive verses on angelic hierarchy, it seems better to understand that there are different divisions within the angelic realm, even among the wicked angels, which allow them to strategically carry out their sinister and wicked plans over mankind and the earth.

The 4 designations (principalities, powers, rulers of the darkness of this world, and spiritual wickedness) describe the different rankings of demons as they go about to perform evil acts within their supernatural empire. Satan's forces of darkness are highly structured and organized in order to fulfill Satan's wishes and create the most spiritual havoc and evil possible on earth. There seems to be a worldwide network of angels staged throughout the earth and they are seen moving about in the heavenlies.

We are reminded here that our struggle is not physical (against flesh and blood – referencing human beings); it is a spiritual conflict against spiritual beings or what we might call the spiritual "Mafia." There is a vast global satanic network, a spiritual mafia, or cosmic potentates that are all around us. The enemy is spiritual, and the warfare is spiritual. This is why we need spiritual power to live victoriously over the demonic hordes in the heavenly realm that exists all around us. Again, the

important thing to remember is that our battle is not against human beings. It is against spiritual powers. We are wasting our time fighting people when we ought to be fighting the devil with the truth who seeks to control people and make them oppose the work of God.

So the Bible teaches that even in the evil world of angels there is a hierarchy and classification of wicked spirits (Revelation 9:11) which rule and have assignments in different realms throughout the earth. Daniel 10:13 reveals something of what goes on in the unseen spiritual world of the heavenlies that surrounds us as demons strategically carry out their evil plans in a coordinated effort. A specific angel was sent to help Daniel but the Bible says he was delayed by an angelic prince or leader.

Daniel 10:13 reveals:

“But the prince of the kingdom of Persia withstood me one and twenty days: but, lo, Michael, one of the chief princes (an archangel), came to help me; and I remained there with the kings of Persia.”

This is a rare glimpse into the invisible world that is behind the physical veil or curtain. It is very clear that Daniel was not talking about the earthly prince of Persia (King Cyrus) but a spiritual angelic prince of Persia that came to oppose this angel as he sought to come and give aid to Daniel. No earthly prince could oppose an angel but another angel could oppose an angelic messenger and helper. We can be certain that Cyrus, the king of Persia, was not somewhere in outer space confronting an angel of God enroute from Heaven to earth. This was a demon or wicked angel who was termed as “the prince of Persia” who was seeking to oppose God’s purpose and thwart God’s plan.

Daniel 10:20 adds more to the unseen battle:

“Then said he, Knowest thou wherefore I come unto thee? and now will I return to fight with the prince of Persia: and when I am gone forth, lo, the prince of Grecia shall come.”

This refers to yet another ruling demon who was assigned to carry out Satan’s wicked plan in Greece and wherever he is sent. There is an invisible battle which is constantly occurring behind the physical world in which we live today. There is a whole other spiritual world that is moving about, taking commands from their appropriate leaders, and which is engaged in either good or evil.

With the mention of the “prince of Persia” and “Greece” we are reminded that angelic beings sometimes carry out their delegated power and authority through human leaders and at other times by themselves throughout the earth. There are probably many demonic leaders in Washington today! There is a whole lot of demonic activity going on here. But various demons are staged all throughout the earth to seek to destroy truth, disrupt God’s moral code, dethrone God, and in general thwart God’s plan.

Lehman Strauss in his commentary on Daniel concludes:

“These two verses of Scripture contain an amazing disclosure, giving to us a rare glimpse into the unseen world of spirit forces. Here is revealed a conflict that is totally disregarded by most people in our civilized world. Actually it is the struggle behind all struggles that are recorded on the pages of history.”

Do angels really control this world? Are angels in charge of Washington DC? Are they responsible for the terrible things that are taking place on earth today? Are angels to blame for the continual moral decline of America? We can come to the conclusion that angels, specifically demons, fallen angels, are directly involved in the affairs of this earth.

As we have seen, angels exist and move about in “high places” or the celestial regions or realms which refer to the first and second heavens (Eph. 6:12). They move about in the heavens fulfilling the will of their master (either Satan or God). When it comes to the fallen angels, demons, they are moving about in the heavens seeking to tempt us and overtake our lives. They are also controlling the earth since they possess different realms of rulership. There is a vast global satanic network, a spiritual mafia, or cosmic potentates (spiritual and angelic rulers) that are all around us.

I believe angels, specifically demons, do in some sense control nations. Behind the human scene, behind people, in our country, just like every country in the world, there is a spiritual conflict taking place. Demons are fighting for the control of our country and society. This seems evident when studying Daniel 10:13-120 and other references.

Revelation 16:13-14 prophetically declares:
“And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs *come* out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet. For they are the spirits of devils, working miracles, *which* go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty.”



This reveals how fallen angels or wicked spirits can deceive people and entire nations. Beloved, this is what is happening in our country today. There is no other explanation for what is occurring in America other than demonism. America is being overtaken and run by demonism. Demonism is on the rise like never before as we approach the End Times. This is why deception is occurring at every hand regarding same sex marriages, gay rights, abortion, political lies and deception, the drug epidemic, gender confusion, and many other things. On and on it goes as America tumbles down into utter moral chaos and confusion due to fallen and wicked angels ruling this country and world through the hearts and minds of people.

Excursion on Deliverance Ministries & Spiritual Warfare

We have already seen how Daniel mention of the “prince of Persia” and Greece” in Daniel chapter 10. He was referring to specific demons that are staged throughout the earth as they seek to overtake and rule the earth through men and their own deception. Some have suggested that the verses in Daniel 10 which speak of angels as the prince of Persian and Greece reveal that there are territory demons staged everywhere throughout the entire earth. This may actually be true. We don’t know the specifics on how demons are organized. However, we cannot accept the Charismatic notion that we are commissioned to dispel demons from their dominions of authority.



This process is said to be “spiritual mapping” which involves going into certain areas and dispelling demons from these locations who rule and have authority. In other words, some are teaching today that demons in certain geographic places must be named, confronted, and cast them out before there can be any effective Gospel witness in that place. Some Christians think they can walk into the city of New York or Chicago and bind demons and dethrone demons from their powerful rule and authority. This is nonsense. Nowhere in Scripture do we find the Charismatic territorial view or assignment of binding and dethroning demons.

Ed Murphy said:

“The experienced deliverance minister can compel evil spirits to tell the truth. I do so all the time ... to evangelize the demonized we must learn how to bind demonic activity from the minds of demonized unbelievers.”

I find this kind of alleged deliverance ministry and conclusion of Ed Murphy and the charismatics totally unwarranted and unbiblical. I have been studying the Bible for over thirty years (and many others much longer than this) and they have never found where a child of God is assigned to bind demons throughout the vast territories of the world before evangelism can take place. The Bible does not mention any such ministry and therefore it is absurd to try and create such a ministry as this today. Neither Jesus, the apostles, or any Christians were instructed to evict demons from specific areas of rulership before evangelizing people.

This is a manmade and make-believe ministry – not a God-given ministry. Nothing in Daniel 10 supports the notion that God’s people know the exact places where demons are ruling and that they can map out territories, identify territorial spirits, and evict demons from their ruling places in the world in order to effectively

evangelize. God has not instructed us to do this nor can we do this! This is because we are not more powerful than the angels.

The good angel that addressed Daniel tells him that he (the angel) must go help Michael the archangel, who was continuing to fight against demons (Daniel 10:20), but he never asks Daniel to help fight against the evil spirits who reside over territories on earth. Daniel is never told to do anything, let alone identify the evil spirits or engage in a certain kind of praying against territorial spirits (strategic-level intercession), which is encouraged today by many. Daniel never sought the names of cosmic powers not use their names in any prayers he made. In fact, there is no indication that Daniel knew what was taking place in the heavenlies (celestial realms around him) during this three-week period of prayer and fasting (Daniel 10:2-3).

Daniel did not engage in aggressive prayer against the powers of evil angels or in connection with any celestial warfare going on in Heaven but prayed as he reflected on the promise of God regarding his people's destiny (Dan. 10:12). Again, neither Jesus or Paul commissions disciples to go into a city and dethrone the territorial demons of Nazareth or Jerusalem. In the letter to Pergamum in Revelation 2:13, Jesus said that Satan dwelled there and even had his throne there. Yet, it's interesting that Jesus did not instruct the believers in Pergamos to rebuke, bind or identify the evil spirits and command these wicked spirits to leave the city.

C. Peter Wagner claims that we should summon territorial spirits, demand information from the local demonic hierarchy, and seek to break certain demonic strongholds over a city before the Gospel can be presented. This type of teaching is not Biblical and it is erroneous. It is wrong for believers to command demons to give up spiritual territory. We are not commissioned to do this anywhere in the Bible. Not even the apostles did this! We must always ask ourselves if a certain practice that is being promoted within the modern church is Biblical. Is it actually found in the Bible? Does it have Scriptural support? Is it based upon a clear revelation found in the Bible. If not, we must scrap it. So called "identificational repentance" (believers repenting over the sins of groups of unbelievers), which keep them from receiving the Gospel, and binding Satan in order to prepare people to receive the Gospel is a practice that is absolutely erroneous and unbiblical.

Mark Hitchcock is correct when he states:

“This practice actually plays into the hands of demons by sidetracking believers into wasting time and energy on unbiblical practices.

This so-called spiritual mapping out of territorial demons and evicting them has no Scripture support. It seems clear from Scripture that certain demons do business in certain areas of the earth and have leading positions of authority in different realms of the earth. However, neither Jesus or the New Testament Scriptures has ever commissioned us to evict demons from their ruling capacities. We cannot do this as physical beings who are made lower than the angels. God has graciously given us victory over the world of darkness through the truth but this does not mean we can control the demonic world and dethrone them from their ruling capacities on earth.

Spiritual warfare does not involve possessing a prophetic gift which allows a person to go about naming territorial spirits, taking back their territories, and binding demons. Nobody, not even the apostles had any gift like this. This is a make-believe gift. It's invented by man but not given by God. Of course, no Bible believer denies that the twelve apostles and the seventy were given miraculous sign gifts, including the ability to cast out demons (Matt. 10:1; Luke 10:17). But these were limited ministries. This does not mean that God's ministers today have these same abilities. Remember that the apostles were also given the authority to raise the dead (Matt. 10:8). Any person who claims to have the gift of the apostles had better prove it by raising the dead! Let's take them to the graveyard!

I had a graveside service this past week in the Harrisburg area. I saw the hearts of people broken over the loss of their loved one. Listen folks, if there were apostles living today that could raise the dead, I would have called on one of them to come to the graveside service. The faith healers of today are phony! They are not apostles. You can take this to the bank. Those in deliverance ministries will quickly tell you that they have the same authority and ministries as the apostles. But they are misinformed and are misguided. Instead of following God's truth, they are following their own manmade and whimsical ideas.



The Bible teaches that the early sign gifts, which included the performing of miracles, was given only to the original apostles to authenticate the new messengers (the apostles) and their messages (Mark 16:20; Acts 2:43; 5:12) before the completed revelation of God’s Word was given. This is why their miracles are called “signs” (2 Cor. 12:12 – “signs of an apostle” – see also Acts 2:22, 43; 5:12; 8:13; 14:3; Rom. 15:19; Heb. 2:4). They were miraculous signs given to authenticate the original apostles and their messages before the Scriptures were completed. Therefore, these types of miraculous sign gifts, which include the casting out of demons, a form of the apostolic healing ministry (2 Cor. 12:9-10 – the word “heal” is used in association with casting out demons) are no longer possessed by God’s children today, since we have God’s full revelatory truth in the canon of Scripture – the New Testament (1 Cor. 13:10-13). This is why the ministry of the apostles, along with their miracles, was foundational (Eph. 2:20) and temporary.

A true apostle had to be a direct witness of Christ’s life and resurrection and be personally and directly commissioned by Him (Acts 1:21-22). Since this is true, there can be no apostles today. The gifts and unique ministry of the apostles has ceased. The gifts of miracles and healing, the unique signs of apostleship, including the casting out of demons, also ceased with the passing away of the apostles. This absence of the apostolic gifts, along with their miracles, was already recognized to have passed off the scene in the mid 60’s of the first century (“was confirmed unto us” – the later Christians during the days the book of Hebrews was written – “by them” – the original band of apostles – “that heard him” – who lived during the days of Jesus Christ - Hebrews 2:3). The second generation of Christians (after the days of the original apostles) already recognized that the apostolic gifts, which included their abilities to heal people, had an ending point during the first century.

Of course, God still can do miracles and does according to His sovereign will. The Bible teaches the cessation of the miraculous gifts but not necessarily the cessation of miracles. He often works through and in response to the prayers of His people. But the divine enablement and authority to perform miracles and healing, as the apostles did, is not a viable gift for today, since there is no person who can meet the qualifications of an apostle (healing everyone, raising the dead, seeing the resurrected Jesus) and since there is no more need for apostles to authenticate God's truth. This is because we have the truth completed in the Bible that we love and possess today.

Many people will tell you that their miracles, deliverances from demons, and all the healings and multitudes of supernatural phenomena going on in the Charismatic movement today are real and genuine. But they must first explain why God restarted the miraculous sign gifts of the apostles after 1,900 years of silence in church history? Where is the Biblical proof that they began? Much of what is going on today in the Charismatic Movement, including deliverance ministries, is simply unscriptural.

Satan wants to sidetrack believers from living the Christ life (Phil. 1:21; 3:10) by getting them to waste time and energy on unbiblical practices and unscriptural experiences. We have no promise given to us of healing or spiritual deliverance from demons through the so-called Charismatic deliverance ministries of today. Deliverance comes through prayer and the Word of God (not expert people involved in deliverance ministries) and healing is only experienced in accord with God's will (2 Cor. 12:7-10).

Many have asked what is actually happening today with all of the alleged Charismatic miracles, signs, and wonders. There are two possible sources behind the influx of the miraculous and many other Charismatic, unbiblical, and extra scriptural experiences which are occurring during these last days. These types of experiences would include things such as the recreation of the apostles, apostolic healings, the miraculous done through apostles, early sign gifts (tongue speaking, gifts of knowledge, prophecy, etc.) and many other types of mystical practices being promoted today (dreams, trances, visions, slayings in the Spirit) have a twofold origin.

One cause of these alleged miracles and experiences is *psychological* or *psychosomatic* (self-taught) which refers to an emotional or mental disturbance that affects both the mind and body.

The psychological/psychosomatic experiences (experiences self-produced by one's own mind and emotions) can affect people in a real physical way. Such self-taught experiences as being slain in the Spirit, laughing in the Holy Spirit, speaking in tongues, visibly seeing Jesus, dreams, visions, casting out demons and dethroning the power of demons (deliverance ministries) are often psychologically inspired and self-induced. This means that many who claim to experience these alleged things are really passing through a psychosomatic experience. It is an emotional experience of some kind that is dreamed up in a person's mind or thinking, which is personally created by themselves, and then claimed to be a valid spiritual experience. In short, various experiences can be created by emotional and psychological factors.

What we have taking place today is psychological (psychosomatic) healing - not divine healing. Modern faith healers will try to convince people from a mental standpoint that they are healed, and it does work in some cases. They will talk about touching the T.V. or radio or some other "point of contact" in order to stir up their emotions. The people can then make these mentally induced illnesses to disappear in some cases. Thus, the faith healer claims the healing, when all along the people make themselves better. God does not heal them; the people heal themselves.

A simple test could be taken to prove that faith healers use the mind healing technique today. If you take a so-called faith healer to the insane asylum and ask him to pray for these people and deliver them from their sickness; he would not be willing to take the test. The reason is obvious. These kinds of people have lost their minds and therefore the faith healer cannot play on their minds, as he can with others, who have only an emotionally induced illness.

The experiences can also be *demonically* inspired (Satanic). In some cases, Satan will use a person's psychosomatic or self-taught experience to become a diversion and deception to them and keep them from experiencing New Testament Christianity through the sufficiency of Christ (Phil. 1:21; 3:10). Satan can enter into

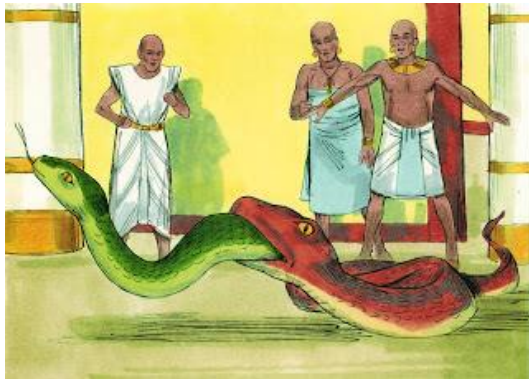
the world of a person's emotional experiences and seek to lead them astray from living a Biblical and normal victorious life through the Holy Spirit's power (Gal. 5:25) and by putting on the armor of God (Eph. 6:10-18). At other times, Satan may actually create certain experiences, even the miraculous, to deceive people and keep them from looking unto Jesus for salvation and sanctification (Heb. 12:2) and trusting in God to directly meet their needs in life without mystical experiences (2 Cor. 3:5; Phil. 4:19).

For instance, the fascination of performing miracles which includes delivering people from demons is not necessarily new, nor must these things necessarily come from God's servants.

- You cannot claim deliverance from demons through the psychological tricks of a man but only through Jesus Christ.
- What you have seen or experienced must be Scriptural or in accordance with God's Word. If it's not, you must write it off as a delusion, devilish, and a detriment to your spiritual growth in Christ (2 Pet. 3:18).
- The fascination of delivering people from demons is not necessarily new nor must it come from God's servants (Matt. 7:22-23).

From these verses which point to a future judgment day, we learn that not all miracles do come from God and not all miracle workers are divinely accredited. Jesus cited this verse in the days of the apostle and the way it will be when He comes back to establish His earthly kingdom. A miracle such as the casting out of demons may seem that God is at work. However, this power can actually be satanic or demonic in origin. Satan may empower his workers to cast out demons temporarily, in order to create the illusion that the miracle is divine. Satan is not dividing his kingdom against itself (Mark 3:24) in such cases as this but is using this miracle to plot even worse things against unbelievers in order to keep them bound to their unbelief and bring them to future judgment. Remember that Judas participated in some or all of the miraculous activities but was not a true believer. We know that Catholic priests practice casting out demons and they are not God's true messengers.

Jesus is teaching that the miracles of God can in some measure be mimicked and mocked by Satan and those who are behind him as he seeks to deceive people in the End Times. This has always been true. Satan attempts to duplicate the miraculous to deceive people and capture them. The devil seeking to deceive people through the miraculous is nothing new.



Exodus 7:10-12

“And Moses and Aaron went in unto Pharaoh, and they did so as the LORD had commanded: and Aaron cast down his rod before Pharaoh, and before his servants, and it became a serpent. Then Pharaoh also called the wise men and the sorcerers: now the magicians of Egypt, they also did in like manner with their

enchantments. For they cast down every man his rod, and they became serpents: but Aaron's rod swallowed up their rods.”

Since God has not promised ongoing successors of the apostles and their miracles, we must consider a demonic source behind some of the alleged miracles that are occurring today which are designed to deceive people during the last days and as we approach the End Times.

Many will talk very enthusiastically about the so-called miracle workers of today, and they say, “You can tell God is with them.” But in light of the above verses, can we be sure of this? The devil may be with them! The name of Christ is on the lips of many people who are leaders of cults and many other “isms” and error ridden movements. But to use the name of Christ, the Bible, and perform a miracle is not proof that a system is genuine or that a person is genuinely from God. In the last days, and as we approach the End Times, Satan will most assuredly use the miraculous to deceive many people (2 Thess. 2:7–12).

We must remember that the miraculous does not mean something is of God. Since God has not promised ongoing successors of the apostles and their miracles, we must consider a demonic source behind some of the alleged miracles that are

occurring today, which are designed to deceive people during the last days (“spirits of devils, working miracles” – Rev. 16:14).

In summary, there are two possible sources behind the influx of the miraculous during these last days. They are psychologically inspired or induced (self) or demonically inspired (Satan). Miracles are only God inspired when they conform to God’s standard of truth which today involves praying to God for spiritual deliverance and physical healing, sharing the Gospel with people who are lost and in need of deliverance from Satan’s power. God’s people must rely on prayer, the providence of God, and His purpose for their individual lives when it comes to seeing people saved and experiencing personal healing in their lives (James 4:15). We cannot deliver people and demand God to heal.

The errors being promoted by deliverance ministries today brings up two practical questions. I want to ask and answer these question under our present discussion.

How do we evangelize? The Bible teaches that we evangelize by simply using the Gospel message (Romans 1:16). We are to use the Gospel message alone to witness to the unsaved. We are never commanded to call on the name of demons, discover the reasons why people are demonized, demand Satan and demons to leave people, and dethrone demons from their “demon domains” or positions of authority before evangelism can occur. This is absolutely unbiblical and erroneous.



We must remember that it is the Gospel message which breaks through hardened hearts and minds which have been deceived by the devil - not the dethroning of demons from their roles of authority (2 Cor. 4:4). It’s the light or revelation of the Gospel to the minds and hearts of people which delivers them from Satan’s power. Nothing that a person allegedly does or practices in these would-be deliverance ministries will ever prepare people to be delivered from Satan’s power.

Acts 26:17-18

“Delivering thee from the people, and *from* the Gentiles, unto whom now I send thee, To open their eyes, *and* to turn *them* from darkness to light, and *from* the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me.”

In this Bible passage we have presented the true Biblical deliverance ministry. The approved deliverance and Biblical ministry is the Gospel ministry. It involves sharing the Gospel with the unsaved masses in order to see them delivered from the darkness of sin and Satan which binds them and blinds them. The only way to release someone from the power of sin and Satan is share the Gospel with them. There is no other ministry but the Gospel ministry which frees or delivers people from Satan.

The epistles which reveal truth that is for the church today do not give any instruction for casting out demons. However, this does not mean that believers today are left helpless to assist a person who is demon possessed. The Bible gives us a clear answer on how to help those who are lost and demon-possessed. We share the Gospel with them which alone can deliver them from the power of Satan and demons.

Upon belief in Christ as Savior, a nonbeliever is delivered not only from the penalty of his sin but also from the power of demon possession that might have afflicted him. So, the proper way to deliver an unbeliever from demons is to preach the Gospel to him. Any believer can deliver an unbeliever from demon possession by leading that person to Christ. Christ sweeps free the body that is possessed by demons at the time of salvation and allows the Holy Spirit to enter (1 Cor. 6:19). The Godhead cannot share His residence with demons. This is why demons do not and cannot indwell believers today.

It should be noted that only Jesus, the Seventy (Luke 10:1, 17), the Twelve disciples (Matt. 10:1), Philip (Acts 8:6-7), and Paul (Acts 19:11-12) were able to heal all the diseased and cast out demons. There is no record of others doing this kind of ministry. It's absolutely foolish to claim you have this gift when the gift was only

available to a few for a very brief time period to authenticate Jesus as the Messiah and the disciples as God's messengers.



How do we engage in spiritual warfare? Yes, we are in a spiritual battle that involves spiritual warfare. Any Christian should realize this since they are being bombarded with temptation and demonic allurements from the rulers of darkness.

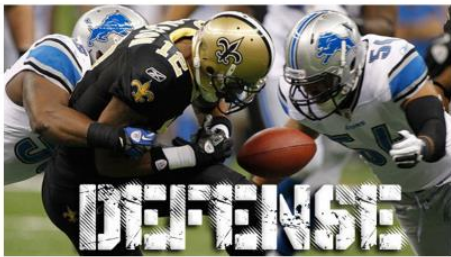
However, as we battle with the spiritual world, we must remember that we are not called upon to confront demons but counteract demons. The church is not commissioned to confront demons but counteract demons with the truth (Eph. 6:17) as they seek to raise havoc in our own personal lives (Eph. 6:12).

We are also to be on the defense – not the offence (going to fight demons in cities) as the words “stand” and “withstand” convey (Eph. 6:11, 13, 14). This means I don't seek out the devil; the devil seeks me out. I don't have to find the devil; the devil will find me! I don't go into cities to try and overtake demons; demons will seek to overtake me.

Of course, we have victory over the devil and demons by putting on the whole armor of God (Eph. 6:11, 13). Ephesians 6:10-18 is the believers field manual for spiritual warfare. Romans 13:14 gives similar advice when it states that we should: “But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to *fulfil* the lusts *thereof*.” In a very practical way, we are called upon to cloth ourselves in Christ's virtues, life, accept Him as our guide and rely upon His strengthening grace and power to live victoriously. Victory is always pictured as putting off one thing (Rom. 13:12; Eph. 4:22. Col. 3:8) and putting on another. If we want victory we must put on our spiritual armor and in a very practical way put on Christ in our daily lives, allowing ourselves to be directed by Jesus Christ.

“Sound the battle cry!
See, the foe is nigh;
Raise the standard high
For the Lord.

Gird your armor on,
Stand firm ev’ry one,
Rest your cause upon
His holy word.”



**STAND
WITHSTAND
RESIST**

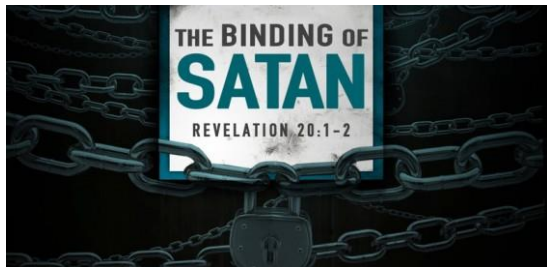
How do we resist and find victory over the devil? Is it by seeking out the devil and trying to defeat him? No, the Bible says we are called upon to practice defense – not offence. We are called upon to “withstand” (Eph. 6:13), “stand” (Eph. 6:11, 13, 14) and “resist” the devil (James 4:7-10; 1 Peter 5:8-9). We are to oppose Satan as he seeks to defeat us. All these verses speak of believers being on the

defense against Satan – not on the attack. In all of these victory texts there is no call to bind Satan or even to speak to him, but to stand against him. All of the victory verses teach that we defend ourselves against the devil, not attack the devil. We cannot overcome Satan; Jesus already did this when He died on the cross (Col. 2:15). We must simply claim the victorious ground Jesus gave to us.

Peter said this defensive position is to be done by believing God’s truth (“whom resist steadfast in the faith” - 1 Pet. 5:9). The term “the faith” speaks of what Christians should embrace and believe. This duty of resisting is common to all Christians. How do we resist Satan according to Peter’s teaching? We must believe the truth (that which should be known and common to all Christians) about our victory over the devil and claim our victory in Christ. Knowing the truth is liberating. It frees us from Satan’s power.

“God rest ye merry gentlemen, let nothing you dismay
For Jesus Christ, our Savior was born on Christmas Day
To save us all from Satan's powers when we were gone astray
Glad tidings of comfort and joy
Comfort and joy
Glad tidings of comfort and joy.”

This is God’s deliverance ministry. Each one of us must resist the devil personally. No one can do it for us, not even someone engaged in the so-called deliverance ministry. We cannot do it for someone else. Beloved, we don’t have to learn the names of demons who are harassing us or others in order to have victory over them. Nor can we bind Satan, for no such authority has even been given to us. Even Jesus did not bind or stop Satan when he was being tempted by the devil to sin. Let’s study our Bibles. The devil won’t be bound unto the Millennium (Rev. 20:1-3). It is not God’s will that Satan be bound now.



Have you ever heard someone say, “I bind the works of the devil” or “Satan, I bind you and release God’s blessing upon you.” This kind of reasoning is not Scriptural and true reasoning. You don’t find believer’s doing this during the days of the apostles and certainly no instruction of “binding Satan and demons” (not permitting demons to work) is given in the later epistles.

The verses that speak of “binding and loosing” in Matthew 16 and 18 (Matt. 16:19; 18:18) refers to the apostle’s right to proclaim the judicial forgiveness or punishment of those people who initially received or rejected the Gospel during the initial expansion of the Church. The binding has nothing to do with binding Satan or demons. It has to do with binding (retaining) or releasing (loosing) people from their sins based on the declaration that their sins are either unforgiven or forgiven in response to how people respond to the Gospel message.

Jesus spoke some important words in view of His approaching defeat of Satan on the cross. The religious people said Jesus was doing His miracles in the power of

Satan but Jesus reminds them that Satan would not want Jesus to use His power to stop the devil's program of evil ("Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation" – Matt. 12:25). In other words, it makes no sense that Satan would fight against his own kingdom.

Jesus then taught a spiritual truth in Matthew 12:29:

"Or else how can one enter into a strong man's house (Satan's kingdom), and spoil his goods, except he first bind the strong man? (Satan) and then he will spoil his house."

Jesus used the word "bind" in relation to Satan's coming defeat on the cross. This was said in anticipation of Christ's death on the cross (John 12:23, 27, 31). In other words, Jesus is teaching that Satan is ultimately a defeated foe. The death of Jesus might appear to be a victory for Satan, but really it signaled his doom. The Cross defeated Satan's power over our lives (Col. 2:15) since we can now be saved from the wages of spiritual death which Satan demanded because of our sinful lives (Rom. 6:23; Heb. 2:14) and also claim our victory through Christ's shed blood (Rev. 12:11). The cross also sealed Satan's fate to the Lake of Fire (Rev. 20:10). The sentence has not yet been carried out on the devil but his doom has been sealed. Satan is defeated in every way through Christ's cross (Rom. 16:20).

This does not mean that believers have the authority to rebuke the devil, to bind Satan, or to even talk to him. This is actually a risky practice. Many today insult the devil, make fun of him, and mock him. This behavior is foolish and unbiblical since not even the angels do this (Jude 8-9).

Mark Hitchcock said:

"We are not to tremble at the devil but neither are we to trivialize him."

Rather than addressing demons directly and demanding that they leave a person or stop tempting us, we should follow God's advice for witnessing and possessing victory in our personal lives. God gives us the charge to resist the devil, and this can only be done when drawing close to God through repentance and cleansing, depending fully upon Him (Eph. 6:10 – "Be strong in the Lord"), by believing and obeying the truth (Luke 4:4, 8), and putting on the spiritual armor described in

Ephesians 6:10-18. This is how we are delivered from the allurements, thoughts, and temptations of demons. This is God's deliverance ministry for today. This is spiritual warfare God's way. Luther said:

“And through this world with devils filled,
Should threaten to undo us;
We will not fear, for God has willed
His truth to triumph through us.”

6. Are there good and bad angels?

We have already answered this question to some degree in our above study but let's investigate this further. Lehman Strauss wrote a book called “Demons Yes, But Thank God for Good Angels.” Yes, there are good and evil angels. The evil fallen angels are represented as “devils” which is literally rendered in the Greek language as demons in the Bible. The Bible teaches that Satan led one third of the heavenly angelic realm in rebellion against God. Despite their holy character and their holy surroundings, some angels used their God-given choice to rebel against God.

The deeper question is why God chose to allow Satan and His angels to sin? He could have chosen a plan that avoided all rebellion and sin. However, God in His infinite wisdom allowed the angels to sin against Him. God's choice to allow sin to enter His perfectly created universe allowed a group of angels to serve Him out of love and loyalty.

This is what God wants from our lives today. He is not looking for legalistic, rigid obedience that does not possess love toward Him. He is looking for His people to serve Him out of deep compassion and love, along with a sense of loyalty. I used to sing in a large vocal group:

“I love You Lord, my strength and my rock
My fortress my God my Deliverer.
You are the One in whom I can hide
My shield and my salvation.
I love you now, I trust you now, I praise You now
My Lord and my King.”

The fall of angels also allowed God to demonstrate His grace toward mankind. This is because man would eventually fall in sin because of Satan's fall. Satan would tempt man and cause man to be lost from God's presence. So, God had a perfect plan designed in both Satan's fall and man's fall. He ultimately wanted to display His grace to a world of fallen angels and fallen men by allowing His Son to die upon the cross for sinners.

Ephesians 3:8-10

"Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ; And to make all *men* see what *is* the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ: To the intent (*with this purpose*) that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly *places* (*to the angels!*) might be known (*displayed*) by the church the manifold wisdom of God" (*His wisdom that relates to salvation, redemption, and the formation of the Church*).

The angelic rebellion and fall also has resulted in the magnificent display of God's grace working in the lives and hearts of people and the angels, specifically the good angels, who continue to ponder and wonder what it would be like to experience redeeming grace.



Revelation 12:1-4 records the fall of Satan and the rebellious angels: "And there appeared a great wonder in heaven; a woman (Israel through whom the Messiah came) clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars: And she being with child cried, travailing in birth, and pained to be

delivered. And there appeared another wonder in heaven; and behold a great red dragon (Satan), having seven heads and ten horns, and seven crowns upon his heads (Satan leading the End Time ten-nation confederacy in Europe and Middle East). And his tail drew the third part of the stars of heaven (the stars represent angels – Job 38:7; Rev. 9:1), and did cast them to the earth (historical fall of Satan):

and the dragon stood before the woman (Israel) which was ready to be delivered (ready to bring forth the Messiah), for to devour her child (the Messiah which came through Israel's lineage) as soon as it was born."

I believe this reference is historical since it looks back to the "woman" (Israel) and the Christ child who came forth from her lineage. This passage is reminding us of the historical fall of Satan and the wicked angels and how they in the past sought to persecute Israel and destroy the Christ child. In order to understand the end of the Bible we sometimes must go back to the beginning of the Bible. The woman presented in Revelation 12 is not Mary as Roman Catholicism teaches. It is Israel. The identifying marks of the woman are the sun, moon, and stars. These symbols relate to Israel as seen in Joseph's dream:

Genesis 37:9-10

"And he dreamed yet another dream, and told it his brethren, and said, Behold, I have dreamed a dream more; and, behold, the sun and the moon and the eleven stars made obeisance (obeisance) to me. And he told it to his father, and to his brethren: and his father rebuked him, and said unto him, What is this dream that thou hast dreamed? Shall I and thy mother and thy brethren indeed come to bow down ourselves to thee to the earth?"

Note how the same imagery is presented in Joseph's dream where the sun represents Jacob, the moon represents Rachel, and the stars represent the tribes of Israel (Joseph's eleven brothers and himself or the entire twelve sons that came from Jacob to form the twelve tribes of Israel).

So the imagery "clothed with the sun," "moon under her feet," "and upon her head a crown of twelve stars" parallels to the Old Testament description in Genesis 37:9 which identifies these figures as representative of the origin and historical beginnings of Israel's existence. Thus, the woman with these sun, moon, and star characteristics represents Israel as a national people who gave birth to the Messiah and to whom Satan and the angels wanted to destroy.

That the woman represents a corporate people (Israel) instead of a single person (Mary) can also be determined from the context itself. The woman is seen to be chased into the wilderness where God has a place of safety prepared for her (Rev. 12:16, 13-17). These events cannot be attributed to Mary. This is not the

description of Mary but of Israel who brought forth the Messiah and who will one day be persecuted by Satan during the Tribulation Period.

Revelation 12:4

“And his tail drew the third part of the stars of heaven, and did cast them to the earth: and the dragon stood before the woman which was ready to be delivered, for to devour her child as soon as it was born.”

We discover that Revelation 12:4 reveals that when Satan fell (Isa. 14:12–15; Ezek. 28:12–17), he swept away a third of the angelic host with him. Along with their defeated leader, these evil angels were cast from heaven to the earth.

The symbolic picture of the dragon’s tail sweeping away the third part of the stars (angels) means that Satan led a host of angelic beings in rebellion against God. Along with Satan, these angelic beings tried to overtake God’s position in Heaven. Guess who won? God cast them out of Heaven to the earth.



The dragon (Satan) originally dragged the stars of heaven down to the earth! This is a historical reference to Satan’s decision to rebel from God and lead a host of angels, represented as stars (Rev. 9:1) in rebellion against their Creator God. When the Bible speaks of “a third of the stars of heaven” it is picturesque language. The stars symbolically represent angels that Satan took with him in his fall.



As a result of Satan’s historic fall he was cast out of Heaven and can no longer live and dwell in the presence of God in the third Heaven. However, we have also learned in Revelation 12:4 that the number of angels who joined Satan in this historical rebellion is a vast incalculable number. During the Tribulation a vast army of 200 million demons will attack mankind (Rev. 9:16-19). This is only a small number of demons released from the bottomless pit. Their number is so vast we cannot begin to calculate their exact number. However, their number is fixed and does not change since angels do not

procreate (Matt. 22:30). Therefore, whatever number of demons there were when they rebelled is the same number that exists today.

The references to the dragon's angels (the devil's angels – this is not a motorcycle group!) in Revelation 12:7 and 9 indicate that the stars of heaven which are connected to the dragon are angelic beings. Angels are depicted symbolically as stars elsewhere in Scripture as we have already confirmed in previous studies (Psalms 148:1-3 Rev. 9:1; Job 38:7).

Those angels which did not rebel against God are said to be God's elect angels (1 Tim. 5:21 – “the elect angels”) which are the good angels. They are a corporate group of angels chosen by God to remain loyal to Him. Like humans, God did not pick a specific angel to rebel and others not to rebel. He gave them free choice (free will) whether or not they wanted to enter into His elect group. In the same way, God gives people freedom of choice to enter His elect group and be saved. God's choice to save a company of humans or keep a host of holy angels for His glory does not set aside the expression of free will. This is where the sovereignty of God and free will of man, as well as the free will of angels come together. The angels chose their eternal destiny and the same is true regarding man.

The good angels are everywhere today performing God's bidding (Heb. 1:7, 14). They are loyal to their Creator and in our next question we will discover what they are doing today. But from our text in Revelation 12 we can understand that those angels who rebelled and fell with Satan (untold billions of them) are now part of the rulers of darkness in this world (Eph. 6:12). They are repeatedly referenced as “devils” (demons) in the Bible (Matt. 4:24; 7:22; Luke 8:2, 27; 1 Cor. 10:20-21; 1 Tim. 4:1; James 2:19; Rev. 9:20; 16:14; 18:2).

Today demons (fallen angels) are everywhere throughout the earth seeking to destroy God's program and righteous ways throughout the earth. This is because they fell with Satan in the original rebellion and are now under his rulership. Satan is their master.

Isaiah 14:12 reminds us once again of Satan's historical fall: “How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! *how* art thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations!”



We have already studied Satan's historical fall. In Isaiah 14:12 the name "Lucifer" means literally "the shining one" (light bearer) and points to the "the Morning Star" which appears in the early morning. This expression combined with "Son of the Morning" (dawn or early light) specifically references the brightly shining planet Venus as it appears in the morning just before sunrise. These expressions point to

Lucifer's brilliance and radiance which accompanied his fall from Heaven. Just as the morning star is the brightest of all the stars, so Satan as a being of light and brilliance, is the brightest of all God's created beings (2 Cor. 11:14).

Lucifer would fall and disappear from Heaven much like a morning star suddenly disappears from the sky in the morning light. The brilliance of a star in the early dawn suddenly vanishes when the sun rises. Satan's fall would be similar to this natural phenomenon. As a created angelic being he took on the appearance of a shining star as he reflected and refracted God's glory. As the shining one Satan got his eyes off of God, the source and cause of his brilliance, and became proud and boastful instead of being full of praise to God.

When did Satan fall? We know that sin was nonexistent after day six of creation (Gen. 1:31). Satan's fall then took place sometime after the end of creation. Satan was already evil by the time he came to earth to tempt man (Gen. 3:1). How long was the interval of time between Genesis 1:31 (the end of God's creation) and 3:1 (the temptation of man)? It was evidently a very short time since when God created Adam and Eve He commanded them to be fruitful and multiply (Gen. 1:27-28). However, no conception occurred until after the fall of man in Genesis 4:1. Since Adam was on his honeymoon and no conception has occurred until after the Fall, one can assume that the time between the last day of creation, God's command to be fruitful and multiply, Satan's fall, and man's temptation was very short. Adam was not waiting around forever to have physical relations with Eve. So, Satan fell with his angels and immediately began to come and tempt Eve in the Garden.

The fall of Satan was accompanied with many "I will" statements of Satan that we studied about earlier.

Let's revisit Isaiah 14:13-14 once again:

"For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven" (Satan wanted to be equal with God), "I will exalt my throne above the stars of God" (Satan wanted to be in full command of the angels): "I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north:" (Satan wanted to rule in the place of God – usurp God's throne) "I will ascend above the heights of the clouds" (Satan wanted to receive God's glory who is above all in the created universe); "I will be like the most High" (Satan wanted to overtake God's position of authority and replace God).

1 Timothy 3:6 reminds us of deacons and Satan's fall:

"Not a novice, lest being lifted up with pride he fall into the condemnation of the devil."

Lesson: Whenever we boast, we are occupied with ourselves, but when we are full of praise to God we are occupied with Him. This name Lucifer stresses Satan's state before the fall and reminds us of the sin of arrogance or pride. We have seen that both Satan and angels became filled with pride and wanted their way instead of God's way. Again, we must remember that pride still goes before a fall (Prov. 16:18).

We choose to live in rebellion against God. When we say, "I will" as Satan did instead of "Thy will be done" we move in rebellion against God and sow to the flesh. And many times when we live in rebellion we take other people with us just like Satan took other angels with him. This is true when it comes to gossip, going down a wrong path, and giving in to specific sins which in return affect others. Your sin will many times will affect others in an adverse way. When you go down, others may go down with you. We must remember this before we choose the wrong path. Today, as always, no one can really sin alone. The influence of sin is contagious and it affects others.

Today we know demons and demonic activity in the affairs of men exist, because the Word of God says so. Both the Old and New Testaments are filled with the activities of this evil host of angels. For Old Testament evidence the student should examine Leviticus 17:7, Deuteronomy 32:17; 2 Chronicles 11:15; Psalm 106:36-37; Isaiah 13:21; 34:14. In these passages it seems certain that the reference is to demonic personages moving about to thwart God's program on earth.

As noted above, the New Testament is filled with many verses that reveal the work of fallen angels known as “devils” or demons that are present in the world (Matt. 4:24; 7:22; Mark 1:39; 3:15; 5:12; 6:13; 9:38; Luke 8:2, 27; 10:17; 11:15, 18, 19, 20; 13:32; 1 Cor. 10:20-21; 1 Tim. 4:1; James 2:19; Rev. 9:20; 16:14; 18:2). Scripture refers to demons no less than 100 times. Every New Testament author, other than the author of Hebrews, mentions demons or the fallen angels. The authors of the New Testament believed in the reality of demons. Jesus taught that demons are real. He taught that Satan was the ruler of a host of demons when he spoke about a kingdom not being divided against itself (Matt. 12:22-28).

- Satan is designated as the prince of the demons (Matt. 12:24)
- Jesus refers to Satan and his angels (Matt. 25:41).
- The Bible speaks of the devil and his angels (Rev. 12:7).

These references reveal that demons are not the spirits of wicked or deceased humans as Hollywood portrays. They are not some kind of disembodied spirits of a pre-Adamic race of people. This is pure conjecture. Nor are they disembodied spirits of the offspring of a union described in Genesis 6:1-4 which some claim were demons cohabiting with women and producing some kind of monstrous offspring. We will talk about Genesis 6 in our next point. The Bible clearly reveals that demons are the fallen angels that followed Satan in his rebellion. Satan is real, so it follows that his angels are also real. Since the authors of the New Testament and Jesus believed that demons are real, so should we. We cannot pass them off as something that is a fairytale or mythological.

A farmer was listening to a sophisticated city preacher speak on the subject of hell. The preacher said, “You shall experience grave eschatological consequences if you die outside the haven of God’s soteriological redemptive plan.” After the message the farmer came and asked the preacher, “Did you mean that when an unsaved man dies he goes to hell?” “Why of course,” the preacher said. “Then why didn’t you say so” the farmer replied?”

Sometime we complicate God’s Word with deep words but Jesus always made it simple so people could understand it. We should do the same as we study God’s Word. We are going to talk about demons coming out of hell in the future. As we look at Revelation chapter nine, we are going to investigate a time when hell will

literally invade earth. Although the descriptions are strange and sometimes hard to understand, I will try and make it as simple as I can. We have come to learn God's Word today – not leave spinning our heads and not understanding it.

We studied about the good angels (elect angels – 1 Tim. 5:21) which chose not to fall with Satan in the original angelic rebellion. We also began to review the bad angels (fallen angels who rebelled with Satan). Now let's investigate the fallen angels (demons) further.

There are actually two subdivisions of fallen angels. Free and confined fallen angels.

A. The Fallen Free Angels

Fallen Angels – Demons (Rev. 12:4)

Some demons are **permanently bound** until the Lake of Fire (Rev. 20:10).
Their prison is called **Tartarus** (2 Pet. 2:4; Jude 6).

Some demons are **temporarily bound** until the Tribulation Period.
Their prison is called the **bottomless pit** (Rev. 9:1-3; 20:1-3).

Some demons are bound in the **River Euphrates** until the Tribulation Period (Rev. 9:14).

Some demons are free to roam the **atmospheric Heavens** (Eph. 6:12).

As we have already seen, the fallen and free angels dwell with Satan in the atmospheric heavens above the earth and are under his rule (Eph. 2:2; 6:12. Rev. 12:7-9). They are free to move about, even on the earth, to do Satan's evil work. Again, the Bible calls them "devils" which is actually the Greek word "daimonion" which means "demons" (Matt. 12:22-26).

B. The Fallen Confined Angels

1. A group of fallen angels are bound in the Bottomless Pit (Revelation 9:1-12).

The future Tribulation Period will include two massive demonic invasions from fallen angels who are at the present time incarcerated in the place called the Bottomless Pit. These invasions will occur in the second half of the Tribulation Period when things really go downhill.

Right now there is a large group of fallen angels that are bound in the Bottomless Pit (abyss – the deepest cavern in the underworld of Hades) and they are awaiting God’s permission to release them from this prison. Their mission is to attack planet earth during the End Times. God will let them out of their prison during the second half of the Tribulation Period and use these wicked, fallen angels as part of His judgment on mankind.

Confined Angels



These demons will take on the form of long-haired, horse-like locusts with stingers and their intent is to harm mankind. They will swarm out of hell possessing these hideous bodies and move about seeking to harm unsaved humanity. The earth at one point during the End Times will literally be streaming with swarms of dreadful demonic beings.

Revelation 9:1-12 reveals this horrible apocalyptic scene:

“And the fifth angel sounded, and I saw a star fall from heaven unto the earth: and to him was given the key of the bottomless pit. And he opened the bottomless pit; and there arose a smoke out of the pit, as the smoke of a great furnace; and the sun and the air were darkened by reason of the smoke of the pit. And there came out of the smoke locusts upon the earth: and unto them was given power, as the scorpions of the earth have power. And it was commanded them that they should not hurt the grass of the earth, neither any green thing, neither any tree; but only those men which have not the seal of God in their foreheads. And to them it was given that they should not kill them, but that they should be tormented five months: and their torment *was* as the torment of a scorpion, when he striketh a man. And in those days shall men seek death, and shall not find it; and shall desire to die, and death shall flee from them. And the shapes of the locusts *were* like unto horses prepared unto battle; and on their heads *were* as it were crowns like gold,

and their faces *were* as the faces of men. And they had hair as the hair of women, and their teeth were as *the teeth* of lions. And they had breastplates, as it were breastplates of iron; and the sound of their wings *was* as the sound of chariots of many horses running to battle. And they had tails like unto scorpions, and there were stings in their tails: and their power *was* to hurt men five months. And they had a king over them, *which is* the angel of the bottomless pit, whose name in the Hebrew tongue *is* Abaddon, but in thGreek tongue hath *his* name Apollyon. One woe is past; *and*, behold, there come two woes more hereafter.”

As I read this portion of God’s Word, I think of Burl Ives, who was talking for a snowman in the classic picture “Rudolph the Red-nosed Reindeer.” He closed his eyes as pictures were shown of an abominable snowman and said, “Tell me when it’s over!” This is the way I feel when studying Revelation chapter nine. Tell me when it’s all over. But let’s try and keep our eyes open for a time as we study this passage of Scripture.

Andrew Blackwood once said:

“In dealing with the future God’s interpreter should pray for a sense of balance lest he strive to make clear what God has not yet revealed.”

This is true. But God in His Word has revealed a lot about the future. Revelation chapter nine is an eye-opener to the End Times. This is not mythology – it’s Bibliology! It’s eschatology (the teaching that deals with the future and End Times).

Let’s remember the Golden Rule of Interpretation: “When the plain sense of Scripture makes common sense; seek no other sense.” Once we trade in the Golden Rule of Interpretation for the fool’s gold of symbolism and allegory (that everything in prophecy and the Book of Revelation is symbolical and allegorical and does not have a literal meaning), we embark upon a sea of conjecture. Many when studying the Book of Revelation lose the literal meaning behind the fool’s gold of allegorical interpretation. We must stop trying to edit God’s mind. Believe what the Bible says.

There is a coming a time in the future Tribulation Period, when hell will invade earth! This is a time period described by Daniel and the prophets, and also revealed by Paul and John. It’s a literal future period of time when God moves in wrath upon planet earth. The Bible teaches that incarcerated demons within the inner regions

of the earth will in the future be released from their prison and take on the form of hideous stinging creatures!

a. The place of their origin (1-3)

Although a star is seen falling from the heaven, we know that this star is not a literal astronomical body, but an angelic being (“and he opened the bottomless pit” – vs. 2). We’ve seen elsewhere where angels are referenced as stars (Job 38:7). The Bible interprets itself in this case. The falling star from heaven in chapter nine is portrayed as the symbol of an actual personal, intelligent being. Once again the Bible will often tell us when something is intended to portray a symbol and such is the case in this passage. We don’t have to guess what this star represents. It represents an intelligent being of some kind – an angel.

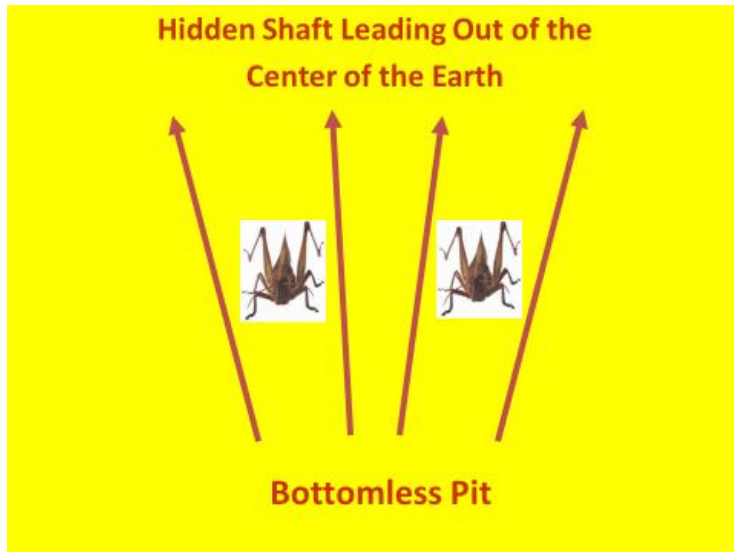
Although John saw a literal key given to this angel, no doubt the key is also used as a symbol (like the star) to indicate God’s control over the confinement of spirit beings. Please note that the key was given to the angel indicating that God has the sole authority to open and close the underworld (Rev. 1:18). This reminds us that even when symbolism is used in certain prophetic scenes, it does NOT take away the literal nature of the prophetic events and what is going to actually happen or take place in the future.

Angels can incarcerate other angelic beings, Satan will be bound in the bottomless pit, and demons can take on hideous bodies and come out of hell to invade humanity during the End Times. It should be noted that when symbolism and metaphors are used they are always designed to teach a literal truth in connection with the End Times; they are NOT designed to dismiss the End Times!

Prophetic symbols are designed to teach prophecy (not history) and relate to literal events that will occur on earth and refer to literal people and personages that will appear on the earth during the End Times.

In Revelation 9:1-3 we are looking at the place of the origin of these flying demonic insects. In short, they come from the inner earth from one of the compartments of Hades which is called the bottomless pit. The description of this place in the inner earth is horrifying and frightening. There is “smoke” (vv. 2, 3) and it is likened to a “great furnace” (vs. 2) that is burning. Out of this inner chamber in the earth will

come smoke (“smoke of the pit” – vs. 2) that will darken the atmospheric heavens of the earth (“and the sun and the air were darkened by reason of the smoke of the pit” – vs. 2).



There may actually be a shaft that leads to the bottomless pit which is apparently opened by this angelic being. Perhaps there is somewhere on the earth a shaft that goes from the surface of the earth to Hades. When this shaft is opened, John says that smoke fills the air. The sun and air are darkened. When this shaft which leads to this awful hellish place is opened the

smoke that rises up from this place will create an eerie darkness all over the earth so that the sky and sun throughout planet earth become darkened as they are covered with smoke. People living during the End Times (the Tribulation Period) will once again panic knowing that another judgment is about to take place from the hand of God.

People will sometimes say today, “I don’t believe in this fairytale stuff about hell.” Let me just say, you will believe in it when you die and go to this awful place which is likened to a fiery furnace and smoke. God’s Word teaches that people also go to the center of the earth and suffer for their sins prior to the final judgment (Great White Throne Judgment).

Luke 16:24 says:

“And he cried and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame.”

The Underworld of Hades

A region for the **DAMNED** who are suffering for their sins and awaiting their final judgment in the Lake of Fire.

Luke 16:24 – “I am tormented in this flame”

A Region for the **DEMONS** who are permanently bound and suffering for their rebellion during the days of Genesis (2 Pet. 2:4; Jude 6).

Others are awaiting their release during the End Times (Rev. 9:1-14).

Hades has separate compartments for both the damned and demons. Hell (literally Hades) is a place of suffering for one's unforgiven sins. This awful place is an expression of the vengeance of Almighty God. It's comparable to a furnace, fire, smoke, and suffering. Again, this is not mythology –

it's Bibliology! If you die in your sins, without having Christ take your sins away, then you will end up in this place which is comparable to a fiery furnace. I want to say today; sin cannot go unpunished! Either you ask Christ to save you and allow His sacrifice to take the punishment for your sin or else you must bear the punishment in this awful place called Hades.

Revelation 9:3 says that these demons which materialized and took on these bodies “came out of the smoke.” These hideous creatures will obviously be hidden in the great layer of smoke as it rises above the earth and then suddenly fly out of the black smoky cloud and swoop down to earth to inflict misery on mankind.



John reminds us at this point that they were similar to locusts and scorpions who can sting people. LOCUSTS would indicate their destructive nature and SCORPIONS their painful judgment upon mankind. We can be sure these are demons taking on a hybrid body of locusts and scorpions. John later describes them as having the overall shape of a locust (“shapes of the locusts” - vs. 7). However, in verse 3 he also

says they appear “as the scorpions of the earth” (vs. 3). This informs us that these are not normal locusts since they are also said to be “as the scorpions of the earth.” He was trying to explain these creatures in the best way he knew how. Normal locusts do not have stinging scorpion tails as these demonic creatures will have. The fact that three times in the passage (vv. 3, 5, 10) their power to inflict pain is compared to that of scorpions indicates they are not normal locusts, since locusts have no stinging tail as scorpions do.

There are two other reasons why we know these locusts are not normal locusts that we have on earth today but are actually demonic beings taken on a similar likeness to locusts. First, locusts only eat vegetation but these do not (see Rev. 9:4). Second, these locusts have a king (see Rev. 9:11) while the Bible clearly reveals that locusts do not have a king over them.

Proverbs 30:27

“The locusts have no king, yet go they forth all of them by bands.”

This phrase “as the scorpions of the earth” (vs. 3) would also imply that these are not normal scorpions but only appear somewhat like these creatures. Again, John is only describing these creatures in the best way he can. These creatures are actually angelic beings taking on the body of this hideous End-Time creatures. They are demonic beings from hell which take on the form of a hybrid body resembling a locust and scorpion, spirit beings that will one day invade the earth during the End Times.

What a frightening time to be alive on planet earth! Oh friend, do you know Christ as your Savior? I’m so thankful that Jesus took the sting of death and judgment for me, so I don’t have to face the sting of demonic scorpion beings straight from the pit of the abyss! Hallelujah what a Savior!

b. The particular mission they are given (vv. 4-6, 10b)

In short, their mission is to inflict harm on unsaved humanity! As we study this prophetic passages we notice several things.

✓ The safety of God's sealed (vs. 4)

Revelation 9:4

"And it was commanded them that they should not hurt the grass of the earth, neither any green thing, neither any tree; but only those men which have not the seal of God in their foreheads."

Who are the sealed who will be exempt from this judgment? Well, we know for sure that the 144,000 Jewish evangelists will be sealed and protected by God (Revelation 7:1-3). At this point (Revelation chapter 9), the Scriptures may be referencing all of God's redeemed of the Tribulation Period who have not received the mark of the beast. It's inconceivable that God would allow His redeemed to suffer under the hands of this demonic attack from hell. Therefore, God may very well place a seal of safety upon His own redeemed during this terrible judgment.

The believers or saints of the Tribulation Period will obviously be preserved, just as God sheltered Israel from the effects of the Egyptian plagues (Ex. 8:22; 9:4; 10:23). Those who have the seal of God include not only the 144,000 Jewish evangelists (7:3-4; 14:1), but also the rest of the redeemed ("The Lord knoweth them that are his" - 2 Tim. 2:19). This seal marks the saints as personally belonging to God and therefore they will be protected from the forces of hell.

✓ The sting of their torment (vv. 5-6, 10b)

Revelation 9:5-6

"And to them it was given that they should not kill them, but that they should be tormented five months: and their torment *was* as the torment of a scorpion, when he striketh a man. And in those days shall men seek death, and shall not find it; and shall desire to die, and death shall flee from them."

For five horrifying months (vv. 5, 10b), throughout the second half of the Tribulation Period, these demonic creatures will attack and torment lost humanity. Perhaps part of the tormenting assignment of the demons is not only to sting their victims but to ensure that each person is unable to take their own lives (verse 6).

Mills says:

“We are not told what will make man unable to commit suicide (Rev. 9:6), but can speculate that these demonic creatures, anticipating a man’s actions, by simply stinging him at the crucial moment, will prevent him from suicide.”

In other words, some suggest that the stings themselves will keep men from committing suicide. Men will want to die as they sense that hell is attacking the earth but before they can take their lives they will be stung by these hideous creatures and paralyzed. This is a possible scenario. However, it is more likely and probable that the sting itself will act as a paralyzing agent that will keep men from committing suicide. Perhaps the sting inflicted from these demonic creatures will result in the paralysis of people, and even though the people will want to take their lives during their terrible time of suffering, they will not be able to do so, due to their paralysis. In other words, the inability for mankind to not take his life may result from the paralysis caused from the sting of these demonic creatures. In this way demons will be the indirect cause of keeping men from taking their lives.

3. The portrayal of their appearance (vv. 7-10a)



No, these are not the description of the group of hippie Harley Riders who call themselves “Hell’s Angels.” John describes the shapes and appearance of this locust army from hell. In describing them he is not taking away from their literalness but is trying to convey what they looked like in the best way he could.

John is using descriptive language (figures of speech) as he tries to explain what these creatures look like - “like unto horses” (vs. 7) and “as it were crowns of gold” (vs. 7) “as it were breastplates” (vs. 9) and “as the sound of chariots” (vs. 9) and “like unto scorpions” (vs. 10). John does not imply that these were not literal creatures but he uses figures of speech as a colorful vehicle and interpretive tool to

express these demonic creatures from hell. He is simply describing them in the best way he knows how.

➤ Their shape

Horses prepared to battle (vs. 7) points to their organization and preparation for attack. A locust resembles the body of a horse in some ways and John is drawing upon this analogy to indicate their preparation and readiness to defeat their enemies which are the inhabitants of earth. This may also indicate they are able to run like horses run.

➤ Their heads

The crowns like gold (vs. 7) were a yellow brilliancy about their heads which resembled a crown. This points to how these creatures will be overcomers and conquerors. They will complete their mission and task to haunt and inflict punishment on mankind.

➤ Their faces

The faces of men (vs. 7) points to the objects of their attack. These locust creatures are out to attack the flesh of men or mankind as this word suggests.

➤ Their hair

The hair of women (vs. 8) points to their rebellion from God. In the prophetic language of Scripture, the symbolism of a female figure or description of a woman depicts that which is false, idolatrous, rebellious, and unfaithful (Zech. 5:7; Matt. 13:33; Rev. 2:20). Sorry ladies, this is just the way the Bible describes rebellious women – not holy women.

The Bible in its own way reminds us of the practical distinction among the sexes at this point. The Bible everywhere argues for the distinction among the sexes. Women are to have longer and more flowing hair while men are to have shorter hair.

1 Corinthians 11:14-15 speaks of the unchanging natural order:

“Doth not even nature itself teach you, that, if a man have long hair, it is a shame unto him? But if a woman have long hair, it is a glory to her: for her hair is given her for a covering” (a sign of submission to her husband)

There is a natural order in marriage (marriage between a man and a woman) and there is to be a natural distinction among the sexes. This is the way God created marriage and men and women. It’s His natural design. Oh, by the way, there is also a distinction between men and women’s bathrooms!

Long hair on women is still a sign of femininity and longer hair on men is still the sign of being a sissy! You can convey this to Duck Dynasty gang that is so popular today. There is no such thing as a man bonnet! It’s a sissy bonnet!

➤ Their teeth

The teeth (vs. 8) point to their power to destroy and devour their prey which in this case speaks of how they will overcome their victims in the human race. This is a very scary description of these insects from hell.

➤ Their breastplates

The breastplates of iron (vs. 9) point to their invincible character. These demonic beings from hell will not be able to be destroyed. They will accomplish their task and nothing on earth will be able to destroy them and keep them from their mission.

➤ Their wings

The wings (vs. 9) point to the swiftness of their conquest. John could only describe the great sound of their wings as many chariots. Imagine what it will be like when mankind hears the buzz of these flying creatures and when they see them approaching the earth as a locust army of incalculable numbers.

➤ Their tails

Their tails (vs. 10) point to the torment and affliction they will bring upon their prey. These creatures, as we have already studied, will possess tails which look like scorpions and with these tails “there were stings” meaning they will sting mankind. These stings will inflict tremendous pain upon the human race, so much so, that man will want to die. However, because of paralysis from the venom that enters the body through these stings, or maybe because of God’s indirect intervention, mankind will not be able to die (Rev. 9:6).



So in this description we have seen that these demonic invaders can fly like locusts, run like horses, and sting like scorpions! It’s no wonder that no person will be able to escape their hellish attack on humanity.

➤ Their size

How big will they be? We don’t know for sure but if John was describing them in such detail one would think they are larger and not smaller in their appearance and size. He was not looking at these creatures under a microscope nor did he have on his reading glasses.

Mounce observes:

“John apparently would have us understand the locusts to be of considerable size. Otherwise the description of hair, face, teeth, etc. would tend toward the comic” (comical).

Imagine if these demonic beings, who have taken on the form of these hideous bodies, are the size of humans or horses. How terrible and frightening this will be when creatures of this size come plunging out of the sky and head for earth to attack mankind. The world will see them coming and know that God is still on the throne!!

4. The personal leader of their kingdom (vv. 11-12)

The Hebrew name Abaddon and Greek name Apollyon mean the same thing – “destruction or destroyer.” The head angel of the underworld is given this name because of the death that He will inflict upon humanity during the End Times. This is what Satan wants to do to lost humanity, destroy people so they will ultimately wind up in hell.

This is obviously an unknown angel who is in charge of the abyss. We must remember that Satan has leaders and sub-leaders underneath him (Eph. 6:12). There is a hierarchy of demons and this particular leader is the king of the bottomless pit who will be in charge of launching this attack during the End Times. Demons are waiting to get out and invade this earth like never before. When God unleashes these demons of the underworld to attack lost humanity, it will be a relentless and merciless expression of His righteous wrath. I’m glad I’m going to escape this invasion of the underworld.

Revelation 3:10

“Because thou hast kept the word of my patience (*patiently endured earthly trials in this life*), I also will keep thee (*God’s redeemed of the Church Age*) from (*Greek preposition “ek” meaning kept out – not through it*) the hour of temptation (*the time of trial or adversity when hell invades earth*), which shall come upon all the world (*worldwide Tribulation Period*), to try them that dwell upon the earth” (*the unsaved of lost humanity for which the judgments fall*).

This is a word of encouragement to those who are passing through difficulty in this life. Jesus promises them, who pass through the trials of life, that we are not going through the great trial of the Tribulation Period. I’m going to be taken out of this world like a rocket someday when Jesus returns for me in the Rapture! Someday I’ll fly away! And this could be the dawning of that day! God’s saints living today will not only escape hell in the Lake of Fire but when hell invades the earth someday during the future Tribulation Period. We won’t be here!

Friend, are you saved? Have you placed your faith in Jesus Christ to be your personal Savior from hell, judgment, and God’s wrath? It should be our desire to see people

saved from the awful fate of an everlasting hell and the time when hell will invade earth. Revelation chapter nine should stir our hearts into greater Gospel outreach and daily evangelism of the lost. If one more soul could be spared from such and awful fate as recorded in this chapter, it would be a wonderful

A young man named Ricky McAlister was changed by this chapter in Revelation 9. At Louisiana State University he acquired a green New Testament from the Gideons. When packing for a fishing trip, he tossed the New Testament into his gear for good luck. He and his two buddies drove through the night and arrived at their fishing spot the next morning. It was hot and the fish were on strike, not biting at all. The same thing happened the next day. The guys finally gave up and collapsed in their room with a cooler full of beer.

Ricky's friend asked him if he had any sports magazines. He did, but they were in the car and it was too hot to go outside. His friend told Ricky to throw him the green New Testament. As his friend started thumbing through the pages he said, "Listen to this." Ricky's friend began to read from Revelation chapter nine and read about the locusts that would torment mankind. The more he read, the more Ricky became afraid. He put his beer down and began to think about something he hated worse than anything, for spiders or snakes to crawl upon him. As the friend kept reading, Ricky became even more afraid.

The Lord had been dealing with Ricky but he had been rejecting the Lord. He was listening now. Ricky began to think about the locusts and said, "Why don't we go home?" While his friends loaded the boat, Ricky read more of the New Testament. The next night, Ricky attended a gospel service with his girlfriend and trusted Jesus Christ as his Savior. Ricky later served the Lord in Bolivia and pastored a church in Louisiana. He led one relative after another to Christ, and told churches far and wide how he was driven to the Lord by a swarm of locusts. Amen!

Friend, we need to have the same heart for people as this man does. After all, hell is forever. This should motivate us to get the word out to people who need the Lord.

Jesus said in Matthew 9:38:

“Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he will send forth labourers into his harvest.”

Will you be part of the answer to this prayer?

“Out in the highways and byways of life,
Many are weary and sad;
Carry the sunshine where darkness is rife,
Making the sorrowing glad.
Make me a blessing, make me a blessing,
Out of my life may Jesus shine;
Make me a blessing, O Savior, I pray,
Make me a blessing to someone today.”

On the top of a hill in a Midwestern state stands a courthouse so uniquely situated that raindrops falling on one side of the roof travel by way of the Great Lakes into the Atlantic, while drops landing on the opposite side find their way through the Ohio and Mississippi to the Gulf. Just a breath of wind one way or the other may determine whether a single raindrop will end up either in the Gulf or in the Atlantic. In a similar way, one single decision (faith in Christ or rejecting Christ) is enough to determine man's destiny, either heaven or hell.

Dr. Maurice Rawlings, cardiologist and professor of medicine at the University of Tennessee College of Medicine in Chattanooga, says that he has seen people die. He has witnessed people going into the afterlife. He admits this by saying, "Just listening to these patients has changed my whole life. There's a life after death, and if I don't know where I'm going, it's not safe to die."

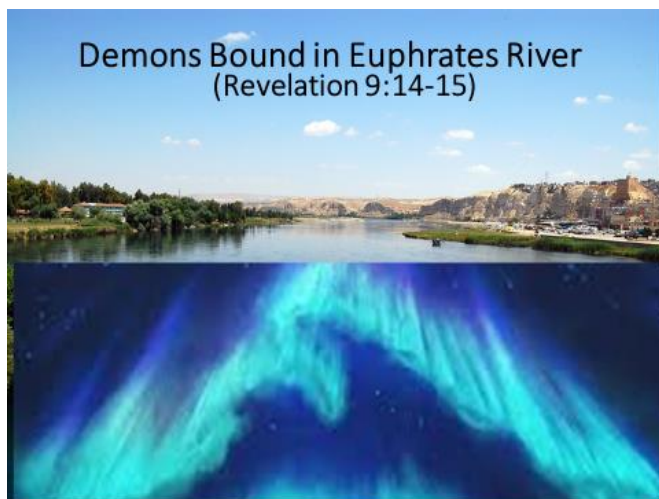
Hell is no joke! It's real. Don't go there!

2. A group of fallen angels are bound in the Euphrates River (Revelation 9:13-15).

There is another group of demonic spirit beings who will also materialize and take on a hybrid form of a body which represents a cross between a horse, lion, serpent, and fire breathing dragon! I'm not making this up. This is exactly what the Bible teaches. This is not mythology – it's Bibliology.

Revelation 9:13-15

“And the sixth angel sounded, and I heard a voice from the four horns of the golden altar which is before God, Saying to the sixth angel which had the trumpet, Loose the four angels which are bound in the great river Euphrates. And the four angels were loosed, which were prepared for an hour, and a day, and a month, and a year, for to slay the third part of men.”



The Bible also reveals that there are evil spirits (fallen angels) bound in the Euphrates River awaiting another End Time demonic invasion of planet earth. They will be released from their watery prison and lead an angelic army of two hundred million demonic hordes to attack mankind. It will be End Time colossal cavalry of spirit beings who are unleashed from their prison in the Euphrates river.

The second demon invasion from hell will materialize and take on the form of horses with lion heads and tails like serpents.

Revelation 9:16-21

“And the number of the army of the horsemen were two hundred thousand thousand: and I heard the number of them. And thus I saw the horses in the vision, and them that sat on them, having breastplates of fire, and of jacinth, and



brimstone: and the heads of the horses *were* as the heads of lions; and out of their mouths issued fire and smoke and brimstone. By these three was the third part of men killed, by the fire, and by the smoke, and by the brimstone, which issued out of their mouths. For their power is in their mouth, and in their tails: for their tails *were* like unto serpents, and had heads, and with them they do hurt. And the rest of the men which were not killed by these plagues yet repented not of the works of their hands, that they should not worship devils, and idols of gold, and silver, and brass, and stone, and of wood: which neither can see, nor hear, nor walk: Neither repented they of their murders, nor of their sorceries, nor of their fornication, nor of their thefts.”

There are two scenes in this trumpet judgment.

I. There is a demonic invasion – vv. 13-19

A. The leaders of the invasion (vv. 13-15a)

This angel of Heaven will summons four other angels (“the four angels”) to begin a dastardly and deadly work upon the earth. Although God is sovereign over this invasion it is strategically orchestrated by four demons bound in the River Euphrates. The meaning of the “four angels” (demons) seems significant. The number four in the book of Revelation seems clear: it is the signature of the world or of global effect. In the Book of Revelation, we have the four winds (Rev. 7:1) and the four corners of the earth (Rev. 7:1; 20:8; see also Matt. 24:31). The first four of the seven seals, the four horsemen of the apocalypse (Rev. 6:1-8), are each represented by a rider on a horse whose action has *worldwide* effects. The worldwide or global connotation of the number four derives from the directions of the compass (North, South, East, West - Ezek. 7:2) and may be why there are four living creatures which are *around* the throne (Rev. 4:6) surrounding it in all four primary directions.

The fact that there are “four angels” indicates the global effect of this judgment. Four angels will lead an army across the world consisting of 200 million demonic beings which take on the appearance of the shape of horses with mounted riders.

Perhaps there will be four separate groups that will launch out to cover the four strategic directions of the earth (north, south, east, west). It may be that each one of these angels will lead a specific military group with the intent of covering the entire earth - four demonic angelic leaders and four demonic military groups. This is a possible and probable scenario.

The fact that these four angels are “bound” indicates they are fallen angels or demons since only demons are seen to be bound in Scripture. Holy angels are nowhere in Scripture said to be bound. Because holy angels always perfectly carry out God’s will, there is no need for Him to restrain them from opposing His will. These four leading angels (demons) are bound (incarcerated) in the Euphrates River.

Henry Morris says:

“Exactly *how* they are bound there is a mystery, of course. How anything—particularly disembodied spirits—could be chained for four thousand years in a flowing river is unknown, to say the least. . . . No doubt God is equal to the needs of the occasion, however, and can bind them in some quite appropriate and effective manner.”

God is responsible for releasing these End Time angelic beings (“loose the four angels”). We once again are reminded that God is sovereign over this invasion of demons. Demons can only do what God allows them to do. He controls their movement or has a reign on what they can and cannot do. The Bible says they are “prepared” (Rev. 9:15) by God for this special judgment. God bound them in this river to await this special end-time judgment. Here we see how God’s control over demonic forces is complete since they are bound or loosed at His command. The preparation was not their own, but that of God. God has actively held them in reserve for this specific time. Indeed, God “works all things according to the counsel of His will” (Eph. 1:11).

Think of it; at this very moment, while we study this text, these four powerful angels, and likely their related demonic hordes of 200 million angels, are pent up in the Euphrates River awaiting their eventual release, when they will rush out upon an unsuspecting world to unleash “hell on earth.” The Bible speaks of “the great river Euphrates.” It is called a great river for its size and history. This river originally

emerged from the Garden of Eden (Gen. 2:10-14). Later, on its banks stood the city of Babylon. It was the sight of Nimrod's rebellion and the rebellion to this day has corrupted the entire earth with paganism and idolatry. It was near the Euphrates that sin began, the first lie was told, the first murder was committed, and the tower of Babel was erected in defiance against God. This river was the origin of an entire complex of false religions that eventually spread across the world. It is the same river over which the enemies of God ("the kings of the east" and the oriental human nations) will cross in order to engage in the battle of Armageddon (Rev. 16:12-16).

How did these four terrible angelic demons become bound in the Euphrates River? It is probable that they were bound in this watery prison because of the rebellion they were involved with at ancient Babel. Just as there were wicked spirits bound in Tartarus (2 Pet. 2:4) due to their diabolical rebellion in Genesis 6, prior to the Flood, so there were wicked spirits bound in the Euphrates River due to their dastardly deed of leading Babel in rebellion against God (Gen. 11:1-9). It would be appropriate to confine them at their very sight of rebellion, the Euphrates River.

In Revelation chapter nine we discover that another demonic invasion is going to occur during the second half of the Tribulation Period (Great Tribulation Period) that will be worse than the first invasion of the demonic underworld. As we've seen, the first invasion originates from the bottomless pit (Rev. 9:1-2). It involves demonic creatures taking on the appearance of locust-like and scorpion-like bodies that sting the world of unsaved humanity. During the first demonic invasion men will want to die but will not be able to take their own lives (Rev. 9:6). In this second demonic invasion demons will take on the appearance of horses and horse riders, and they will originate from the Euphrates River. In the second demonic invasion many humans will die. In fact, one third of all humanity will suffer and die from the second demonic invasion.

B. The timing of the invasion (vs. 15b)

The expression "an hour, and a day, and a month, and a year" may refer to the length or duration to their torment over the earth (13 months) but more likely it refers to God's specific timetable. In other words, this specific demonic invasion occurs exactly on the hour of God's appointment - the exact hour of the day, month,

and year that God ordained it to occur. It would start on time and in God's time. God raises up both men and demons as His instruments to accomplish His purposes in history and prophecy. Each acts out of their own volition, according to their schemes and nature, but God, knowing them from eternity past, raises them up in history to carry out His purpose even at the exact hour (Isa. 10:5; Rom. 9:11–18). God is a sovereign God!

These four demonic angels will be released at just the right time, a time known only to God (Acts 1:7), to lead this demonic revolt against mankind. As we will comment on later, they will slay one third of all those men who are still alive on earth ("slay the third part of men" – vs. 15). This no doubt will be well over a billion people! This will be a fearsome sight and strike indescribable fear into the hearts of men as they watch these fire-breathing creatures swarm forth from the Euphrates River and begin to attack mankind. It will indeed appear that the fires of hell have enveloped and overtaken the earth.

C. The number in the invasion (vs. 16)

To slaughter well over a billion people (one third of all those living on earth at this time) will require an unimaginably powerful force. John reported that the number of the armies of the horsemen was an astonishing two hundred million.

Revelation 9:16

"And the number of the army of the horsemen were two hundred thousand thousand: and I heard the number of them."

This is an exact number in contrast to those references in the Book of Revelation that speak of an incalculable number (see Revelation 5:11 and 7:9). Anticipating that some skeptical readers would doubt the specific size of this huge number, John emphatically insisted on the precision of the number testifying, "I heard the number of them." There can be no doubt about it. This number is intended to be literal and in John's day (about 200 million people lived on the earth during this day) and even in our day (6.5 billion people on earth) this number is staggering.

Again, as we will see in our next point, this seems to be describing a demonic army instead of a modern military army. The question is where do these 200 million demons come from? Are they also bound in the River of Euphrates awaiting their release? This may very well be the case since AFTER mentioning the four angels bound in the Euphrates River (Rev. 9:15) this demonic army is then mentioned (Rev. 9:16). Perhaps they follow them out of this watery prison and materialize into these End Time monsters haunting humanity. I know one thing; I'm not going fishing in the Euphrates River any time soon!

There is another possible scenario. You will remember that at the middle of the Tribulation, Satan, along with his of followers, will be cast out of the atmospheric heavens into the earth (see Revelation 12:9). This momentous event, in conjunction with God summoning to loose these angels, may cause these angels who were cast out of the heavens to move in rebellion against mankind. This rebellion will result in 200 million demons, which now roam the heavens, to take on another body form (materialize) that resembles these hideous creatures revealed in chapter 9.

The summoning of the demon world will result in a supernatural, demonic invasion that will kill one third of the earth's population. This great demonic army will be ready to do Satan's bidding throughout the earth, since they are angered by recently being cast out of their heavenly domain (Eph. 6:12), and since they know their time is short (see Rev. 12:12).

D. The description of the invasion (vv. 17-19)

1. It involves demonic warfare.

I believe this is a demonic cavalry. This prophetic or apocalyptic scene does NOT speak of modern warfare but demonic warfare. The wrath of God is without mercy and is displayed in a fearful way in the sixth Trumpet Judgment.

There are EIGHT reasons why this is demonic warfare and not modern warfare.

a. Because of the mention of the number in this army.

The vast number of this army (200 million) suggests a supernatural army of demons which could easily (at a moment's notice) come together to raise havoc among mankind. This is not a human army taking weeks or months to strategically unite together but an army of 200 million demons who are quickly summoned by these four angels (their leaders) to attack mankind.

Some worthy prophetic scholars have concluded that this is the same oriental army (a human army) mentioned in Revelation 16:12 (turn) since the Euphrates River is mentioned in both prophecies. They assume that this army in Revelation 9 must be the oriental army or "kings of the east" making their way into the Holy Land for Armageddon and killing one third of the people on planet earth on their way to Armageddon. However, I disagree with this conclusion as do many other prophetic scholars. How do we know this is a demonic army instead of a military human army?

One reason is because there is no mention made of the actual size of the oriental army in Revelation 16:12-13 but there is mention of the size of this army (200 million) in Revelation 9. This indicates that this is NOT the same scene.

MacArthur states this about the Revelation 9 army:

"Some have suggested that this is the human army referred to in Rev. 16:12 and led by "the kings from the east," noting that the Red Chinese army reportedly numbered 200 million during the 1970s. But no reference is made to the size of the army led by the kings of the East."

Since there is no actual number assigned to the oriental army in Revelation 16, it suggests that this is NOT the same army envisioned in Revelation 9.

Henry Morris is correct when he states:

"This is not an army of human horsemen, despite the preponderance of published interpretations to that effect. Although it might be possible for an earthly army of this size to be assembled, the description which follows cannot legitimately be equated to anything human."

- b. Because of the link between the fifth and sixth trumpets.

The fifth trumpet is clearly an invasion of demons (fallen angels as hideous locust creatures – Rev. 9:1-3) and since the sixth trumpet follows in sequence without changing the thought of demons attacking mankind, it seems likely that demons are also in view. In the fifth trumpet demons were released from the underworld to attack humanity and in the sixth trumpet demons are released from the Euphrates River to once again attack lost humanity and bring God’s judgment upon the earth dwellers. The linkage of these two trumpet judgments supports interpreting the army that is released by the sixth trumpet as demonic.

c. Because of the repeated pattern of demonic leadership.

The army of demonic locusts is led by a fallen angel of the abyss (Rev. 9:11-12) and this demonic army is led by four fallen angels that come forth from the Euphrates River. Because the leaders of these troops are demonic the followers are also demonic. These prophetic scenes indicate that they are being directly led by demonic leaders or generals. The leader of the first demonic revolt is called Abaddon (Rev. 9:11) and the leaders in the second demonic revolt will be four angels bound in the Euphrates River (Rev. 9:14).

These parallel accounts and judgments seem to suggest that we have a picture of demonic generals leading demonic armies which occur during the fifth and sixth trumpet judgments. Again, there is no reason to assume that the flow of thought is changing from demonic to human generals. These are demonic generals summoning forth and leading demonic armies.

d. Because fire, brimstone, and smoke are always understood as supernatural weapons in the Bible and are connected with hell four times in the Book of Revelation (Rev. 14:10-11,19-20; 20:10; 21:8) – not human beings.

Revelation 9:17

“And thus I saw the horses in the vision, and them that sat on them, having breastplates of fire, and of jacinth, and brimstone: and the heads of the horses *were* as the heads of lions; and out of their mouths issued fire and smoke and brimstone.”

Some have suggested this is a description of modern warfare and represent such things as tanks, scud missiles, and other modern warfare. I don't espouse this interpretation and many others do not either. This image depicts hell - not modern warfare (tanks, missiles, guns). And since the imagery is that of hell, demons coming out of hell and leading an army against lost humanity is the likely understanding and interpretation of this text.

e. Because no humans are mentioned.

The army in Revelation 16 is called "kings" (a human designation) but no human designation is given to this army in Revelation 9. Also, the army in Revelation 16 pertains to the Middle East and Armageddon but this army effects a third part of all mankind which suggests it is a worldwide conflict of demonic being attacking people all over the earth (Rev. 9:15).

f. Because of the timing envisioned.

The Oriental armies arrive on the scene during the sixth Bowl judgment and not the sixth Trumpet Judgment (Armageddon). The Bowl Judgment of Revelation 16 flows out of the seventh trumpet and is completely distinct from the Sixth Trumpet. It involves a different time than this judgment. The Sixth Trumpet Judgment is NOT a repeat of overlapping of the Sixth Bowl Judgment. The Armageddon armies that are led by demons, do not occur until the sixth bowl judgment, which is near the end of the Tribulation Period. The focus and campaign of Armageddon comes later. There is no hint of any earthly, military armies forming in Revelation 9. Trying to overlap the sixth trumpet judgment with the sixth bowl judgment seems to be out-of-sync with the chronological flow of the seal, trumpet, and bowl judgments.

g. Because of the creatures described.

Those who want to interpret this as modern warfare must stretch their imagination to turn these decryptions into tanks, missile launchers, and other military equipment. What kind of modern military equipment that we have today looks like the combination of a horse, a lion's head, or snake?

Notice:

- ✓ Horses or animals do not describe modern warfare.

John describes these HORSES in this fashion (vs. 17 – “I saw the horses”). He is very clear on this. In some way, these creatures possessed what appeared to be the body of horses in their overall description. This means they had legs and heads like an animal. In other words, their main bodies and appearance took on the shape of a familiar ANIMAL that John knew about (horses) or else John would NOT have described them in this way.

If John were viewing a 21st century scene of warfare he would NOT have stated “I saw the horses.” He would not have tried to describe them as an ANIMAL. Some suggests that John saw something like tanks, helicopters gunships, and other modern mechanized equipment (futuristic weaponry) and then *translated this down* in terms of cavalry images for his readers. I find this notion difficult to accept. Modern warfare would NOT take on the overall ANIMAL appearance of horses. John saw an animal of some kind – not tanks, helicopters, and machine guns! If John had been seen modern military tanks, he would have undoubtedly mentioned that the horses were something “like chariots with multiple wheels.” If he was shown helicopters with gunships, then he would have mentioned something in flight, perhaps “like an eagle.” He would not have spoken about horses.

In this prophetic scene, John clearly saw some horse-like, ANIMAL creatures (with legs and heads) and they were mounted with riders. He did not witness a picture of modern warfare. If we understand this army to be demonic in origin it solves many of the problems that are posed by attempts to find natural fulfillments in modern warfare. Demonic warfare makes sense and is easily understood and reflected in the large number (200 million moving across the earth), the strange and eerie appearance of these creatures, and because they are directly summoned and led by four evil angels. A demonic army (not modern warfare) fits this scene and description.

- ✓ Hellish riders do not describe modern warfare.

The RIDERS on the horses are also described in specific terms: “and them that sat on them, having breastplates of fire, and of jacinth” - Rev. 9:17). The description of actual RIDERS mounted on horses does not fit the modern description of warfare which involves tanks, missiles, and other modern instruments of destruction. John actually saw riders on horses!

But they are hellish riders (not Harley riders!) who are actually demons taking on the ANIMAL body of these hideous creatures. There is NOTHING human about these creatures. They likely possessed centaur bodies (where the rider and horse are all connected together in one). They are perhaps like the mythical creatures known as centaurs where both head and body are connected together in one. However, in this case, they did not have a human head but a lion’s head.

✓ Heads and tails are not a description of modern warfare.

A further description says these demonic hordes of the end times possessed something that appeared to be “like the heads of lions” (vs. 17) and their “tails were like unto serpents” (vs. 19). How could this description refer to modern warfare? John was describing ANIMAL characteristics once again. They possessed the head of a lion and the tail of a snake. These animal characteristics are not depicting modern warfare.

In this instance, John uses figurative or symbolic language (“like unto”) to further describe what these terrible creatures will look like when they come to kill mankind. There is no other way to describe them but they are similar to these ANIMAL descriptions. Thus, the figurative descriptions of lion-like heads and serpent-like tails becomes a colorful way to express the literal and frightening character of these end-time demonic creatures of warfare. The tail description (verse 19) is literal just like the tail description was literal in Revelation 9:10 when describing the previous demonic invasion. There is no reason to NOT understand these tales in a literal fashion as well. This second demonic invasion of hideous demons will be creatures that possess tails that are able to strike and sting their victims.

h. Because of their origin.

This is the most convincing argument that helps to understand this is referencing a demonic army. I believe these creatures and riders seemingly come from their prison in the Euphrates River where right now there is a great army of demons awaiting to perform this End Time diabolical deed against mankind (see Revelation 9:14-15).

The most logical understanding of this text is that these four demons are acting as generals which will lead a demonic invasion from the Euphrates River, which is the place where these 200 million demons have been bound, since the days of Babel and the rebellion that occurred there. These four angels are given permission by God to summon these demons, which apparently are bound in the Euphrates River with them, to commit this End Time judgment against humanity.

We continue to investigate the description of this demonic invasion (vv. 17-19)

2. It involves terrifying creatures.

Like the scorpion-locusts under the preceding trumpet (Fifth Trumpet Judgment), this will be a demonic legion of nightmarish animals indwelt by evil spirits.

Dr. Henry Morris well states:

“It must be that these frightful horses and horsemen are demon-possessed creatures whose bodies are specially created by God for the awful judgment which they are thereby enabled to inflict upon mankind. Their bodies are real physical bodies, capable of generating physical fire and brimstone and causing the physical death of those men and women whom they attack. This suggests that the bodies are specially created right at the time of the release of the unclean spirits from their prison, and are then immediately taken over by the ascending spirits.”

Now let's contemplate a more detailed description of these hideous creatures and what they will do when they are unleashed on the world. Their appearance is terrifying to say the least!

a. Their body – 17a

The description of these monsters is segmented. In other words, they are a combination of three creatures, with the body of a horse, the head of something that looks like a lion, and the tail of snake heads.



“And I saw the horses” – This means that their bodies were shaped in the likeness of a horse. Also, the riders on these horse creatures were covered with “breastplates of fire” (color of deep orange and red) and of “jacinth” (hyacinth – deep blue or black like smoke) and brimstone” (a yellowish color gas that gives off a sulphur smell).

Their colors on the rider’s breastplates (fiery orange and red) reflects the type of judgments they will inflict on people. Revelation 9:17 says, “and out of their mouths issued fire and smoke and brimstone.” These creatures will breath forth fire, smoke, and brimstone from their mouths and go about burning and poisoning mankind during the End Times. Of course, the breastplates not only portray the eternal judgment that is going to fall on people when they die. They also signify the protection these demonic creatures will have from man’s attempts to kill and annihilate them. These creatures will be indestructible. They will accomplish the task they set out to do.



b. Their heads – 17b-18

The Bible goes on to say: “and the heads of the horses were as the heads of lions” (17b). John was trying to describe the heads of these creatures in the best way he knew how. Their heads resembled or were similar to that of a lion’s head. A lion is the best way to describe them.

John then confirms that this lion-like head will bring about the deaths of untold millions.

Revelation 9:18 records:

“By these three was the third part of men killed, by the fire, and by the smoke, and by the brimstone, which issued out of their mouths.”

Lions breathing out fire, smoke, and brimstone! What an end-time nightmare!



The appearance of these strange creatures was like a grotesque fire-breathing lion which possessed the body of a horse and the head of a lion, and as we are about see, the tail of a serpent or snake. Who can even contemplate how terrible these creatures will be? But apparently these creatures will be something like fire-breathing dragons which roam the earth seeking to burn their

victims and bring death upon all those who they encounter. The scene will be like one of the monster movies dreamed up by science fictions writers in Hollywood – only far worse!

Henry Morris again writes:

“No doubt this all sounds fantastic and impossible, so commentators have invented all sorts of figurative meanings to apply to these deadly horses. But these are not the first fire-breathing animals the earth has seen. Ancient nations everywhere describe fire-breathing dragons which formerly existed on earth, and the Bible describes at least one such creature, called leviathan (Job 41:19-21). There are many indications that these dragons were actually dinosaurs, and the fossil evidence does show structures on at least some dinosaurs that could well have served as mixing chambers for flammable chemicals [not to mention methane from digestive processes] that could be expelled in the form of fire and smoke.”

Revelation 9:18 declares:

“By these three was the third part of men killed, by the fire, and by the smoke, and by the brimstone, which issued out of their mouths.”

Revelation 9:19 adds:

“For their power is in their mouth” indicating that their mouths are their primary targets of judgment upon lost humanity. This is because the fire, smoke, and brimstone is spewing forth from their mouths.

These lion-like creatures (with horse bodies) will breathe and bring forth fire, smoke, and brimstone from their mouths. These creatures from hell are coming to earth someday. This is no myth; it’s real! Apparently these demonic horse/lion/dragon-like creatures will attack mankind and burn people with by their fire, suffocate them by their smoke, and poison them by the brimstone. These terrible demonic creatures, which take on these hideous bodies, will target mankind during the second half of the Tribulation Period.

The description and weapons of this army are fire, smoke, and brimstone (vs. 18) which are descriptions of hell and may further indicate that these demonic creatures are judging unsaved mankind with a foretaste of what unsaved people will receive and experience throughout an eternity in hell or the Lake of Fire.

“fire, smoke, and brimstone”



Again, these descriptions are NOT referring to modern warfare but are the symbols of hell’s judgment. They are a reminder of the eternal judgment that all Christ-rejecters will face when they die and go to hell (Rev. 21:8). Although these demonic creatures and judgments are literal they are at the same time symbols or emblems of God’s judgment and once again become to the unsaved a foretaste of the eternal judgment that awaits those who die without Jesus Christ as Savior (Rev. 20:10; 21:8). Everyone being chased down by these fire-breathing, demonic dragons will be getting a foretaste of the coming fires of hell that they are going to enter when they die! Those who die not knowing Christ as Savior will experience fire, brimstone (sulfur), and smoke in the torments of an everlasting hell. Fire and brimstone are both typical and the result of God’s overwhelming judgment (Gen. 19:24; Deut. 29:23; Job 18:15; Ps. 11:6; Isa. 30:33; 34:9; EzeK. 38:22; Luke 17:29; Rev. 14:10; 19:20; 20:10; 21:8). Thus, their destruction with these elements (fire, smoke, and brimstone) remind us once again that God is a God of judgment.

It's coming! This terrible demonic plague of Lion creatures is going to strike the earth and bring terrible judgment to a world of sinners that have forsaken God and His Gospel. Unsaved people all over the earth will experience a foretaste of hell on earth with the fire, smoke, and brimstone which proceeds out of the mouths of these hideous creatures.

c. Their tails – 19b

Revelation 9:19 goes on to say: “For their power is in their mouth, and in their tails: for their tails were like unto serpents, and had heads, and with them they do hurt.” These lion-like creatures will move about the earth not only burning their victims to death but also biting and striking their victims with their snake-like tails. Their unusual tails have the head of a snake on them for John records that they “had heads.”

**“their tails were like unto serpents,
and had heads”**



 **Demonic Judgment**



In the Fifth Trumpet the demonic locusts had scorpion-like tails with which they stung (Rev. 9:10), but these demonic horses differ in that their tails are like serpents that have heads which bite people (“their tails were like unto serpents” – Rev 9:19). Revelation 9:19 implies that these serpent-like tails with heads will kill their victims by their venomous bites.

In other words, their tails looked like serpents with heads so that they can also strike their enemy and inflict venom in their bodies and bring about the deaths of untold millions or people. Their serpent tails are another reminder that they are following their leader who originally took on the form of a snake in the Garden of Eden.

Burning and biting! What a terrible creature. The fierceness of this army can be seen in the lethal power which is connected with both ends of these horses – their

mouth and the tails. Approaching the horsemen from behind is of little avail since their tails also harm people and bring death. What a frightful arsenal. Once again, these creatures will attack mankind by burning people with by their fire, suffocating them with their smoke, poisoning them by the brimstone, and also stinging them with their tails.

I can almost hear the news channels announcing the invasion that John described will take place during the second half of the Tribulation Period. It will come across as a red alert on every channel and over the radio. "Take shelter. Millions of terrible fire-breathing creatures have been attacking people in the Middle East. They are burning their victims to death. There are also some reports that they have been biting some of their victims with something that appears to be like a serpent-shaped tail. National radar has detected they are making their way across the oceans into countries all over the world. They have been killing everyone in sight. There is no stopping them at this point. Millions of lives are expected to be lost because of their rampage of horror."

E. The result of the invasion (vv. 15b, 18a, 20-21).

Death is the result (15b, 18a). These demonic horse/lion/dragons/serpents will attack mankind and burn people with by their fire, suffocate them by their smoke, and poison them by the brimstone until one third of mankind living on earth during this time has been executed. The Bible says that they will "slay third part of men" (this refers to a worldwide conflict). A third part of humanity will die from these demonic invaders. John mentions this twice to confirm the death toll on society. These people are those who are part of humanity, which are not God's saints, and those who do not have the seal of God upon them.

Like the first demonic invasion (Rev. 9:4), this demonic invasion of hell will only affect those who are not protected by God's seal. The people in the Tribulation Period who are judged by these demonic creatures are characterized as people who will not repent and don't want to turn to Jesus Christ to accept Him as Savior (see Rev. 9:20). In short, the part of humanity that is being described is similar to those who were not protected from the first demonic invasion, mainly, unsaved humanity. As in the first demonic invasion, God will spare His children from this hellish

outbreak, protecting them as His own children. He will not allow His children to be overtaken by demons.

Once again, we note that the trumpet judgments share a pattern of affecting one-third of what they target (“slay third part of men”). In the first trumpet judgment, a third of the trees were burned up (Rev. 8:7). In the second trumpet judgment, a *third* of the sea became blood, a third of the creatures in the sea perish, and a third of the ships were destroyed (Rev. 8:8-9). In the third trumpet judgment, a third of the rivers and springs are poisoned (Rev. 8:10-11). In the fourth trumpet judgment, a third of the sun, moon, and stars were struck so as to be darkened (Rev. 8:12). In the fifth and sixth trumpet judgments, all men without the seal of God are tormented, and then *a* third of them are killed. This clearly demonstrates that these judgments of the Tribulation Period are an orchestrated work of the sovereign God. God does things in precision and demonstrates that He is on the throne.

Imagine the human carnage and stench of rotting human flesh all over the world that will result from the demonic invasion of these grotesque creatures that are created for the purpose of judgment. The problem of disposing of the dead bodies of billions of people alone will be inconceivable. The sickly stench of decaying corpses will permeate the world, and it will take an enormous effort on the part of the survivors to bury them in mass graves or burn them. The dead from this demonic invasion are one-third of the surviving people which are left following the death of one fourth of the world’s population due to the fourth seal (Rev. 6:8).

How many people will die during the fourth rider’s judgment (Rev. 6:7-8)? The Bible says that “the fourth part of the earth” will be killed by the judgments inflicted by this rider. With the passing of the fourth seal, which occurs during the first three and one half years of the Tribulation Period, one fourth of the world’s population will be killed due to the judgments that come from the Lamb! The recent statistics of world population are about 6.5 billion people. If one fourths of the people die during the first judgments of the Tribulation Period, this means approximately 1.6 billion people will die during the first three and one half years of the Tribulation Period. What a terrible death toll this will be on humanity.

It is estimated that during the Second World War one out of forty people lost their lives. But during this seal judgment alone one out of four people will lose their lives! This represents the greatest destruction of human life every recorded in history. However, now we add the sixth trumpet plague to this great loss of human life which is another one third of mankind losing their lives due to this demonic invasion.

According to recent population statistics, based on 6.5 billion people living in the world, if 1.6 billion people die during the seal judgments, this would mean there are approximately 4.9 billion people left on the earth (minus those who have been raptured). The exact number cannot be known due to the rise or increase in population and not knowing how many people will be raptured. However, if we hold to recent statistics there would be 4.9 billion people left on earth after the seal judgments. Then, if one third of the remaining 4.9 billion people are killed, this would mean another 1.6 billion people will lose their lives in the demonic invasion. This would average about 8 victims for each demonic horseman and spirit released, based on current numbers. Together the seal and trumpet judgments up to this point would claim the lives of 3.2 billion people on earth which would be over half the earth's population.

This is why Jesus said in Matthew 24:22:

“And except those days should be shortened (a termination of this period of time), there should no flesh be saved: but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened.”

What a terrible time to be living on earth. Death will be the norm. No unsaved person will be exempt from the attack of this terrible invasion of demon forces which will be seen roaming about the earth as fire-breathing lions and biting serpents killing over a billion people who are still alive on planet earth. Friend, are you saved? Do you know Christ as your Savior? It's a wonderful thing to flee to the grace of God and escape the wrath of God. God's grace is so very wonderful. You don't have to face the coming wrath and judgment of God. You can be saved or delivered from all of God's wrath!

1 Thessalonians 1:10

And to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, *even* Jesus, which delivered us from the wrath to come.

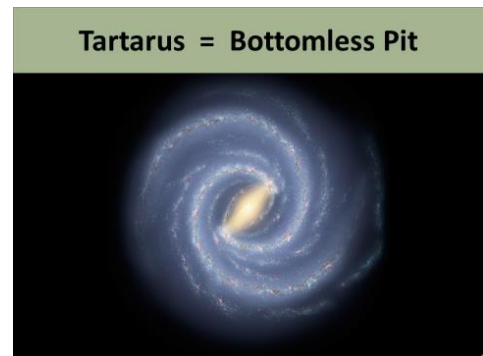
What a wonderful promise this is for every Gospel believer today!

Did you know that Mormons believe that angels are spirits of deceased human or humans yet to be born? Mormons also believe that Adam (the first man) is now the archangel Michael (who experienced some kind of celestial upgrade) and that the angel Gabriel once lived on the earth as Noah. Did you know that the Bahi faith believes that people who love God on earth become Angels in Heaven? Many Family Bible Publishers seem to think that Angels are chubby naked babies with little-bity wings. In the 1994 a movie portrayed how angels were the spirits of deceased major league ball players who would help players make out of this world catches are run at supersonic speed. They were angels in the outfield! It's amazing how distorted the views of angels are among those who know nothing about what the Bible teaches concerning angels.

We have been studying about fallen angels. Now let's look at another group of fallen angels.

3. A group of fallen angels are bound in Tartarus

There is a particular group of demons (fallen angels) who are incarcerated in a place called Tartarus. This particular group of fallen angels will not be released until their day of judgment comes. These wicked, fallen angels were once allowed to roam free with Satan for a period of time after the initial rebellion. However, the Bible teaches that later on they committed such a heinous sin that was so grievous to God that they were bound or confined in a prison. Two New Testament passages refer to this group of fallen angels.



2 Peter 2:4 declares this:

"For if God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast *them* down to hell, and delivered *them* into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment." The word

for “hell” is translated as Tartarus in 2 Peter 2:4 (the only time this word is used in the Bible). Tartarus is a place of punishment for a specific group of fallen angels. Tartarus, which is described as a place of “chains of darkness” is apparently one of the compartments within the larger place called Hades which is in the underworld.

Compartments in the Underworld of Hades

Place of suffering for unsaved
(Luke 16:23-24)

Place of bliss for the Saved
Now empty with the resurrection of Christ!
(Ephesians 4:18)

Tartarus
(2 Pet. 2:4; Jude 6-7
1 Pet. 3:19-20)
Confined Angels

Bottomless Pit
(Revelation 9:1; 20:10)
Confined Angels

The ancients likened this particular place of Tartarus to the lowest part or section of Hades and it is likely a place where some of the renegade spirits are confined to this day. Some expositors teach that Tartarus and the abyss or bottomless pit are the same place. This might be true. The abyss of bottomless pit where Satan will be cast and bound during the Millennium (Rev.

20:1). I think there just might be a case that Tartarus is the same place as the bottomless pit. In other words, Tartarus is a synonym for the bottomless pit which resides in the lowest part of Hades and therefore gets its name – the bottomless pit. It is called the abyss or bottomless pit elsewhere in the Bible (Rev. 9:1). So, either Tartarus is a separate compartment within the realm of the underworld of Hades or it may be the same place identified as the bottomless pit elsewhere in the Bible. Tartarus is likely the same prison and place that other demons feared entering before the Millennium begins. During the days of Jesus, some demons were frightened about entering this gloomy place of confinement that Jude talked about.

Luke 8:31 gives this record:

And they (the demons) besought him that he would not command them to go out into the deep.

The word for “deep” means the abyss (a deep chasm). This is not the Bermuda Triangle! It is a place or compartment in Hades that is identified as the bottomless pit. This deep or abyss is likely the place called Tartarus. Only God knows how to confine wicked spirits in a place such as this. He has his own set of chains that can keep wicked spirits bound. We must believe what the Bible says on this point.

What angels are being referenced in 2 Peter 2:4? This could not be a reference to all the angels that sinned in the rebellion against God for if this were the case then all the fallen angels, including Satan, would already be bound in the place of Tartarus or the bottomless pit. This apparently was a special group of angels that did some dastardly deed back in the days of Noah, prior to the Genesis Flood. The deed that they performed was so horrific or terrible that God confined them to this place called Tartarus or the lowers part of Hades.

Jesus actually preached a victory sermon to these wicked spirits in Tartarus which tried to demonize the human race in the days of Noah.

1 Peter 3:18-20

“For Christ also hath once suffered for sins (this is why we do not celebrate the Mass), the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit: By which also he went and preached unto the spirits in prison; Which sometime were disobedient, when once the longsuffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls were saved by water.”

Peter reminds us that there were fallen angels roaming about the earth “Which sometime were disobedient, when once the longsuffering of God waited in the days of Noah.” He tells us that there were angels that apparently were up to something no good during the day of Noah, prior to the Genesis Flood. Whatever these wicked angels did during these days prior to the Flood, it must have been pretty bad. These were bad guys. We are about to investigate and discover that these wicked actions did something reprehensible. I believe these angels identified as the “sons of God” in Genesis 6 decided to promote physical relations with women (“daughters of men”) by influencing and indwelling unsaved men throughout all the earth. In other words, they would influence and inhabit wicked or evil men to have multiple wives and create a race of wicked people that would eventually corrupt human society in an attempt destroy the messianic line and keep Christ from coming into the world.

We will see this in a moment when we go back to Genesis 6. For now, we see that Peter concludes that God confined these wicked spirits to Tartarus for committing

this dastardly deed (2 Peter 2:4). He imprisoned them in chains of darkness and they will be confined to this place until their final judgment. Peter also reveals that in-between Christ's death and resurrection, He went to the center of the earth (Matt. 12:40) where he preached to these wicked spirits (2 Peter 3:21) that were confined in chains and darkness.

Christ's sermon was a victory sermon. In essence, Jesus said them, "You guys tried to keep me from coming into the world before the day of the Flood. News flash, I'm here and I have died on the cross to rescue men from Satan's plan to keep men bound to condemnation and His power. And I'm about to rise from the dead. You guys lost, and you lost big!" Jesus went to this prison in Hades to announce His victory and their doom. What a sermon it must have been!

Jude 6-7 casts more light on these same sinning angels:

"And the angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, he hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day. Even as Sodom and Gomorrha, and the cities about them in like manner, giving themselves over to fornication, and going after strange flesh, are set forth for an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire."

First, these angels are said to have left their "first estate" which means "domain." This word suggests that these specific angels did not remain in the sphere of influence that God intended for angels. They traded a good influence for an evil and sinful influence and left God's intended purpose for the angelic realm which was to glorify God and serve Him.

Second, they left their "habitation" which apparently means their dwelling place in the first Heaven, where all angels existed and could roam and move about (Eph. 6:12). But instead of remaining in Heaven they rebelled with Satan and took up residency on planet earth in order to accomplish some horrific and horrible practice among unsaved humanity during the day prior to the Genesis Flood.

Third, the Bible says that these specific angels gave "themselves over to fornication" (porneiah = sexual relations forbidden by God which can be illustrated by the perverted acts of homosexuality in Sodom and Gomorrah ("Even as Sodom and Gomorrha"). The Bible further defines the angelic fornication as "strange flesh"

which specifically means a sexual relationship that is foreign to the angelic order. In the case of Sodom and Gomorrah it was homosexuality. Peter uses homosexuality as an illustration of strange flesh. In other words, when men want men for physical relations, they are strange for they are going after strange or foreign flesh, which is not a common or normal sex drive for the male gender. In Sodom and Gomorrah it was the strange flesh of homosexuality relations but in the case of these wicked angels, it was no doubt having sexual relations with the “daughters of men” (women) as outlined in Genesis 6:2. This too was strange flesh.

Genesis 6:1-2

“And it came to pass, when men began to multiply on the face of the earth, and daughters were born unto them. That the sons of God saw the daughters of men that they *were* fair; and they took them wives of all which they chose.”

According to what Peter and Jude wrote about, we can conclude that the “the sons of God” were angels who saw the daughters of men (women in general throughout the earth) that they *were* fair; and they took them wives of all which they chose” (this is an indication of multiple marriages). We will discuss this in a moment. It’s seems very clear that these “sons of God” were angels working in connection with the human bodies of men who lived on the earth in the days prior to the Flood. Although the emphasis is on angels doing a wicked deed, they used real physical men to accomplish this wicked deed. The men were the proxies of these wicked spirits which means the men of the earth were being used by the sons of God (the angels). These “sons of God” or angels were functioning through men and acting out their dastardly deed through wicked men.

The “strange flesh” that Jude mentions regarding these wicked angels would be for angels to desire to have physical relations with women through inhabiting male, human bodies. In short, these demons or wicked angels would seek to promote and enhance sexual relations with women through inhabiting male human bodies. This was “strange flesh” to them since angels are created as sexless beings without bodies (Heb. 1:7), sex drives, and without the capability of reproduction (Mark 12:25). Therefore, it was indeed a strange desire for angels to inhabit human beings for the purpose of procreation among the fleshly human race.

This dastardly deed was Satan's master plan to eliminate the seed line through whom Christ would come. He wanted to corrupt the line of the Redeemer. His goal was to in some sense demonize the entire human race of humanity by having demonized men marry women, which would eventually infect the entire human race with wickedness. This is because families would be overrun and influenced with these wicked demonic spirits and live in open rebellion and wickedness against God. And this is exactly what happened.

The "sons of God" (angels) sought to pollute the human race and keep Christ from coming into the world as the Redeemer of mankind. And for this wicked act the angels are bound in Tartarus.



Genesis 6:4 connects the sons of God with giants: "There were giants in the earth in those days; and also after that, when the sons of God (these wicked angelic beings) came in unto the daughters of men (womankind through

inhabiting male bodies), and they bare *children* to them, the same *became* mighty men which *were* of old, men of renown" (heroes or champions—successful warriors).

The "sons of God" were originally angels who began to influence and inhabit a group of giant men (Nephilim – the Genesis Giants). This giant race of men was overtaken by demon activity (the sons of God) and perhaps indwelt by demons. As a result, they would marry women and their families would be influenced by demons and wickedness. This demonized cycle of wickedness would be passed down from one generation to the next with the Satanic mindset to spiritually pollute human society and keep a Redeemer from being born.

The "sons of God" in Genesis 6 has been interpreted in various ways. Some teach that the "sons of God" was an expression that meant the line of Seth (the godly line = sons of God) intermarried with the line of Cain (the ungodly line – daughters of men) and do not involve angels in the mix. This seems highly unlikely for several reasons. First, not all in the line of Seth were necessary godly people. Second, why

would the line of Seth be called “sons” (men) and the line of Cain be called daughters (women)? This makes no sense. The noun “men” as seen in the reference of “daughters of men” is a generic term. It does not refer to a specific man (Cain) but to female descendants within the human race. It cannot refer to a specific class or line of men. Third, this view does not explain 2 Peter 2:4 and Jude 6-7 which connects angels with Genesis chapter six.

Others suggest that the “sons of God” were demons (fallen angels) which lusted after women. As a result, they initially materialized and took on the form of human beings in order to have physical relations with women, which resulted in a half-human and half-demonic race of people. Promoters of this view teach that angels reproduced themselves through procreation. This cohabitation between demons and human women would actually produce an offspring of giants which were demons or angels possessing human bodies (half human and half spiritual beings).

Genesis 6:4 debunks the theory that a race of giants was actually created by angels having physical relationship with women: “There were giants in the earth in those days; and also after that, when the sons of God came in unto the daughters of men, and they bare children to them, the same became mighty men (not angels) which were of old, men (not angels) of renown.”

Note what the Bible teaches here. The Bible says the giants already existed on the earth prior to the sons of God coming together with the daughters of men (“there were giants in the earth”). In other words, a giant race of people was not produced by demons (half demon and half man). The Biblical evidence does not support that the giants were the product or result of demon activity. This race of giants already existed. Furthermore, they are called “men” twice in the Biblical text. Therefore, nothing is said in the Bible that demons actually produced through physical relations a race of half demon and half giant men. Although good men espouse this view, I cannot buy into it.

There are several problems with the view of angels lusting after women, taking on human bodies, and having physical relations with women.

First, God has only allowed *good angels* to take on human or bodily form and appear before men (Gen. 18:1-18; 19:1; Joshua 5:13-15). There is no record of evil or fallen angels appearing in *bodily* form to interact with mankind.

Matthew 22:30

“For in the resurrection they neither marry, nor are given in marriage, but are as the angels of God in heaven.”

Second, Jesus taught that angels by themselves cannot reproduce. It’s not within their angelic code to do this. In Matthew 22:30, Jesus said in response to the Sadducees: “For in the resurrection they neither marry, nor are given in marriage, but are as the angels of God in heaven.” This means angels do not have physical sex drives and they can’t procreate. Even when angels do take on human form, the Lord Jesus

taught that angels could not and would not produce offspring through sexual relations.

Of course, some have suggested that only the angels in Heaven are said to not remarry and give birth to people. They claim that this statement of Jesus would not refer to the angels who were no longer in Heaven and who left Heaven to follow Satan in his rebellion. They also conclude that Jesus only taught that angels could not “marry” but He did not teach they could not have sexual relations. However, to try and construe the meaning that other angels who are no longer in Heaven could reproduce seems to stretch the intent of Jesus’ words and read between the lines. By creation and design, God created angels without capability of reproduction which would include having sexual desire and relations. This seems to be all that Jesus was implying by this statement. It is difficult to believe that after certain angels disobeyed God that they suddenly were allowed by God’s permission to develop the drives and capabilities for reproduction.

Third (and this is very important), Satan is not in charge of creating babies in the womb. This is God’s work and business! If demons took control of procreation, materializing into human bodies and having physical relations with women, and creating a half- demonized race of people, then Satan would surely be behind it. But the Bible states that God is in charge of life within the womb.



Psalms 139:14-15

“I will praise thee; for I am fearfully *and* wonderfully made: marvellous *are* thy works; and *that* my soul knoweth right well. My substance was not hid from thee, when I was made in secret, *and* curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth.”

Angels = Sons of God in Genesis 6

Job 38:7 - When the morning stars sang together, and all the **sons of God (angels)** shouted for joy?

Job 1:6 - Now there was a day when the **sons of God (angels)** came to present themselves before the LORD, and Satan came also among them.

Job 2:1 - Again there was a day when the **sons of God (angels)** came to present themselves before the LORD, and Satan came also among them to present himself before the LORD.

So what does Genesis 6:2 and 4 really teach? The “sons of God” are elsewhere presented as angels in the Bible. One cannot deny this. I think the best and most obvious understanding of what happened in Genesis 6 is that the “sons of God” (created, fallen, wicked angels) chose to inhabit wicked men who already existed on earth. Demons always seek to inhabit bodies (Luke 8:26-31; 11:24). So they began to inhabit and

influence a race of giant men by stimulating them to lust after women and marry them. Perhaps they had multiple wives. This pattern would continue on for many years and it eventually polluted the human race from a spiritual perspective. It was Satan’s best attempt to keep Messiah from coming.

The “sons of God” were fallen angels who began to influence and inhabit a group of giant men (Nephilim – the Genesis Giants). This giant race of men was overtaken by demon activity (the sons of God) and perhaps indwelt by demons. As a result, they would marry women and their families would be influenced by demons and wickedness. This demonized cycle of wickedness would be passed down from one generation to the next with the Satanic mindset to spiritually pollute human society and keep a Redeemer from being born.

There were perhaps millions of angels who sought to do this dastardly deed in the days prior to the Flood. Through the human agency of men (specifically giants), these fallen angels sought after the flesh of women, which was foreign to the angelic creation, and sought to pollute the human race and keep the Redeemer from coming. These demonic angels mingled with the human race by indwelling and adversely influencing the human race (specifically males) to lust after women and have physical relationship with them. Satan’s plan was to eventually produce a demonized or God-rejecting society which could not reproduce the promised Messiah. And the devil’s plan almost worked!

Genesis 6:5-6 records:

“And GOD saw that the wickedness of man *was* great in the earth, and *that* every imagination of the thoughts of his heart *was* only evil continually. And it repented the LORD that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him at his heart.”

Satan’s masterplan to destroy the spiritual family and godly line almost worked and would have worked, if it were not for the godliness of a man called Noah and his family. Noah was a man and preacher of righteousness in a day and time when the entire human race was being demonized by these wicked spirit beings. He stood above the spiritual darkness of the day. And we need to do the same thing today. This is because Satan is alive and well. His demonic hordes and followers are still trying to overtake society and destroy the witness and light of Christianity today.

Well, Satan and his fallen angels were up to something back in the days prior to the Flood. Satan is always up to something! And it appears that he was attempting to destroy the line of Christ through some dastardly act prior to the great deluge. The entire human race was infected with demonic wickedness except Noah and his family which would preserve the messianic line through whom Christ would come. Satan would not win. His plan would fail. Jesus came and He died on the cross and rose again as the great Savior of souls!

This brings up another question related to these wicked angels. It’s a question dealing with this point. When will the wicked angels be judged for their rebellion against God during the days of Genesis, prior to the Flood?

Jude mentions about this in verse 6.

“And the angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, he hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day.”

The “judgment of the great day” refers to the time when these confined angels and presumably all angels will be judged at the end earth’s history. Apparently Satan and his angels which rebelled with him, including those angels that sought to

destroy the messianic line by cohabiting with women through demon possessed men, will be cast into the Lake of Fire.



When the devil is cast into the Lake the Fire all of His demonic hordes will be cast into this final place of judgment with him. Those angels that followed Satan in his rebellion will follow him right into hell. Here is something that every unbeliever should know. If you follow Satan, you will follow him right into hell.

Here is some final application. Genesis chapter six reveal how Satan attempted to strike against society and the family in order to destroy the line of Christ. The serpent's plan was to destroy God's witness in the world through the family unit and to ultimately pollute the line of Christ. We need to learn a lesson from this chapter and it's this. Satan also has a plan to destroy our families today. He wants to wreck our spiritual lives and in doing so wreck the family unit.

A reporter came to a fire one day where a house was steadily burning down to the ground. He noticed that there was a little lad standing by with his mom and dad. The reporter said, "Son, it looks like you don't have a home any more." The little boy answered courageously, "We have a home--we just don't have a house to put it in." It's wonderful to be able to say that we have a real home life that is not devastated and disrupted by Satan. But Satan has always been out to get the family for one reason or another. History proves this to be true. When Satan was trying to corrupt the line through which Christ was to be born, he attacked the family. Yes, he attacked the whole human race, but in attacking the human race he attacked the family. Satan gets to the human race by attacking the family institution. Let us remember this in regards to our own family. Don't allow Satan to get an inroad and foothold in your home and family.

Ephesians 4:27 gives us the best advice when it states, “Neither give place to the devil.” In other words, don’t give a starting point for the devil to work. Remember that he is trying to pollute and destroy your family from a spiritual perspective. Keep the door shut and don’t allow the devil to get into your home life and marriage.

There is an invisible world all around us. If we could take back the curtain for just a few minutes we would be utterly shocked at what we would see. There is a whole other world beside the world of the physical that we see and live in on a daily basis. There are invisible creatures moving about everywhere in the world. Some are good and others are evil. Some are doing God’s bidding and others are doing Satan’s bidding.

7. What do angels do?

We need to take some time to investigate this question since the work and ministries of angels is rather extensive. We will study the two classifications of angels (good and evil) to determine their activities and work throughout the universe.

I. The good angels perform tasks for God and His glory

We can begin by determining that the term “angel” in both Old Testament (malak – Gen. 24:40; 31:11; Ex. 23:20) and New Testament (angelos) literally means “messenger.” This is because angels were originally designed to be God’s messengers. This is why the Bible refers to the created spirits beings who serve as messengers of God (Heb. 1:7, 14).

A. Their general activities toward God.

- 1. They worship God in Heaven (Rev. 4:8-11; 5:13-15; 7:11-12).**

Revelation 7:11-12

“And all the angels stood round about the throne, and *about* the elders and the four beasts, and fell before the throne on their faces, and worshipped God, Saying, Amen: Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honour, and power, and might, *be* unto our God for ever and ever. Amen.”

All of God's angels are commanded to praise Him.

Psalm 148:2

"Praise ye him, all his angels: praise ye him, all his hosts."

The multitude of holy angels who appeared to the shepherds of Bethlehem praised God and ascribed glory to Him.

Luke 2:13-14

"And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men."

Angels teach us an important lesson about worship. We should be ready to spontaneously worship God. Worship should not be confined to a building on Sunday morning but be part of our every life as Christians.

A. W. Tozer once said:

"God is trying to call us back to that which He has created us, to worship and enjoy Him forever!"

Have you heard His call upon your heart and life? God wants us to worship Him like the angels do. We need to be a worshipful people today. Worship is the missing link in the lives of many Christians today. We need to take time to worship the Lord. William Temple once said:

To worship is:

To quicken the conscience by
the holiness of God.

To feed the mind with the
truth of God.

To purge the imagination with
the beauty of God.

To open the heart to
the love of God.

To devote the will to the
Purpose of God.

Robert Webber once said:

“Worship is a verb. It is not something done to us, or for us, but by us.”

2. They carry out God’s will.

The original purpose of their creation was to administer or carry out God’s will.

Speaking of the angels, Hebrews 1:14 declares:

“Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?”

The good angels continue to carry out God’s will in many ways and through various activities. They are ministering spirits to God’s people today in ways we may never know about. We will talk about this more under the question about guardian angels. For now, we must understand that they are ministers of God. This means the good angels serve God and do His wishes. What a testimony they are for each one of us today. We too should be ready to carry out God’s will and purposes for our lives.

During Bible times, prior to the completion of the canon of Scripture (1 Cor. 13:8-10), angels sometimes delivered direct messages and communicated the will of God to certain people (Matt. 25:5-8; Luke 1:11-13, 19; Luke 1:26-38). They also assisted in the giving of the Mosaic law (Deut. 32:2; Acts 7:53; Gal. 3:19). These verses teach that the Law of Moses at Mount Sinai was delivered to Israel through the intermediate help of angels. We also read how angels can administer God’s judgments. In David’s day an angel afflicted Israel with God’s pestilence judgment (2 Sam. 24:15-17). During the future seven-year Tribulation Period angels will assist in administering Christ’s Trumpet and Bowl judgment on the earth (Revelation 8-16).

Psalm 103:20-21

“Bless the LORD, ye his angels, that excel in strength, that do his commandments, hearkening unto the voice of his word. Bless ye the LORD, all ye his hosts; ye ministers of his, that do his pleasure.”

What an example the good angles are for each one of us today. We should be like the angels in that we obey God’s commands and seek to do His good pleasure. We

should be ready and willing to carry out God's wishes and commands for our lives and give ourselves unreservedly to Him.

“Take my life and let it be
Consecrated, Lord, to Thee.
Take my moments and my days,
Let them flow in endless praise.

Take my hands and let them move
At the impulse of Thy love.
Take my feet and let them be
Swift and beautiful for Thee.

Take my will and make it Thine,
It shall be no longer mine.
Take my heart, it is Thine own,
It shall be Thy royal throne.”

A. Their specific activities toward Jesus Christ.

The Bible declares that Jesus Christ is God (Hebrews 1:8). But in Scripture we see angels having a special ministry that is connected with Jesus Christ.

1. They worship Jesus Christ.

God the Father has commanded that all angels worship Jesus Christ since He is God (Heb. 1:6). No other worship should ever be directed to anyone else or anything else other than Jesus Christ (Rev. 5:8-13). Jesus Christ needs to receive all worship and glory. Demons (fallen angels) are behind all false, idolatrous, pagan worship (1 Cor. 10:20). This means we should not partner in the work of fallen angels or demons by promoting idolatrous worship in any way.

Statues that represent another god, deity or any person which are designed to promote dependence, adoration, and worship toward that deity or person, is nothing but idolatry. Today there are millions of people all over the world who worship different gods and people through idols and statues that are erected to honor them. There are many who worship Mary. There are millions of images of

Mary in every imaginable form that are scattered throughout the world. They're obviously not able to be counted – millions of them in every form and every location: churches, cathedrals, houses, cars, wallets. Everywhere are images, pictures, and representations of Mary.

There are millions upon millions of people that every day pray to her. They pray to her for forgiveness and salvation. They pray to her to protect them. They pray to her to help them, to comfort them, to rescue them, to help them in the hour of death. They give thanks to her for her help and assistance. Is this not worship? The worship of Mary in the Catholic Church is an attack on God Himself. There are pagan statues of Buddha, Hindu statues. and statues used in the world of the occult.

I was once talking to a man and asked him why he had a statue of Buddha in his back yard. He told me he liked the way the statue looked and thought it was very decorative and made his house look better. People commit idolatry by worshipping something else or someone else other than God. Behind all of this pagan worship and statues is demonism. The Bible says we should not “fellowship with demons” (partner with the fallen angels) who are promoting this type of pagan idolatry.

I googled praying angels and found this one on Amazon.com. It only cost \$79.11. Here is the point. I don't have statues of praying angels in my home or outside in my garden areas. Let me tell you why? We are not to focus on angels praying for us and helping us but on Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit's ministry in our hearts and lives today (Phil. 1:21). I don't need an angel praying for me to get me through life. I need the power of the Holy Spirit working in me (Acts 1:8).



One individual said, “My niece has gotten very interested in angels, and she told me the other day that she often prays to the angels and asks them to help her and direct her when she has decisions to make.” This kind of practice is the worshipping of angels. The Bible strictly forbids this. Statues that promote other gods and personages which are being worshipped today and statues of these same personages, which we are perceived as depending upon in our Christian life, should not be displayed in our homes. These kinds of things should not be part of our

households. How far do we take this? Any statue that represents a false religion, a so-called canonized saint, and which promotes heathen worship toward that person, should not be part of our homes. Let me tell you what should be part of our homes – only Jesus Christ! Let's send that message to our children and grandchildren.

Exodus 20:4-5

“Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth: Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them: for I the LORD thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me.”

Exodus 34:14

“For thou shalt worship no other god: for the LORD, whose name *is* Jealous, *is* a jealous God.”

This is the Word of the Lord! It's not my word. It's God's Word. I want nothing to do with paganism. I surely don't want to practice not do I want to indirectly promote it. I also don't want to give excuses for it. If it's paganism; it's paganism. Admit it. Do you have certain statues that you look to for strength and inspiration? Do you have certain pictures or statues in your home that you depend on to help get you through the day? If so, you are committing idolatry.

Now, let me give you something else to think about today. We can often create our own gods or idols as we go through life. We must be aware of this.

1 John 5:21

“Little children, keep yourselves from idols. Amen.”

We can have other idols in our hearts that are not physical idols. Things such as money, fame, fortune, sports, hobbies and anything that we put before God, His truth, and His will for our lives is actually an idol in our hearts because we are allowing it to control us instead of God. Another person can be your idol. Another purpose outside of God's will. Another place, another power that is controlling your

life other than God. Is there some idol in your life today? Admit it and get rid of it. Break it down.

- The angel Gabriel foretold of the supernatural conception and virgin birth of Jesus Christ (Luke 1:26-38). He also told Joseph about this supernatural event and commanded him not to put away his wife (Matt. 1:18-25).
- An angel announced God's choice of Jesus's human name and the fact that he would be the Savior of sinful human being (Matt. 1:21).
- An angel announced the birth of Jesus Christ to Bethlehem Shepherds (Luke 2:8-14).
- An angel provided protection to Jesus when He was a child (Matt. 2:13, 19-20).
- Angels ministered to Jesus Christ in His weakened physical condition after His temptation by Satan (Matt. 4:11).
- An angel came from Heaven to strengthen Jesus during His Gethsemane agony (Luke 22:43).
- Angels witnessed and announced Christ's bodily resurrection from the dead (Luke 24:1-10, 22-23; John 20:11-13).
- The holy angels attended Jesus Christ at His ascension into Heaven (Acts 1:10-11).

At this point, we need to ask if Christians should depend upon angels for help and strength. And do angels assist people today like they did Elijah and Christ in feeding and strengthening them (1 Kings 18:4-8; Matt. 4:11)? We will note later that God's Word does teach that angels can protect God's children in ways we might not even know about since angels are ministering spirits given to the "heirs of salvation" (Heb. 1:14). However, in the Church epistles, which are given specifically for church life and conduct, there is no mention of angels directly assisting the local churches, giving guidance to Christians and revelatory messages outside the Bible. This is because we have the completed canon of Scripture today and no longer need angelic messages (1 Cor. 13:8-10).

Just because angels did certain things to certain people at specific times in the Bible does not necessarily mean they do the same things now. The Bible is silent in the

later church epistles about angelic visitations to help strengthen God's people and provide encouragement for them. This means we should not expect angels to materialize and appear to us as they did on various occasions during Bible times to confirm specific events and give new revelation. Protection by angels is one thing but we should not expect revelations or appearances of angels.

We never read about Christians relying on angels, talking to them, and looking to them for guidance and inspiration. This is because angels are not given to the Church to help them live the Christian life. In the New Testament epistles, we discover that our dependency is to be upon the Holy Spirit who guides us in the truth of Scripture (John 16:13). Angels do not guide us in truth – the Holy Spirit does. Today we are to possess a new, living, and dynamic relationship with only Jesus Christ - not angels (Phil. 1:21; Phil. 3:10). This means that our power, strength, help, encouragement, peace, comfort, and joy comes from God – not from angels.

All of his angelmania and angelolatry of today must stop! To overemphasize angels and to depend upon them for strength, help, and guidance is foreign to New Testament Christianity, even during the days of the apostles. We are not to be looking for angels but “looking unto Jesus” (Heb. 12:2). We are to be praying to God and not to angels (“After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father which are in heaven” - Matt. 6:9).

Think of this. Christ Himself never prayed to anyone but the Father. When asked by His disciples to teach them to pray, He instructed them to pray to the Father (Luke 11:2). This is because we are to depend upon God for guidance, help, strength and deliverance. The good angels reject our prayers and worship (Revelation 22:8-9). Praying to angels and expecting secret message from angels is strictly forbidden.

Colossians 2:18

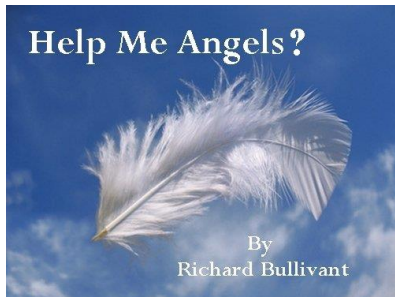
“Let no man beguile you of your reward in a voluntary humility and worshipping of angels, intruding into those things which he hath not seen, vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind.”

Books on angels often encourage readers to pray to angels for protection, guidance, healing, help, and rescue them from danger. They talk about developing

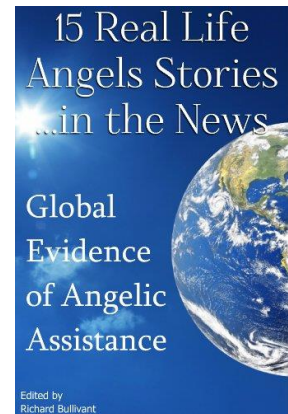
relationship with angels. This is nothing but pagan worship and apostasy from the true God. Let's call it for what it really is today. We must remember that prayer is a form of worship to God. When we pray to angels for help and strength we are worshipping them. When we pray to God for help and strength it is a form of worship.

Psalm 46:1

“God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.”



These books inform us how to connect and work with your guardian angels for daily help and guidance.

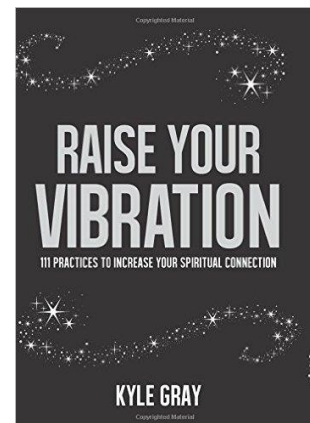


Pope Pius XI (1022-39) is said to have prayed twice every day to his angels. Pope John XXIII (1958-63) admitted he did the same, especially asking his guardian angels to help him as he carried out his work. Praying to angels is not Biblical. It is absolutely pagan and heathen. It is blasphemy against God. We never find any person in Scripture praying to angels who had a right relationship with God. The Scriptures condemn praying to angels, depending upon angels, and developing any kind of relationships with angels.

This book says we are to raise our vibrations. I must ask, “Vibrations to what?” Folks, you will open yourself up to demonism if you start reading these pagan and devilish books! We are called upon to “try the spirits” to see “whether they are of God” (1 John 4:1).

Philippians 1:21

“For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain.”



We need to take the focus off angels and put it on Jesus Christ! The worship of angels, Mary, the use of statues to represent other people and deities, which are adored and which we depend upon for help, strength, and guidance, is putting other gods before the true God.

When people concentrate on what is sometimes called “guardian angels,” they inevitably get their eyes away from God. Their angels in one sense replace God. In fact, an overemphasis on guardian angels makes it easier to pray to angels. We need to stop looking unto angels and keep “looking unto Jesus” (Heb. 12:2).

All created beings are mere creatures. They are not divine and their worship is explicitly and repeatedly forbidden in Scripture (Col. 2:18; Rev. 19:10; 22:9).

God says in Isaiah 48:11, “I will not give my glory unto another.” We need to utterly, completely, and radically repudiate all worship and adoration given to anyone else or anything else other than God alone.

The good angels give this lesson to us today. The angels are saying, “worship God” (Rev. 22:9). How much have we been worshipping Him in our daily lives? Have we been adoring Him, ascribing worth to Him, and declaring to Him what He means to us? How close are we to God these days? Our worship and time spent with the Lord is a barometer of our love and closeness to the Lord. What is the temperature of your love for the Lord these days?

Revelation 2:4

“Nevertheless I have *somewhat* against thee, because thou hast left thy first love.”

A lady invited several friends to a mushroom steak dinner. When her maid opened the can of mushrooms, she discovered slight scum on the top. Since the guests were expected at any moment, the lady suggested, “Give the dog a little, and if he eats it, it’s probably all right.” The dog licked it and begged for more, so the dinner was completed and served to the guests. After the main course, the maid came in to serve the dessert but her face was ashen white. She whispered, “Ma’am, the dog is dead.” Before she could say another word the woman sent all the guests to the

hospital and every one of them had their stomachs pumped. When the lady of the house returned she asked, “Where’s the dog now?” The maid replied, “Out on the front steps, where he fell after the car hit him!”

This reminds us that we need to get our story straight. We also need to get our teaching straight on angels. We need to stick to what the Bible says about angels or else we will end up with unbiblical conclusions about angels – what they do, what are their ministries, and how they relate to us today.

2. They return with Jesus Christ.

We now want to move on to some prophetic Scriptures that deal with Jesus and angels.

- Angels will accompany Jesus when He returns in the Rapture of the Church, which is a secret return of Jesus Christ not revealed by the Old Testament prophets (1 Cor.15:51-52; 1 Thess. 4:16-17).

An angel will have part in heralding forth the Rapture of God’s Church Age saints. The “voice of the archangel” (1 Thess. 4:16) will accompany the descent of Jesus Christ into the atmosphere to catch away His Bride (the Church). One of the archangels with their high ranking authority in the angelic order is going to issue some kind of command at the Rapture. There seems to be more than one archangel in the angelic ranks (Dan. 10:13). However, one archangel’s voice will be heard at the Rapture. I think this will be the voice of a warrior. Perhaps the archangel of Heaven (maybe Michael) will summon all the angelic order, which is yet true to God, to overlook and protect His church from the evil and wicked angels or spirits that are roaming the atmospheric heaven above (Ephesians 6:12).

Revelation 12:7 says:

“And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels”

You will notice that this text does not indicate that a war only begins at the middle of Tribulation Period. The text is actually revealing that by the middle of the

Tribulation Period there will be a war already in progress in the atmospheric heaven (“there was”). What might this mean? It may suggest that at the time of the Rapture, a fierce war between the evil and holy angels will break out, which will obviously last until the middle of the tribulation, when Satan is finally kicked out of the atmospheric heavens and bound to earth.

If I know the devil, he will try to do something to stop God’s program of the Rapture from occurring. His host of demonic hordes will be there in the atmospheric heaven above (Eph. 6:12). They will be roaming around attempting to thwart the program of the rapture from taking place. The devil and his demons will try to interrupt the Rapture and keep it from occurring. Therefore, the voice of this archangel may very well summon the good angels as a military escort to accompany the Lord and His saints through enemy territory back to Heaven.

If angels escort God’s people into the next life upon death (Luke 16:22), perhaps the same will be true at the Rapture. The devil will try to keep God’s people, who have been raptured, from going into Heaven. He will still want us to go to hell. But the God of all grace will see to it that we are led or escorted all the way back to Heaven into the Father’s House which He has prepared for us (John 14:1-3).

Many years ago I had to conduct a large funeral. A well-known high school athlete had died and I was asked to do the funeral. A large part of the high school, along with teachers, were in the funeral home. People were literally standing in every inch of the room. I remembering going to the graveside service afterward. I went with the funeral director in the lead car and there were over 100 cars following us in a processional. To help us through some of the traffic difficulties, there were several policemen with their vehicles escorting us through intersections and traffic lights.

At the Rapture there may very well be some kind of angelic escort service for all of God’s people as they pass through the domain of the wicked spirits. The voice of the archangel may actually be a summons to all the good angels to prepare for battle and safely see God’s people back to Heaven.

- At the Second Coming of Jesus Christ to earth, great multitudes of angels will accompany Him (Matt. 16:27; 24:29-31; 25:31; 2 Thess. 1:7-8; Jude 14).

Let's look at the general task of the angels at the Second Coming. How will the angels assist Christ in His Second Coming? The good angels will remove all unbelievers from earth before Christ restores the theocratic Kingdom and then regather all saved Jews (the elect of Israel) from around the globe before the Millennium begins. The Bible reveals in conjunction with Christ's Second Coming to earth that angels will gather together the unsaved people on earth and send them off to judgment and then regather Israel, God's elect people, from all over planet earth.

After speaking of the seven-year Tribulation Period by relating it to birth pangs (labor pains) in Matthew 24:1-26, Jesus outlines what will take place when He actually returns to earth in His Second Coming (Matt. 24:31). Christ illustrates what it will be like during the seven-year Tribulation Period and in those days after the Tribulation, during those days just prior to the Second Coming. The parables are all connected with the event of His Second Coming to earth and what is going to take place and occur in conjunction with the Second Coming.

The Bible reveals in conjunction with Christ's Second Coming to earth that angels will take part in the gathering of unsaved Israel, who will be sent to judgment, but they will also regather saved Israel (God's elect people) from all over the world. Let's try and put the pieces of the prophetic puzzle together. As Pastor Bob Shelton used to say, "Don't lose me in these prophetic woods."

How will angels assist Christ in the Second Coming?

At the Second Coming of Jesus Christ to earth, great multitudes of angels will accompany Him (Matt. 24:29-31; 25:31; 2 Thess. 1:7-8; Jude 14). 2 Thessalonians 1:7-8 reveals that Christ will return to earth with His "mighty angels" to assist Him in judging planet earth with what is termed as His "flaming fire" (an expression of His wrath and judgment). The good angels will have a very important role to fulfill at the Second Coming of Christ. They will make sure the unsaved are judged for their wicked deeds and cast into Hades. We will see this later in our study. 2 Thessalonians 1:10 reminds us that this judgment will occur when the Lord comes back to earth and is glorified through the lives of believers whom He has transformed by making saints out of sinners. The text says, "When he shall come to

be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe (because our testimony among you was believed) in that day.”

2 Thessalonians 1:7-10 is not referring to the Rapture (1 Thess. 4:13–18; John 14:2–3) since no judgment accompanies the Rapture. Instead, this scene is the revelation of Jesus Christ when He returns to earth in power and great glory (Ps. 2:1–9; Matt. 25:31), the time when He will set up His earthly kingdom (Rev. 19:11–20:4). This will be a day of judgment for the lost and a day of glory and amazement for Jesus Christ as His saving work is reflected in the lives of His beloved saints. At the Second Coming Christ will be “glorified in his saints” (not by his saints). In other words, at the Second Coming, Christ’s own glory will be mirrored or reflected in His saints for the great and wonderful things He has given to them.

The revelation of the saint’s salvation, sanctification, and glorification (possessing resurrected and glorified bodies) at His Second Coming will be a tribute of praise to Jesus Christ and glorify Him, in that day and time when Christ returns with all of His saints in this spectacular revelation in the sky. In other words, seeing all that Jesus Christ had done for His saints at His Second Advent will in one sense cause Jesus Christ to be “glorified in his saints” as His grace and mercy are reflected in the transformation of His people. In this day Jesus Christ will get all the glory! At His Second Coming to earth, Jesus Christ will be admired for what He has done for His saints and with His saints. All of His saints who have been raised from the dead, who have been given glorified bodies, who have been given eternal life and salvation through Christ, will return with Him and together in this great coronation to earth, Jesus Christ will get the glory, as His likeness is reflected through His saints. By the way, this is the time when the saints come marching in!

Jude 14 also connects angels with the Second Coming. It states that Christ will return with “ten thousands” (urias or “myriads” - an indefinite number) of his “saints” (literally “holy ones”) which would suggest that this a reference to the angelic order who will assist Christ in judging the earth in His Second Coming (Jude 15). There is an indefinite number of angels at God’s disposal that will assist in judging the earth and preparing it for the Millennial Kingdom. Jesus will come in the clouds, escorted by myriads of angelic beings and of glorified saints (Rev. 19:14). It will be a scene of overwhelming power and dazzling splendor

The prophetic parables and scenes predict how angels will assist Christ in judging planet earth at the Second Advent. All of the unsaved (both Jews and Gentiles) will be regathered by the angels and judged in the place called Hades. This is a place of temporary judgment until the final resurrection and Great White Throne Judgment (Rev. 20:11-15).

Both the Unsaved and Saved
(Jews and Gentiles) are Gathered by
Angels at Second Coming



There are many prophetic Scriptures that depict this angelic work of rapturing the unsaved (both Jews and Gentiles) from earth and assisting Christ in sentencing them to Hades.

Matthew 13:30

“Let both grow together until the harvest: and in the time of harvest I will say to the reapers, Gather ye

together first the tares, and bind them in bundles to burn them: but gather the wheat into my barn.”

This is a harvest of the unsaved people (“tares”) and the saved (“wheat”). I know some of you are thinking that all the unsaved people are going to be those who watch CNN but I can assure you that there will be plenty of unsaved people from Fox News as well!

I remember hearing Lehman Strauss speak of the time he was signing autographs in a bookstore somewhere. He had just written a new book and some of the people wanted to have their book signed by him. A man came in to Dr. Strauss and said, “I am Jesus Christ.” Dr. Strauss ignored him and kept signing the books. A little while later he said again, “I am Jesus Christ.” He stopped what he was doing and said, “Hold out your hands.” The man showed him his hands. Dr. Strauss immediately said, “Sir, you are an imposter. The Jesus I know, the true Jesus has nail scarred hands and your hands do not have any scars. I suggest that you leave the campus immediately.

This man was a tare. He was a fake or a phony. There are many like this today within Christendom. They have a religious facade about themselves but they are not God's children. They have a form of godliness but deny the power of God to transform their lives. The "tares" (a weed) picture the unsaved living on earth when Jesus returns. They will be burned which is a reference to their judgment in Hades. But the "wheat" (a true grain) pictures God's true children who will be gathered into the "barn" which is an expression for the Millennial Kingdom. You will want to be in the barn in the coming day!

TARES Look IDENTICAL To WHEAT



WHEAT: before it is fully ripe.

TARES: Lolium Temulentum

Picking out weeds in the garden is not fun. The weeds sometimes look similar to the flowers when they begin to grow. This is what Jesus was talking about. All throughout this age (pre-Messianic age), prior to the Second Coming of Christ, the true and the false will mix together and

sometimes it will be difficult to detect who is an imposter. But the angels will know and in the Second Coming they will swoop down and pick out the unsaved and take them off to be judged.

Matthew 13:40-43 explains who the reapers of the harvest are:

"As therefore the tares are gathered and burned in the fire; so shall it be in the end of this world. The Son of man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom (in the initial set up phase of Christ's earthly kingdom) all things that offend, and them which do iniquity; And shall cast them into a furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth (this is a rapture to retribution!). Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. Who hath ears to hear, let him hear."

The angels will snatch the unsaved from the earth so they can be examined by Jesus Christ before being judged in the fire of Hades. This will be a time of the expression of God's wrath and judgment for both unsaved Jews and unsaved Gentiles.

Matthew 13:47-50

“Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto a net, that was cast into the sea, and gathered of every kind: Which, when it was full, they drew to shore, and sat down, and gathered the good into vessels, but cast the bad away. So shall it be at the end of the world: the angels shall come forth, and sever the wicked from among the just (a rapture of the rebellious!), And shall cast them into the furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth.”

In the early 1970s, probably the most popular song within the church was one entitled: " I Wish We' d All Been Ready," by Larry Norman. Many Christians would sing Norman' s song. This song about the Rapture includes the following lines:

“A man and wife asleep in bed.
She hears a noise and turns her head, he's gone.
I wish we'd all been ready.
Two men walking up a hill.
One disappears and one's left standing still.
I wish we'd all been ready.”

This should be our heart’s cry today. That we would be ready to meet Christ at the Rapture and not be left behind to go through the terrible Tribulation Period. I do like songs about the Rapture but this particular song was taken from some of the statements that Jesus made regarding His Second Coming to earth – not the Rapture. As we discovered already, many confuse Matthew 24 with the Rapture. We must once again remember that Matthew 24-25 are not referring to the Rapture (the secret coming for God’s saints in the clouds – 1 Cor. 15:51-52) but instead to Christ’s Second Coming to earth. This is the time when angels will have direct involvement in gathering the unsaved to judgment.

Mark Hitchcock said:

“In 1999, the Associated Press ranked the top 100 news events of the twentieth century. Some of the century's biggest stories were the stock market crash of October 28, 1929; the bombing of Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941; the Kennedy assassination on November 22, 1963; and man walking on the moon on July 20,

1969. But the number one story was the Hiroshima bombing on August 6, 1945 that brought about the end of WWII and unleashed the atomic age.

“While all of these stories are incredible, the greatest news event of all time is yet to occur: Jesus' return to planet earth. Talk about a front-page story! Just think about it for a moment and it may make the hair on your neck stand on end.”

➤ The details of the task of the angels at the Second Coming.

We have seen that angels will assist in judging the earth at Christ's Second Coming. Now let's look at the specific events that will occur with the surviving Jews and Gentile. Angels will separate the saved from the unsaved, the true from the false. We have seen this in the prophetic revelations of Matthew 24:29-31; 25:31, 16:27, along with Matt. 13:41-43. Angels will remove all unbelievers from earth before Christ restores the theocratic Kingdom and then regather all saved Jews (the elect of Israel) from around the globe before the Millennium begins.

✓ Unserved Jews are gathered by the angels.

Jesus had been addressing His Jewish brethren (Matt. 24:1, 14, 16-26, 33) and therefore is relating the seven illustrations presented in Matthew 24 and 25:1-30 to the Jewish regathering at the Second Coming and then later Christ switches to the Gentile regathering that will occur at His Second Coming (Matt. 25:31-46).

After speaking of the seven-year Tribulation Period by relating it to birth pangs (labor pains) in Matthew 24:1-26, Jesus outlines what will take place when He actually returns to earth in His Second Coming (Matt. 24:31). Christ illustrates by way of parables what it will be like during the seven-year Tribulation Period and after the Tribulation, during those days just prior to the Second Coming. The parables are all connected with the event of His Second Coming to earth and what is going to take place and occur in conjunction with the Second Coming.

The illustrations Jesus gave in Matthew 24-25 of two people in the field, two women grinding at the mill, good and bad servants, wise and foolish virgins, faithful and unfaithful stewards, and goats and sheep reveal two different types of people that

will be living on earth at the second Coming. These descriptive terms are a contrast between the saved and unsaved.

Matthew 24:36-42

“But of that day and hour knoweth no *man*, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only. But as the days of Noe *were*, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. For as in the days that were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark, And knew not until the flood came, and took them all away; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. Then shall two be in the field; the one shall be taken, and the other left. Two *women shall be* grinding at the mill; the one shall be taken, and the other left. Watch therefore: for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come.”

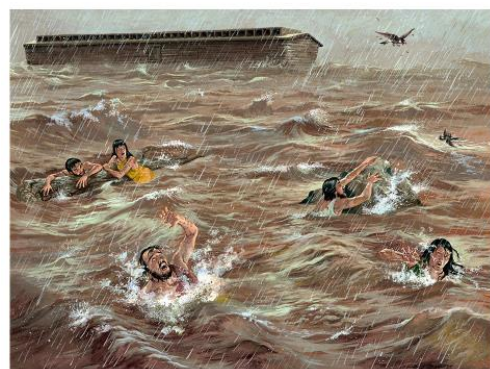
✓ Unsaved Jews will be taken to judgment.

This is illustrated in seven ways.

a. The unsaved people were taken away in the Flood – Matthew 24:36-39

At the Creation Museum in Kentucky they have built the replica of Noah’s Ark. I can’t wait to go and see this wonderful crafting of Noah’s ark, according to the specs given in Genesis.

Jesus gives us an illustration about Noah’s ark and the judgment that took place in the day when Noah and his family went into the ark. Who were the people that were taken way to judgment during the days of the Genesis Flood? Was it the saved or unsaved? Of course, it was the unsaved who were taken into judgment and those who were saved (Noah and his family) were left to populate the earth. Jesus relates this Biblical account of Noah’s Flood to the way it will be in His Second Coming to earth. The unsaved are taken away to judgment just like the unsaved living during the days of the Flood were taken



away to judgment. However, the saved (like Noah and his family) will remain on earth to enter into the Millennial Kingdom.

During the days of Noah, it was the wicked who were taken into judgment (the judgment of the Genesis Flood). The unsaved were taken away or washed away by the Flood and experienced God's judgment. The same will be true at the Second Coming. As we have seen already, at the Second Coming of Christ the angels will come and snatch away the unsaved from the earth and take them to judgment.

b. The unsaved person in the field is taken to judgment.



We can now read Matthew 24:40 with the correct illustration of the Flood in our mind: “Then shall two be in the field; the one shall be taken (taken judgment like the unsaved in the days of Noah), and the other left (left to go into the Kingdom like Noah and his family were left to inhabit the post-Flood world).

The angels will assist Christ in snatching away the unsaved (“the one shall be taken” – vs. 40) and take them to judgment as it was in the days of the Flood. The context is talking about people being taken to judgment (Matthew 24:51; 25:30).

c. The unsaved woman grinding will be taken to judgment.

Matthew 20:41 says: “Two women shall be grinding at the mill; the one shall be taken (taken to judgment like the unsaved in Noah's day), and the other left (to go into the Millennium like Noah and his family after they stepped off the ark into the New World).” This can be the ONLY correct interpretation according to what Jesus taught.



Luke's record gives us one more illustration not found in Matthew account.

d. The unsaved person sleeping in bed will be taken to judgment.



Luke 17:34

"I tell you, in that night there shall be two *men* (two people) in one bed; the one shall be taken (taken to judgment as the unsaved were in Noah's day), and the other shall be left."

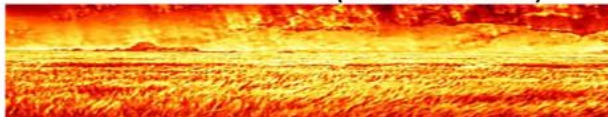
Let's study some more details about the judgment of those who survive the seven-year Tribulation Period.

This will actually be a reversal of the Rapture. In the Rapture the saved are taken to Heaven and rescued from God's judgment (Rev. 3:10; 1 Thess. 5:2-3) and the unsaved are left on earth to pass through the Tribulation Period. However, in the Second Coming of Christ to earth, the unsaved are raptured from earth by angels and taken to the judgment of Hades, while the saved are left on earth to enter the Millennial Kingdom.

At the Second Coming, the unsaved will be cast into Hades for 1,000 years (Luke 16:20-31).



After the Millennium, they are raised to stand at the Great White Throne Judgment and cast into the Lake of Fire (Revelation 20:7-15).



Those Jews who reject Christ's offer of salvation at the Second Advent will NOT enter the Millennial Kingdom but be cast into Hades by the angels. Unsaved Jews, presumably atheistic Jews and perhaps non-messianic Jews, will mourn or wail with other unsaved people (Matt. 24:30; Rev. 1:7) at the Second Coming knowing that the Jesus they still reject is about to judge them.

Once again, Jesus had been addressing His Jewish brethren (Matt. 24:1, 14. 16-26, 33) and therefore is relating the first six parables presented in Matthew 24 and 25:1-

30 to the Jewish regathering at the Second Coming and then later Christ switches to the Gentile regathering that will occur at His Second Coming (Matt. 25:31-46).

- e. The final three illustrations that Jesus gives Jews are likened to slaves, virgins and stewards.

Surviving Jews at Christ's Second Coming

The saved and unsaved Jews are illustrated as:



Faithful servants vs. evil



Wise virgins vs. foolish virgins



Faithful steward vs. wicked steward

The unsaved Jews who will be judged are pictured in the Jewish context of Matthew 24 and the first part of Matthew 25 as evil slaves who are hypocrites (Matt. 24:48-51), foolish virgins who have prepared no oil in their lamps and have the door to the Millennial Kingdom shut before them (Matt. 25:1-13), and as an unfaithful and lazy steward who will be judged by Jesus Christ as His Second Coming

(Matt. 25:14-30). Instead of entering the Millennium (the 1,000-year reign of Christ) the unsaved Jews will be judged in Hades.

Let's study these Scriptures in context. The unsaved Jews are presented in these illustration as an evil and hypocritical servant, foolish virgins, and as a wicked and lazy steward.

Unsaved Jews at Second Coming

Evil Servant

(Matthew 24:44-51)

Foolish Virgins

(Matthew 25:1-13)

Wicked and Lazy Steward

(Matthew 25:14-30)

The **faithful servant** or slave (Matt. 24:45-47), **wise virgins** with oil in their lamps (Matt. 25:1-13) and the good and **faithful stewards** (Matt. 25:14-30) refers to **SAVED** Israel who survives the Tribulation. Only the saved **CAN ENTER** the Millennium (Matt. 24:47; 25:7-10; 21, 23 with Matt. 13:30, 43; John 3:5).

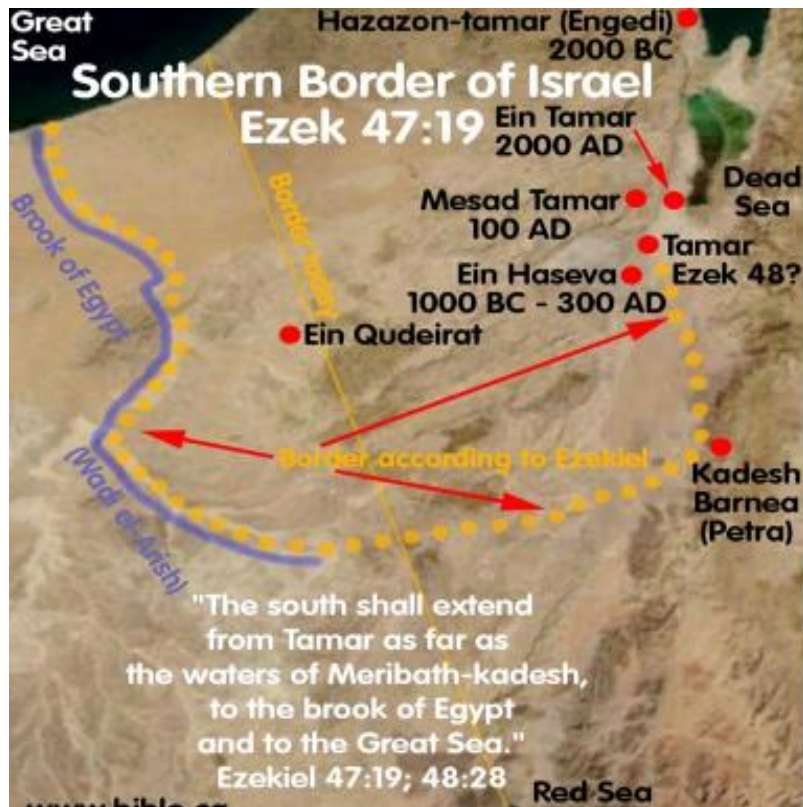
The **evil servant** or slave (Matt. 24:48-51), **unwise virgins** with no oil in their lamps (Matthew 25:1-13), and the evil and **wicked and lazy steward** (Matt. 25:14-30) refers to **UNSAVED** Israel who survives the Tribulation. The unsaved are judged in Hades and **CANNOT ENTER** the Millennium (Matt. 24:51, 25:10-13; 30, 46 with Matt. 11-12; 13:30, 41-42, 47-50).

Jesus taught in Matthew 8:11-12:

“And I say unto you, That many (many Gentiles) shall come from the east and west (from all parts of the world), and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven (the Millennial Kingdom – the time that Heaven rules the earth). But the children of the kingdom” (the natural descendants and heirs of the kingdom promises won’t get in to the Millennium for their rejection of the Messiah) shall be cast out into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

Ezekiel 20:38 prophetically mentions the time when the “rebels” (unsaved Jews) from within Israel will be purged out and not enter the blessing of the Millennial Kingdom. The place of judgment for unsaved Israel will be at the entrance to the land of Palestine (Kadesh-Barnea). Ezekiel 20:34-38 reveals this amazing prophecy. This is actually a picture of unsaved Israel (atheistic and non-messianic, Christ rejecting Jews) being regathered for Judgment. “And I will bring you out from the people, and will gather you out of the countries wherein ye are scattered (through angelic assistance), with a mighty hand, and with a stretched out arm, and with fury poured out. And I will bring you into the wilderness of the people (see Numbers 13:26), and there will I plead with you face to face. Like as I pleaded with your fathers in the wilderness of the land of Egypt, so will I plead with you, saith the Lord GOD. And I will cause you to pass under the rod, and I will bring you into the bond of the covenant: And I will purge out from among you the rebels, and them that transgress against me: I will bring them forth out of the country where they sojourn (by angelic assistance), and they shall not enter into the land of Israel: and ye shall know that I *am* the LORD.”

This pictures a shepherd holding out his rod and forcing the sheep to pass under it single file for counting (Jer. 33:13). The shepherd would let those sheep that were actually his own sheep to enter the fold, a place of protection. It seems that unsaved Jews are the ones gathered by the angels to this place in the wilderness. This place of gathering is likely describing Kadesh Barnea. It was at Kadesh Barnea where the people were historically examined for their faith and judged by the Lord for their lack of faith or unbelief (Numbers 13:26-14:1-35).



By correctly mapping the southern border of Judah, we can prove beyond any doubt that Kadesh Barnea was located Transjordan. It all comes down to one critical phrase that everyone misunderstood: The border goes up south of Kadesh and terminates south of Kadesh (Numbers 34:3-5; Joshua 15:1-4). Since we know Kadesh is not within the promised land, the only place that you can locate Kadesh is on the north-south portion of the southern border, east of the Arabah Valley. Petra fits perfect.

This prophetic scene described by Ezekiel 20:34-38 and many other texts is yet future. Another day of examination and judgment is coming to Israel and unsaved Israel will not enter into the Millennial Kingdom. The purging process will occur by angelic assistance. The angels will pick out the unsaved Jews from among the saved and transport them to this place in the wilderness. Romans 11:26 verifies that through angelic assistance God will “turn away ungodliness from Jacob.” This means that the unsaved Jews will not inherit the covenant promises. Only a saved nation of Jews will come into their covenant promises in the land of Israel.

When the angels gather together unsaved Israel and they pass through the rod of Christ’s judgment, then there will be left a “nation” of Jews who are saved and it’s these Jews who will enter the Millennium. After the unbelievers are separated from the nation, or after the judgment is passed upon every living Jew on earth, there will be an entire nation of Jews left that are saved and ready to enter the Millennial Kingdom. Therefore, it can be said that Israel as an entire believing nation is saved and is spiritually prepared to enter the age when Messiah rules. This universal

regathering and salvation of Israel, as a believing nation, will set the stage for Messiah's Millennial Kingdom.

Romans 11:26 states, "And so all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob" (Isaiah 59:20-21). You will note that Israel's salvation occurs at the Second Coming which is confirmed by Zechariah 12:10 -13:1. The Second Coming is the time when the Messiah officially offers the New Covenant to Israel (Ezek. 36:26-29). The term "all Israel" (Rom. 11:26) speaks of the future conversion and salvation of national Israel. It does not mean that every Jew will be saved that is regathered. What it means is that after the judgment is passed upon every living Jew on earth, there will be an entire nation of Jews left that are saved and ready to enter the Millennial Kingdom. The "all Israel" would then refer to the remnant of Jews that survive the Tribulation Period which are saved in conjunction with Christ's Second Coming. It would include the redeemed remnant of Jews that are already in the land and all of regathered and redeemed Israel from all parts of the globe. Together these two groups of Jews will make up the national salvation of Israel.

Many of the Jewish people from all over the earth, including the remnant in Palestine, will mourn or wail as they see the Messiah returning in His Shekinah Glory (a brightness, splendor, radiance) and they will receive Him as Savior.

Matthew 24:30 records:

"And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory."

Many Jews will repent of their sins and turn to faith in the returning Messiah and enter the earthly theocracy that Jesus is going to establish. They are termed as the "elect" or saved Israel who enter the Millennial Kingdom (Matt. 24:31). But the unsaved Jews will have the door shut on them and they will not enter the earthly theocracy. We will talk about the saved Jews later in our study and how they will return to their homeland.

- ✓ Unsaved and saved Gentiles are gathered by the angels.

Matthew 25:31-32 prophetically speaks of Christ's Second Coming: "When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory (David's earthly throne in Jerusalem – Matt. 19:28 with Luke 1:32-33): And before him shall be gathered all nations ("ethnos" = the gathering of Gentile masses through angelic assistance): and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth *his* sheep from the goats."

Surviving Gentiles at Christ's Second Coming

The saved and unsaved Gentiles are illustrated as:

| | |
|--|---|
| <p>Sheep (saved)</p>  |  <p>Goats (unsaved)</p> |
|--|---|

This prophetic scene has been called "The Judgment of the Living Nations" or those Gentile people who survive the Tribulation Period. It pictures or envisions the time when all the Gentile people who survive the Tribulation Period will be gathered by angels to be judged by Christ.

In the previous parables found in Matthew 24-25 Jesus described what will happen to the remaining Jews on earth at the Second Coming. Now he moves to the remaining Gentiles who are still alive and on the earth at the Second Coming. The remaining Gentiles will be supernaturally gathered by the angels to face the King and determine what their destiny will be. If they are saved they will enter the earthly theocracy but if they are unsaved they will be cast into Hades.

In Matthew 25:31-32, the sheep are pictured as God's Gentile children who survive the Tribulation Period while the goats are pictured as the devil's children who survive the Tribulation Period.

The sheep (God's Gentile children) will enter the Millennial Kingdom.



Matthew 25:34 prophetically records:

“Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand (the sheep), Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.”

I remember the goats in Amish Country (Berlin Ohio). My grandsons Titus and Silas were sending up food to the goats on the roof. They had a blast. But the goats in Matthew 24, representative of unsaved Gentiles, will not be having fun. The goats (the devil’s Gentile children) will not enter the Millennium but be cast into the fiery furnace of Hades.

Unsaved Gentiles



Matthew 25:41

“Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels.”

Matthew 25:46

“And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal.”

This speaks of how from this point forward the unsaved will experience judgment at the hands of a righteous and just God. For 1,000 years the unsaved will suffer in the place called Hades and then finally be cast into the Lake of Fire at the Great White Throne which occurs after the Millennium (Rev. 20:7-15). They indeed will experience everlasting punishment for their sins.

One person wrote:

“There is no way to describe Hell. Nothing on earth can compare with it. No living person has any real idea of it. No madman in wildest flights of insanity ever beheld its horror. No man in delirium ever pictured a place so utterly terrible as this. No nightmare racing across a fevered mind ever produced a terror to match that of the mildest hell.

“No murder scene with splashed blood and oozing wound ever suggested a revulsion that could touch the border lands of hell. Let the most gifted writer

exhaust his skill in describing this roaring cavern of unending flame, and he would not have even brushed in fancy the nearest edge of hell.”

It’s wonderful to be saved and know that we will not enter this awful place that Jesus spoke about.

Joel 3:1-3 suggests that the Gentiles will be examined by God at the Valley of Jehoshaphat: For, behold, in those days, and in that time, when I shall bring again the captivity of Judah and Jerusalem (reverse the fortunes of Israel and regather her to the land of Palestine), I will also gather all nations, and will bring them down into the valley of Jehoshaphat, and will plead with them there for my people and *for* my heritage Israel, whom they have scattered among the nations, and parted my land. And they have cast lots for my people; and have given a boy for an harlot, and sold a girl for wine, that they might drink.”

Part of God’s dealings with the surviving Gentiles of the Tribulation Period (the sheep and the goats) will be to determine which Gentiles are saved and those that are not saved. The Bible says that the Gentile treatment of Israel will be a determining factor of their salvation. In other words, how they treat Israel will be a testimonial of their salvation. According to Matthew 25:40, 42-45, the treatment of Christ’s Jewish brethren during the coming Tribulation Period will be the indicator of their salvation. It will be the proof of their salvation. Righteous living is not the way of salvation but the proof of one’s salvation. Such will be the case with the Gentiles who remain on earth after the Tribulation Period and who are judged by the King. Paul Benware states: “The internal, spiritual condition of the Gentiles is revealed externally in the way in which they treated Israel during the Tribulation Period (Rev. 12:13-16).”

These saved Gentiles who survive the Judgment of the Living Nations (the Gentile people) will live on the earth in their natural bodies throughout the 1,000 years (Isa. 2:2-4; Dan. 7:13-14; Micah 4:1-5; Zech. 14:8-11, 16-21).

May I ask you today. Are you a sheep or a goat? You won’t want to be a goat in this coming day! M. F. Rich, an atheist, cried, "I would rather lie on a stove and broil for a million years than go into eternity with the eternal horrors that hang over my soul!

I have given my immortality for gold, and its weight sinks me into an endless, hopeless, helpless Hell."

We are presently looking at how angels assist Christ in the Second Coming.

How do Angels Assist Christ in the Second Coming?

1. Unsaved Jews are gathered by the angels at Kadesh Barnea and cast into Hades.
2. Unsaved and saved Gentiles are gathered by the angels at Valley of Jehoshaphat (Judgment of Living Nations).
3. Saved Jews will be regathered and return to Palestine by the assistance of angels.

✓ Saved Jews will return to Palestine by the assistance of angels.

The angels will have plenty of involvement with the Second Coming of Christ.

Matthew 24:29-31

"Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken: And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other."

The passage Jesus referred to was Isaiah 27:12–13. In this Old Testament passage Israel is in view, so Jesus must be speaking about the gathering of Israelites again to the Promised Land at His second coming. This regathering of saved Jews to their homeland will occur AFTER the Battle of Armageddon is over and be a prolonged event. After the coast is clear in Palestine, the long-awaited event of the ages is going to occur. All of saved Israel will return to her homeland.

In this Jewish context of speaking to His disciples and Israel's persecution, "the elect" has reference to the saved Jewish people who will return from all parts of the earth to inhabit the Promised Land during the Millennium. This occurs after the Tribulation Period has expired. Israel is called "mine elect" in Isaiah 45:4.

The “elect” are the saved remnant of Jews (Matt. 24:31; Mark 13:27) living throughout the entire earth who will return to Palestine with the help or assistance of the angels. This is what Matthew 24:31 is prophetically anticipating. This regathering will set the stage for Messiah’s worldwide reign.

When Jesus returns in His Second Coming:

- There will be mourning of all people.

Matthew 24:30-31 predicts how saved Israel will be regathered:

“And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven (the Shekinah Glory of God’s presence): and then shall all the tribes of the earth (Israel and the nations - context is the entire earth – not just the land of Israel – vs. 31) mourn (saved Israel will mourn in repentance and place faith in the returning Messiah and become part of the elect Jews [vs. 31] but all other unbelieving Jews and Gentiles throughout the earth will mourn or express grief for the impending doom and the personal fate that is about to come upon them), and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect (saved Israel) from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other” (the regathering of saved Israel will be more of a prolonged effort and event - Duet. 30:4-5; Isa. 11:12, 15-16; 51:11; 43:5-7; Isa. 27:13; 60:8-10; Jer. 31:7-9; Ezek. 11:16-17; 20:41-42; 36:24-27).

This is a very general statement of what the prophets spoke about in great detail regarding the regathering of Israel for national salvation.

Revelation 1:7 says something similar:

Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him (both saved and unsaved), and they *also* which pierced him (this would include all Israel everywhere in the world since it was the Jews who pierced Christ - Zech. 12:10; Acts 2:22-23; 3:14-15): and all kindreds (tribes) of the earth shall wail because of him (Israel and the nations - some Jews will wail in repentance while other people, including both unbelieving Jews and Gentiles throughout the earth, will express grief realizing that Judgment Day has finally come – Rev. 6:16). Even so, Amen.

- There will be a miraculous return of the Jewish people.

The Bible predicts the regathering and return of saved Israel back to her homeland. The return of Israel today is not a fulfillment of the prophecies found in the Bible. Today Israel has returned in unbelief to the land of Palestine. But someday, after the Second Coming, Israel will return to Palestine as a saved nation (unlike the 1948 nation) and dwell in the land God promised to them during the Millennial Kingdom (Rev. 20:1-6). This will be in direct fulfillment of Bible prophecy.

Jewish worldwide population in 2015 is nearly 16 million (around 0.2% of the world's population). Seventy years after the Holocaust, the global Jewish population close to returning to what it was before. After Israel with 6.1 million, US has second largest Jewish population at 5.7 million. As a result of the Diaspora which was the dispersion of the Jews scattered across the world (“the twelve tribes scattered abroad” - James 1:1), we have Jews living in many countries.

James was writing to the Jews dispersed from their homeland. The technical term “scattered” (*diaspora*) occurs in only two other places in the New Testament (John 7:35; 1 Peter 1:1). Because of Israel’s sin, the people had been driven from their native land and were now dispersed in the countries surrounding the Mediterranean. The *original* dispersion took place when the ten tribes were carried into captivity by the Assyrians, 721 B.C. Some of these returned to the land in the days of Ezra and Nehemiah, but only a remnant.

On the Day of Pentecost, devout Jews were visiting Jerusalem from every nation of the then-known world (Acts 2:4). These could properly be called Jews of the Dispersion. But a later dispersion of *Christian* Jews took place. In Acts 8:1, we read that the early Christians (mostly of Jewish ancestry) were scattered abroad throughout Judea and Samaria by the persecutions of Saul. Therefore, the people to whom James and Peter wrote could have been Jews who had been dispersed in any one of these crisis times.

Although the 12 tribes of Israel are scattered, they are never lost. God has not forgotten His beloved people. These Jews that are scattered all throughout the earth are going to one day be angelically escorted back to their homeland.

Matthew 24:31 records:

“And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect (saved Israel) from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.” This refers to the four direction points of the earth.

Mark 13:27 reads similarly:

And then shall he send his angels, and shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from the uttermost part of the earth to the uttermost part of heaven.

The “four winds” means from all directions (the four directional points of the earth), and is a reference to Jews living in all parts of the world, as emphasized by the last two phrases (“the uttermost part of the earth ... heaven”).

Zechariah 2:6

“Ho, ho, *come forth*, and flee from the land of the north, saith the LORD: for I have spread you abroad as the four winds of the heaven, saith the LORD.”

In other words, God spread Israel throughout the earth and this is repeatedly depicted as the four winds of the earth (Ezek. 5:10, 12). But someday He is going to bring them back from the four winds of the earth or from every direction point on the earth (North, South, East, and West).

Although not stated here (Israel is God’s elect), it’s during this same time that a resurrection of Old Testament saints and believers martyred during the Tribulation will also occur (Dan. 12:2; 20:4). The prophets in the Old Testament foretold of a miracle that would bring the Jews back into their land. Angels are also in charge of the regathering of SAVED Israel. This will be more of a prolonged event. The angels will coordinate a plan to bring Israel back into her homeland. One again we see that angels are God’s gatherers.

Many of the Jews will still be hiding in caves, fearful for their lives. The gathered Jews will include the 144,000 Jewish witnesses, their Jewish converts, the Jewish converts of the angelic preacher (Rev. 14:6), the one third remnant of the Jews left in Palestine (Zech. 13:8-9) and all those Jews throughout the earth who look upon the returning Messiah in faith (Zech. 12:10; John 19:37; Matt. 24:30). Multitudes of Jews will be saved during the Tribulation, both the 144,000 and their converts. But

for many others the Second Coming will be the time of their salvation. It will be in that day (Christ's Second Coming to earth) a fountain will be opened for the house of David and for the inhabitants of Jerusalem because of their sins.

What triggers the Second Coming? The Bible says that the repentance and calling of one third of the Jews left in Palestine, following the days of the Tribulation Period, will be the triggering mechanism that brings about the Second Coming of Jesus Christ to earth. Hosea 6:1-3 apparently occurs after the Tribulation Period has expired and refers to the one third remnant left in Palestine's Petra and in Jerusalem. Here is their cry. "Come, and let us return unto the LORD: for he hath torn, and he will heal us; he hath smitten, and he will bind us up. After two days will he revive us: in the third day he will raise us up, and we shall live in his sight. Then shall we know, *if* we follow on to know the LORD: his going forth is prepared as the morning; and he shall come unto us as the rain, as the latter *and* former rain unto the earth."

Israel's call for deliverance will probably come about with the aid and teaching of the 144,000 Jewish witnesses and two witnesses (Rev. 7:1-3; 11:3; 14:1-5). Christ will hear Israel's call and return to earth after a short period of time following the national confession and calling for His deliverance (Hosea 6:2). The phrase "after two days" is a Hebrew idiom which means "after a short while" and suggests that God will act quickly when Israel begins to acknowledge her sins. Others suggest the phrase means "a set time" in accordance with God's calendar. What this means is that Jesus Christ will return in His glorious Second Coming to rescue His ancient people soon after they cry for deliverance from their enemies (the surrounding armies in Palestine).

One of the key purposes of the Tribulation Period is to bring Israel to her knees and back to her Messiah (Zech. 12:2, 10; 13:1, 9; Jer. 30:7,11; Dan. 9:24).

Jesus gave this promise in Matthew 23:39:

"For I say unto you, Ye (the Jewish remnant who has placed faith in the returning Messiah) shall not see me henceforth, till ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord."

Once again, Romans 11:26-27 prophetically declares:

“And so all Israel shall be saved (in conjunction with the Second Coming an entire nation will be saved for after the ungodly are judged and only a believing remnant of Jews are saved within the land and throughout the entire earth): as it is written, There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob: For this *is* my covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins.”

Ezekiel 36:24-30 depicts the worldwide gathering of believing Israel:

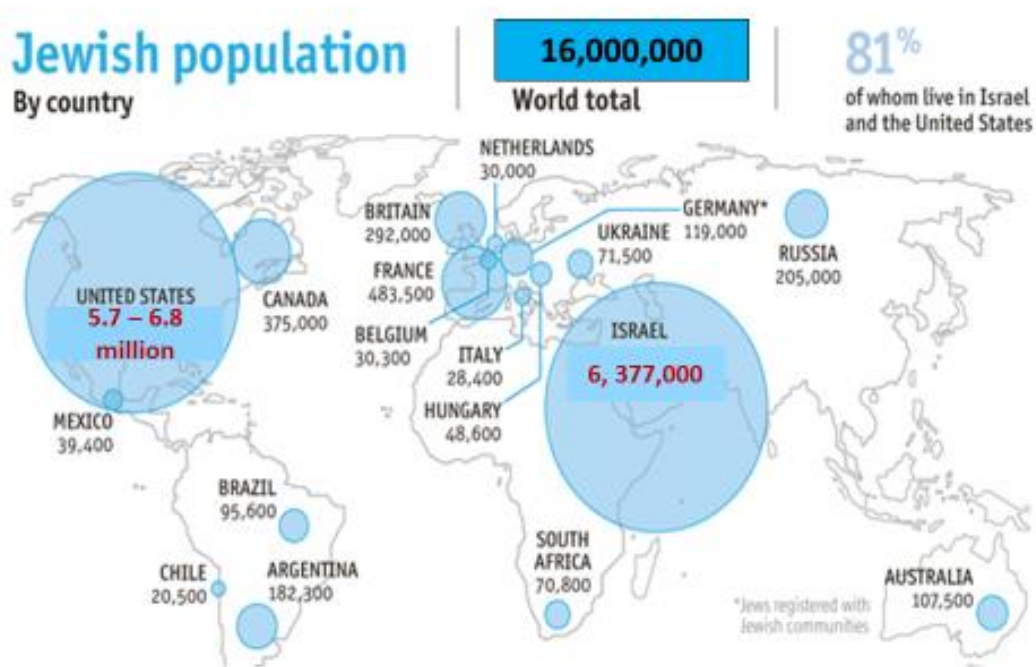
“For I will take you from among the heathen, and gather you out of all countries, and will bring you into your own land. Then (in conjunction with Israel’s return to the land and the Second Coming) will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you (Israel’s restoration will be more than physical. Israel’s future return to the land is marked by spiritual conversion). A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh (Israel’s cleansing will be followed by the impartation of new life). And I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do *them*. And ye shall dwell in the land that I gave to your fathers; and ye shall be my people, and I will be your God. I will also save you from all your uncleannesses: and I will call for the corn, and will increase it, and lay no famine upon you. And I will multiply the fruit of the tree, and the increase of the field, that ye shall receive no more reproach of famine among the heathen.”

Matthew 24:31 reminds us of the angelic assistance in returning believing Israel to her homeland of Palestine: “And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.” The blowing of a trumpet will be the summons to start the Jewish regathering process. In the Old Testament, Israel’s movements were announced by trumpet signals (Num. 10; Joel 2:1ff).

In ancient Israel the trumpet was used to announce important convocations, and the sound of the angel’s great trumpet will signal the assembling all of God’s saints on earth, from wherever they might be, from the four winds, from one end of the sky to the other. This is not the trumpet of the Rapture. The Rapture trumpet occurs

BEFORE the Tribulation Period (Rev. 3:10). This trumpet occurs AFTER the Tribulation in conjunction with the Second Coming of Christ to planet earth.

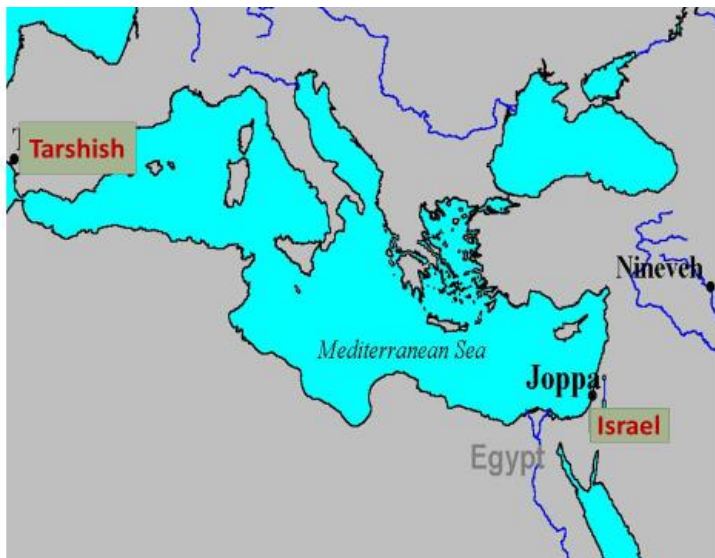
How many Jews are there in the world? This is a difficult question to answer because not every country keeps track of such things, and not every Jew chooses to admit such things, particularly in countries where Jews are persecuted. But estimates today range around 16 million. Most estimates I have seen suggest that there are about 13-14 million Jews in the world while others place the number around 16 million. The vast majority of these Jews live in either the United States and Israel; Israel has over 6 million Jews and America with about 5.5 million to 6 million. There are about 1.5 million Jews in Europe (a third of them in France), 400,000 in Latin America and 400,000 in Canada. In Africa, there are less than 75,000 Jews, about 90% of whom live in the country of South Africa. There are about 125,000 Jews in Australia and New Zealand combined. There are about 40,000 Jews in Asia (not including Israel), half of them in former Soviet Union countries.



Now let's think about the Jewish regathering of saved Jews to their homeland (the land of Palestine). We know that there will be a mass exodus of Jews from all countries over the earth prior to the Millennium. The Old Testament often mentions

God's regathering of dispersed Israelites from the remotest parts of the earth to national and spiritual unity in Palestine (Duet. 30:4-5; Isa. 11:12; 43:5-7; Isa. 27:13; Jer. 31:7-9; Ezek. 11:16-17; 20:41-42; 36:24-27) and they will make their way into the land of Palestine at some point during the 75-day gap of time between the official ending of the Tribulation Period (the seven years) until the Millennium begins (Dan. 12:11-12). At the time of the Second Advent saved Israelites (Jews) will be regathered around the triumphant Son of Man. They will be restored as a nation and redeemed (Isa. 59:20-21; Ezek. 20:33-44; Zech. 13:8-9; Rom. 11:25-27).

The Jews will return to Palestine with the help of Gentile assistance which will evidently be guided by angelic intervention.



Isaiah 60:8-10 also envisions the Gentiles helping the Jews back to their land. “Who *are* these *that* fly as a cloud, and as the doves to their windows? Surely the isles (islands or coasts) shall wait for me, and the ships of Tarshish (the area of Southwest Spain) first, to bring thy sons from far, their silver and their gold with them, unto the name of the

LORD thy God, and to the Holy One of Israel, because he hath glorified thee. And the sons of strangers shall build up thy walls, and their kings shall minister unto thee: for in my wrath I smote thee, but in my favour have I had mercy on thee.

This prophecy envisions Israel returning to her land like flocks of birds, along with Jews sailing on large ships. It prophetically anticipates how the Gentiles will help bring Israel and her accumulated wealth back to Palestine as the Millennium begins. God will do some miraculous things as they make their journey into the Holy Land. Apparently this is one area where angelic assistance will also be seen.

Isaiah 11:15-16 reveals this:

“And the LORD shall utterly destroy the tongue (the Gulf of Suez) of the Egyptian sea” (Red Sea). The Bible says that God, presumably through angelic assistance, who are in charge of the regathering of Israel, will destroy the Gulf of Suez (the extension of the Red Sea) and allow His people (the Jews) to make their way to Palestine and Jerusalem.”



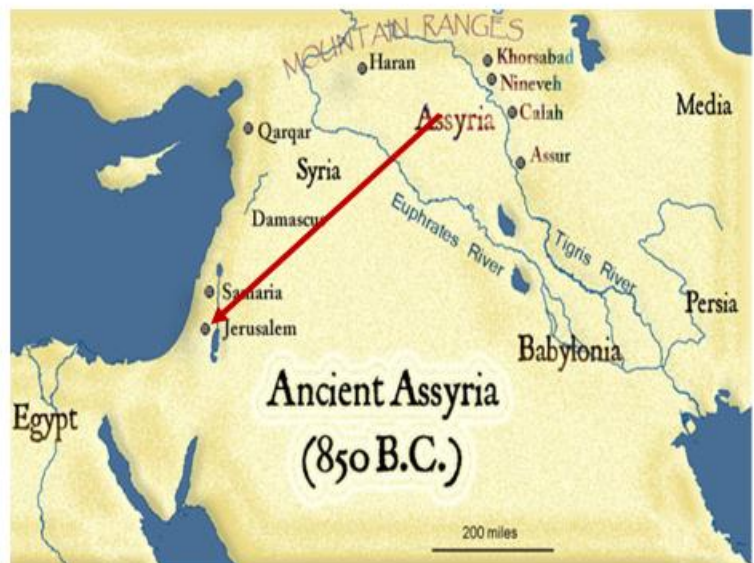
Isaiah 51:10 speaks of God’s past display of power: “Art thou not it which hath

dried the sea (Red Sea), the waters of the great deep; that hath made the depths of the sea a way for the ransomed (redeemed Israel) to pass over?”

God will do something similar when Israel returns to the land. This is something miraculous that will occur in connection with Israel’s return to Israel in her final regathering unto salvation in the Millennial Kingdom.

Isaiah 11:16 goes on to say:

“and with his mighty wind shall he shake his hand over the river, (Euphrates) and shall smite it in the seven streams (reduced it to seven streams or divided into seven shallow canals), and make men go over dryshod (with the new creation of canals the original river will be completely dried up at certain spots to allow easy access toward the land of Israel). And



there shall be an highway for the remnant of his people, which shall be left, from Assyria (a highway that will connect Assyria and Israel so that the return from the

north will be made easy); like as it was to Israel in the day that he came up out of the land of Egypt.

This drying of the waters of the Euphrates will be reminiscent of the first Exodus when Israel crossed the Red Sea on dry land (Ex. 14:21–22). The return of Jews which are left in Assyria (Isa. 11:16) and all parts of the world (Isa. 11:11-14) will be like Israel’s “exit” from Egypt when they started marching toward the Promised Land. And God will provide a new highway or access for them as they make their way into the Holy Land.

When Israel returns to her land at the beginning of the Millennium, God will prepare the way for her and angels will undoubtedly be involved in these great happenings. Angels will act as guides for Israel and assist the redeemed remnant back to the land of Palestine. This mass progression of Jews to Palestine from different parts of the earth will apparently be supernaturally guided and orchestrated in some way by angelic assistance. We know this to be true because Matthew 24:31 says, “And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.” Angels will apparently “gather his elect” (the redeemed of Israel) by doing supernatural things to assist them on their journey to their homeland. Angels will be in charge of gathering God’s redeemed Jews from all parts of the earth. They will assist in getting the Jews back to the land of Israel.

Jeremiah 31:9 also predicts the worldwide regathering of redeemed Israel returning with angelic assistance. “They shall come with weeping, and with supplications will I lead them (their mourning phase in connection with their repentance and salvation at Second Coming): I will cause them to walk by the rivers of waters in a straight way, wherein they shall not stumble: for I am a father to Israel, and Ephraim *is* my firstborn.” Isaiah 51:11 also predicts the worldwide regathering of redeemed Israel returning by angelic assistance. “Therefore the redeemed of the LORD shall return, and come with singing unto Zion (their joy of salvation stage after their repentance and mourning has passed in conjunction with the Second Coming); and everlasting joy *shall be* upon their head: they shall obtain gladness and joy; *and* sorrow and mourning shall flee away.”

In summary, after the Tribulation Period the angels will regather saved Israel to the land of promise for the Millennium (Deut. 4:27-31; 30:3-5; Isaiah 11:11-16; 14:1-3; 27:12-13; 43:5-7; 48:8-16; 60:20-21; 66:20-22; Jer. 3:17-18; 16:14-16; 23:5-8; 30:3, 10-11; 31:8, 31-37; Ezek. 11:17-21; 20:33-38; 34:11-16; 37:1-4; 13-14, 21, 24-25; 39:25-29; Hosea 1:10-11; 3:4-5; Joel 3:17-21; Amos 9:11-15; Micah 4:4-7; 7:20; Zeph. 3:14-20; Zech. 8:4-8; Matt. 24:31; Rom. 11:25-26).

Have you ever heard about a movie called angels in the outfield? Angels in the Outfield was originally a 1951 American comedy film. It was based on a story by Richard Conlin. The film is about a young woman reporter who blames the Pittsburgh Pirates' losing streak on their abusive manager, who begins hearing the voice of an angel promising to help the team if he changes his ways. As the spokes-angel for the Heavenly Choir Nine, a celestial team of deceased ballplayers, he begins bestowing "miracles" upon the Pirates (to help them win ballgames) but only on the condition that McGovern put a moratorium on swearing and fighting. With the help of the invisible ghosts of past baseball greats, the Pirates make it into the pennant race. During a game, 8-year-old orphan Bridget White insists that she can see the angels helping out the "live" ballplayers since it was Bridget's prayers to the Archangel Gabriel that prompted the angel to visit McGovern in the first place.

Do angels really play baseball? Is this what God has told them to do? Sadly, there are many people who actually believe things like this today! This is why we are studying about what angels really do. We move on in our study of the angels. What do angels do? We have seen that the good angels perform tasks for God and His glory. We have noted their general activities toward God and their specific activities toward Jesus Christ in particular. We now move on in our study.

C. Their activities toward the nations

We have noted this already in an earlier part of our study. Angels may be assigned to different strategic locations throughout the earth to interact with the nations. The Book of Daniel speaks of angels ruling as the "prince of the kingdom of Persia: (Daniel 10:13) and the "prince of Grecia" (Dan. 10:20) which indicates that angels are involved in the affairs of the nations and this world. Holy and wicked angels wage war with one another over the affairs of the nations. Franz Delitzsch wrote,

“Angels contend for the rule over nations and kingdoms, either to guide them in the way of God or to lead them astray from God.”

It can also be seen from Scripture that Michael, the great archangel, is assigned as a prince over the nation of Israel for protection which is based on God’s sovereign program for Israel (Dan. 10:21). During the End Time Michael will oversee the protection of the remnant of Israel who are destined to be saved at the Second Coming (Dan. 12:1). God has an unseen world of angels involved in the affairs of the nations and this world. This was true in the past and there is no reason not to believe that the same is true today in our present world. Angels are involved in the mix of world affairs as they influence major leaders and movements within nations.

It is no secret that the Nazis in the era of World War II were exposing themselves to demonic influence when they sought the systematic liquidation and annihilation of the Jews in what we now know as the Holocaust. As we have seen, Michael, the great archangel, is assigned as a prince over the nation of Israel for protection (Dan. 10:21; 12:1). It could very well be that this same mighty angel and other holy angelic princes ruling over the nation of Israel kept the Jews from being annihilated during WWII. They may have in some way even influenced the allied nations to form a united force to crush Hitler and his forces.

Satan also is using his wicked angels to accomplish His purposes within the world and nations. During the coming Tribulation Period, Satan will summons wicked angels (demons) to influence the leading rulers of the nations of the world to come together to annihilate the Jewish people and stop Jesus Christ from returning to earth in His Second Coming (Rev. 16:12-16). Angels, both good and bad are involved with the affairs of this world as they influence mankind, either for good or evil.

We can listen to the news and be exposed to only the visible things that are occurring internationally among the affirms of the nations. But at the same time, there is a very real invisible angelic element that is powerfully influencing the affairs of the nations and events of the world. Demons are behind terrorism today and the terrible atrocities occurring in this world. They are behind the persecution of Christians. Angels, both good and bad, are definitely involved in the affairs of mankind.

D. Their activities toward the Church

The holy angels watch over the affairs of the Church which is composed of the lives of people.

1. Angels are watching church leaders.

1 Corinthians 4:9

“For I think that God hath set forth us the apostles last, as it were appointed to death: for we are made a spectacle unto the world, and to angels, and to men.”

The word for “spectacle” means that their lives are like an open theater (being a Roman arena with wild beasts) while men and angels watch them. The apostles suffered at the hands of evil men and the angels are said to have watched their suffering and even deaths. This passage seems to indicate that angels watch the persecution, even the martyrdom of church leaders, who stand fast for God’s truth. They are interested in how God is bringing His purpose to pass in relation to God’s people suffering for His cause.

This brings up some application questions. Have you been accepting suffering as part of God’s will for your life? How do you react to persecution? Do you find it strange that this kind of things should not happen to you? Peter said we should not consider it strange (1 Pet. 4:12). The Bible says that “all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution” (2 Tim. 3:12).

It’s not an easy road
We are trav’ling to heaven,
For many are the thorns on the way;
It’s not an easy road,
But the Savior is with us,
His presence gives us joy ev’ry day.
No, no, it’s not an easy road,
No, no, it’s not an easy road;
But Jesus walks beside me
And brightens the journey,
And lightens ev’ry heavy load.

We also discover that angels are watching what church leaders do.

1 Timothy 5:19-21

“Against an elder receive not an accusation, but before two or three witnesses. Them that sin rebuke before all (church discipline), that others also may fear. I charge *thee* before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, and the elect angels, that thou observe these things without preferring one before another, doing nothing by partiality.”

In dealing with matters of discipline in the local church which involve elders or other saints, there are two dangers to be avoided. The first is prejudice and the other is partiality. It is easy to be unfavorably prejudiced against someone and also show partiality toward a man because of his wealth, position in the community, or his personality. We should follow God’s instructions and not judge a matter before all the facts are known. We should also judge and administer discipline without showing favor toward a man simply because he is a friend or well-known person. Each case must be judged as in the sight of God and the Lord Jesus, and also in the sight of the elect angels.

The elect angels are those who have not been involved in sin or rebellion against God, but kept their first estate. Apparently these angels observe how church leaders handle these matters of church discipline. This is because the angels want to see perfect righteousness displayed in matters related to church discipline. Church discipline is still needed today but many times the local churches sweep all sin under the carpet. However, God’s still wants the church to bring discipline upon those church members who commit certain heinous sins. However, in all discipline there must be no prejudice or partiality that occurs. Paul reminds us that angels are watching us! They are seeing if we are judging and bringing about church discipline in a righteous and fair manner. They are watching us to see if we are fair, unprejudiced, and impartial as we deal with other Christians.

2. Angels are watching the church being formed.

Second, angels observe the wisdom of God displayed in the Church (the uniting of both Jews and Gentiles in the body of Christ).

Ephesians 3:10

“To the intent (with the purpose) that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly *places* might be known (displayed) by the church the manifold wisdom of God.”

The context is talking about the “mystery” (Eph. 3:9) or sacred secret of the church which was truth that was unrevealed to mankind in the past ages. We have already discovered that the “principalities and powers in heavenly places” refers to the different rankings and descriptions of angels who move about in the atmosphere. The phrase “might be known by the church” means that angels are learning something as they observe the church. Paul is teaching that the angels are watching the Church being formed which displays the unique wisdom of God in bringing both Jews and Gentiles together in one peaceful relationship and body.

Even the angels did not know this would happen until the church began to be formed on the Day of Pentecost. Angels are watching the Church being formed and they are amazed at this marvelous work of God’s wisdom.

3. Angels are watching women submit to their husbands.

1 Corinthians 11:9-10

“Neither was the man created for the woman; but the woman for the man. For this cause ought the woman to have power on *her* head because of the angels.”

The word “power” means a sign of authority that was displayed on the woman’s head. In Corinth during Paul’s day, women wore a veil to express their submission to their husbands. The veil was a visible sign of the functional authority and institution that God had designed way back in Genesis. Although a woman’s natural hair length reflects male authority and leadership over her (1 Cor. 11:14-15), Paul did not condemn the local custom of wearing an artificial veil to further demonstrate this functional authority.

Here is the point. When the Bible says “because of the angels” it is reminding women that angels are watching women submit and follow their husbands. There is a connection between the issue of functional authority in the home and the

angels. The good angels are creatures of submission to God and they are interested in seeing women follow the same example of submission to their husbands. God wants Christian women to be examples to the angels of how submission is to work. Ladies, you are being watched by angels as you live out your life of submission to your husband.

It should also be noted that angels are watching the church function according to God's design. They must be appalled when seeing women preachers standing behind pulpits and usurping man's role. This is absolutely contrary to God's design (1 Tim. 2:12). Angels are concerned about the church functioning properly in accordance with God's original plan for headship and submission. Yes, angels must come to church when we have church!

E. Their activities toward believers (God's saints).

We will see later that the good angels do have a protective ministry over the heirs of salvation (Heb. 1:14). We will deal with this in some final question regarding angels. At this point, we want to consider some general activities that the evil angels have toward God's saints. The evil angels perform tasks for Satan and His purposes. Angelic power is classified as being *supernatural* power. By contrast, human power can only be understood as *natural* power. This means that angels can do many things that human cannot do. We have seen this in relation to the good angels but evil angels (demons) also possess supernatural power and this means they have unusual powers that enable them to oppose God's people and will one earth.

1. They oppose God's purposes for believers.

Throughout history the evil angels have tried to oppose God's will and thwart His purposes on earth. Satan can only be at one place in the world at a time. Therefore, he has untold billions of his agents (wicked angels) working on his behalf all over the world.

1 Thessalonians 2:18

"Wherefore we would have come unto you, even I Paul, once and again; but Satan hindered us."

Satan, presumably through his wicked agents, hindered Paul from returning to the Thessalonian saints to perform his ministry there. It's here that we discover evil angels seek to hinder God's servants from executing God's ministers which He wants them to do. In this way, wicked spirits oppose God.

Elsewhere, Paul said in 1 Corinthians 16:9:

"For a great door and effectual is opened unto me, and *there are* many adversaries."

These adversaries sought to oppose the spreading of the Gospel and we can be sure that their evil opposition to Paul was fueled by the work of demons.

If we are really doing the work of God, witnessing and working for the Lord, we can be sure that our spiritual work is going to be challenged. It won't go unnoticed by the devil and his angels. If our work and service is not being challenged by wicked beings, then we must question whether or not it is God's work and service! Satan is out to destroy God-horning and soul-winning work. He opposes evangelism and outreach ministries which are designed to reach the lost. Don't be surprised if you have opposition when you are doing the Lord's work.

2. They fulfill God's providential will for believers.

Although Satan's angels perform tasks for him, the Bible reveals that they ultimately do tasks for God. This is because God is sovereign or in control over everything – even the devil. It was Martin Luther who once said that "even the devil is God's devil." This means that God can even use Satan and his emissaries to accomplish His will on earth in the midst of a fallen world or humanity. This was true in the case of Job.

Job 1:8

"And the LORD said unto Satan, Hast thou considered my servant Job, that *there is* none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God, and escheweth evil?"

It's interesting that when Satan attacked Job to try and get him to curse God, this actually brought to pass God's will for Job. It was God's ordained plan and purpose

to allow Satan to attack to Job in order to test Job and prove this man's loyalty to Satan. What is comforting in this whole ordeal is that Satan was limited on what he could do to Job. Satan and evil angels cannot attack one of God's children without His permission and evil angels are strictly limited to what He permits them to do. Nevertheless, we discover that God can use Satan and his wicked cohorts to fulfill his will in relation to the lives of His people.

1 Corinthians 5:3-5

“For I verily, as absent in body, but present in spirit, have judged already, as though I were present, *concerning* him that hath so done this deed, In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, when ye are gathered together, and my spirit, with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ, To deliver such an one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus.”

Here is another example of God bringing His purpose to pass for one of His children by using Satan to inflict harm and even death on a Christian man's life. In this case, God allowed, through an apostolic authority, to turn a person over to Satan who was committing immorality with his stepmother. In other words, through the apostle Paul, this individual Christian was destined to be attacked by Satan and through the whole ordeal he would lose his life.

To deliver Christians someone over to Satan would mean that Paul had removed (excommunicated) them from the church's fellowship and placed them within Satan's realm or domain where they would experience Satan's full wickedness and attacks from both a physical, emotional, and spiritual standpoint. It means the special protective hedge was taken off of this Christian man. The fact that this would result in “the destruction of the flesh” (body) means he would experience premature death at the hands of Satan and his wicked spirits and would experience what the Bible calls elsewhere as a “sin unto death” (1 John 5:16). Although the body (sarx) is destroyed the spirit of this person is saved and this will be confirmed and validated at the Judgment Seat of Christ (“the day of the Lord Jesus Christ”), the time when this person is judged as a saint and not a sinner that is separated from God.

There is also the case with Paul himself. God allowed Satan to inflict him with a disease to teach Paul the lesson he needed to learn.

2 Corinthians 12:7

“And lest I should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I should be exalted above measure.”

The “messenger” of Satan implies that Satan inflicted this infirmity upon Paul through one of his evil angels. On three different occasions Paul asked God to remove this affliction (2 Cor. 12:8) but God said that He had allowed Satan to bring about His purpose for Paul which was to keep him humble and not allow his ministry to be adversely affected by a prideful spirit. Here is another example of God bringing to pass His sovereign will and purpose for His children through the work of Satan. And yes, God allowed a disease to remain in Paul to accomplish His purpose. God has never promised a perfect bill of health for his children.

All three of the example that we have studied about illustrate several truths. First, God can use Satan to bring about His ultimate purposes in a fallen world of sin and sinners. Second, Satan cannot attack one of God’s children without His permission. Third, wicked angels are limited to what they can do with God’s children. God is still on the throne! And yes, even the devil is God’s devil.

In the Australian bush country grows a little plant called the "sundew." It has a slender stem and tiny, round leaves fringed with hairs that glisten with bright drops of liquid as delicate as fine dew. Woe to the insect, however, that dares to dance on it. Although its attractive clusters of red, white, and pink blossoms are harmless, the leaves are deadly. The shiny moisture on each leaf is sticky and will imprison any bug that touches it. As an insect struggles to free itself, the vibration causes the leaves to close tightly around it. This innocent-looking plant then feeds on its victim. This is how the devil often gets us to sin. He paints a pretty picture of sin, lures us in, and then sets the hook. We now continue to study how Satan and his cohorts (demons) attack God’s saints and try and seduce them.

The evil angels support Satan in his plans and purposes to dethrone God and His righteous agenda on earth. Satan is called the “prince of devils” (demons) as various texts indicate (Mark 9:34; 12:24) and “the prince of the power of the air” (Eph. 2:2) because he is leading a host of wicked angelic beings against God. Satan is the ruling authority over the realm of wicked angels. Angelic power is classified as being *supernatural* power. By contrast, human power can only be understood as *natural* power. This means that angels can do many things that human cannot do. We have seen this in relation to the good angels but evil angels (demons) also possess supernatural power and they use it to tempt God’s saints.

3. They tempt God’s saints.

Ephesians 6:11-13

“Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high *places*. Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.”

It was F.B. Meyer, I believe, who once said that when we see a brother or sister in sin, there are two things we do not know: First, we do not know how hard he or she tried not to sin. And second, we do not know the power of the forces that assailed him or her. We also do not know what we would have done in the same circumstances.

The expression “the wiles of the devil” refers to the deceptive methods Satan and his evil angels use to defeat our spiritual lives and gain advantage over us. Elsewhere the Bible says that Satan, who is in charge of a vast host of wicked angels, uses various devices to get an advantage of believers.

2 Corinthians 2:11

“Lest Satan should get an advantage of us: for we are not ignorant of his devices.”

The word “advantage” means that we allow Satan to defraud us or make a gain in our lives. It has the idea of allowing setting to get a starting point in our hearts and lives or allowing the devil to get one foot in the door. This warning was set in the context of forgiving a sinning brother and not holding bitterness and unforgiving

spirits toward him. The word “devices” (scheming thoughts and plans to conquer our lives) that Satan uses against us by placing different thoughts and intentions in our minds to steer us off course. This is what he did to Eve in the Garden of Eden (2 Cor. 11:1-3).

J. Sidlow Baxter says:

“Satan uses all manner of stratagems to turn souls from the truth: a sieve to ‘sift’ them (Luke 22:31), ‘devices’ to trick (2 Cor. 2:11), ‘weeds’ to ‘choke’ (Matt. 13:22), ‘wiles’ to intrigue (Eph. 6:11), the roaring of a lion to terrify (1 Pet. 5:8), the disguise of an angel to deceive (2 Cor. 11:14) and ‘snares’ to entangle them (2 Tim. 2:26).”

We might add that Satan and his wicked angels set snares and traps for church leaders to destroy their effectiveness in God’s ministry (1 Tim. 3:7). A “snare” refers to trick or stratagem used by Satan. It references a noose or notch that an animal might step in which would cause them to be fooled and captured. It is like the dumb sunfish biting a worm which is dangling on the end of a hook. You get the picture! All of these verses present one primary truth to us. We are involved in spiritual warfare! As we encounter the tricks, deceptions, and devices of the devil, through mind manipulation and temptations, we are involved in a spiritual battle against sin and Satan. It is the battle of our will between Satan and God.

Satan is trying to seduce and overtake our spiritual lives through temptation and deception. We can be motivated and manipulated by demons. God has called us to maintain our ground of victory against the Evil One (Eph. 6:11). The word “wrestle” (Eph. 6:12) means “to swing and throw” and refers to a wrestling match in which two parted battle unto one opponent throws the other down on his back and pins him.

A bruised and bleeding boxer stumbled back to his corner after a rough round. His trainer splashed cold water on his head and rubbed him down as his managed tried to encourage him. He said, “Rocky, you’re doing great. Your opponent hasn’t laid a glove on you.” The half-dazed boxer looked up and said, “If my opponent hasn’t laid a glove on me, you’d better keep an eye on the referee because somebody out there is beating the daylights out of me.” This reminds me about the spiritual warfare and battle that we are in on a daily basis. Satan is hitting us and we must counter his blows with a defensive stand on the truth. If we don’t put on God’s armor to stand

against Satan and fight back with the truth, then Satan will beat the daylight out of us!

Ephesians 6:12 reminds us that our real struggle or wrestling match (originally used for wrestling which as part of the Greek games) is with Satan and the wicked angels. It's not a struggle with "flesh and blood" (on a human level – with people) but our struggle is on a spiritual level with spiritual forces which are behind everything and everyone who is evil in this world. The word "against" occurs six times in Ephesians 6:10-18. This speaks of the clash between the believer and the cosmic evil forces that are all around us. Satan and his wicked angels are against us! The battle lines are drawn. God and His people are on one side, and Satan and his demons are on the other side.

How do we have victory over Satan and sinister spirits?

- Remember they are already defeated.

We cannot defeat Satan and his wicked spirits; Jesus has already defeated them for us.

Colossians 2:15

"And having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them in it."

The word "spoiled" (disarmed) the wicked spirits or the demonic powers and authorities that were against us when He died on Calvary's cross. This word refers to those who were captured in a Roman invasion and who were brought back as captives. Through the death of Jesus Christ on the cross, the shedding of His precious blood, He defeated Satan and all his wicked spirits (demons) that are following him today. They were in one sense overtaken, defeated, and captured by the death of God's son. This means they no longer must defeat us. Christ's death, when properly appropriated to our lives in the time of temptation, is the ground for our victory over Satan.

The Belgian artist A. J. Wiertz, in his great painting entitled "The Triumph of Christ," beautifully portrays the victory Jesus won through His ignominious death. As you

look at this famous canvas, you see the Savior hanging in shame on the cross. Yet from the crown of thorns on His head shine beams of heavenly light. Above Him glorious angels sound their trumps while sinister, evil figures flee away into the darkness. These evil figures depict the victory that Jesus had over the devil and demons when He died upon the cross.

➤ Reclaim your victory in Christ.

We don't pray for victory; we claim our victory in Christ. This means that we must claim our victory over Satan and the wicked angels through the ministry of aggressive prayer, God's strength, and wearing the victorious armor (Eph. 6:10-18). We must learn the secret of appropriating the victory Christ already won to our daily lives. When the Tempter comes, we must remember Calvary and Satan's utter defeat.

The practical, day-to-day victory over Satan and demons involves standing upon our ground of victory. We take a defensive position or posture and by doing so, resist the devil. The words "stand" (Eph. 6:11, 13, 14) and "withstand" (Eph. 6:13) speak of taking a defensive stand whereby we hold the victorious ground that we already possess in Christ and don't give any "advantage" or starting point for Satan to work (2 Cor. 2:11) so he can gain enemy ground or territory in our lives ("Neither give place to the devil" - Eph. 4:27). This means that Satan is constantly trying to gain greater amounts of territory in our lives and possess greater control over our Christian lives. In simple terms, we should not allow the devil to get a foothold in our lives by flirting with sin and fooling around with sin.

➤ Resist the devil.

James 4:7

"Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you."

This resisting is a decisive action (aorist imperative) on behalf of the saint of God who is undergoing temptation. This means to take a stand against the devil. Notice that the command to "resist the devil" follows the command to submit to God or place ourselves under His authority (Eph. 4:7).

The word “submit” is a military term which means meaning to be subordinated, to give obedience to one’s superior. This means that we must first place ourselves under the complete authority of God through repentance (James 4:8-9) and determine to give obedience to Him if we are going to have victory. No Christian can experience victory without first submitting to God by determining to give Him total allegiance and loyalty. At this point, after we place ourselves under God’s authority, we can then effectively “resist the devil” (Eph. 4:7) or his advancements upon our life. To resist the devil means to effectively oppose the devil or stand against him. When we carry out these responsibilities, God promises that the evil “will flee from you.”

Notice that our daily victory has nothing to do with binding Satan, rebuking Satan, seeking out the devil, or being part of some kind of deliverance ministry. The early church did none of these things. God’s plan for victory is clearly stated in the Bible. There are two comforting promises found in James 4:7-8. First, when a child of God takes a stand against the devil to resist him, Satan flees. Second, when a believer draws near to God, God does not flee (James 4:8).

1 John 4:4

“Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them: because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world.”

“Stand up, stand up for Jesus,
Stand in His strength alone;
The arm of flesh will fail you.
Ye dare not trust your own.”

Friend, we don’t have to volunteer to find ourselves engaged in a war. The war has come to us! Satan and the world rages against us to defeat our spiritual lives.

The mention of the “evil day” (Eph. 6:13) refers to the time when the devil and his wicked spirits attack us. Of course, some days seem more evil than others.

Mark Hitchcock said:

“There are times when Satan’s attacks are especially furious. There are seasons when the evil escalates, when pressures are more intense, when the problems,

trials, and temptations seem to gang up all at once, and then when the intensity of the struggle is ratcheted up.”

Alexander MacLaren describes these times of all-out attack:

“They are the days when all the cannons fire at once, and scaling ladders are reared on every side of the fortress.”

Friend, we must realize that we are in a war. The powers of darkness are looking for an opening to bring the “evil day” in our personal lives, our homes, our marriages, and our churches. The evil day comes for every one of us. The question is how will we respond to it? Will we submit to God’s way and authority and get passed it, or succumb to it?

Erwin Lutzer said:

“We’re in a war. We can’t plead pacifism. We can’t run from the bullets. We can’t hide from the bombs. We can’t plead medical deferment.”

Here is spiritual warfare in a nutshell. The enemy is Satan, the battleground is our mind, and the issue at hand is our Christian and spiritual walk. We do not live in a neutral world. You cannot be neutral in this battle! You cannot have victories without war! There are no victories without battle.

Mark Hitchcock again states:

“Spiritual warfare is the invisible war waged in the spiritual realm but fleshed out in the visible, physical realm.”

Thank God for the promise of Romans 8:37:

“Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us.”

The Bible repeatedly teaches that Satan and his wicked angels are tempting us, trying to deceive us, and cause us to sin.

1 Corinthians 7:5

“Defraud (deprive) ye not one the other, except *it be* with consent for a time, that ye may give yourselves to fasting and prayer; and come together again, that Satan tempt you not for your incontinency.”

This verse reminds us that Satan and his emissaries are busy in the area of sexual temptation. Married couples must give their consent to one another if they are going to be separated for a time period. Why? It's because during their time of separation that Satan may very well try and tempt them into a lustful relationship with another person. Normally we think of sexual activity as an indication of lack of self-control, but Paul also viewed the failure to engage in physical relations as a lack of self-control for a married person.

A key area of satanic temptation is in the area of sex outside the marriage relationship. Satan knows that human beings are vulnerable to this lust and works hard to keep us bound to His seductive temptations to commit immorality in our Christian lives. Paul reminds Timothy to "keep thyself pure" (1 Tim. 5:22).

1 Thessalonians 3:3-5

"That no man should be moved by these afflictions: for yourselves know that we are appointed thereunto. For verily, when we were with you, we told you before that we should suffer tribulation; even as it came to pass, and ye know. For this cause, when I could no longer forbear, I sent to know your faith, lest by some means the tempter have tempted you, and our labour be in vain."

Paul's reference to the tempter is reminiscent of Satan's activity in the Garden of Eden (Genesis 3) and in the Judean wilderness when the devil tempted Jesus (Matthew 4). Paul saw Satan as using the persecution the Thessalonians were undergoing to lure them away from what they knew to be God's sovereign will and purpose for their lives, which was to persevere in the midst of persecution and trials – not become overcome by them and defeated. Paul was concerned that Satan might snatch away the truth which had been taught to them about trials and suffering before the truth was firmly rooted in their hearts by faith.

Satan is always trying to steal away our faith in God's Word or truth. If Satan had seduced and induced the saints to recant some of the truth he taught them, then Paul felt his labor there would have been for nothing. Friend, don't recant! Don't allow the devil to deceive you and take you away from what you know God's will to be for your life.

William MacDonald wrote:

“It is the ever-present temptation to swap loyalty to Christ for personal comfort, to by-pass the cross in pursuit of a crown. Who of us does not have to pray, ‘Forgive me, Lord, for so often finding ways to avoid the pain and sacrifice of discipleship. Strengthen me today to walk with You no matter what the cost.’”

There is a final note we must think about at this point in our study. The Bible clearly reveals that believers are the objects of Satan’s and demon’s attacks. However, we should always distinguish between these spiritual conflicts with evil spirits and the conflict or troubles that we bring on ourselves. In other words, sometimes we simply reap the results of poor or bad decisions and Satan and his demons may not be involved at all with the outcome.

The believer must always remember that our thoughts can come from God (Matt. 16:16-17), Satan (Matt. 16:22; James 3:14-15), or the old sin nature (Heb. 3:13; Rom. 7:18; Gal. 5:17; Matt. 15:19), or from within ourselves (Matt. 16:17 – “flesh and blood”; Isaiah 55:8; Luke 24:38; 1 Cor. 14:38) or simply in accordance with our own flawed reasoning. This means that the believer is capable of experiencing self-deception, sin’s deception, and Satan’s deception. Many times Satan will work in connection with the old nature (Eph. 2:2-3; 1 Tim. 6:9). He likes to *fan the flame* that is already smoldering on the inside of you through the drives and evil incentives of the sin nature. He works in connection with the old nature to deceive us mentally and then keep us in bondage.

Nevertheless, we should always evaluate our own behavior before playing the blame game with Satan (blaming the devil) for every sin, obstacle or problem that we face in life. Many times we are the cause of our own problems. A demon is not behind every bush and we cannot always blame demons for our bad behavior and decisions.

Jeremiah 17:9 reminds us that:

“The heart *is* deceitful above all *things*, and desperately wicked: who can know it?”

This means we cannot always blame demons for wrecking our spiritual life. Our evil heart can lead us astray as well. Let us not forget this. We must guard our heart and keep it in check (Prov. 4:23).

Here are some misunderstandings regarding temptation:

- Temptation itself is sin (no – yielding to it is sin).
- We fall into temptation (no – we choose to sin).
- God is disappointed and displeased when we are tempted (no – God allows Satan to tempt us to test our loyalty and faith to Him).
- We overcome all temptation by separation from it (not always – we must learn to be victorious in everyday living).
- When I am spiritually mature, I will no longer be harassed by temptation (no – Satan never stops tempting us).

None of these things are true when it comes to being tempted by the devil and demons. However, the words to the old song should be our desire.

“I want a principle within
Of jealous, godly fear,
A sensibility of sin,
A pain to feel it near;
I want the first approach to feel
Of pride, or fond desire,
To catch the wandering of my will,
And quench the kindling fire.”

One preacher shares this story. When I diet, I typically try and do the Adkins Diet, the no-carb diet. It doesn't always work very well. Sometimes I'm on it for hours. But I was on it and I was doing pretty good. It was like Day 3 of Adkins. No carbs. Sarah my daughter comes over. It's on a Friday. I'm in my office. I'm studying, preparing for Sunday. She comes over and she says, 'Daddy.' I said, 'Yeah.' She goes, 'Look what I made.' And it was this plate filled with these cookie bars, chocolate, gooey things.

They were just incredible. And she said, 'I made these.' And she said, 'Don't they look good?' And I said, 'They look really good.' And she said, 'Well, tell me how they taste.' I said, 'I can't. I'm on Adkins.' She said, 'Well, Daddy, you're going to hurt my feelings.' And I said, 'Well, I really can't.' She said, 'Please,' and then she stuck the lip out. It's like, 'Oh, okay, I will.' And I said, 'I'm just going to take a little bite.' And so I took a little bite. They were so good. And I said, 'Well, I can take a little more. I didn't really have all of that little bite and piece.' I took a little more. And then she took them in the kitchen, and I ended up following her into the kitchen to get some milk to go with the rest of my cookies!

Now, as harmless as cookies might be, the devil uses the same kind of tactic to tempt us and get us into the kitchen. He says, "Doesn't this look good. Doesn't this seem right. There is no harm in it." And we end up giving in to his temptation.

4. They want to destroy God's saints.

Paul wrote in Romans 8:36-39:

"As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

When Paul declared, "For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter," he was referring to the Satanic attitude toward God's saints. If the devil and his demons had their way, every last one of us would be dead. The goal of taking us out is so these wicked spirits might separate us from God forever in hell. Paul is teaching in this verse that wicked angels attack believers and want to destroy them with the goal of separating them from God's love by separating them from Christ. However, the Bible teaches that these evil spirits can NEVER accomplish this goal because of what Christ has done for us!

Nothing, no demon, no person, no place, or anything known in the visible and invisible world, will ever be able to separate us from God's unconditional love for us which we have in the saving merits of Jesus Christ. God will continue to love us

when we die, and He will continue to love us in spite of Satan's attitude to destroy us. God loves us on both sides of the grave. Hostile angelic beings cannot change God's loving commitment to us in the saving work and person of Jesus Christ His Son.

Blessed assurance, Jesus is mine!
Oh, what a foretaste of glory divine!
Heir of salvation, purchase of God,
Born of His Spirit, washed in His blood.

5. They want to use God's saints for evil purposes.

It's interesting that Satan, either directly or indirectly through his wicked angels, can use believers (God's people) to help accomplish His wicked purpose in the world. In fact, Satan can use our lives to adversely affect the lives of other people. Our sin can have far-reaching effects on others.

In what ways does Satan and his demons tempt us to do evil or wrong? The Bible reveals some of Satan's strategies.

a. Satan tempts us live independent of God (1 Chron. 21:1-7).

Satan wants us be involved in the "me, myself, and I" syndrome. He wants to get us to live independent of God's will and purpose for our lives. He wants us to get us to do our own thing and have our own way in life. In other words, the devil wants to get us to believe that we don't need God's guidance and help in our lives. The devil wants us to follow the Burger King Philosophy – "Have it Your Way." We find this in the way Satan provoked David to take a census of Israel which was something God forbid. David did it anyway – his own way. As a result, it stirred up God's wrath against the nation (1 Chron. 21:1-7). This is something God forbid. David wanted to know how many fighting men there were in Israel. Maybe this proves he did not trust in God. He felt self-sufficient with so many troops. Self-reliance is one way the devil gets us away from depending upon God and living a self-dependent life, instead of a God-centered life. David's action may have been a bragging point for him, the root of pride in his heart. Any way you look at it, the devil got David living a life of independence from God's will and purpose.

As a result, the Bible reveals that the Lord was angry with His people and used David's census as an occasion to punish him and the people. David's sin affected the people. Many times our sins (wrong attitudes, sinful decisions, evil doings, what we say) have a direct impact on others – our friends, family, and the fellowship that we have with other people. This is how the devil loves to work. The Lord simply let Satan tempt David to undertake the census, much as He permitted Satan to attack Job (Job 1:12). The Lord is sovereign even over the temptation that He allows to come into our life. But we must remember that when we give in to the temptation that our sin can have a negative impact on the lives of others. When we give in to anger it affects others. When we lack self-control and patience it rubs off on others. Others must put up with our lives which are out of order and which Satan has gotten a victory over.

b. Satan tempts us to move away from a Christ-centered focus.

Satan wants to sidetrack us from living a Christ-centered life. He does this by drawing our attention away from Christ. He often tries to break our fellowship with Jesus, get us to lose sight of Christ as our great Victor and helper in life. Satan used Peter as a mouthpiece to try and persuade Jesus to avoid His death on the cross (Matt. 16:21-23). So, Peter was really trying to sidetrack Jesus from His saving mission. Of course, Jesus would have none of it! He rebuked Satan who had placed this thought in Peter's mind. Ultimately, Satan was using Peter. He was attempting to get Peter's mind off of Christ and the mission and purpose of His cross. In doing this, Peter lost his Christ-centered focus in life. Beware! The same thing can happen to us.

The practical lesson we learn from this is that Satan wants us to get our eyes off of Jesus; specifically, what Jesus did for us on the cross. This is because the cross is the ground of our salvation and victory and the inspiration we need to live victoriously and faithfully. This is why we need to be ("Looking unto Jesus" - Hebrews 12:2). This means that Jesus is to be our inspiration, Victor, and hero in life. When we are no longer glorying in the cross, or staying focused on Christ, we are playing into the hands of the devil. When we lose our cross-focus in life, we can be sure that we are going down! We need to stay Christ-centered in our thinking, living, and devotions and remember that He is to be our Leader, Victor, helper, and inspiration in life.

Most of all, we must always remember that the cross and the shedding of Christ's blood is the basis of our victory. We must stay Christ-centered in this way. Let's reflect upon this truth for a few moments. The Bible reveals that Satan accuses saints (God's children) before God when they sin.

Revelation 12:10

"And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ: for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night."

The "accuser of the brethren" reminds us that Satan, like a prosecuting attorney, accuses us of being a sinner before God's presence. He says, "This child of yours has sinned and should be damned in hell for sinning against you." But Jesus comes to our rescue and says, "I have shed my blood for every one of their sins and they are free from judgment."

1 John 2:1 gives the response of Jesus:

"My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous."

Jesus is our lawyer in Heaven! He pleads our case before the Father. His very presence in Heaven with those nail-pierced hands and feet remind Satan that the judgment for our sins have been paid for by the shedding of Christ's blood and sacrificial death. As a result, Satan's accusations cannot stand in the courtroom of Heaven! The blood of Jesus Christ overrules Satan's accusations and demands. The blood of Jesus Christ is the ground of our salvation and victory. We need to remember this and not lose focus of the important of the shed blood of Jesus Christ.

Revelation 12:11 reminds us to keep a Christ-centered focus:

"And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death."

How do we overcome Satan's accusations against us? How can we have victory over his temptations and diabolical attempts to damn us to hell and defeat our lives? We can do as these Tribulation saints will do in the future. We can plead the salvation, victory, and assurance that we have through the shed blood of Jesus Christ. Staying

Christ-focused is important. His blood stands for our safety, security, and sure victory! We claim our victory and hold our victorious ground by giving testimony to His shed blood on the cross.

“I thank God for Calvary,
For it’s the blood that sets me free.
He bore my shame, O praise His name.
I’ve never been the same.
Since I came to Calvary.

c. Satan tempts us to lie and not tell the truth.

Satan also tempted Ananias and Sapphira to lie which brought judgment upon them and fear in the hearts of others (Acts 5:1-11). We can lie to our teachers, parents, friends, pastor and even to ourselves. In doing so, we deceive ourselves. This sin, like David’s and Peter’s sin, also had an adverse effect on others. This time it caused fear to swell up in the hearts of the people. Once again, we see how our own sin and defeat at the hands of wicked spirits who tempt us, will have a direct effect on others. This was true of Achan’s sin as well (Joshua 7). Satan not only wants to defeat our personal lives from a spiritual standpoint, he also wants to use us to adversely affect the lives of others. This could be a husband, wife, or other family members. It might be a co-worker or some other person. Has Satan been using you in some way? Don’t be a pawn in the hands of the devil. Recognize what he is trying to do in your life and resist him (James 4:7).

Here is the point. A Christian should not want to be a tool that Satan uses to bring about his evil purposes and agenda in this world. I should not want to be a vessel Satan uses to adversely affect my family members, church members, or any person. Instead, I should want to be a trophy of God’s grace. My goal in life should not be to reflect Satan’s plan but God’s grace as I manifest the fruit of the Holy Spirit and victory in my life. To be used of God should be our desire.

“To be used of God
To sing to speak to pray
To be used of God
To show someone the way
Oh how I long so much to feel

The touch of His consuming fire
To be used of God is my desire.”

A recent survey of Discipleship Journal readers ranked areas of greatest spiritual challenge to them:

1. Materialism.
2. Pride.
3. Self-centeredness.
4. Laziness.
5. (Tie) Anger/Bitterness.
5. (Tie) Sexual lust.
7. Envy.
8. Gluttony.
9. Lying.

Survey respondents noted temptations were more potent when they had neglected their time with God (81 percent) and when they were physically tired (57 percent). Resisting temptation was accomplished by prayer (84 percent), avoiding compromising situations (76 percent), Bible study (66 percent), and being accountable to someone (52 percent).

It was F.B. Meyer, I believe, who once said that when we see a brother or sister in sin, there are two things we do not know: First, we do not know how hard he or she tried not to sin. And second, we do not know the power of the forces that assailed him or her. We also do not know what we would have done in the same circumstances.

- d. Satan tempts us to express anger toward others (Ephesians 4:26-27).

Satan tries to get Christians to live with anger. The Bible does say that we can be angry. Many don't realize this. Anger against evil can be a proper and righteous anger. We might call it "righteous indignation." But there are many times when anger is sinful and devil-sent. The expression of "wrath" (vs. 26) and not giving place to the devil (vs. 27) go hand in hand. This is because the devil tempts us to express

wrath to others. When anger is an emotion of malice, jealousy, resentment, revenge, or hatred because of personal wrongs, it is forbidden in Scripture. In this context of anger, the work of the devil is mentioned. Why? It's because the devil is responsible for sowing the seeds of anger in our hearts and lives. Satan will get an advantage or starting point to work in our hearts and lives when we allow him to sow the seed of anger, bitterness, and unforgiveness. You see, if another person can easily anger you, it is because you are off balance spiritually.

Someone said:

“Anger is one letter short of danger”

Holding on to anger only hurts you, not the person you are angry with. In fact, anger is like an acid that can do more harm to the vessel in which it is stored than to anything on which it is poured.

Someone gave this perspective on anger:

Getting anger is actually punishing yourself with the mistakes of others.

- e. Satan tempts us to develop pride in our hearts (1 Tim. 3:6).

We've mentioned this previously. The sin that caused Satan's fall from Heaven is the same sin he tries to use on us. When we find ourselves boastful of our accomplishments, our victories, and our position in life, we may very well be under the influence of the devil. When we think we are better than others, more spiritual than others, and have reached the highest state of spirituality, then we are overcome with pride (1 John 2:16).

We are filled with pride when we boast how we are more athletic than others, smarter than others, or have more money than others. Many relationships fail because married couples fight with pride more than they work with love.

Someone said:

“Pride will cost you everything but leave you with nothing.”

Another person stated:

“When you do something wrong, admit it and be sorry. No one in history has ever choked to death from swallowing his pride.”

f. Satan tempts us with sexual immorality (1 Cor. 7:5)

We have also mentioned this previously. Let us never forget that Satan tries to stimulate us to commit acts of sexual rebellion against God. Sex is big business and we can be sure that Satan is behind this business today.

O be careful little eyes what you see
O be careful little eyes what you see
There's a Father up above
And He's looking down in love
So, be careful little eyes what you see.

O be careful little hands what you do
O be careful little hands what you do
There's a Father up above
And He's looking down in love
So, be careful little hands what you do.”

James 1:14

“But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed.”

Here are some questions we need ask ourselves.

- Are we being desensitized by the present evil world? Do things that once shocked us now pass us by with little notice? Have our sexual ethics slackened?
- Where do our minds wander when we have no duties to perform?
- What are we reading? Are there books, pictures on our iPhone that we need to get rid of?

- What kind of TV programs are we watching? How many adulteries did we watch last week? How many murders? How many did we watch with our children?
- g. Satan tempts us to be overcome with worry and discouragement in our hearts (1 Peter 5:6-10).

Satan tries to sow the seeds of discouragement and anxiety in our hearts. Dr. Park Tucker, former chaplain of the federal penitentiary in Atlanta, Georgia, told of walking down the street in a certain city, feeling low and depressed and worried about life in general. As he walked along, he lifted his eyes for a moment to the window of a funeral home across the street. He blinked his eyes a couple of times, wondering whether his eyes were deceiving him. But sure enough, he saw in the window of that funeral home was this sign, in large, bold words: "Why walk around half-dead? We can bury you for \$69.50. P.S. We also give green stamps." Dr. Tucker said the humor of it was good medicine for his soul. Many Christians are walking around half-dead because worry has built a mountain of problems over them and they have surrendered to fate instead of the Lord. We must turn our hearts and discouragement over to the Lord and leave it there!

1 Peter 5:7

"Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you."

"Leave it there, leave it there,
Take your burden to the Lord and leave it there;
If you trust and never doubt, He will surely bring you out—
Take your burden to the Lord and leave it there."

The devil tempts us to be discouraged and become despondent in life (1 Peter 5:6-10). This is a big temptation that we can give in to. We need to be on guard against discouragement. Peter is teaching us to swallow our pride of self-sufficiency (1 Pet. 5:6) and surrender life's anxieties, worries, and discouragements to the Lord (1 Pet. 5:7). If we are not careful, we can start the pity party and go down into the doldrums of life! It's very interesting that Peter speaks of casting our cares or anxieties on the Lord for he knows they tend to lead to discouragement and despair. In the same

context, the devil is then seen to come after us as a roaring lion in order to devour and defeat our spiritual lives. What is the one key way the devil defeats our lives? It's by sending discouragement into our hearts and lives. The devil gets us down into the cellar and steps on us, keeping us in the realm of sadness, despair, and discouragement. Beloved, discouragement is devilish. Let's not forget this.

"In my early youth," says Homer Croy, magazine writer "I got a small 'vest-pocket' dictionary, determined to master every word in it. I came to the word 'coxcomb.' The definition was a 'fop,' but I had never heard the word 'fop'. I looked it up. "The dictionary said: 'Fop; a coxcomb.' It pretty well discouraged me from getting an education." Satan tries to give us the same "merry-go-round" experience in order to discourage our lives. Don't allow him to do it! Be smarter than the devil's devices and tricks.

Someone shared this. "I saw a span of horses drawing a very heavy load of logs, and as they came to a hard place they struggled and tried with all their force, strained every muscle to the highest tension, but they could not start the load. Then the driver took some of the logs off and tried to get them to start the load, but they would not. He rolled off some more, but those horses would not start. He rolled off still more, and at last took off every log, and then they started up the road. Those horses had been utterly discouraged; they had pulled with all their strength and failed, and any one doing that, be it man or beast, is not able to accomplish half as much as a man who has not lost heart."

When we lose our heart in discouragement, then the devil has got us. We begin to pull back and not accomplish the things God wants us to do and live for Him as He wants us to live.

- h. Satan tempts us to promote disharmony between God's people (2 Cor. 2:10-12).

Satan tried to divide our families, our churches, and wholesome friendships. The devil also promotes disharmony and division among Christians. This is rather obvious. In this instance, a man had sinned sexually by living in sin with his stepmother and was disciplined by the church. Rightly so. This was all recorded in

1 Corinthians 5. But now this same fellow obviously repented of this sin. Paul said in essence, “You must forgive him and welcome him back into the fellowship. If you don’t forgive him, then Satan will get an advantage over your own life and heart.” The word “advantage” means that Satan will defraud and deceive us and make a gain or advancement in our Christian life. If we give the devil a starting point to work, we can be sure that he will make greater gains in our life.

We need to get along by submitting to church authority, submitting to one another, and above all else, submitting to the Word of God. United we stand, divided we fall! When we are divided we become defeated.

- i. Satan tempts us to question God’s Word (2 Cor. 11:3).

Above all else, Satan tries to get us to doubt God’s Word or absolute standard of truth (2 Cor. 11:3). If he can win this battle, then he can win many battles in our lives. “Yea, hath God said? (Gen. 3:1). The devil puts a question mark where God puts a period! This has always been the devil’s approach in tempting us. Did God really mean what he said? Are you sure that is in the Bible? Is this music really carnal and worldly? Is this picture really provocative? If it feels right, then it surely cannot be wrong. This is how the devil gets us to change our minds and go along with his scheme or plan.

- j. Satan tempts us to doubt God’s goodness (Genesis 3:1).

In Genesis 3:1 the devil also said, through the serpent, “Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden?” In other words, the devil is asking, “Why can’t you have everything. Why can’t you eat from all the trees?” The devil wants us to believe that God is holding out on us or that He is withholding something that is actually good for us and permissible. He wants to paint God as a killjoy. This is another way the devil tempts us. He attacks God’s character and ways.

Psalm 34:8

“O taste and see that the Lord is good: blessed is the man that trusteth in him.”

God is good in the sunshine and the rain. He is good in the ups and downs of life. God is intrinsically good and right in all that He does.

“God is so good,
God is so good,
God is so good,
he's so good to me.
He cares for me,
He cares for me,
He cares for me,
he's so good to me.”

We must remember that Satan harasses us by exploiting our weaknesses. Don't let the devil deceive and discourage you through his temptations! He is out to get us! Let us never forget this. We need to draw a line in the sand and not cross that line.

In general, the devil tries to tempt us through the “world” which is describes as the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life (1 John 2:15). The world is Satan's organized system or world-view that leaves God out and opposes Him. It's a set of idea, values, and aspirations which go against God's will and desire for the believer.

There are three avenues through which the devil tempts us to commit worldly acts. These three avenues of temptation to live a worldly life have never changed (Gen. 3; Matt. 4). The “lust of the flesh” (1 John 2:15) refers to the believer's sin nature which gives them the capacity and tendency to sin (Rom. 7:18; Gal. 5:17). Our enemy within is the flesh (sin nature). We still have the presence of the old capacities and tendencies to sin.

Satan will often tempt us through the avenue of the flesh (the sin nature). He will try and ignite the flames of the sin nature within us. He does this by getting us to misuse our God-given physical appetites. He tempts us to live impure, overindulge in food and drink, or in the area of improper use of time and money. We live in an age of hedonism and materialism. There are many sinful things that are part of the

world system (music, money, ideas, ideologies, vices, cultural viewpoints) which Satan uses to draw us away from living a righteous and God-honoring life.

Second, Satan tempts us through the “lust of the eyes” (1 John 2:15). There are many sinful things in the world around us which can be viewed and cause us to sin. Satan tempts us through the eye gate. The lust of the eyes means that evil cravings are generated through what we look at and view. People often entertain impure thoughts through the eye gate (Matt. 5:28). Our sex-mad world makes everyone susceptible to temptation and sin. The lust of the eyes (Satan using the avenue of the eyes) consists much more than just sex. A craving for more and more material things is also part of our society today. Satan tries to get us to covet things and place and undue emphasis on things which are passing away (1 John 2:17). Jesus taught that we are to “beware of covetousness” (Luke 12:15, 19).

Third, Satan tempts us through the “pride of life” (1 John 2:15). This is the “I love myself” attitude. It is being prideful of one’s accomplishments, status, and position in life. It finds expression when one thinks no one else can do anything as well as he can. It is thinking more highly of oneself than he or she ought to think (Rom. 12:3). Often this attitude of pride becomes evident to others in words and actions of the one who is prideful.

On July of 2004, the Arizona Game and Fish Department began nursing more than 30 emaciated, dehydrated, banged-up pelicans. During the previous two weeks, the injured pelicans had been found from Yuma to Phoenix. The brown pelicans were injured when they descended from the sky, sailed low over sidewalks and asphalt highways, stretched out their feet as though to make a perfect splash landing in water, and then tumbled end-over-end when they hit the pavement. The pelicans, apparently suffering a food shortage in California, flew to Arizona looking for fish. From the sky, the shimmering hot air over the black asphalt appeared to the Pelicans as water. Down they flew for fish and a refreshing dip in a lake. What they found instead was solid pavement, dehydration, hunger, and near death.

This is the way Satan deceives people today. He presents to them a mirage in the wilderness but none of it is true! The thing we want to be aware of in our own Christian life is that we are not being deceived by demons. We need to think

Biblically so we are not taken advantage of by the devil and his demons. Don't follow a mirage in the wilderness.

F. Their activities toward unbelievers (the unsaved).

The good angels have a role of judgment toward the unsaved. The Cherubim prevents fallen man from having access to the tree of life in the Garden of Eden (Gen. 3:24). If the angels would have allowed man to eat in his fallen state, then mankind would be able live forever in his unsaved state without the possibility of being saved. They would live confined in their fallen state. God had a different plan! He wanted mankind to be redeemed from his lost estate and enjoy His presence forever in Heaven.

Angels (God's servants) also played key roles in the judgment of Sodom and Gomorrah (Gen. 19:10-25). An angel inflicted a fatal illness upon King Herod Agrippa I because he accepted the ascription of deity to himself by some of his subjects (Acts 12:20-23). Holy angels will also administer God's future trumpet and bowl judgments upon the unbelieving world living during the Tribulation Period (Rev. 8-18). As we have already researched, angels will also assist Christ at the Second Coming to judge by rapturing unbelievers from the earth and cast them in the horrible place of judgment which is termed Hades (Matt. 13:24-30, 36-43, 47-50; 24:29-31, 37-41; 25:31-46). But at this part of our study, we want to focus on the bad angels and their activity toward the unsaved or lost.

1. Satan functions as the spiritual father of unsaved people.

John 8:44

"Ye are of *your* father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it."

You are of the devil. The devil is your father. Remember that Jesus was speaking to religious people! They were Jews who thought that being part of the Jewish race that they were saved ("We be Abraham's seed" – vs. 33). These religious people

were children of the devil by imitation. They showed their relationship to the devil by living the way he lived and rejecting Jesus Christ as God's Son. He was sending a very clear message. Religion does not save you. Being religious does not mean that you are one of His children. You can be up to your eyeballs in religion and still be the devil's child! It does not matter how long you have been a church member, how many "Hail Mary's" you have said, or how often you have given your money to the church. If you have NOT been saved through the shed blood of Jesus Christ – you are the devil's child. It does not matter if you have been baptized, catechized, or Christianized. If you are not saved through Jesus Christ alone, then you are the devil's child.

1 John 3:10

"In this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil: whosoever doeth not righteousness is not of God, neither he that loveth not his brother."

You are either a child of the devil or a child of God. There is no in-between status. Those who are unsaved are the spiritual offspring of the devil. If you are unsaved then you are the devil's child. When you are born again you become God's child (John 1:12).

2. Satan tries to prevent the unsaved from becoming saved.

This is important to remember as we evangelize and talk to people about salvation through Christ. There is a spiritual wall of darkness that needs to be penetrated in order for a person to be saved. Satan and demons prevent people from being saved in several ways.

a. They steal the truth from people.

Satan and his network evil cohorts (demons) are constantly seeking to keep people in spiritual darkness. They do this by snatching away the Gospel truth from the minds of people before they act upon it and become one of God's children.

Matthew 13:19

“When any one heareth the word of the kingdom, and understandeth *it* not, then cometh the wicked *one*, and catcheth away that which was sown in his heart. This is he which received seed by the way side.”

Several years ago, I had the opportunity to do a pagan funeral. The people wanted to have a party instead of funeral. After they had their fun, I stood up and began telling them about Jesus. It got very quiet. There must have been 150 people attending the funeral. When I finished, I gave an invitation for people to be saved. As I was finishing someone’s phone went off and began playing the Michigan Fight Song or something like this. Some began to chuckle. I immediately thought how Satan was at the very moment of decision, attempting to use this distraction to keep people’s minds from focusing on the truth I had just presented. This is what Satan does. He attempts to steel the seed of the living Word of God from the minds and hearts of people before it germinates.

Dr. Pentecost has a very helpful statement.

“Satan, of course, would rather not have to do the work of taking away the seed that has been sown. He would rather so control the one who is doing the preaching that something other than the good seed of the Word of God is proclaimed. Now listen: think of the work that Satan has to accomplish when the Word is preached. If there are 500 people present when the true Word of God is planted in 500 hearts, he has to have 500 demons getting into 500 different lives to take out that which has been sown. Well, I don’t know if that’s true, he could have one very fast demon, or any multiple of such, but the point is obvious. What an economy of operation it is if he can have those people who think they will be taught the Word of God, hear some lie of the devil. He had to work with only one individual instead of 500. But knowing that the Word of God will be proclaimed, and that the truth of God will be declared, Satan has prepared to prevent the good seed of the Word from falling into the good ground if he can.”

Acts 13:6-10 is another case in point of Satan interfering with evangelism:

“And when they had gone through the isle unto Paphos, they found a certain sorcerer, a false prophet, a Jew, whose name *was* Barjesus: Which was with the deputy of the country, Sergius Paulus, a prudent man; who called for Barnabas and Saul, and desired to hear the word of God. But Elymas the sorcerer (for so is his name by interpretation) withstood them, seeking to turn away the deputy from the faith. Then Saul, (who also *is called* Paul,) filled with the Holy Ghost, set his eyes on

him, And said, O full of all subtilty and all mischief, *thou* child of the devil, *thou* enemy of all righteousness, wilt thou not cease to pervert the right ways of the Lord?"

Here we see how Satan was trying to interfere with the salvation of this man. This is nothing new. Time and time again Satan is opposing the efforts to spread the Gospel to people. He will continually try to interfere with the proclamation and salvation of souls. If you are a faithful witness for Christ, you know this is true. Satan will try and throw up roadblocks in your path of witness. The spiritual world of darkness is constantly opposing the spiritual world of light and truth.

1 Corinthians 16:9

"For a great door and effectual is opened unto me, and *there are* many adversaries."

1 Thessalonians 2:18

"Wherefore we would have come unto you, even I Paul, once and again; but Satan hindered us."

Wherever and whenever there is an open door, you can be sure Satan will be waiting to throw a monkey wrench in your Gospel opportunities of witness. The battle of the ages is very real. We must get our heads out of the sand and realize what is occurring when we witness.

1 Corinthians 1:18

"For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved (being saved) it is the power of God."

Of course, the message itself is not foolish, but to them who reject it, it's foolish. The people who are presently perishing because of their unbelief and rejection of Christ are the direct result of Satan's activity in their heart. Satan paints the picture of Christ's death on the cross as something foolish and blocks their minds from the saving reality of the cross.

I was talking to someone who said that they have a strict outline that they follow when witnessing to the unsaved. I shared with this fellow that God does not necessarily work with outlines. He saves souls through the Gospel. Share the Gospel with the unsaved. It's the only light that can penetrate through the darkness. And

if God is pleased, by His intervention and power, we can overcome the roadblocks that Satan puts in our way when witnessing.

b. They blind people and keep them from truth.

Blinding people in unbelief is one of Satan's major ways to keep them in an unsaved or unregenerate state without God's salvation and life. Satan is aggressively keeping people from understanding the Gospel.

2 Corinthians 4:3-4

"But if our gospel be hid (veiled), it is hid to them that are lost: In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them."

Satan blinds these people in the realm of their "minds" or thinking and reasoning. This is why people do not believe in the saving message of the Gospel. People say, "I don't need the Gospel" or "I'm okay the way that I am." "I am a good person." "I am religious." "I attend the Catholic Church." "I am a Lutheran." "I'm a Mormon, Jehovah's Witness, Muslim, etc."

Why do millions of people look to themselves and their religion and miss the simplicity of the Gospel? It's because of the blindness and deception of the Evil One. Why don't people see the relevance of the Gospel to their lives today? Why do they doubt it, deny it, and detract from it? It's because of the blindness of Satan. Satan has put a veil over their minds. This is why people are lost and going to hell. There is nothing wrong with the Gospel. The light is shining, but the Devil has blinded their eyes so they cannot see.

This reminds me of a group of miners who were trapped in a mine in West Virginia after an explosion. Finally, rescuers got food over to them, and then they got an electric light over to the place where they were trapped. A young miner there was looking right into the light and said, "Why don't they turn on the lights?" All of the men looked at him, startled. He had been blinded by the explosion. Satan blinds many people today even through the light of the Gospel is shining. So how is a person saved? Through the proclamation of the message of the Gospel ("lest the

light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them” – 2 Cor. 4:4).

In other words, the lost will remain in their unsaved, blinded state of unbelief, unless the light of Gospel truth shines in their hearts. It takes the “light” (revelation or illumination) of the Gospel to penetrate the spiritual darkness and blindness of Satan. Light pokes holes in the darkness! How does the light shine? Through the work of the Holy Spirit of God taking place in the hearts of the lost. The Spirit of God uses the Gospel of God to turn people into the sons of God.

2 Corinthians 4:6

“For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to *give* the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.”

God commanded light to shine out of darkness. He said, “Let there be light,’ and there was light” (Gen. 1:3). This was physical light but Paul is using this illustration to teach that God also gives us spiritual light. The parallels to the creation account are fascinating. As the Gospel is preached, the Spirit of God moves on the heart of a person, just as He moved on the face of the deep after the original creation.

Genesis 1:2-3

“And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness *was* upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters. And God said, Let there be light: and there was light.”

It is God the Holy Spirit that shines into the heart of this person, convicting him, showing him that he is a guilty sinner and needs a Savior. Friend, it takes the Spirit of God’s movement to make things happen. It was true at the original creation and it’s true in the new creation when God makes us a new creature in Christ (2 Cor. 5:17). This is very personal and beautiful. What a wonderful day it was when the lights came on! When God shined or illuminated our hearts with the Gospel, we were able to respond to His marvelous grace and be saved.

The phrase “to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ” (2 Cor. 4:6). Paul was probably alluding to his own conversion experience on the Damascus road when he wrote this verse (Acts 9:3, 8–9; 22:6, 9, 11; 26:13; Gal.

1:15–16). It was on this day that the apostle saw God’s glory in the unveiled face of Jesus Christ who appeared to him in that great light. However, there is a spiritual application of this to our lives today. The light or revelation given to believers today is the knowledge of God’s salvation through Jesus Christ alone. Satan is trying to block illumination, but God is providing it.

The famous quote attributed to the circus promoter P. T. Barnum, “There’s a sucker born every minute,” appropriately sums up a major result of the Genesis Fall, why unsaved people are deceived, and why we as God’s people can also fall to Satan’s deception. One of the ways Satan deceives people today is through gullibility. In the most highly educated society in history, people remain amazingly gullible. Deceitful swindlers take in thousands with phony investment schemes, fake charities, bogus health claims, and a myriad of other scams. They ensnare victims through a variety of means, including ads, telemarketing, and spam e-mail. But far more dangerous than the petty plots of human hucksters are the deadly schemes of Satan.

3. Satan directs unsaved people to do his evil work in the world.

Cain committed the first murder in history and the Bible says that Cain was influenced by the devil in committing this dastardly deed.

1 John 3:12

“Not as Cain, *who* was of that wicked one, and slew his brother. And wherefore slew he him? Because his own works were evil, and his brother’s righteous.”

Our justice system of today will sometimes tell you that the reason a person commits murder is because they are mentally insane. Well, God’s Word has a different story on this matter. The Bible says that a murderer is a murderer because of the influence of Satan and demons. To be “of the wicked one” means to be influenced by Satan.

John 8:44

“Ye are of *your* father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning (a reference to Cain murdering Abel), and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it.”

Listen, when a person rises up to kill another person, you can be sure that they are influenced by Satan and demons. Satan also prompted the unsaved enemies of Jesus to kill him (John 8:40-44). Since Jesus links many of the Jews with Satan, who is a murderer, He is likely inferring they would soon murder Him.

Jesus told the Jews in Acts 2:23:

“Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain.”

Satan was behind the murder of Jesus. Satan, who began his murdering trail in the days of Genesis, continued to influence people to murder Jesus, and he is still orchestrating unsaved people to commit horrific acts of murder today. Satan is also behind the persecution and murdering of God’s saints.

Revelation 2:10

“Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer: behold, the devil shall cast *some* of you into prison, that ye may be tried; and ye shall have tribulation ten days: be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life.”

Revelation 2:13

“I know thy works, and where thou dwellest, *even* where Satan's seat *is*: and thou holdest fast my name, and hast not denied my faith, even in those days wherein Antipas *was* my faithful martyr, who was slain among you, where Satan dwelleth.”

Wherever and whenever murder is taking place, you can be sure Satan is there. The Evil One is behind premeditated murder or the taking of human life without God’s approval. Everything from abortion, cult killings (Islamic terrorists beheading people) and all acts of unjustified killing (the illegal taking of human life) fall under this category.

Murder rates rose significantly in 25 of the nation’s 100 largest cities, according to an analysis by The New York Times of new data compiled from individual police departments. The findings confirm a trend that was tracked recently in a study published by the National Institute of Justice. It states: “The homicide increase in

the nation's large cities was real and nearly unprecedented," wrote the study's author, Richard Rosenfeld, a criminology professor at the University of Missouri-St. Louis who explored homicide data in 56 large American cities. The F.B.I. released in 2015 a crime data for the entire country on September 26. It showed that the murder rate rose 11 percent across the United States in 2015, jumping more last year than it had in nearly half a century.

In the Times analysis, half of the increase in homicides came from just seven cities — Baltimore, Chicago, Cleveland, Houston, Milwaukee, Nashville and Washington. Chicago had the most homicides — 488 in 2015 — far more than the 352 in New York City, which has three times as many people. Baltimore had the largest increase — 133 more than 2014 — and the second-highest rate in 2015, after St. Louis, which had 59 homicides per 100,000 residents. The number of cities where rates rose significantly was the largest since the height of violent crime in the early 1990s. Who is behind all of this? It is Satan. As long as Satan is in the world, we will have murder. This is because he was a murderer from the beginning.

John 10:10

"The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have *it* more abundantly."

Satan also entered Judas Iscariot to motivate him to betray Jesus.

Luke 22:3-6

"Then entered Satan into Judas surnamed Iscariot, being of the number of the twelve. And he went his way, and communed with the chief priests and captains, how he might betray him unto them. And they were glad, and covenanted to give him money. And he promised, and sought opportunity to betray him unto them in the absence of the multitude."

In another part of our study, we will discover that a Christian cannot be demon possessed. Judas was not a true believer in Jesus Christ and the Bible says Satan entered Judas to influence Judas to betray Jesus so that Jesus might ultimately be crucified on the cross. What legacy does Judas leave with us today? What lesson do we learn from this betrayer? I think the legacy and lesson of Judas is very clear.

Judas represents hypocrisy and deception that an unsaved person can portray or live out before true believers. Judas ate with the disciples and Jesus, He saw the miracles of Jesus, heard the words of Jesus, was part of the band of men that were nearest to Jesus, and yet he was an imposter. He did not believe on Jesus to be his Savior. He was a hypocrite, a play actor, and phony. His true nature eventually came out.

1 John 2:19

“They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would *no doubt* have continued with us: but *they went out*, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us.”

We also discover that Satan prompts unsaved people to lie (John 8:44; Rev. 3:9) and blaspheme against God and Jesus Christ (Rev. 2:9). Satan is alive and well. You can almost hear the hiss of the serpent when people blaspheme God today. They curse God to hell and take God’s name in vain without batting an eye.

Jesus said in Matthew 12:36:

“But I say unto you, That every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment.”

This is a solemn reminder to all Christ-rejecting unsaved people. A day of reckoning is coming for the unsaved. They will be held accountable for their wicked actions and every wicked and ungodly word they have ever spoken against God.

4. Satan stimulates unsaved people to promote false religion and apostasy.

Tertullian, a church father, once said:

“Diabolos est Dei simia,” and that translates into “The devil is God’s monkey.”

What Tertullian meant was that the devil likes nothing better than to ape God or give a false impression that he is God. There are a lot of unsaved people and even Christians today who think God is doing something when it isn’t God at all. It is Satan. This is another way that the devil works among unsaved people in this world. He directs them into false religions and the worship of other gods. The devil is opposed to true Christianity but he isn’t opposed to churchianity or those who

represent religion but are worshipping false gods and participating with pagan worship.

Deuteronomy 32:17

“They sacrificed unto devils, not to God; to gods whom they knew not, to new *gods that* came newly up, whom your fathers feared not.”

The people of Israel adopted the pagan Gentile practices of Canaan. One of the most wicked and vile practices was the sacrificing of their own children to pagan gods. This whole heathen practice was fueled by demonism. Satan was behind the murdering of children. God calls this practice an abomination. It is something utterly detestable in His sight.

Deuteronomy 12:31

“Thou shalt not do so unto the LORD thy God: for every abomination to the LORD, which he hateth, have they done unto their gods; for even their sons and their daughters they have burnt in the fire to their gods.”

These pagan gods were called “the idols of Canaan” (Deut. 12:38). Child sacrifice was a terrible heathen practice. Satan has always been promoting the taking of human life. Over the centuries the devil has focused on the murdering of innocent children.

Psalms 106:35-38

“But were mingled among the heathen, and learned their works. And they served their idols: which were a snare unto them. Yea, they sacrificed their sons and their daughters unto devils, And shed innocent blood, *even* the blood of their sons and of their daughters, whom they sacrificed unto the idols of Canaan: and the land was polluted with blood.”

Sacrificing children in the name of pagan idols and gods was fueled by demonism. In fact, the murdering of innocent children in our own country and world today, the abortion epidemic, is backed by the devil and demons. Anyone who can sacrifice their child to pagan religion or butcher a child in a doctor’s office in the name of “Planned Parenthood” is being heavily influenced by demons. You cannot murder a child without being either possessed or obsessed by demons. The practice of taking the lives of children is one of the most despicable and sinister practices found in the

Bible. In New Testament times we discover that the sacrificing of meat to the idols of pagan gods was also instigated by demons.

1 Corinthians 10:20

“But I say, that the things which the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice to devils, and not to God: and I would not that ye should have fellowship with devils.”

This reminds us that all false religion is supported by the devil and demons. Demons are behind idols which represent gods and people that are being worshipped as gods. Demons are promoting false worship in the pagan religions of our world today.

Revelation 9:20

“And the rest of the men which were not killed by these plagues yet repented not of the works of their hands, that they should not worship devils, and idols of gold, and silver, and brass, and stone, and of wood: which neither can see, nor hear, nor walk.”

Behind every idol is demonism. This includes the idols of Buddha, Confucius, the many idols of Hinduism, the idols of Mary, canonized saints, and angels. To look at the representations of men, women, animals and bow down in prayer and worship before them, depend upon them, and find help through them is nothing but ancient paganism. We should not be fooled with incense, smoke, prayer beads, statues of Mary, and many other religious paraphernalia within Roman Catholicism today. This too is a pagan religion disguised as Christianity. When you look at a statue of Mary with prayer beads in your hand, you are committing idolatry. Through this stature, you are looking to Mary, depending upon Mary to save and help you. As a result, you have created a goddess status of Mary through an idol representation of her.

Muslims also commit idolatry. They make the claim that they are not idolaters but they really are committing idolatry. The Muslims pray five times a day when they turn toward the Kabba (“The Cube”), which is in Mecca and the most sacred site in Islam. When in Mecca Muslims bow before it as if it were some kind of god. What does the black stone in Kabba represent? It is considered the "House of Allah." This stone cube is worshiped because it is believed to be intrinsically sacred. This is idolatry. A Muslim is worshipping the false God of Allah as they bow before this sacred stone which supposedly represents Allah. Behind all of these idols is the

work of demonism. This is what the Bible teaches. The Bible is very clear that the promotion proliferation and practice of worshipping other gods in the form of idols is fueled by the world of darkness. Behind every false religion is Satan.

My wife and I do some light jogging up at the Junior High Track. They resurfaced the track and did a very nice job. It has cushion to it which helps with the knees. The surface has some give to it and as you get older your knees more and more give! Anyway, at the end of our jog we usually go up and down the grandstands which were also newly constructed. I was the first one to reach them. They were build out of a strong steel and aluminum. However, the other morning when I made my way on to the first step, I slipped. I did not realize this but overnight the frost had accumulated on the steps and made them very dangerous to walk. The light coating of frost was not discernible. It blended in to the aluminum and could not be detected.

As we continue in our study of Satan and his wicked angels, who are spirit beings, we must remember that they are very deceptive. They are like the frost on the aluminum steps. They want to go undetected. Many times Satan and demons do not want to be seen as something or someone that is wrong or out-of-the-main-stream. Instead, they want to take on a religious phi-sad and possess what appears to be a “form of godliness” (2 Tim. 3:5). We have been seeing this in relation to how Satan supports false religion and apostasy.

Satan’s support of false religion will come to a climax during the Tribulation Period. He will bring about the great harlot religion during the first half of the Tribulation Period (Rev. 17:1-10) and then promote worldwide Antichrist worship by the middle of the Tribulation Period (Rev. 13:3-4). During this time, Satan will erect a statue of the Antichrist, the coming world ruler, and force the entire world to bow down and worship it (Rev. 13:14-15). However, worshipping and giving allegiance to the statue is not only an act of worshipping the Antichrist but ultimately an act of worshipping Satan who is behind the Antichrist (“And they worshipped the dragon which gave power unto the beast” - Rev. 13:4).

Satan will be behind this worldwide religion that overtakes the entire earth in the coming day in order to get the world to worship himself. This has been Satan’s desire since his fall (Matt. 4:9). The Bible teaches that whenever a person is involved in

pagan idolatrous worship that detracts from the worship of the true God, the worshiper is actually worshipping Satan. In the future Tribulation Period, the Bible reveals how Satan will work directly with the Antichrist and his false religion or apostasy.

How will Satan work with the Antichrist of the End Time?

- Satan will empower the Antichrist (Revelation 13:4; 2 Thess. 2:8-9).

What we need to be careful about is that we don't allow the devil to influence and empower our lives. We have discussed this in a previous section of our study. We need to keep a guard about our lives. Jesus said, "Watch and pray" (Matt. 26:41). Stay on your spiritual tiptoes!

- Satan will promote idolatry of Antichrist (Rev. 14:11; 16:2; 19:20).

Although we condemn the gross idolatry of the End Times, the greatest idolatry of worshipping the Antichrist through his erected statue, we must also keep guard of the subtle forms of idolatry that can occur in our lives.

1 John 5:21

"Little children, keep yourselves from idols. Amen."

Whatever takes the place of God in your heart and life become an idol to you. Is there something that has taken God's place and control in your life? Is there something which has captured your heart and removed God from the throne of your heart and life? These are important questions to ask yourself.

- Satan will spread deception through the Antichrist (2 Thess. 2:9-10).

2 Thessalonians 2:9-10

"*Even him*, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved."

These verses are talking about the deception that the unrighteousness actions of the Antichrist, who is energized by Satan, produces in the hearts and minds of unsaved people. Many people living during the Tribulation Period will find themselves hoodwinked or deceived by the Antichrist's words, actions, and false claims. Satan will empower the Antichrist and this man of sin will deceive many people into thinking he is God by claiming to be a reincarnated figure of the past, who has come back from the dead, and who will rule as an absolute deity – God himself (Rev. 13:2–4; 17:8). The Antichrist will oppose and blaspheme the true God of Heaven and seek to promote himself as the only true God (2 Thess. 2:4). Satan is always trying to ape or replace God.

Satan will bring about all of this deception with his worldwide false religion that will occur during the final years of the Tribulation Period. As we have seen previously, we need to be careful the devil does not deceive us within our Christian life and get us off track. Today Satan is also stimulating the increasing growth or apostasy and apostate teaching throughout the world and in the church.

1 Timothy 4:1

“Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils.”

The Bible calls Satan's workers as “seducing spirits” which means they are evil spirits who try and lure people away from God's truth. You will notice the influence of demons is in the area of apostate doctrines which are a departure from “the faith” (the major truths and teachings of the Bible – what Christians believe and embrace). The Bible says that demons play an active and ongoing role in deceiving people with their own set of “doctrines” (teachings that run contrary to the basic tenants of Christian teaching and living). The demons have their own doctrinal books that are deceiving and damning people to hell.

A.W. Tozer said:

“The devil is a better theologian than any of us and is a devil still.”

The devil knows correct theology but he tries to twist it and distort it to suit his own end – the damnation of souls and dethroning of truth. Have you ever heard of the liberal manifesto of the doctrine of demons?

Someone likened it to this:

“A God without wrath brought men without sin into a Kingdom without judgment through the ministrations of a Christ without a Cross.”

Satan always denies the authority of Scripture, the deity of Christ, salvation by grace through faith alone, the Second Coming of Christ and God’s judgment and wrath which is connected with the Second Coming (2 Peter 3:4). When a person rejects the deity, virgin birth, death, burial, and bodily resurrection of Christ as the only means of salvation, then you can be sure he is deceived by demonic doctrines.

1 John 4:1

“Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world.”

The Bible calls us to “try” or test the spirits because behind the men and messages that reject the major tenant of Christian teaching are demonic spirits. Apostate denominationalism, the teaching of the cults and the emergent church (a new type of emerging church) is also riddled with doctrines of demons!

Rob Bell Jr. is an American author, motivational speaker and former pastor. He is part of the emerging church movement. Bell was the founder of Mars Hill Bible Church located in Grandville, Michigan, which he pastored until 2012. Somebody mentioned this man to me a while back, so I thought I would investigate his claims and theology. The method and the goal if the Emerging Church Movement is basically trying to reinvent Christ and Christianity in order to make them more acceptable or palatable to the unsaved masses. It amounts to *recreating God in the fallen image of man*. This whole movement is delusionary an millions of professing Christians caught in its web of deception.

When speaking of false prophets, Jesus said in Matthew 7:20:

“Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them.”

What are the fruits of this man Rod Bell? Doctrinally, what he states is apostate. It is undermining the truth of Scripture and the essential doctrines of Christianity.

What are his claims. At one-point Bell states:

"This is not just the same old message with new methods. We're rediscovering Christianity as an Eastern religion, as a way of life." He also states that they are "a new kind of Christian."

Consider what else Bell says about the Virgin Birth in a book called "Velvet Elvis" (Repainting the Christian Faith). "What if tomorrow someone digs up definitive proof that Jesus had a real, earthly, biological father named Larry, and archeologists find Larry's tomb and do DNA samples and prove beyond a shadow of a doubt that the virgin birth was really just a bit of mythologizing the Gospel writers threw in to appeal to the followers of the Mithra and Dionysian religious cults that were hugely popular at the time of Jesus, whose gods had virgin births?"

But what if, as you study the origin of the word 'virgin' you discover that the word 'virgin' in the gospel of Matthew actually comes from the book of Isaiah, and then you find out that in the Hebrew language at that time, the word 'virgin' could mean several things. And what if you discover that in the first century being 'born of a virgin' also referred to a child whose mother became pregnant the first time she had intercourse?

Bell compares the Christian faith to a large trampoline, with its cardinal doctrines (truths evangelicals have historically deemed essential) functioning like the springs that support the jumping platform. The individual springs are not absolutely essential, Bell says—including the virgin birth:

"What if that spring [the virgin birth] were seriously questioned? Could a person keep on jumping? Could a person still love God? Could you still be a Christian? Is the way of Jesus still the best possible way to live? Or does the whole thing fall apart? . . . If the whole faith falls apart when we reexamine and rethink one spring, then it wasn't that strong in the first place, was it?" (26-27)

This is casting doubt on the Virgin Birth of Jesus Christ.

Rob Bell, in his book, "Velvet Elvis," also states: "When people use the word hell, what do they mean? They mean a place, an event, a situation absent of how God

desires things to be. Famine, debt, oppression, loneliness, despair, death, slaughter—they are all hell on earth. Jesus' desire for his followers is that they live in such a way that they bring heaven to earth.”

Bell ridicules the notion of a literal eternal hell:

“What's disturbing is when people talk more about hell after this life than they do about Hell here and now. As a Christian, I want to do what I can to resist hell coming to earth.”

“We are speculating,” he said of definitive discussions surrounding heaven and hell. “No one knows.” The only hell that exists in Bell’s theology is a state of mind or an earthly experience of suffering that Bell says God wants eliminated. “The people who talk the most about hell when you die seem to talk the least about the very hells on Earth right now — and we have hells on Earth,” Bell said. “We have urban schools that are falling apart, we have people starving, we have rampant abuse of the environment, we have literally millions of people struggling with suicidal thoughts.”

Rob Bell also rejects the clear statement of the Gospel:

“Jesus wants to save us from making the good news about another world and not this one. Jesus wants to save us from preaching a gospel that is only about individuals and not about the systems that enslave them. Jesus wants to save us from shrinking the gospel down to a transaction about the removal of sin and not about every single particle of creation being reconciled to its maker.”

Bell attempts to shift the emphasis from personal salvation for sinners, to an ambiguous emphasis on this vague hope of universal restoration of all people.

It’s no surprise that Bell also rejects the authority of Scripture:

“The Bible is still in the center for us, but it’s a different kind of center. We want to embrace mystery, rather than conquer it.”

He believes the holy book, which was “written by people,” is “extremely inspired.” He goes on to say: “It was written by real people, in real places, at real times and it reflects evolving human consciousness, so the people who wrote the Bible were

writing from a particular period of time,” he said. Bell fails to realize that God claims to be the author of the Bible for it is “inspired by God” according to 2 Timothy 3:16 (not by people who were merely inspired to write it).

Bell argues that the Bible was written by men and not by divine fiat. Let me tell you something. Bell is following doctrines or teachings of demons! He is not following God’s truth.

1 John 4:1

“Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world”

Rod Bell’s profession of faith is not credible. Rob Bell is an apostate who is sending people to hell. His religiosity fools many people and you can be sure that Satan is behind the deception. Satan is an angel of light and his ministers, who are being directed by demons, like Rod Bell, also appear as ministers of what is right and main stream but their doctrines are damnable. This is because they doubt God’s Word and replace it with false teachings.

Genesis 3:1

“Now the serpent was more subtil than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said unto the woman, Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden?”

Satan has historically, and to this very day, tried to get people, like Rod Bell, and many others, to doubt God’s Word. Did God really mean what He said? Are you sure that God’s Word is true? Maybe you need to understand it mythologically or allegorically. Doubt, diversion, and denial are part of Satan’s arsenal in getting them away from the truth. If you don’t think demon deception and doctrines are in the world today, then you had better think again.

When radical Islamic zealots can run around and chop the heads off of people and think they are doing God a favor, they are deceived by demons and demonic doctrines. When a person thinks they are going to Heaven to have a harem of women, if they die a martyr of Islam, then they are deceived by demons and false

teaching. They are following doctrines or teachings of demons! Satan is propagating all kinds of false teachings today. The oldest one in the book is that you can sin and get away with it. This is the lie he sold to Eve.

Genesis 3:4

“And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die.”

Satan wanted Eve and you and me to believe that sin does not have consequences. In other words, sin or disobedience to what God has said won't affect us in an adverse way. Everything will be okay if we disobey God.

I remember hearing about the story of Hemingway. It was in an article written in Eternity magazine. It stated these facts right after Hemingway's death. The article was regarding the fact that at his heyday, it was said that he had proven that you could sin and get away with it. He had destroyed biblical morality by doing exactly as he pleased and having the world on a string. It said he had won wars and tumbled women and done this and had drunk as much as he – on and on it went, giving him every bit of credit for having just obliterated the biblical view of morality. And then 10 years later, to the very day, he took a gun, put it to the side of his head, and blew his brains out.

Satan says you can get away with sin and rebellion. This is one of his false doctrines. Don't you believe it. Satan says, “You can sin all you want and everything will be all right.” This is the same bill of goods he sold Eve. How did that turn out?

2 Corinthians 11:3

“But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ.”

The simplicity of Christ means that Satan is trying to steer our hearts and minds, as believers, away from being devoted to Jesus Christ morally, spirituality, and unreservedly to His will. Satan does this with an appeal to our mind or intellect. Intellectual deception is how he gets us.

We see in this same chapter that Satan spreads his false teaching and claims about God, Jesus Christ, and salvation through counterfeit believers who are actually opposing the truth. Even as believers, we also need to be careful we do not succumb to his false teachings and perversions which sometimes appear to be sound, Scriptural, and straight on the surface.

2 Corinthians 11:13-15

“For such *are* false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ. And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. Therefore *it is* no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works.”

Satan does his dastardly work of perverting and blinding people to the truth by putting his own demon-influenced and demon-possessed people in pulpits, who in return propagate false doctrine and teaching that reject the clear revelation of the Gospel of grace.

This verse reminds us of several important facts.

❖ Satan’s followers are filled with deception.

The Bible says these false apostles during Paul’s day were disguising themselves as God’s true servants, but they were “deceitful workers.” They are out to deceive people regarding the major Biblical tenants of Biblical Christianity. They might even tell you that they believe in God, Jesus Christ, salvation, the Gospel, and Heaven. But they have a different dictionary than the Bible does regarding the major truths related to Christianity. Many of Satan’s workers use correct terminology or words but have a different meaning behind these words. They are not promoting the true Gospel, God, Jesus Christ, or plan of salvation as recorded in the Bible.

2 Corinthians 11:4

“For if he that cometh preacheth another Jesus, whom we have not preached, or *if* ye receive another spirit, which ye have not received, or another gospel, which ye have not accepted, ye might well bear with *him*.”

Don't let the Mormons, Jehovah Witness, or Muslims deceive you. They are worshipping a different Jesus, have a different Gospel, and do not present the true way of salvation. The Bible says they are "deceitful workers." The deceitful workers of Satan use their trade by disguising themselves as apostles of Christ to deceive the gullible and undiscerning. Though they posed as equals to Paul and the other apostles, the false apostles were in reality deceitful workers, Satan's servants who disguised themselves as servants of righteousness. The Bible reveals that deceit is a hallmark of false teachers. The claim to be declaring truth but their message is a false gospel of works, a rejection of the major tenants of Biblical truth and Christianity. Roman Catholicism rejects salvation by grace alone, justification by faith alone, as do the cults and many other liberal denominations of our day. Those who reject the central doctrines of the Bible are backed by Satan demons!

❖ Satan is filled with deception.

The Bible goes on to explain why Satan's followers are filled with deception and deceptive talk. It states: "And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed (masqueraded or changing the outward form) into an angel of light." The reason why Satan's followers are deceptive is because Satan himself is deceptive. He transforms or masquerades himself as an angel or messenger of light in order to deceive people. Nowhere else but here do the Scriptures give this description of Satan.

What does this mean? Does it mean that Satan literally and physically turns himself into an angel of light? Actually, Satan does not have to do this for he is already an angel who manifests physical light. He was created this way by God. Of course, because of Satan's original creation as a being of exquisite beauty and light, he can masquerade himself as a messenger, which appears to be righteous and good, when manifesting his beauty and brilliance to others in what are often termed "near death" experiences.

Let's reflect on Satan's beauty. Satan is usually physically pictured today as a horned, evil-looking red creature with a tail. This picture of the devil comes from Greek mythology. Of course, this is not the way the Bible presents the devil. In regards to his own spiritual existence, he emanates physical brilliance or light from his

presence. If the devil would make himself visible to you, you would see a being of breathtaking beauty (Ezek. 28:12-15). Satan was created as a being of magnificent splendor and beauty. And yes, he might use the light of his creation as a masquerade or cover-up to his true nature which is spiritual darkness and deception. Perhaps this explains some of the “bright light” and “out-of-body” experiences of the afterlife that people are having today.

In regards to Satan’s spiritual existence, He emanates or shines forth light or radiance and can certainly deceive people into thinking that this light is peaceful and is from God. So, when Satan appears to someone in this way, manifesting or beaming forth light from his creative presence, this light actually becomes a “mask” or masquerade of deception to them. However, this verse is not given to merely inform us about Satan’s visible appearance as light; the expression of Satan as a being of light takes on a metaphorical meaning. Describing Satan as an angel (messenger) of light means that he masquerades himself as light or something that is good, honorable, acceptable, and righteous. But his light is deceptive and He lures people into deception and confuses them in order to seal their fate in hell.

The devil deceives people by presenting himself as a messenger of light, a messenger of something that appears to be good, positive, helpful, and right. He does this through various kinds of temptation. The word “angel” in this verse literally means messenger and this seems to be what is suggested in this context. Satan presents himself and the messages he sends into the minds of people as something that is righteous, honorable, respectful. Satan’s messages which are clothed in religious disguise are especially deceptive. Of course, the devil can send his deceptive messages DIRECTLY through temptation and false doctrines but many times he sends these messages INDIRECTLY through His co-workers who are presenting false teachers presenting false messages.

Someone said:

“Satan is most effective in the church when he comes not as an open enemy, but as a false friend; not when he persecutes the church, but when he joins it; not when he attacks the pulpit, but when he stands in it.”

The point is this, Satan himself appears as a messenger of light (false light and deception). Since this is true, Satan's followers also appear as messengers of light. But this is not true light. It is the false lights of deception. Today the lights of Mormonism, Modernism, Romanism, Liberalism, Confucianism, Buddhism, and the Muslim religion are all false lights which are damming people to hell. They appear as those who are presenting the truth but are actually messengers of darkness and damnation. Paul sees Satan behind his followers. He sees the false display of light which they portray before others to be just like their leader portrays, who is Satan.

The Bible says, "his ministers" are also transformed (masqueraded) as the ministers of righteousness." Satan, along with his ministers, want to hide their true selves through religious disguise, prayers, prayer beads, statues, idolatry, and many other religious paraphernalia. This is done to deceive great multitudes of people. We must remember that error counterfeits the truth to be accepted by the unsaved. In the final judgment, the masks of these false teachers and apostates, who are energized by Satan, will be removed and their works will be identified as evil ("whose end shall be according to their works" – 2 Cor. 11:15). This means they will burn in hell in proportion to their evil and deceptive works which they have taught.

General Questions About Satan

Before going into more of our general questions on angels, let's deal with some direct questions about Satan and demons. These are going to be very interesting questions. Of course, we cannot ask and answer all the questions. We would need to do another study just on this subject alone. We have already answered some questions about Satan in our previous studies, but these questions are important about Satan and demons.

When studying about Satan, I have always followed the advice of Mark Bubeck: "We must remain God-centered and never become Satan-centered. That is always a danger. We must not become so conscious of Satan's power that we are always fighting the devil instead of serving the Lord."

If we become a Satan hunter we are going to become preoccupied with the Evil One and his wicked works instead of Jesus and His works of grace, redemption, and

victory. So, although we are studying about Satan, we are not centering our life upon him but Christ (Gal. 2:20, Phil. 1:21).

1. If Jesus defeated Satan at the cross, why is he still active today in the world?

The Bible does teach that Satan was defeated on the cross.

John 16:11

“Of judgment, because the prince of this world (Satan) is judged.”

This means a sentence was carried out on Satan when Jesus Christ died on the cross.

Colossians 2:15 speaks to the same truth:

“*And* having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them in it.”

Hebrews 2:14 adds these words:

“Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power (authority) of death, that is, the devil.”

The word “destroy” means that Christ’s death annulled Satan’s power or authority over the lives of God’s redeemed people. Previous to Christ’s death and resurrection, Satan possessed authority over the lives of all people, both God’s children and his own children. In what sense does the devil have the power of death? Probably the chief sense in which he has this power is in demanding death. It was through Satan that sin first entered the world. As a result, God’s holiness decreed the death of all who sinned (Rom. 6:23). So in his role as adversary, the devil can demand that the penalty for sin be paid and in one sense hold all mankind under his authority and power in this way.

This is why God’s saints, prior to the death and resurrection of Christ, entered the center of the earth (Eph. 4:8). The penalty had not yet been paid and they could not enter Heaven until it was paid by the death of the Son of God. Everything changed when Jesus died on the cross and paid for sin’s penalty, and rose from the

dead. Satan no longer has authority over the realm of death and people's lives who are redeemed. Jesus died and rose again to release us from Satan's demands to keep us in the realm of death and under the sentence of God's judgment.

Jesus triumphantly declares in Revelation 1:18:

"I *am* he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death."

Hebrews 2:15 goes on to speak of Christ's victory:

"And deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage."

Christ's death on the cross also (in addition) promised to grant redemption to those living on the post-side of Christ's work. In other words, after Christ died on the cross, all those living on earth, who were bound to Satan's power, could be forever released from the power of Satan, since Christ's died to release people from Satan's power. Taken as a whole, these Bible verses teach that Satan was judged and defeated in connection with Christ's death and resurrection. The open tomb proves that what Christ said about defeating Satan on the cross is true. This means from a practical standpoint that through Christ's death and resurrection that Satan can no longer keep us bound to the realm of death and judgment, that his power has been canceled over our lives as believers, Satan has been overthrown, and his own judgment is awaiting him.

The sentence upon Satan was already given. If this is true, then why is Satan still roaming about deceiving millions of people? The answer is in the providential purpose of God. God has simply given Satan more time to operate on this earth before His final doom and defeat is meted out upon him.

John 16:11

"Of judgment, because the prince of this world (Satan) is judged."

The verdict has already been given to Satan and his judgment is sure. However, according to God's plan, the actually carrying out of Satan's sentence is in still in the future.

Erwin Lutzer described Satan's defeat and power to still roam about like this:

"Today he (Satan) is on bail. He is allowed to roam until his final judgment. The sentence to the Lake of Fire has only been postponed. His verdict has already been read. We have seen the lightening. The thunder is on the way."

Yes, the lightning happened at Calvary. Satan was defeated and sentenced to doom. However, the thunder will clap when Jesus returns to earth and binds Satan for 1,000 years (Rev. 20-3) and then finally judges Satan in the Lake of Fire (Rev. 20:10).

Writing in Moody Monthly, Carl Armerding recounted his experience of watching a wildcat in a zoo. "As I stood there, an attendant entered the cage through a door on the opposite side. He had nothing in his hands but a broom. Carefully closing the door, he proceeded to sweep the floor of the cage. He observed that the worker had no weapon to ward off an attack by the beast. In fact, when he got to the corner of the cage where the wildcat was lying, he poked the animal with the broom. The wildcat hissed at him and then lay down in another corner of the enclosure. Armerding remarked to the attendant, 'You certainly are a brave man.'

'No, I ain't brave,' he replied as he continued to sweep. 'Well, then, that cat must be tame.' 'No,' came the reply, 'he ain't tame.' 'If you aren't brave and the wildcat isn't tame, then I can't understand why he doesn't attack you.' Armerding said the man chuckled, then replied with an air of confidence, 'Mister, he's old -- and he ain't got no teeth.'

Like this wild cat, the teeth have been removed from Satan by Christ's death on the cross. His power and authority over our lives has been canceled out due to Christ's death on Calvary's cross and His resurrection from the grave.

2. Can Satan cause physical sickness and disease?

We know that the Bible clearly teaches that Satan can be the instigator behind physical disease. Several places in Scripture tell us that Satan and demons can afflict people with physical maladies. Job was afflicted with a terrible disease by Satan.

Job 2:4-8

"And Satan answered the LORD, and said, Skin for skin, yea, all that a man hath will he give for his life. But put forth thine hand now, and touch his bone and his flesh,

and he will curse thee to thy face. And the LORD said unto Satan, Behold, he *is* in thine hand; but save his life. So went Satan forth from the presence of the LORD, and smote Job with sore boils from the sole of his foot unto his crown. And he took him a potsherd to scrape himself withal; and he sat down among the ashes.”

It’s important to note that Satan could only afflict Job with God’s permission and he was restrained from taking Job’s life. We also know that Job viewed all of His suffering from the hand of God’s sovereignty (Job 13:15). In other words, Job knew that his suffering was ultimately the result of God’s doing and purpose for his life. Although God had allowed Satan to inflict him with disease, Job’s viewed of his sickness as actually coming from God – not Satan. This is because Job understood that behind the devil is God’s greater purpose being worked out in his life. God was actually in charge of his illness – not the devil. Nevertheless, we find in this Biblical narrative that Satan was given permission to inflict Job with a terrible and painful disease.

The Gospel accounts contain other instances of demon diseases (Matt. 9:32-33; 12:22; Mark 9:25; Luke 13:11, 16). Everything from muteness, blindness, deafness, physical deformity, and mental disorders has been attributed to the work of demons. When people are possessed by demons they can experience mental or psychological disorders or abnormalities which is evidenced in bizarre behavior such as of violence (Matt. 8:28), abnormal strength (Mark 5:4) screaming (Matt. 5:5), self-mutilation (Mark 5:5), foaming at the mouth (Mark 9:20), nakedness (Luke 8:27), and grinding of the teeth (Mark 9:18). In Mathew 17:15-18, s demonic spirit caused a man to totally lose control of himself.

Matthew 17:15-18

“Lord, have mercy on my son: for he is lunatick, and sore vexed: for oftentimes he falleth into the fire, and oft into the water. And I brought him to thy disciples, and they could not cure him. Then Jesus answered and said, O faithless and perverse generation, how long shall I be with you? how long shall I suffer you? bring him hither to me. And Jesus rebuked the devil; and he departed out of him: and the child was cured from that very hour.”

Of course, we must acknowledge that demon possession and lunacy is different than possessing mental disorders which are simply part of a fallen world and the result of the Genesis curse. We live in a fallen world where physical and psychological problems arise from both the natural as well as the supernatural. Many of the mental disorders of today are simply the ongoing effects of the Genesis curse (Gen. 3:14-19).

Yes, some mental maladies can be traced to demonic origins and we should not be ignorant of this Biblical teaching. Many times those who are possessed and heavily influenced by demons will demonstrate signs of mental disorders along with other signs of demon possession. In other words, those who play around with the devil and demons can experience demonic mental maladies.

I am often amazed when an individual decides or plans to murder another person, sometimes multiple people at the same time, and yet the courts find them “not guilty for reason of insanity.” This is a misdiagnosis. Psychological problems are one thing, but when a person murders someone else (premediated murder) they are being heavily influenced by demons. They have followed the allurements of demons.

John 8:44

“Ye are of *your* father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it.”

1 John 3:12 speaks of “Cain, *who* was of that wicked one, and slew his brother.” People who commit acts of murder are definitely influenced by the demonic world of darkness. Even when it comes to death that is caused by demons, we must remember that God has the final say, even over death.

God says in Deuteronomy 32:39:

“See now that I, *even* I, *am* he, and *there is* no god with me: I kill, and I make alive; I wound, and I heal: neither *is there any* that can deliver out of my hand.”

This speaks of the sovereignty of God working behind the scenes in a fallen world. God is ultimately in charge of all things that happen. He does not commit all actions but ordains all things. Satan cannot commit acts of murder outside the sovereign, watchful eye of God. God is in control over all the events of the world, even the wicked acts of murder which are spawned by Satan and demons.

In general, how should we view the subject of Satan and sickness? There are several points to remember. First, we have learned that Satan cannot work outside the confines of the sovereign will of God (Job 2:4-8). This means that Satan can never send any illness, disease or sickness into our life that does not first pass the sovereignty of God and His providential purpose of God for our lives (2 Cor. 12:7). God always has a purpose for our ailments and sicknesses. Of course, one of the great purposes is to test our faith and make us more like Jesus Christ.

Romans 8:28-29

“And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to *his* purpose. For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate *to be* conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren.”

Of course, we cannot assume that all of sickness is the result of demonic activity. Our next point will invalidate the idea that all sickness comes from the devil and demons. The Charismatic Church would have us believe that there is always a demon of cancer, heart problems, and headaches. This is certainly a narrow view of sickness and unwarranted conclusion. For the most part, nobody knows when and where Satan is at work in relation to illness of sickness. To assume that Satan has inflicted you with the flu bug is a conclusion that no person can make. We don't know what is going on behind the spiritual curtain or veil.

God has not commanded or instructed us in the New Testament Church epistles how to detect demonic illness, how to know their names, or how to cast them out. Instead, He has exhorted us in the Bible to shun sin (1 Pet. 3:11), give no place for the devil to work in our lives (Eph. 4:27), and resist the devil by obeying the Lord (James 4:7).

Second, not all sickness is relegated to Satan and demons. The Bible clearly says that God can directly inflict us with illness according to His own sovereign purpose.

Exodus 4:11

“And the LORD said unto him, Who hath made man's mouth? or who maketh the dumb, or deaf, or the seeing, or the blind? have not I the LORD?”

God clearly reveals that He also reserves the right to inflict with disease and deformity. This verse has always been in the Bible. Sadly, the Charismatic and Pentecostal Church denies what the Bible teaches in this area. Yes, God can and does also inflict with illness and disease to fulfill His greater purposes in the lives of people who are part of a sin-cursed world.

Psalms 119:75

“I know, O LORD, that thy judgments *are* right, and *that* thou in faithfulness hast afflicted me.”

This reminds us that God has right or prerogative to inflict us with illness in order to fulfill His will and purpose for our lives.

Third, some sickness is the direct result of the Genesis curse. In accordance with God's sovereign declaration of the Genesis curse (Gen. 3:19), we can conclude that some sickness is the direct result of suffering the effects of the curse that God has brought upon all mankind. In other words, we become ill simply because our bodies are subject to decay and disease as a result of sin entering the world. God has also allowed our bodies to face what has been called the “second law of thermodynamics.” This means our bodies are subject to decay and illness because of the built-in process of breakdown as a result of the Genesis curse (Rom. 8:18, 22-23). Sometimes we become ill simply because we are part of the human race which has been brought under the Genesis curse.

For instance, not every person who is born deaf or mute is possessed by the devil or struck by the devil with dumbness, disease, and deformities. No Charismatic preacher can convince me that all the children's hospitals that treat babies and children with cancer and other terminal diseases are filled with children who are being overcome by the devil's diseases. This is nonsense. Many times there may

be no devilish or demonic cause in our illness. Our illness may be the result of a commonly shared result of the Genesis curse. Contrary to what some teach today, the curse of disease and death has not been lifted upon the human race. This has only been promised only in the resurrection (1 Cor. 15:52-57). The victory over disease and illness is in the promise of the bodily resurrection of each believer.

Fourth, we need to remember that we can sometimes take responsibility for our illnesses. For instance, if we eat a Big Mac and large fry every day we may be setting ourselves up for a heart attack! We may be the own source of our illness. Our own bad habits can sometimes be the reason for sickness, disease and illness. We cannot blame the devil of God for certain things that we have done to our own bodies. We must often distinguish between our opposition with Satan and the conflict and difficulties we bring on ourselves.

In other words, there are times when we are reaping the results of our own poor or bad decision and Satan and his demons may not be involved. For instance, we can commit sin without the devil and demons being involved since the Bible says the heart is desperately wicked (Jer. 17:9). The sin nature can prompt us to do wicked things. In fact, the flesh alone is a common source of many of our temptations.

Many times we can, independent of Satan and demons, make wrong decisions that cause problems in our life and simply reap what we sow (Ga. 6:7-8). It is best to evaluate our own behavior before blaming Satan and demons for every obstacle and problem that we face. We may discover that we are the cause of our problem – not Satan.

Fifth, although some disease may have a demonic source, Satan must always work within the biological laws that God created regarding sickness. In other words, the maladies that are created by demons are not “mystical diseases” that are outside the confines of normal disease. None of the diseases that might be inflicted by demons must be done away with by magical incantations as seen in paganism.

It’s very difficult, if not impossible, to know the source of our illness or disease. Our illness may be part of the spirit world or the natural sin-cursed world. But we do

know that God is sovereign over our illness in that He only allows, whether directly from His hand or indirectly through other means, what He has ordained to come not our lives.

Job 23:10

“But he knoweth the way that I take: *when* he hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold.”

God knows the way or direction of our lives for He has ordained the events that come into our lives, even sickness and disease. And no matter whom or what befalls us, God always wants us to grow through our trials and become spiritually purified (a stronger and more fruitful Christian), just as gold is purified as it passes through the fire. Ron Hamilton wrote a very lovely hymn that portrays this to us.

“God never moves without purpose or plan
When trying His servant and molding a man.
Give thanks to the LORD though your testing seems long;
In darkness He giveth a song.

Now I can see testing comes from above;
God strengthens His children and purges in love.
My Father knows best, and I trust in His care;
Through purging more fruit I will bear.

O Rejoice in the LORD
He makes no mistake,
He knoweth the end of each path that I take,
For when I am tried
And purified,
I shall come forth as gold.”

We need to stop trying to diagnose the causes of our illness and focus on walking by faith (Mark 11:22 – “have faith in God”) in the midst of the trials, which include illness and disease, and learn the spiritual lessons that God wants to teach us. Has your faith been flickering? Has it been getting weak as you are passing through some trial? Maybe you need to once again, in a new and fresh way, reactive your

faith in God and His purpose for your life. We need to understand that God really is in control of all the events that transpire in our lives, even those that He may allow Satan to bring into our lives.

Oswald Chambers said:

“Faith for my deliverance is not faith in God. Faith means, whether I am visibly delivered or not, I will stick to my belief that God is love. There are some things only learned in a fiery furnace.”

Although the days may be difficult, we can be sure that God still loves us very much and is teaching us the lessons we need to learn during our time of affliction. Faith in God makes us great optimists. Over in Burma, Judson was lying in a foul jail with 32 lbs. of chains on his ankles, his feet bound to a bamboo pole. A fellow prisoner said, "Dr. Judson, what about the prospect of the conversion of the heathen?", with a sneer on his face. Judson's instant reply was this: "The prospects are just as bright as the promises of God." We walk by faith in the promises of God – not by looking at the circumstances that we are facing in life. Faith is the victory that overcomes the world!

Someone said:

“Little faith will bring your soul to heaven, but great faith will bring heaven to your soul.”



Here is some intriguing and unique weather phenomenon. Common in winter especially on hilly or mountainous terrain, something called snow rollers form when strong winds blow moist snow along the ground, piling it up into a cylinder-shaped ball that's hollow in the middle. When a snow roller gets too big and

heavy to be blown around anymore, it stops where it lies. Snow rollers can grow as large as a barrel or oil drum, or be as small as a roll of toilet paper. They also can leave tracks behind them. Here's a few of the conditions needed for snow rollers to form, according to the National Weather Service:

- Existing icy or crusty snow cover, so additional snow won't stick to it
- Wet, loose snow on top of the icy, crusty snow cover

- Wind strong enough to scoop up balls of snow and propel them forward
- Ground with at least some slope or incline.

There is another strange weather phenomenon? There have been reports of fish raining from the sky date back to at least 200 B.C. in Greece. According to our severe weather expert Dr. Greg Forbes, tornadoes and waterspouts were the most likely causes for these ancient reports of fish and other small animals falling from the sky.



This picture of falling fish is from Thailand. But One such example in the United States occurred on the morning of June 28, 1957 at Magnolia

Terminal near Thomasville, Alabama. Thousands of small fish, frogs and crayfish fell from the sky during a rainstorm. In fact, many of the fish were still alive and were placed in ponds and swimming pools. An F2 tornado about 15 miles to the south near Whatley, Alabama was likely responsible for getting those animals airborne.

This brings up our next question in a series of questions dealing with Satan and demons.

3. Can Satan control the weather?

This is an intriguing question. The Bible teaches that God ultimately is in control of the weather. God is sovereign over the storms and weather phenomenon that occurs in the world.

Matthew 5:45

“That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust.”

According to what we have seen in the above picture, God can also rain fish on the just and unjust. The Bible repeatedly declares that God is the One who is in control of the weather movements on earth such as tornadoes, hurricanes, tsunamis, and other weather phenomenon. Many wonder why God allows violent weather outbreaks which take the lives of people. But we must remember that violent weather outbreaks are part of the Genesis curse that we live under and they strike both the just and unjust.

Nahum 1:3

“The LORD *is* slow to anger, and great in power, and will not at all acquit *the wicked*: the LORD hath his way in the whirlwind and in the storm, and the clouds *are* the dust of his feet.”

“God moves in a mysterious way
His wonders to perform;
He plants His footsteps in the sea
And rides upon the storm.”

Job 5:8-10

“I would seek unto God, and unto God would I commit my cause: Which doeth great things and unsearchable; marvellous things without number: Who giveth rain upon the earth, and sendeth waters upon the fields.”

The Bible teaches that God is responsible for the weather patterns in the world. He has His way or purpose in all of them. He brings His ultimate purposes to fruition through each weather phenomenon that He allows to come upon the face of the heavens and earth. However, we find on several occasions in the Bible where Satan is given by God some authority to control the weather. Satan caused a destructive storm in the days of Job (Job 1:8-12, 18-19).

It's clear that on this occasion, God allowed Satan to stir up the great storm or tornado that decimated Job's family. Of course, Satan was permitted to do this under the sovereign authority of God. The devil cannot control or effect the weather at his own whim or liking. He must receive permission from God since (I say this reverently) God is the divine weatherman – not Mother Nature or Old Man Winter!

We see another possible example of Satan's control of the weather in Mark 4:37-39. "And there arose a great storm of wind, and the waves beat into the ship, so that it was now full. And he was in the hinder part of the ship, asleep on a pillow: and they awake him, and say unto him, Master, carest thou not that we perish? And he arose, and rebuked the wind, and said unto the sea, Peace, be still. And the wind ceased, and there was a great calm."

It seems very likely in this Biblical narrative that Satan was given permission to stir up the sea in an attempt to keep Jesus from doing one of his greatest miracles which involved casting many demons out of a man who was terrorizing the country of Gadarenes (Mark 5:1-15). Keep this in mind because we want to make some spiritual application of this incident to our own lives today.

Right now we want to contemplate how Satan was allowed, by God's permission, to stir up this severe thunderstorm or wind storm. In doing so, the devil tried to take out Jesus before His appointed death on the cross. Of course, Jesus calmed the waves and was brought safely to the other side (eastern side) of the sea of Galilee.

D. Edmond Hiebert wrote of this experience:

"The dramatic form of the command to inanimate objects may suggest that Jesus recognized demonic powers behind the raging of the elements. It is noteworthy that 'rebuked' and 'be still' were used in Matthew 1:25 with reference to an exorcism."

This means that Jesus recognized who was behind this sudden storm and once again proved His ultimate power and authority over Satan. He stopped the raging storm that the devil had tried to use to wipe out both Jesus and the disciples. This reminds us that Satan can stir up a storm, but Jesus is the Sovereign God behind all storms. He can still the waves by speaking peace or calmness to them. In this case, Jesus was also speaking to those spiritual forces behind the wind and the waves.

There are some practical applications of this passage to our lives. First, we need to remember that Jesus can successfully and victoriously bring us through our trials and tests. Jesus speaking calmness and peace to the storms surrounding us means that He will see us through each trial that we face.

1 Corinthians 10:13

“There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God *is* faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear *it*.”

What a wonderful promise this is for each one of us to claim today! Jesus can cause us to successfully pass through every trial and temptation victoriously.

“Master, the tempest is raging.
The billows are tossing high.
The sky is o'er shadowed with blackness,
no shelter or help is nigh.
Carest Thou not that we perish?
How canst Thou lie asleep,
when each moment so madly is threatenng,
a grave in the angry deep?

The winds and the waves
shall obey my will, peace be still.
Whether the wrath of the storm-tossed sea
or demons, or men, or whatever it be.
No water can swallow the ship where lies
the Master of ocean and earth and skies;
they shall sweetly obey my will,
peace be still, peace be still.
They all shall sweetly obey my will;
peace, peace be still.”

Second, we also need to remember that Satan will try and stop us from doing great things for God. This is what He was trying to do in connection with Jesus and the disciples. Anytime you are on the front lines of battle doing something significant for God, the enemy's attacks against your life will escalate. I'm not telling you this to scare you, but to mentally equip you. This way, when Satan's attacks come, you won't be taken by surprise! Being mentally prepared for a spiritual attack is very important. If you are familiar with the devil's tactics, his assaults won't take you off

guard or by surprise when they intensify against you. You'll be able to recognize and resist every demonic attack, rejoicing in the Lord because you know what's happening.

Jesus came under this kind of intense attack when He was crossing the Sea of Galilee with His disciples on His way to cast a legion of demons out of the demoniac of Gadara. This demon-possessed man was an important weapon in Satan's arsenal. Through the actions of the demoniac of Gadara, the devil had held the countryside hostage with fear for a very long time. The demoniac was so legendary that people throughout the entire coastland region knew of him.

The devil knew that if Jesus crossed the Sea of Galilee that night and reached the other side, He would cast the demons out of that man. When this would happen, Satan would lose the weapon he had long used to terrorize the whole countryside. So as Jesus and His disciples crossed the Sea of Galilee that night, violent and destructive winds seemed to come from out of nowhere to capsize Jesus' boat and drown Him and His disciples in the middle of the sea.

The phrase "there arose" is taken from the Greek word *ginomai*, which in this case describes something that happens unexpectedly or something that catches one off-guard. This tells us that Jesus and His disciples did *not* expect bad weather that night. The Greek word *ginomai* emphatically means that this event completely took the disciples by surprise. This is the way Satan tries to work in connection with our lives. He will try and take us by surprise, when we are off our game plan. When we are not on guard.

Mark also speaks to the size of the storm when he says it was a "great storm of wind." It was He uses the Greek word *mega*, which denotes something of massive proportions. Because Mark uses the word *mega*, it alerts us to the fact that this was a mega-storm with mega-winds! The word "wind" is the Greek word *lalaipsi*, which means this was a *turbulent or terribly violent wind*. This word can also be translated *hurricane, cyclone, tempest, gale, windstorm, a furious tempest, or a fierce squall*. Therefore, we know the storm that came against Jesus that night was no small breeze. It was a formidable, crushing, overpowering type of storm. This windstorm

that had come to overturn their boat in the middle of Sea of Galilee was designed by Satan to kill them before they reached the other side.

Let's get the full picture in our minds. Here was Jesus, on the brink of one of the greatest miracles of His ministry. At the same time, there was the devil, fearing that he was about to lose one of his most highly prized weapons of terrorism (the demoniac of Gadara). It was at this exact moment that this violent, destructive turbulence came down upon Jesus and His disciples.

The occurrence of the storm at this exact moment was no accident. The devil didn't want Jesus to reclaim one of his most prized captives. This was a strike of the devil to undo the work of God. But that night in the midst of the storm, Jesus arose and took authority over the situation. The Bible says that when He exercised His authority over this great turbulence.

Mark 4:39

“And he arose, and rebuked the wind, and said unto the sea, Peace, be still. And the wind ceased, and there was a great calm.”

In doing this, Jesus demonstrated that He was the Lord of the wind and the waves. He also demonstrated He was Lord over the devil and demons! This potentially deadly situation provided a great opportunity for the disciples to learn that Jesus Christ is truly Lord over all!

We can be sure that Satan will certainly try to attack you with unexpected turbulence from time to time. His attacks against you will probably escalate whenever you're right on the edge of a breakthrough, as was the case with Jesus that night. But just as that event provided an opportunity for Jesus to demonstrate His power and authority, you need to see each demonic attack against you as an opportunity to rise up, claim our victory and authority over the devil through Jesus Christ.

Mentally and spiritually prepare yourself to deal with the devil's attacks. Put on the whole armor of God as the Bible teaches us in Ephesians chapter 6. Rise up and take authority in Jesus' name over the wind and the waves that come against you and

your family. Never forget that during demonic attack you have a golden opportunity to see a demonstration of God's power in your life!

“The winds and the waves
shall obey my will, peace be still.
Whether the wrath of the storm-tossed sea
or demons, or men, or whatever it be.
No water can swallow the ship where lies
the Master of ocean and earth and skies;
they shall sweetly obey my will,
peace be still, peace be still.
They all shall sweetly obey my will;
peace, peace be still.”

God is always in charge of your temptations and trials. And He is the One who can give us victory and safely cause us to pass through them. Remember that Jesus is greater than our temptation and trial. His power and promises can bring us safely through any trial, test, and temptation that comes into our lives.

I remember years ago when I was in Florida, on vacation, there was a man, supposedly one of the strongest men in the world, who was going to lift some vehicle off the ground. I went out back of the Hotel to see what all the fuss was about. They had cameras there and people were surrounding this man. He was trying to set the Guinness Book of World Records in attempting to lift a vehicle, loaded with extra weight, off the ground. Before I knew what happened, it was all over. The officials said he lifted the vehicle off the ground but neither I, nor anyone else, saw that vehicle move. Maybe the ants saw it, but we did not see it! This strong man incident seemed to be a hoax. But one thing is certain, Satan's strength and power is no hoax or joke.

4. Is Satan omnipotent?

In other words, is Satan all-powerful? The answer to this question is that Satan is not all-powerful. The Bible reveals that God as the Creator and sustainer of the universe and everything in it, is the most powerful being that exists.

Revelation 19:6

“And I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunderings, saying, Alleluia: for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth.”

Matthew 28:18

“And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth.”

We know from Scripture that Satan is a very powerful created being. Next to God, the devil is the most powerful being in the universe. His power both in the heavenly realm and on earth is great and should not be underestimated. As we have already seen, with God’s permission, Satan has the power to effect the weather. In another point, we will discuss how Satan has the power to perform miracles (2 Thess. 2:9). We have also seen that Satan has power over a countless number of spirit beings (“the devil and his angels” - Matt. 25:41) which roam the heavens and earth bringing about his evil agenda purposes throughout the world (Eph. 6:12; 1 John 5:19). Yes, Satan is very powerful but he is not the mighty God!

Isaiah 9:6

“For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.”

A young boy traveling by airplane to visit his grandparents sat beside a man who happened to be a seminary professor. The boy was reading a Sunday school take-home paper when the professor thought he would have some fun with the lad. “Young man,” said the professor, “If you can tell me something God can do, I’ll give you a big, shiny apple.” The boy thought for a moment and then replied, “Mister, if you can tell me something God can’t do, I’ll give you a whole barrel of apples!”

The point is this. God is more powerful than Satan and has provided the way of victory over Satan. We must claim our victory today and not give in to his power.

Ephesians 6:10

“Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might.”

Whose power have you been allowing to affect your life? Who has been running your life? We must remember that God's power is much greater than the devil's power and we don't have to succumb to Satan's power.

“Would you live for Jesus, and be always pure and good?
Would you walk with Him within the narrow road?
Would you have Him bear your burden, carry all your load?
Let Him have His way with thee.

His power can make you what you ought to be;
His blood can cleanse your heart and make you free;
His love can fill your soul, and you will see
'Twas best for Him to have His way with thee.

5. Is Satan omnipresent?

In other words, can Satan be everywhere in the world at the same time? The answer to this question is no. Satan cannot be everywhere at the same time. Omnipresence is defined as “being present everywhere at the same time.” The Bible teaches that God is omnipresent or that He is present everywhere at the same time. The Bible also teaches that Satan is not omnipresent.

Job 1:7

“And the LORD said unto Satan, Whence comest thou? Then Satan answered the LORD, and said, From going to and fro in the earth, and from walking up and down in it.”

This informs us that Satan moves about throughout planet earth in order to accomplish His evil purposes. The devil cannot be everywhere at the same time. He is limited in His capabilities since he is not God.

1 Peter 5:8

“Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour.”

This verse also reminds us that the devil cannot be everywhere at the same time. Of course, we do know that the devil influences many people to sin, but the temptation to sin might not always come from him directly. Instead, the devil's allurements can take place indirectly through his followers (demons) and his evil work which is already established in the world. The point is this, the devil cannot be everywhere at the same time. The devil is limited by time and space, but God is not, for He is omnipresent. If the devil "roams" and "walks" about, this means he is not omnipresent (he cannot be everywhere at the same time). If he was omnipresent, he would not have to "move" since he would already be there. Since the devil is a fallen angel (as the Scriptures describe him), then the same limitations of an angel are the same limitations of the devil. An angel cannot be everywhere at the same time (Eph. 6:12).

The Bible teaches that only God is omnipresent. The Bible says we are never out of his sight (Psalm 139:7-8). We can never get away from God. God is here, there, and everywhere! Many Christians pray and act as if Satan is right next to them all the time, tempting them to turn away from God, attacking them, etc., as though he were omnipresent. Beloved, let us know and believe what the Bible says about the devil. He cannot be everywhere at the same time. He is only a created angel. What we need to experience in our lives is the omnipresence of God. He is always with us and will never leave us nor forsake us (Heb. 13:5).

The story is told of Donald Grey Barnhouse, early in his well-known ministry in the mid-20th century at the historic Tenth Presbyterian Church in downtown Philadelphia. As Barnhouse stood to preach, Dr. Robert Dick Wilson, one of the renowned professors at Princeton and a brilliant scholar, took his seat in the front row, which the young preacher found somewhat intimidating. Understandably, Barnhouse felt fear and trepidation about teaching the Scriptures to those who had taught him.

At the close of the message, Dr. Wilson approached Barnhouse and announced, "If you come back again, I will *not* come to hear you preach." Barnhouse collapsed on the inside. How had he failed? Was his theology wrong? Was his use of the original languages improper? With all the courage he could muster, the young preacher asked the aged professor, "Where did I fail?" "Fail?" Wilson replied. "Oh, you didn't

fail. I only come to hear a former student once. I only want to know if he is a big-Godder or a little-Godder, and then I know how his ministry will be.”

When his former student asked for an explanation, Wilson answered, “Some men have a little God, and they are always in trouble with Him ... He doesn’t intervene on behalf of His people. They have a little God and I call them little-Godders.”

“There are others who have a great God and I call them a big-Godder.” Wilson continued. “Those who really know God realize that He speaks, and it is done. He commands, and it stands fast. He knows how to show Himself strong on behalf of them that fear Him. You (Barnhouse) are a big-Godder, and He will bless your ministry.” The professor paused a moment, smiled, and walked out. What a lesson for Barnhouse! What a lesson for us! We serve a great, big, wonderful God who can be everywhere at the same time and who is all-powerful. There is no reason to give up or give in! Maybe your God is too small! We need to once again see the greatness of God and remembering and experiencing His greatness in our lives and service for the Lord, we will not allow the devil to defeat us.

An Australian missionary told a thrilling story of the Lord’s special care for him as he made a lonely and dangerous journey on foot. He had no problem getting to his destination, but was uneasy on the return trip because he carried with him a large sum of money. A man was waiting at a lonely spot, planning to rob and kill anyone who passed by. The missionary, unaware of this but concerned about the risk of traveling alone, prayed aloud to God for protection as he walked along. Before the bandit saw him, he heard him talking, and immediately he thought there must be two men, so he decided not to attack. Later, he told someone what he had intended to do that day, and the news got around. When the missionary heard it, he realized that God’s Spirit had prompted him to pray aloud as he journeyed. His heart rejoiced as he thought of the Lord’s wonderful protection from harm. How could God watch over this missionary? It’s because God knows everything!

6. Is Satan omniscient?

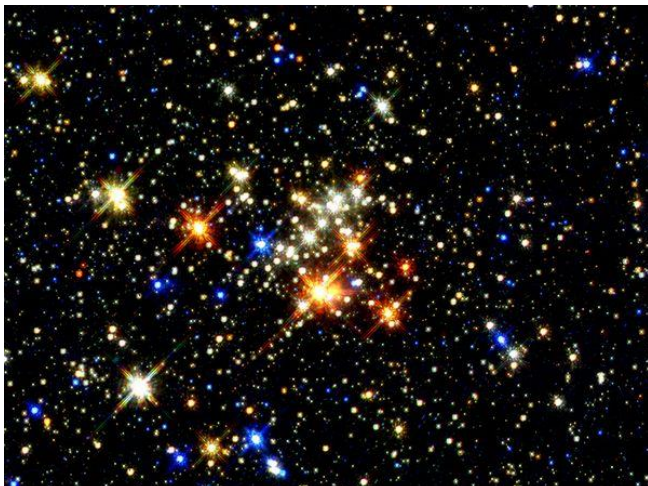
This is a question that is often asked. Does Satan know everything that is going to happen? Is Satan all-knowing? We need to remember that Satan is created by God.

This means he is defined and limited by some features common to all creatures, and one limitation of God's creatures is that they do not know everything. Satan does not know all things that will take place since He is not God. Only God is omniscient or all-knowing. In classical theology the doctrine of God's omniscience means that God knows all things, past, present and future, real and potential, and he knows them all at the same time. He not only knows what was, and what is, he also knows what will be. More than that, he knows everything that could be but is not.

Isaiah 46:9-10

"Remember the former things of old: for I *am* God, and *there is* none else (so much for pluralism!); I *am* God, and *there is* none like me, Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times *the things* that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure."

This Bible verse teaches that only God is omniscient of all things since He is the One who has ordained them to happen. When the Bible talks about God's "counsel" and "pleasure" it means that only God is "all knowing" of what He has ordained to come to pass. Satan has no part in the ordaining and providence of all things and therefore cannot know all things.



Psalm 147:4-5

"He (God) telleth the number of the stars; he calleth them all by *their* names. Great *is* our Lord, and of great power: his understanding *is* infinite."

Without a telescope you can only see about 3,000 stars from any point on Earth. Scientists estimate the universe contains at least 70 sextillion stars (70-thousand-million-million-million). That's 7 followed by 22 zeroes, or ten-times the number of grains of sand on earth. Psalm 147:4 tells us God "counts the

numbers of the stars; He gives names to all of them." Not only that, but God counts the numbers of every hair on every person in the world.

Jesus said in Luke 12:7:

But even the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear not therefore: ye are of more value than many sparrows.

God knows how many hairs we have on our head. Amazing! God knows everything about us and the universe. He is totally knowledgeable about all things that He has created and what His creatures are doing at every moment of their lives.

Romans 11:33

“O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable *are* his judgments, and his ways past finding out!”

Only God knows everything. Only God knows everything (every minute detail) that occurs in the universe. He sees a branch fall off a tree in the middle of the rainforest when no one else sees it. Of course, Satan knows a great deal but he can only make informed guesses about the future based upon his own experiences and what he sees happening. We should never underestimate Satan. He certainly knows more than we do and our next question will help us understand how his workers (demons) try to read our minds. Another question that normally flows out of this one also deals with Satan’s knowledge.

7. Does Satan know people’s thoughts?

In other words, can Satan read minds? God certainly knows all of our thoughts. In fact, he knows what we are going to think even before we think it!

Psalm 139:1-4

“O LORD, thou hast searched me, and known *me*. Thou knowest my downsitting and mine uprising, thou understandest my thought afar off. Thou compassest my path and my lying down, and art acquainted *with* all my ways. For *there is* not a word in my tongue, *but*, lo, O LORD, thou knowest it altogether.”

I do not believe that the Bible teaches Satan can read the minds of people. Only God can know the thoughts of our minds.

1 Kings 8:39

“Then hear thou in heaven thy dwelling place, and forgive, and do, and give to every man according to his ways, whose heart thou knowest; (for thou, *even* thou only, knowest the hearts of all the children of men.”

Matthew 9:1-4

“And he entered into a ship, and passed over, and came into his own city. And, behold, they brought to him a man sick of the palsy, lying on a bed: and Jesus seeing their faith said unto the sick of the palsy; Son, be of good cheer; thy sins be forgiven thee. And, behold, certain of the scribes said within themselves, This *man* blasphemeth. And Jesus knowing their thoughts said, Wherefore think ye evil in your hearts?”

John 2:24

“But Jesus did not commit himself unto them, because he knew all *men*.”

There are no examples in Scripture of the devil and demons reading anyone’s mind or knowing their thoughts. Satan’s power and abilities do have limits, and reading our minds seems to be beyond his ability. It would take omniscience for Satan and his demons to read our minds, which they do not have. God is the only One who can know our thoughts for God is the only one who is omniscient.

Nevertheless, Satan and his demons do know human nature very well. We can be sure that they study our lives and know our individual weaknesses and tendencies. Satan and his demons have been observing and tempting human beings for thousands of years. Surely, they have learned a few things about us over the years. Even without the ability to know our thoughts, they can make a well-educated guess as to what we are thinking and then attempt to use that to their advantage.

For instance, we can sometimes know what our spouse or children are thinking because we know them so well. At times, demons can also sense what we are thinking as they observe our actions. What we say, do, and where we go can

certainly trigger the thinking of demons. It can leave them know where are mind is going and they can add fuel to the fire by then tempting us in a certain way or direction.

So, there is no Biblical warrant for concluding that demons can actually read our minds, but this does not mean they cannot sense what is going on with our thinking. In fact, when demons, through the process of temptation, place thoughts of intellectual rebellion in our minds or thinking (2 Cor. 11:3; Matt. 16:23; Acts 5:3; Eph. 6:17), they certainly know that we have these thoughts in our mind and that we must either destroy them or follow them (2 Cor. 10:5).

Although some conclude that Satan and demons cannot place thoughts in our minds, the evidence of Scripture suggests otherwise. Whether it's through outward stimuli, or directly bringing thoughts into the realm of our minds, we can be sure that demons can in some measure have access to our thinking, as we open our minds to their ideas and temptations.

In conclusion, we must remember that demons cannot read our minds, but they can have a pretty good idea what we are thinking based upon our actions and how they are tempting us at a given point of time. I'm so thankful that we can have victory over the false ideas, temptations, and snares of the devil. The victory is ours through the truth of Scripture.

Ephesians 6:17

"And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God."

Dear friend, we are not called to be victims but victors! Are you winning or losing in the ongoing battle with Satan? What has been your story this past week? We don't have to lose because Jesus already won the battle for us! If we stand upon the truth, His Word, and rely upon His power, we can effectively and victoriously pass through the time of temptation. Don't give in, don't give up, and above all else, don't get mad at God. You stick to the stuff and let God work through you and do amazing things in your heart and life. His power can make you what you ought to be!

8. Why did Satan try to destroy Christ if it would mean his ultimate demise and defeat?

Another question that we sometimes ask within the same framework of the previous questions has to do with Satan's awareness of his defeat on the cross of Calvary and his attempts to destroy Christ. Why would the devil try and have Jesus crucified on the cross, if he knew that this would result in his own ultimate defeat?

The devil knows the Bible!

Genesis 3:15

"And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel."

Isaiah 53 graphically records the suffering of the Messiah on the cross. I'm sure the devil knew about these Scriptures but perhaps he did not have a fully acquired understanding of them – how they would play out in the end. Satan is brilliant, but like unbelieving human interpreters, he may not have understood these predictions about the Cross before Jesus actually died.

We do know that Satan had an integral part in the betrayal, arrest, torture, and execution of Jesus. During Jesus' final meal with his disciples, Satan entered into Judas so Judas would betray Jesus (Jn. 13:2, 27; Lk. 22:3). Revelation 12 tells us that Satan couldn't wait to get his hands on Jesus, so that he could "devour" him (Rev. 12:4). If Jesus' death ultimately brought about the defeat of Satan (1 Jn. 3:8; Col. 2:14-15), why would Satan do this? Satan is a remarkably intelligent being. Why would he follow through with his plot to kill Jesus, if this would lead to his eventual demise? There are several answers to this question.

First, Satan must be submissive to God's sovereignty. In the overall plan of God's sovereignty, Satan is ultimately submissive to God's purposes, whether he realizes it or not. Nothing happens without God ordaining it. God is in control of all the events of the universe.

Psalm 103:19

“The LORD hath prepared his throne in the heavens; and his kingdom ruleth over”
all.

Psalm 115:3

“But our God *is* in the heavens: he hath done whatsoever he hath pleased.”

Psalm 135:5-6

For I know that the LORD is great, and that our Lord is above all gods.
Whatsoever the LORD pleased, that did he in heaven, and in earth, in the seas, and
all deep places.

These verses indicate that God is in control of all the events of history and the universe. God’s sovereignty can be defined as God possessing supreme authority, control, and power over all that has happened, is happening, and will happen in the future in all times across all history.

On a smaller and more personal scale, every Christian can know God is sovereignly working in connection with all the events of his life (Rom. 8:28). Are you resting in God’s sovereign purpose over your life? Do we really believe God has ordained all the events associated with our lives, whether it be sickness or health, good and evil, or tragedy or triumph? It takes faith to believe God is in control even when things seem to be moving in a way that is very difficult and hard. Someone explained it like this.

“When God says no to you, it’s such a blow to you,
When all your hopes and dreams unravel at the seam.
When God says wait to you, and God seems late to you,
It’s hard to rest within His will, it’s hard to trust and just be still,
It’s hard to simply wait until it’s all made plain.
He who holds us in His hands, has no problems only plans,
He who has control of all, sees the smallest sparrow fall.
He who works where no one knows, does not sleep as we suppose,
But works in all things, both great and small things,
For His own glory and our best good.
When God works silently, in ways we cannot see,

When troubles multiply so that we ache inside.
When God does not seem kind, and hope is hard to find,
It's hard to rest within His will, it's hard to trust and just be still,
It's hard to simply wait until it's all made plain.
He who holds us in His hands, has no problems only plans,
He who has control of all, sees the smallest sparrow fall.
He who works where no one knows, does not sleep as we suppose,
But works in all things, both great and small things,
For His own glory and our best good!"

Isaiah 46:10 says this about God:

"Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times *the things* that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure."

God's sovereignty requires that He be absolutely free to carry out His eternal purpose in every single detail of the universe without interference. Satan must ultimately be submissive to God's authority, even though Satan has a free will.

Second, Satan is filled with self or pride which may have actually blinded Satan to reality. Two Old Testament passages (Isaiah 14:12-15 and Ezekiel 28:11-19) discuss Satan's original position and the reasons for his loss of that position. It was pride that brought down Satan and pride which may have brought a blindness upon himself. Despite Satan's self-delusion about the cross, the delusion that he could in some way defeat God by having His Son (Jesus) killed, Satan was defeated when Jesus died on the cross (John 16:11) and is destined to fall in the future (Rev. 20:10).

Third, Satan's sinister victories throughout the world may have given him the false illusion that he could defeat God by killing His Son. We know that Satan is extremely intelligent. Through his intelligence he deceived Adam and Eve and took over their rule of the world for himself (Genesis 1:26; 3:1-7; 2 Corinthians 11:3). His cleverness enables him to carry out his deceptive work almost at will, although his power is subject to God's restrictions (Job 1:12; Luke 4:6; 2 Thessalonians 2:7-8). Satan does have certain victories, although within the boundaries God has set for him, and perhaps these victories allowed him to continue the illusion that he can have victory over God Himself by having His Son crucified.

Fourth, Satan is a sadistic murderer. Since Satan is a bloodthirsty murderer (Rev. 12:4; Jn. 8:44), perhaps he simply couldn't help himself. While he knew that the crucifixion of Jesus would open up Heaven for the salvation of humanity (John 14:6), perhaps he simply couldn't resist torturing and killing the Son of God.

Fifth, Satan is a seizer who thought he could hold Jesus in the realm of death and stop Him from being raised again. Satan may have actually believed that he could keep Jesus in the grave, but he simply underestimated the power of Christ's own death and resurrection (Heb. 2:14; Rev. 1:18).

All of these ideas may answer the question as to why Satan sought to crucify Christ even though the cross would bring about His ultimate doom in the Lake of Fire (Rev. 20:10). This reminds us once again that Satan is not omniscient or all-knowing about God, Jesus Christ, and His plan of the ages. Nevertheless, there are some things the devil does know. He knows that during the Tribulation Period his time to raise havoc among the nations is short.

Revelation 12:12

"Therefore rejoice, ye heavens, and ye that dwell in them. Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and of the sea! for the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time."

This means that the devil will know that Jesus Christ is going to return to earth and that his time is running out to deceive the nations. There are some things the devil knows for they are clearly recorded and revealed in Scripture. This brings up yet another question regarding Satan's knowledge.

9. Why does the devil try and stop Christ's Second Coming to earth if he knows that his doom is sure?

Revelation 20:1-3

"And I saw an angel come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan, and bound him a thousand years, And cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal upon him, that he should deceive

the nations no more, till the thousand years should be fulfilled: and after that he must be loosed a little season.”

Revelation 20:10

“And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet *are*, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever.”

Surely the devil has read the Bible from cover to cover. He knows what awaits him in conjunction with Christ’s Second Coming and His final doom in the Lake of fire. As we have seen, this is why the Bible says the devil knows his time is short (Rev. 12:11). Since the Bible reveals the devil will suffer defeat, why does he try and prevent Christ from returning? Satan will counter Christ’s Second Coming for three obvious reasons.

First, the devil will fulfill God’s sovereign plan and purpose in opposing Christ as His Second Advent. Revelation 16:13-14 and Psalm 2 prophetically reveal that Satan will gather the armies of the earth together in order to try and stop God’s Son from returning to planet earth and establishing the earthly kingdom.

Second, the devil with his sadistic mind may actually think he can change the Word of God and defeat the Son of God. He did this in the Garden of Eden when declaring that God’s Word was not true and that God was lying (Gen. 3:4). Perhaps in his own deluded way of thinking, the devil may actually think he can beat God despite what God’s Word teaches.

Third, the devil is not going to go down without a fight. Although the devil, concerning this point of Biblical revelation, knows that he will be bound and judged, you can be sure that he will try everything to oppose God and stop the plan of the ages from occurring. Why? It’s because this is who Satan is. He is God’s adversary and opponent. Satan will not stop his prideful bid for power and worship until the lid is put on him in the Millennial Kingdom and until he is finally cast into the Lake of Fire.

The good news is that Satan's defeat was promised, and although temporarily postponed, his defeat will come to pass at the Second Coming and finally when He is judged in the Lake of Fire.

One little boy said he could not understand many things in the Book of Revelation but he did understand one thing: "In the end, God wins!" Yes, God wins. And because Jesus has already won the battle over Satan, we can win also! We don't have to go through life being emotionally, spiritually, and mentally defeated.

"On the victory side, On the victory side,
No foe can daunt me, no fear can haunt me.
On the victory side
"On the victory side, On the victory side,
With Christ within, the fight we'll win
On the victory side!"

You will be hard pressed to find someone who has never heard of some kind of religious miracle. There are reported miracles in many religions such as Hinduism, Buddhism, and Islam. They all claim to have documented miracles. The Hindu milk miracle was a phenomenon, considered by many Hindus, to be a miracle, which started on 21 September 1995, in which statues of the Hindu deity Ganesha allegedly drank milk offerings. It attracted great attention from people and the media particularly in India.

Buddha has supposedly done many miracles. One story tells how 500 pieces of firewood split at the Buddha's command. In another, a mad elephant charged wildly down a street forcing everyone to flee. Only the Buddha remained, quietly waiting. The elephant, overcome by the Buddha's radiant kindness, knelt before him, and the Buddha patted his leathery trunk. Buddha himself is alleged to have possessed and exercised miraculous higher knowledges such as telepathy, super-hearing, divine seeing, and seeing past lives.

Muslims believe that while Muhammad was in Mecca, Allah split the Moon as a miracle to the Meccans. itself. To back up this claim, they use close-up pictures of the moon taken by NASA as evidence.

Many Catholics are convinced of the validity of various sightings of the Virgin Mary. According to The New York Times: "Sightings of the Virgin Mary can happen in the unlikeliest places. Some people encounter her high in the mountains of the French Alps, while others find her in a school playground. Sometimes, Mary comes awash in a bright light. Other times, she's in tears. In the 20th century alone, there were about 386 sightings of Mary "reported at a level beyond local rumors,"

Some Catholics also claim they have experienced stigmata's (experiencing the sensation of pain in the location of the crucifixion wounds of Jesus – the hands, wrists, and feet). Others have seen weeping or bleeding statues while others claim the miracle of "incorruptible bodies" (the bodies of certain saints do not decompose after death as a sign of their holiness).

Of course, there are also many alleged miracles occurring in the modern Charismatic Movement of today as well. Although much of what is termed miracles today can be proven to be fraudulent and psychosomatic, we cannot rule out a Satanic source behind some miracles occurring today.

This is what we want to talk about in our next question about Satan.

10. Can Satan perform miracles?

We have mentioned this previously. The Bible gives to us a very clear answer on this matter of Satanic miracles. We have addressed this earlier in our study. Let's recap what we have learned. Satan can perform miracles which are designed to deceive people. Satan is a manipulative miracle worker. Next to God, Satan is the most powerful being in the universe. He possesses the power to accomplish supernatural feats which are designed to deceive people and get others to follow him. There are several examples given to us in Scripture.

In Exodus, the magicians of pharaoh, who were satanic sorcerers, were able to counter the miracles of Moses up to a certain point (Exodus 7:8-8:19). The sorcerers, who were influenced by Satan's power, turned their wooden staff into snakes. Turned water into blood, and duplicated the miracle of the frog infestation. However, when Moses struck the ground with his staff and gnats (lice) covered the

land, even the magicians themselves were forced to admit, “This is the finger of God” (Exodus 8:19). This means that they knew God was behind this miracle and it was a miracle that they could not reproduce.

By way of application, we need the finger of God working in connection with our lives today. We should want to experience His power and strength in our lives today so we can live victoriously (Eph. 6:10; Phil. 4:19). Nevertheless, we see from this account that the devil has great supernatural abilities and powers given to him by God. In the future, the Bible teaches that Satan will perform supernatural miracles to deceive people into following the Antichrist (Rev. 13:11-15).

Jesus warned long ago in Matthew 24:24:

“For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if *it were* possible, they shall deceive the very elect.”

The existence of demonic miracles is one reason why we must test all spirits to see whether or not they are of God (1 John 4:1). Any time we are in doubt, we are to make sure that what is being taught lines up with what Scripture says. If the miracle worker is teaching something contrary to God’s Word, then his miracles, no matter how convincing they seem, are a demonic delusion.

I think there are some examples of convincing demonic miracles today such as the apparitions of the Virgin Mary which do seem to occur in different countries. Some of these appearances of Mary seem legitimate. In fact, they are believed by millions of people. But does the Bible confirm that apparitions are part of the life of sanctification and godliness? No. Where in the Bible are we given direction for seeking out and experiencing apparitions? Scripture declares that Satan and his demons masquerade as angels of light (2 Corinthians 11:14-15). Sometimes we can conclude that Satanic deception is the explanation for the apparitions.

In addition, when we compare what the apparitions say to what Scripture teaches, it is blasphemy and contrary to the truth. Over the course of several Marian apparitions, we are told that God wants to establish worldwide devotion to Mary’s immaculate heart, that souls will be saved if devotions to her immaculate heart are established, that she is the mediatrix between man and God, that praying the rosary

is required to enter heaven, that she receives and answers prayer, that taking communion makes reparation for sins committed against her, and that blessed objects should be worn and placed in homes.

None of these messages are of God. Jesus is the only way to God (John 14:6). Mary never had an "immaculate" (sinless) heart during her earthly life. Devotion to Mary like this is forbidden, and the Bible never instructs us to pray to anyone but God. Jesus is the only mediator between man and God (Hebrews 7:25; 1 Timothy 2:5; 1 John 2:1).

The Bible tells us to "test everything" (1 Thess. 5:21). I put to test the apparition of the Virgin of Guadalupe, and this apparition failed the biblical test in many ways.

First, Juan Diego claimed that the girl he saw was a young Mexican girl, about 14 years old, with golden beams that radiated from her person from head to foot. Mary is not a Mexican girl. According to the Bible she is a Jewish girl. In fact, the Bible painstakingly emphasizes her genealogy as being traced to the lineage of David.

Second, the girl said, "I am the ever-virgin Mary, Mother of the true God." Mary is not "ever-virgin." According to the Bible, after she gave birth to Jesus as a virgin, she later had normal relationship with her husband Joseph and gave birth to four boys and a few daughters.

Matthew 13:55-56

Is not this the carpenter's son? is not his mother called Mary? and his brethren, James, and Joses, and Simon, and Judas? And his sisters, are they not all with us? Whence then hath this *man* all these things?

These are the four (half) brothers (not cousins) of Jesus. They were actually children born to Mary and Joseph after the birth of Jesus Christ. Three of these sons - James ... Simon, and Judas - are not to be confused with three of the Twelve by the same names. The Greek words for "brethren" and "sisters" are *adelphos* for brother and *adelphē* for sisters. These words come from the word *delphus* which literally means "the womb." In other words, these were brothers and sisters of Christ who

shared the same womb. The words brothers and sisters could not be—as the Catholic church claims—relatives or cousins or previous children of Joseph.

The message of the Marian apparitions clearly contradicts Scripture. Did the people who claim to have seen Mary experience a real miracle? Yes, possibly. However, the entity calling itself “Mary” is not working for God’s glory or pointing people to Jesus Christ. Rather, Mary is being glorified, and in Catholic theology people are being told to earn their own salvation by works and depend on Mary as another intercessor between God and man.

This reminds us that the presence of miracles is not necessarily a proof that something or someone is from God. The miracles may actually be from Satan who seeks to deceive people through the miraculous display of supernatural feats. The devil will try many things, including performing the miraculous, to keep people from believing on Jesus Christ. Many people today believe they can experience miracles without believing on Jesus Christ and I’m afraid sometime Satan performs the supernatural to keep people away from placing actual faith in Christ.

Demonic miracles are real and they do occur even in the world of the occult. It is our responsibility to make sure that we do not give in to them. We must keep our Bibles open and put God’s revealed truth ahead of any and every miracle we see. The Bible does not give specific detailed instructions on how to recognize counterfeit miracles. However, the Bible does give specific instructions on how to recognize counterfeit messengers.

Matthew 7:16

“Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles?”

Matthew 7:20

“Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them.”

To qualify as a true messenger of God, the fruit (what they do and say – method and message) must comply with God’s Word (2 Tim. 2:15; 3:16-17). Does what a person say about miracles align itself with God’s Word? For instance, does the

Charismatic phenomenon of God sending gold dust down from Heaven or laughing in the Holy Spirit align itself with what the Bible says? There is a plethora of false teaching on miracles today such as there is healing in Christ's death, God never wants us unhealthy, and that we have sinned and failed God when we are ill. This is a misunderstanding and misapplication of God's Word to our lives.

None of these teachings can be supported with a proper study of the Bible and what it says about sickness and healing. God has not always promised us a perfect bill of health. False teaching about healings and miracles is abundant. We should take the bait of this type of teaching. We need to walk by faith – not fanaticism!

Yes, we know that God can miraculously heal according to His plan and purpose. However, God's people are instructed to rely on prayer (1 John 5:14), the providence of God (Ps. 115:3), and His purpose (Rom. 8:28) for their individual lives when it comes to experiencing personal healing in their lives. We cannot deliver people and demand God to heal. This is not our prerogative. Only the early apostles had this special privilege to go about and heal people. When it comes to healing, we must remember that there is another source other than God. Satan has the power to do miracles in order to keep people bound in unbelief and confusion.

Miracles are only God inspired when they conform to God's standard of truth which today involves submitting to God for spiritual deliverance (James 4:7) and praying to God for healing (James 5:15), and sharing the Gospel with people who are lost and in need of deliverance from Satan's power (Acts 26:18). God's people must rely on prayer, the providence of God, and His purpose for their individual lives when it comes to seeing people saved and experiencing personal healing in their lives. We cannot deliver people and demand God to heal. This is not our prerogative.

We must also remember once again that only the apostles had this special privilege to go about and heal people. In the New Testament, we discover that miracles were performed almost exclusively by the apostles and their close associates. The miracles served to validate the gospel message and the ministry of the apostles (Acts 2:43; 5:12; 2 Corinthians 12:12; Hebrews 2:4). This makes the miracle workers of today, what they are doing and saying about miracles, fraudulent. Why? It's

because what they are saying does not match up with the purpose and program that God instituted for miracles.

While we should never doubt God's ability to perform miracles, the biblical purpose of miracles should give us a degree of skepticism concerning reports of modern-day miracles. While it is not biblical to say that God never performs miracles, the Bible is clear that we are to seek after truth - not miracles.

Matthew 12:39

"But he answered and said unto them, An evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign; and there shall no sign be given to it, but the sign of the prophet Jonas."

In other words, we should not live out our entire lives seeking the miraculous and missing out on God's primary purpose for living which is to glorify God by becoming more Christlike in our character and conduct (2 Cor. 3:18).

Matthew 7:21-23 goes on to then speak of Satanic miracles:

"Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity."

From these verses which point to a future judgment day, we learn that not all miracles come from God and not all miracle workers are divinely accredited. Jesus cited this verse in the days of the apostles and the way it will be when He comes back to establish His earthly kingdom. A miracle such as the casting out of demons may seem that God is at work. However, this power can actually be satanic or demonic in origin. Satan may empower his workers to cast out demons temporarily, in order to create the illusion that the miracle is divine. Satan is not dividing his kingdom against itself (Mark 3:24), in such cases as this, but is using this miracle to plot even worse things against unbelievers in order to keep them bound to their unbelief and bring them to future judgment. Remember that Judas participated in the miraculous activities but was not a true believer. We know that Catholic priests

practice casting out demons and they are not God's true messengers. Witch doctors also claim to possess this power.

Jesus is teaching that the miracles of God, such as casting out of demons, can in some measure be mimicked and mocked by Satan and those who are behind him as he seeks to deceive people in the End Times. This has always been true. Satan attempts to duplicate the miraculous to deceive people, capture them, and keep them in his own kingdom. The devil seeking to deceive people through the miraculous is nothing new. We need to remember this in a day when the promotion and proliferation of miracle workers and their alleged miracles.

The Bible teaches that the early sign gifts, which included the performing of miracles, was given only to the original apostles to authenticate the new messengers (the apostles) and their messages (Mark 16:20; Acts 2:43; 5:12) before the completed revelation of God's Word was given. This is why their miracles are called "signs" (2 Cor. 12:12 – "signs of an apostle" – see also Acts 2:22, 43; 5:12; 8:13; 14:3; Rom. 15:19; Heb. 2:4). They were miraculous signs given to authenticate the original apostles and their messages before the Scriptures were completed. Therefore, these types of miraculous sign gifts, which include the casting out of demons, a form of the apostolic healing ministry (2 Cor. 12:9-10 – the word "heal" is used in association with casting out demons) are no longer possessed by God's children today, since we have God's full revelatory truth in the canon of Scripture – the New Testament (1 Cor. 13:10-13). This is why the ministry of the apostles, along with their miracles, was foundational (Eph. 2:20) and temporary.

A true apostle had to be a direct witness of Christ's life and resurrection and be personally and directly commissioned by Him (Acts 1:21-22). Since this is true, there can be no apostles today. The gifts and unique ministry of the apostles has ceased (1 Cor. 13:10-13). The gifts of miracles and healing, the unique signs of apostleship, including the casting out of demons, also ceased with the passing away of the apostles. This absence of the apostolic gifts, along with their miracles, was already recognized to have passed off the scene in the mid 60's of the first century ("was confirmed unto us" – the later Christians during the days the book of Hebrews was written – "by them" – the original band of apostles – "that heard him" – who lived during the days of Jesus Christ - Hebrews 2:3). The second generation of Christians

(after the days of the original apostles) already recognized that the apostolic gifts, which included their abilities to heal people, had an ending point during the first century.

Yes, God still can do miracles and does according to His sovereign will. The Bible teaches the cessation of the miraculous gifts but not necessarily the cessation of miracles. He often works through and in response to the prayers of His people. But the divine enablement and authority to perform miracles and healing, as the apostles did, is not a viable gift for today, since there is no person who can meet the qualifications of an apostle (healing everyone, raising the dead, seeing the resurrected Jesus) and since there is no more need for apostles to authenticate God's truth. This is because we have the truth completed in the Bible that we love and possess today.

11. Can Satan raise the dead?

The answer to this question is no. Satan does not possess the power to give life. Only God as the Creator can give life (Acts 17:25). This right or prerogative only belongs to God alone. Some well-meaning expositors of Bible prophecy believe that Satan will temporarily be granted this power by God, during the future Tribulation Period, so he can raise the Antichrist from the dead. But this seems unlikely. Why would God grant Satan the authority to bring back life when He alone possesses that right?

Let's look at the beast prophecy that is often misunderstood. Here comes the beast!

Revelation 13:1-3

"And I stood upon the sand of the sea, and saw a beast rise up out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns, and upon his horns ten crowns, and upon his heads the name of blasphemy. And the beast which I saw was like unto a leopard, and his feet were as *the feet* of a bear, and his mouth as the mouth of a lion: and the dragon gave him his power, and his seat, and great authority. And I saw one of his heads as it were wounded to death; and his deadly wound was healed: and all the world wondered after the beast."

This verse speaks about a beast restoration to life that will occur at the middle of the Tribulation Period. This will cause delusion and deception during this special season of time at the end of the age (2 Thess. 2:9-12). In other words, the Antichrist will come back to life, at least it will seem like this will occur to the people of the earth.

Since Satan cannot raise the dead, John Walvoord makes this suggestion: “Another plausible explanation is that the final world ruler receives a wound which normally would be fatal but is miraculously healed by Satan. While the resurrection of a dead person seems to be beyond Satan’s power, the healing of a wound would be possible for Satan, and this may be the explanation.”

The wound of the Antichrist may seem to be fatal but the miraculous healing of the devil will bring about the Antichrist’s restoration to life. According to John Walvoord’s teaching on this matter, the Bible says that “his deadly wound was healed” but it does not say that the Antichrist actually died and was raised by the power of Satan. Besides, the Bible says that after an unsaved person dies, they immediately face God’s wrath and judgment and have no of returning from the dead (Heb. 9:27).

Let’s investigate this a little further. The “heads” on this beast vision correspond to the descriptions of the animals in Revelation 13:3 and in the book of Daniel (Daniel 7) and refer to the past historical empires and leading figures in these empires (Egypt Assyria, Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, Rome, Revived Roman Empire). They represent the ancient empires of history culminating together in one empire to reemerge during the End Times.



John sees one of the “heads” on the beast to be wounded and the wound appears to be mortal or to the point of death. This is where the Antichrist comes into the

picture. If John is referring to what appears to be a death of the seventh head (the prophetic and Revived Roman Empire of the End Times) represented on the beast vision, then he is teaching that, at one point, the Revived Roman Empire with its leader the Antichrist, will suffer what appears to be a mortal wound, but will then be healed of this wound by the power of Satan, and become an eighth head (kingdom and leader) in and of himself (Rev. 17:11).

If John is looking back to the sixth head that dies (the past historical Roman Empire with its leading figure), or another empire head, then Revelation 13:3 is not teaching that the Antichrist will be harmed or killed during the Tribulation Period. What is being represented in Revelation 13:3-4 is the lie of reincarnation. Since the language of Antichrist's death is similar to what is stated in relation to the actual death of the Messiah (Rev. 5:6), we may need to look at Antichrist's wound in a similar way – a wound that results in actual death. However, since Satan cannot raise the dead, the Antichrist will make the bold claim that his predecessor, a Caesar of the past Roman Empire, has died and now has come back to life through reincarnation – not resurrection.

If John is referring to the death of the sixth head (the historical Roman Empire with its leading figure), then the Bible is teaching that the Antichrist will create the lie that he was a historical figure living in the ancient or past Roman Empire (the time period of the sixth head), who died, but who has now come back to life via reincarnation (the time period of the seventh head with ten horns and crowns = “seven heads and ten horns ... and crowns on the horns” - The Revived Roman Empire – Dan. 7:24. Rev. 17:12-13).

In other words, when the Antichrist comes on the world scene, at one point, he will claim to be a reincarnated figure of the past Roman Empire, perhaps Caesar himself, who has now reemerged as a seventh head (leader and king) through reincarnation to lead the Revived Roman Empire in Europe and the Middle East. This man and his kingdom will dominate the world. In fact, he will at one-point claim independence from all previous kingdoms and kings and become an “eight” king and kingdom in and of himself (Rev. 17:11).

One thing is certain, Revelation 13:3 is not teaching that Satan will literally raise the Antichrist from the dead but that he will heal his deadly wound, which has appeared to be fatal, and restore him to life. This amazing feat will result in worldwide worship of the Antichrist during the last three and one half years of the Tribulation Period.

12. Can Satan and demons make people sin?

Children will have their share of fights while growing up. It's part of human nature – or the old nature. I like the story of the little girl who was once disciplined by her mother for kicking her little brother in the shins and then pulling his hair. "Sally," said her mother, "why did you let the devil make you kick you brother and pull his hair?" The girl replied, "The devil made me kick him but pulling his hair was my idea!" We can all probably relate to this story. I would love to blame all or at least part of my sin on Satan, but I don't believe that Satan and demons can make anyone sin. They cannot force human being to act. The old adage, "The devil made me do it" simply is not true. Many times we would like to pawn off full responsibility onto the devil, but James 1:13-15 gives us the realistic picture.

James 1:13-15

"Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man: But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed. Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death."

Don't pass the buck on the devil. Satan is not mentioned anywhere in this chain of events. Of course, Satan and demons are sometimes behind temptation but human sin ultimately originates in the will and volition of people who have allowed their sin nature to run their lives.

Matthew 15:18-19

"But those things which proceed out of the mouth come forth from the heart; (where the sin factory is occurring through the old nature) and they defile the man. For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies."

The sinful, depraved, human heart is the engine and originator of sin even though Satan can strongly influence our thinking and acting (2 Cor. 11:3). In other words, we cannot blame the devil for our sin because it's our own human, depraved heart, which we choose to follow, that causes us to sin. The devil nor demons make us sin. They can tempt us and add fuel to the fire of the sin nature, but they cannot make us or cause us to sin. We choose to sin!

13. Should Christians be afraid of Satan?

The fear of God is the key to combating unhealthy fear (Eccl. 12:13). When we fear God, reverencing who He is and wanting to please Him with our lives, we don't fear other things. The person who fear God has no need to fear anything else. As our fear of God expands, fears about life and death diminish, including the fear of Satan.

Although Satan is a powerful spirit being and formidable and ferocious foe (1 Pet. 5:8), believers are not to fear him. Believers have not been given a spirit of fear (2 Timothy 1:7). This means we should not live in a state of fear regarding the devil's power and desire to destroy our spiritual lives. However, this does not mean we have the license to swing to the other extreme by mocking, insulting, and making fun of the devil. We lose our "sober" and "vigilant" state (1 Pet. 5:8) when we do this. This kind of behavior is foolish and unbiblical (2 Peter 2:10; Jude 8-9).

Not even Michael, the great archangel, rebuked the devil when arguing with him over the body of Moses. I cannot find anywhere in the Bible where New Testament believers are told to talk to Satan and demons. Instead of this, we are to talk to God in prayer (Eph. 6:18-20). Even Jesus did not rebuke the devil or bind the evil when He faces him in the wilderness. He responded using the Bible (Matt. 4:1-11).

God has not called believers to engage in aggressive forms of so-called spiritual warfare where we allegedly bind and rebuke both Satan and demons. This is not a Biblical practice. We never once read in the Bible about the apostles or any person binding a demon. We hear a lot of terminology being passed around today but we must find out if it is Biblical terminology. If it's not – scrap it and follow the Bible. Those places in the Bible where binding and loosing (forbidding or permitting) is spoken about (Matthew 16 and 18) has nothing to do with the devil or demons but with is related to the actions of the apostles carrying out God's heavenly will on earth in relation to the person lives of others.

In a similar way, the idea that we are to command demons (territorial spirits) and the devil to give up spiritual territory in various parts of the world sidetracks believer into wasting time and energy on unbiblical practices. The New Testament never calls us to these kinds of practices. In no instance does anyone in the New Testament (not even the apostles) summons territorial spirits, demand information from demons, or that certain demonic strongholds over cities must be broken so the Gospel can be effectively preached. This kind of thing is foreign to the New Testament. Satan's seat or throne is in many places throughout the earth (Rev. 2:13) but God has never instructed us or any Christian to rebuke, bind, identify, and command evil spirits to leave cities.

In addition, the New Testament epistles never relates demonic spirits to specific sins (the demon of lust, greed, or demon of a sinus headache) or instruct believers to confront demons that are allegedly behind particular sins, such as the demon of nicotine, alcoholism, pornography, anger, or drug addiction. This too is an umbilical practice that bypasses the sin nature and depravity of man whose heart is evil and wicked (Jer. 17:9). We should not blame our fallen depravity on demons and Satan!

Although demons tempt us to sin and know our weaknesses, we cannot relate demons to specific sins. This is not a New Testament practice, nor can any Christian know for sure when demons are tempting them, or if only our sin nature is moving us to sin. We cannot see behind the curtain which enemy, or combination of our enemy's (the world, flesh, and the devil), are trying to take us down.

The New Testament practice to gain victory NEVER commands or instructs us to rebuke Satan and demons, curse or deride demons, get rid of territorial spirits, or relate our sins to demons. Rather it commands us to walk in the Spirit (Gal. 5:17), conform our mind to the truth (Rom. 12:2), flee sin and follow after righteousness (2 Tim. 2:22). We are called upon to overcome sin on a daily matter by resisting the devil as we humbly submit to God's authority over our life (James 4:7). Submitting comes before resisting. Resisting the devil does not mean rebuking or shouting at him but involves a lifestyle of submission, repentance, and obedience to God.

The battle plan for winning over demonic attack is to resist the devil, claim our victory, and hold our ground that we possess. This means we can also pray on and apply God's spiritual armor (Eph. 6:10-18). We would be wise to follow God's true method of spiritual warfare and dealing with our sin instead of practicing umbilical

practices that lead to frustration and failure. Follow God's plan. Follow the blueprints for victory! This means we should aggressively use our God-given methods to obtain victory over the world, the flesh, and the devil.

How does the Bible say we can have victory?

- We must FLEE fleshly lusts (1 Cor. 6:18; 2 Tim. 2:22; Rom. 13:14)
- We must FOLLOW righteousness (1 Tim. 6:11; 2 Tim. 2:22; Eph. 6:14)
- We must walk by FAITH in God's provision and promises (Eph. 6:16).
- We must FIRMLY rely on the Lord's power (Eph. 6:10; 1 John 4:4).
- We must FIGHT *defensively* with God's armor (Eph. 6:10-12).
- We must FULLY submit to God and resist the devil (James 4:7; Rom. 12:1).
- We must be FILLED with the Spirit's power (Eph. 5:18; Gal. 5:25).

You will notice that nothing is said in any of these New Testament verses that are dealing with victory, which are given to the Church, that we must discover and root out territorial spirits, bind demons, rail against Satan, speak in tongues, or that we must seek out faith healers. And yet, many well-meaning but misled Christians have bought into these false and manmade approaches that attempt to overcome the devil, demons, and sin. However, the fact is that believers are never commanded in Scripture to seek out or attack Satan or demons, rebuke or deride them, bind them, or blame their sins on demons. Again, we must remember that demons seek us out and that we are on the defense when dealing with demons – not the offense.

Ephesians 6:13-14

“Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness.”

Should we fear Satan? No. At the same time, we should not belittle Satan with our words and actions but have a sober awareness of Satan's power and ability to deceive us. Likewise, we should also follow God's blueprint on how to have victory in our Christian life, instead of following manmade strategies which are not Biblically accurate.

As quoted earlier, Mark Hitchcock states:

“We are not to tremble at the devil, but neither are we to trivialize him”

Martin Luther said:
“And though this world with devils filled,
Should threaten to undo us;
We will not fear, for God has willed
His truth to triumph through us.”

14. How is Satan related to the occult?

Occult practices are broadly divided into three categories. They are divination (foretelling the future), magic (sorcery), and Spiritism (contacting spirits of deceased people). This all relates to the world of Satan. We know that Satan is the author of all false religion, including occultism. It’s interesting that Satan’s original appeal to Eve was to seek hidden information beyond what God had revealed. The Bible and the unchanging moral laws or code of God condemns all involvement in occult practices.

Deuteronomy 18:9-14

“When thou art come into the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee, thou shalt not learn to do after the abominations of those nations. There shall not be found among you *any one* that maketh his son or his daughter to pass through the fire (child burning and sacrifice), *or* that useth divination (witchcraft or sorcery which involved practicing magic by incantations and interpreting omens), *or* an observer of times (soothsaying - observing signs and omens such as the wind, rain, fire, the seasons, and specific events in the world to foretell the future - clairvoyance and E.S.P.), *or* an enchanter (sorcery - someone who casts spells on others through drugs and potions - the practice of voodoo), *or* a witch (a medium who contacts the spirit world in order to practice magical spells on others),

“Or a charmer (a person who claimed to have power over snakes or serpents – Satan was the original snake charmer), *or* a consulter with familiar spirits (a spiritualist - a séance leader - one who supposedly communicates with the dead spirits of people but who actually communicates with demons) *or* a wizard (those in the occult world who claimed to possess supernatural knowledge through communication with the evil world of spirits - warlocks and wizards)

or a necromancer (someone who allegedly contacts and calls up the dead through the use of spirit guides in order to gain advice, information on the future, or help).

“For all that do these things *are* an abomination unto the LORD: and because of these abominations the LORD thy God doth drive them out from before thee. Thou shalt be perfect with the LORD thy God. For these nations, which thou shalt possess, hearkened unto observers of times, and unto diviners: but as for thee, the LORD thy God hath not suffered thee so *to do*.”

These commands to separate from false religion which include the occult would also apply to such things as modern-day practices such as fortune-telling, Eastern meditation, reading plasm and tarot cards, channeling, astral projection, astrology, Ouija Boards, séances, crystal balls, or any other similar activities.

Henry G. Bosch, writing in our Daily Bread, in August of 1989 said:

“Satanism, demons, and the occult are dark, sinister realities, not tricks. One of the signs that we are nearing the close of this age is the widespread interest in witchcraft, astrology, and other forms of the occult.... Thousands consult their horoscope each day, attend séances, or seek to communicate with deceased loved ones. There’s also a great interest in Satanism and demons. The Bible repeatedly warns against such practices (Lev. 19:31; 20:27; 2 Chron. 33:6; Jer. 10:2; Gal. 5:19, 20). How urgent and up-to-date are the warnings of Scripture! Let’s not play around with something that could become a kiss of death.”

I remember one time when I was on vacation. We were in some mall and I happened to walk into a strange store. I began looking around and came to realize that I had wandered into some kind of weird store that was promoting totem poles, strange looking statues, and voodoo-type enchantments. They were playing repetitive drum music. It was weird and creepy. I got out of there in a hurry! I like to steer clear of Satan’s territory.

Ephesians 5:10-11 says that we are to be constantly:

“Proving what is acceptable unto the Lord. And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove *them*.”

This is true regarding the occult and anything that the devil is promoting. Don't go along with it – reprove or correct it.

The Bible links the occult to demonism.

Acts 16:16-18

“And it came to pass, as we went to prayer, a certain damsel possessed with a spirit (a demonic spirit) of divination (fortune telling, soothsaying, make astounding revelations) met us, which brought her masters much gain by soothsaying: The same followed Paul and us, and cried, saying, These men are the servants of the most high God, which shew unto us the way of salvation. And this did she many days. But Paul, being grieved, turned and said to the spirit, I command thee in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her. And he came out the same hour.”

Here is a takeaway from this episode. Satan tries to disrupt our prayer life. He will do whatever he can to distract us from the “sweet hour of prayer” and try to keep us from contacting God and living close to Him. Don't allow Him to invade your devotional life!

Three pastors got together for coffee one day and found all their churches had bat-infestation problems. "I got so mad," said one, "I took a shotgun and fired at them. It made holes in the ceiling, but did nothing to the bats." "I tried trapping them alive," said the second. "Then I drove 50 miles before releasing them, but they beat me back to the church." "I haven't had any more problems," said the third. "What did you do?" asked the others, amazed. "I simply baptized and confirmed them," he replied. "I haven't seen them in the church since." Like these bats, Satan tries to keep us from living for Jesus Christ, listening to Him, following Him, and obeying His will for our personal lives.

15. How does Satan get a foothold in our life?

Ephesians 4:26-27

“Be ye angry, and sin not: let not the sun go down upon your wrath: Neither give place to the devil.”

The concept behind “giving place” to Satan means that we give him a portion of our heart and lives. As a result, this becomes a starting point, a foothold, or a base of

operation for the devil to begin working in our lives. Satan likes to then use this particular weak point in our lives and begin to slowly tear us down.

Do you have a weakened defense against Satan? Has there been some specific point of entry that the devil has made into your life? Maybe it's something very small or insignificant in your mind. But remember the devil knows how to take more territory in our life. If we give him an inch, he will eventually take a yard.

One pastor in Haiti once told this parable to his congregation: "A man in Haiti wanted to sell his house. Another man wanted very much to buy it, but because he was poor, he couldn't afford the full price. After much bargaining, the owner agreed to sell the house for half the original price with just one stipulation: he would retain ownership of one small nail protruding from just over the door. After several years, the original owner decided he wanted the house back, but the new owner was unwilling to sell. So the first owner found the carcass of a dead dog, and hung it from the single nail he still owned. Soon the house became so smelly that it was unlivable, and the family was forced to sell the house to the owner of the nail."

Then the Haitian pastor made this application of the parable:

"If we leave the devil with even one small peg in our life, he will return to hang his rotting garbage on it, making it unfit for Christ's habitation."

One weak point, starting point, beachhead, foothold, or base operation that the devil uses in our lives is the sin of anger. This is why the Bible says "let not the sun go down upon your wrath" in connection with giving place to the devil. Apparently anger is one of the sins that the devil uses as a starting point for him to work in our lives. He can use anger and an unforgiving spirit to get a foothold in our life and eventually a greater portion of our spiritual life.

Billy Sunday was a famous evangelist many years ago. A woman came up to him once after he preached on anger, and tried to justify her angry outbursts. She explained, "There's nothing wrong with losing my temper. I blow up, and then it's all over." Sunday replied, "So does a shotgun, but look at the damage it leaves behind!" The Biblical teaching of the text Ephesians 4:26-27 is that we should not allow anger (a starting point of the devil) to continue in our hearts and minds without dealing with it. It may be one hour or several hours until sundown, but

that's not the point. Deal with it by confessing your sin and getting right with God (1 John 1:9).

Two brothers got into a fight one morning, and the older one very easily overpowered the younger, smaller brother. He took quite a beating, but it was his pride that suffered the most. He was so bitter about it that he refused to talk to his brother all day long. When bedtime came, their mother, wanting to see them patch things up, said, "Don't you think you should forgive your brother before you go to sleep? Remember, the Bible says, 'Do not let the sun go down on your wrath.'" The little boy looked perplexed, as he thought for a few moments. Then he blurted out, "But Mom, how can I keep the sun from going down?"

Of course there are many ways Satan can get starting points in our lives and defeat us. There are many ways we open ourselves up to the devil's influence and power in our lives. Satan has marked off much territory in our lives where he would like to gain control, and once he moves in, it is much, much easier for him to affect us in other ways as well.

Living the Christian life is all about surrendering to the lordship of Jesus Christ and not allowing Satan to start a basis of operation in our hearts and lives. We need to repent of any sin and starting point the devil has made in our lives and take back the territory he has stolen.

Revelation 2:5 says:

"Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent."

16. Are you UFOs the work of Satan and demons?

Roswell New Mexico is considered the UFO capital of the world. There is a dedicated UFO museum there in honor of the July 1947 crash site near Roswell. There have been all kinds of storied and explanations of this alleged UFO sighting.



When it comes to UFO sightings, the most important point is that the vast majority of UFO sightings are easily explained in terms of natural phenomena. About 95 percent of these sightings end up being IFOs (Identified Flying Objects). They turn out to be mistakenly identified planets (especially Venus), stars, landing lights from distant airplane, atmospheric gases, weather balloons, satellites, blimps or airships, abnormal light, rocket launchings, and various other phenomena which is easily explained and dismissed as natural phenomena. Other sightings are simply hallucinations. So, when we discuss UFO sightings, only about 5 percent are really at issue.

Some people actually believe that the Bible mentions UFOs by pointing to the pillar of cloud and fire that led the children of Israel through the wilderness (Ex. 13:21-22; 14:19-20), the theophany of Ezekiel 1 (where Ezekiel saw the wheel!), and the Bethlehem star is also interpreted to be a UFO. Of course, these passages, when interpreted in a reasonable manner, can never point to UFOs.

Some Christians and many non-Christians believe that life exists on other planets. The most common argument for intelligent life on other planets is the vastness of space. People say, "Why would God create so many galaxies if He did not intend to populate them?" The Biblical answer to this question is that they were created for God's glory (Psalm 19:1-3) – not to house extraterrestrial life.

The great vastness of the universe is designed to reflect God's amazing glory as the Creator. It is not designed to populate life in other galaxies and on different planets.

Ron Rhodes provides a good explanation:

"We might say that the whole universe is God's 'kindergarten' to teach us the ABCs of the reality of God...This then is why God created so many stars and planets – not to inhabit them with multiple life-forms but to serve as a testimony to His power and glory. It is not necessary to argue that simply because many planets exist in the universe on which life *could* exist, life *does* therefore exist on those planets."

No person can prove that there is extraterrestrial life on other planets. There is not one shred of Biblical evidence to prove that extraterrestrials exist. The Bible

mentions nothing about this but gives the clear indication that God only designed the earth to be inhabited by man and creatures (Acts 17:26; Isa. 40:22).

The Bible only speaks of the earth being inhabited by intelligent beings. Therefore, we must leave the Bible settle the matter on this subject instead of speculative theories. Since the Bible does not mention life on other planets but only the earth, we must accept what the Bible reveals to us about this matter.

There is an argument from silence that we must accept and believe. God revolves His plan around the Lamb (Jesus Christ) and the salvation of earth dwellers (Rev. 13:8) – not extraterrestrial beings or other forms of life on other planets. The clear revelation of Scripture is that God created planet earth to house life – not other planets (Genesis 1-2).

We must let the Bible speak for itself on this matter and stop all the speculation. The point is this; if there is not life on other planets, then what are the 5 percent UFO sightings which cannot be explained? This is what we want to study about next.

About 5 percent of UFOs defy natural explanation and the laws of physics. They can:

- Move at a high speed without causing a sonic boom
- Turn at right angles or stop in midair at speeds up to 16,000 mph
- Adapt to human perception, appearing in the nineteen century as flying sea ships of arrows
- Seemingly vanish into thin air
- Sometime avoid detection by radar, photos, or other services
- Seemingly change shape, size, or color at will.

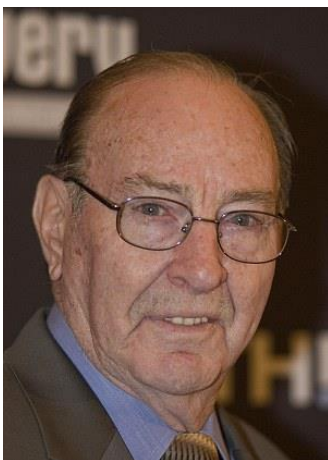
We do know that those sightings which cannot be explained are not a physical object or an aircraft. They are actually reported as being massive, multicolored, intense, pulsating, hypnotic lights, often accompanied by strange sounds. In other words, UFOs don't behave like physical objects.

In Washington last September, six former Air Force officers and a former enlisted man stepped forward to say that they'd seen or had been directly involved with

UFO sightings at nuclear missile sites. These sightings began at the dawn of the Cold War and continued through the 1970s. There is really no viable explanation for them after tons of research have been done to identify these problems. At the press conference, organized by UFO researcher Robert Hastings, these men told the media that they were encouraged not to speak of these sightings by their superiors, and in some cases, were required to sign secrecy oaths.

Now, Hastings is saying three more witnesses are speaking to him about a more recent UFO sighting and it revolves around a serious communications scare at F. E. Warren Air Force Base in Wyoming last October, when the military acknowledged that it had lost contact with 50 of its nuclear Minuteman III missiles. “We’ve never had something as big as this happen,” said a military officer who had been briefed on the event, according to the *The Atlantic*. “We can deal with maybe 5, 6 or 7 at a time, but we’ve never lost complete command and control and functionality of 50 ICBMs.”

What is the answer to these types of sightings and strange happenings? Some believe that angels (or some kind of UFOs) were saving America from a nuclear war or holocaust with Russia, especially during the early days of nukes and the time of the cold war.



Edgar Mitchell, the sixth man to walk on the moon, says high-ranking military sources witness alien ships hovering during weapons tests. The UFOs, he says, were seen during the world's first nuclear weapons test which took place on July 16, 1945 in the desolate White Sands deserts of New Mexico. Is it possible that angels, or Satan and demons are behind some of the UFO sightings in the world?

There are three plausible reasons that fallen angels are behind some of the UFO sightings.

- ❖ Satan and angels are created as luminous beings.

Angels in general are luminous creations of God. In other words, they emanate light from their bodies as they move about in the spirit world.

Matthew 28:2-3

“And, behold, there was a great earthquake: for the angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and came and rolled back the stone from the door, and sat upon it. His countenance was like lightning, and his raiment white as snow.”

Ezekiel 1:14 gives a similar description of angels:

“And the living creatures ran and returned as the appearance of a flash of lightning.”

These verses, and many others, indicate that there is a world of angelic beings which emanate light forth from their spiritual bodies. The Scriptures seem very clear on this. Satan himself displays brilliant light from his personal being (Luke 10:18). The name “Lucifer” means morning star which shines brilliantly in the sky (Rev. 9:1). This means that Satan and demons could at particular times materialize in this way within the realm of our own physical dimension, emanating light, and moving very quickly in every direction across the sky. Demons could move from their spiritual dimension into our physical dimension and portray this type of light source that has been repeatedly seen and unaccounted for in these sightings.

A large number of well-respected UFO researches (who are not Christians) maintain that UFOs and aliens are from parallel dimensions, not other planets. The UFO’s simply slips and out of sequence and appears in our own physical dimension, instead of just the spiritual world.

❖ Satan and angels roam the celestial heavens.

Ephesians 6:12

“For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high *places*” (the heavenlies – the first and second heavens).

Angels, including demons, have special access and movement throughout the universe in both the stratosphere and stellar heavens. This means they could at any

given point materialize (take a light form in our physical dimension) and be seen by the human eye. Angels are interdimensional which means they can appear in the spiritual or physical dimension.

❖ Satan and angels want to deceive mankind.

Why would demons materialize in such a way as this? What would they have to gain? First, these types of appearances get people to focus on extraterrestrials instead of Jesus Christ (John 14:6). These things distract people from their real need of salvation through Jesus Christ. They focus on the possibility of life from other planets instead of being concerned about their salvation. Second, they want to promote the evolutionary theory that life originated from extraterrestrial life from other planets. This is a very popular and devilish, evolutionary theory today. Satan wants to deceive people about Creator God and wants them to believe that life originated from aliens and not from God. In the end, this promotes atheism.

Remember the debate between creationist Ken Ham and avowed evolutionist Bill Nye? After claiming Ham was irrational for believing that God created the earth, Nye, the alleged brilliant scientist, who actually believes everything evolved by chance mechanism, made the assertion that he believes life came from extraterrestrials who live on other planets. You make the call. Who is more rational? Everything came from nothing. The universe popped into existence without nothing existing before it and aliens, which somehow came into existence, are the origin of life on earth. Or, "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth" (Gen. 1:1).

Third, these types of demonic materializations in our dimension (where we live and breathe) are likely designed to distract people and set them up for many types of End Time delusions which are still to come (2 Thess. 2:9-10). Yes, it would appear that Satan is behind some of the UFO sightings in this world. Don't rule out a satanic source behind some of these sightings. We live in a world of devilish deception and delusion today. Don't underestimate what Satan is doing today in this world.

17. What are doctrines of demons?

One of the official documents distributed to Nazi guards overseeing the death of camps of World War II included these words: “The camps law is that those going to their death should be deceived until the end.” In the same way, Satan and his demons want to deceive people unto the end of their lives. Satan’s main method of deception is to deceive people with false doctrine.

1 Timothy 4:1

“Now the Spirit speaketh expressly (in specific terms – not in vague terms or symbolic language), that in the latter times (postapostolic times – a later time period than when Paul was writing) some shall depart from the faith (what all Christians believe and teach), giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils.”

The “some” that are being referenced in this verse do not mean that these people were at one time saved. It simply means that they had once professed to be Christians. They knew about the Lord Jesus Christ. They professed for a time to follow Him, but then they apostatized or departed from “the faith” which is an expression of what Christians are to believe and practice. An apostate follows a false religion, one that is inconsistent with the revealed truths of Christianity.

Apostasy can be defined as a willful turning away from the truth of the Christian faith. It is someone who knows the truth but who deliberately turns away from it and proclaims something other than the truth. You will notice that this verse draws a clear distinction of what the Holy Spirit is saying in the latter times and what demons are saying through false teachers. Deceitful spirits are the instruments or agents that Satan uses to produce or generate these false teachings during the last days. Doctrines of demons are deadly theological ideas that demons create. They are doctrines or teachings that *deny* salvation by grace alone, which seek to *undermine* our liberty in Jesus Christ, and which *question* the major doctrines of Christianity.

Satan is glad to give people the truth, so long as he can squeeze in his drops of poison. One drop of cyanide in water is enough to kill you. The same is true with many errors being propagated by demons. They are false teachings which come

from the lips of false teachers which are so prevalent in the mainline churches of our day.

Someone said:

The more truth that error contains, the more dangerous it is.”

Error rides on the back of truth. Let us not forget this. Satan is the mastermind behind a campaign of deception. False teachings emerge from corrupt denominations which have erred from the truth and which have never embraced the absolute standard of truth. They come from the lips of false teachers who wear the pious robes of religion and which say many things which appeal to the flesh and is presented with charm and charisma. They quote the Bible to give the appearance that they are genuine and can be trusted with what they are teaching. But it's demons that are behind the messages of false religion, corrupted denominationalism (Romanism, Liberalism, Modernism), the cults, and seminary classrooms that question the major doctrines of the Christian faith. Some of the doctrines of demons that are being peddled today include these things:

- creation happened by time and chance
- man is simply a higher form of an animal
- man is basically good (humanism)
- the Bible was written by man and is not inspired by God
- the Bible is filled with contradictions and errors
- man can go to Heaven by his own good works
- salvation is not by grace alone
- man is justified by his own good works
- Jesus is not God but a created being
- Jesus did not physically rise from the dead
- the miracles in the Bible never really happened
- everyone will go to Heaven
- there is no hell
- God's higher goal for everyone is happiness
- God wants you to be rich and health.

Demons are actually lying spirits that seek to deceive millions of people through false teachers which are peddling their doctrines. When you hear something that denies a central teaching of Biblical Christianity, then you can be sure that it is a doctrine of teaching that has originated from a demon.

18. What is demon possession?

We need to deal with this as we consider the work of Satan and his evil angels. Movies and popular culture talk about demon possession today. But what does the Bible say about demon possession? Demon possession is defined in the Bible as “having a demon” or “having an unclean spirit” (Mark 3:30; Luke 7:33; John 7:20) or to be demon possessed (Mark 5:15-16, 18). These two concepts are used interchangeably and synonymously for both are used in conjunction with the man possessed by many demons in the country of Gadarene. Mark 5:15-16, 18 with Luke 8:27). In the Biblical accounts of demon possession, a demon takes up residence within a person’s body. They actually invade a human body, live inside of a person, and exercise control over the victim, which the victim cannot successfully resist.

This truth is reinforced by what the Bible says when a demon is expelled from a person.

Mark 5:13

“And forthwith Jesus gave them leave. And the unclean spirits went out (of the man), and entered into the swine: and the herd ran violently down a steep place into the sea, (they were about two thousand;) and were choked in the sea.”

In the case of demon possession, one or more demons indwell a person. Jesus gave an instructive illustration about demon possession.

Matthew 12:43-45

“When the unclean spirit is gone out of a man, he walketh through dry places, seeking rest, and findeth none. Then he saith, I will return into my house from whence I came out; and when he is come, he findeth *it* empty, swept, and garnished. Then goeth he, and taketh with himself seven other spirits more wicked

than himself, and they enter in and dwell there: and the last *state* of that man is worse than the first. Even so shall it be also unto this wicked generation.”

We see from this illustration that demon possession involves demonic, or unclean spirits (bad or wicked angels), living inside of an individual. Demon possession is the direct, inward control that fallen angels have over an individual, as they reside inside of them. This is something that occurred during Bible times and nothing would lead us to believe that Satan stopped this practice after Bible times. Since there are no Scriptures that teach demons will cease to reside in people, we can assume the practice continues to this day. Of course, we know from outward evidence that this is true. Everything from witchdoctors, to the world of the occult, to gruesome murders, all signify that demons can and do still indwell people and take full control over their bodies.

The Bible gives some examples of people who were possessed by demons. From these examples we can find some of the symptoms of demonic possession and gain insight as to how a demon possesses someone. In some of these passages, the demon possession causes physical ailments such as inability to speak (Matt. 9:32-33; 12:22 - the Biblical word for “dumb”), blindness and other diseases (Matt. 8:16-17), such as epileptic symptoms or convulsions which causes people to do uncontrollable things (Matt. 17:15). The word “lunatick” (moon-struck or crazy) is used to indicate the actions of this type of person that is overtaken by demons. Mark mentions the same boy foaming at the mouth (Mark 9:20).

The demon-possessed man of the Gadarenes, who was possessed by a multitude of demons (Legion), had superhuman strength and lived naked among the tombstones (Mark 5:1-4; Acts 19:16). In other cases, we know that demon possession causes the individual to do evil acts, Judas being the prime example, whom Satan, the leader of demons, entered (Luke 22:3; John 13:27). Judas betrayed Jesus for money. Then there is King Saul, after rebelling against the LORD, was troubled by an evil spirit (1 Samuel 16:14-15; 18:10-11; 19:9-10) with the apparent effect of a depressed mood and an increased desire to kill David. In Acts 16:16-18, a demon apparently gives a slave girl some ability to know things beyond her own learning.

There is a wide variety of possible symptoms of demon possession, such as a physical illnesses and impairment that cannot be attributed to an actual physiological problem, a personality change such as depression or aggression, altered voice, supernatural strength, immodesty, antisocial behavior, evil actions such as murder, and also the ability to share information that one has no natural way of knowing.

It is very important to note that nearly all of these types of symptoms may also have other explanations, so it is important not to label every depressed person or epileptic individual as demon-possessed. As mentioned earlier, we must acknowledge that demon possession and lunacy caused by demons is different than possessing mental disorders, such as schizophrenia and other serious mental disorders, which are simply part of a fallen world and the result of the Genesis curse. We live in a fallen world where physical and psychological problems arise from both the natural as well as the supernatural. Many of the mental disorders and diseases that we experience today are simply the ongoing effects of the Genesis curse (Gen. 3:14-19).

On the other hand, our western culture probably does not take satanic involvement in people's lives seriously enough. We cannot rule out demonic indwelling (possession) as the source of many things that are occurring in our world today. Satan is alive and well! This brings up another question that we will include under our present heading. How can we tell the difference between mental illness and demon possession? We probably can conclude that mental disorders are much more common than demon possession. But treating a person who has schizophrenia as someone who is demon possessed can have terrible consequences. They may not receive the treatment and care that they really need. In the same manner, treating the symptoms of a truly demon-possessed person, as if he only has a mental disorder, is equally dangerous.

There is no infallible guide on determining what is demonic and what is physical, but here are some guidelines. These guidelines are mentioned by Mark Hitchcock.

- ❖ Schizophrenics sometime speak incoherently but not with the refinement of a demon-possessed person.

- ❖ A schizophrenic may believe he is someone he is not.
- ❖ Schizophrenics often make outlandish, clairvoyant claims that are demonstrably false, but the extrasensory abilities of demon-possessed individuals are usually genuine.
- ❖ Most schizophrenics don't react negatively to prayer or the name of Jesus, but demon-possessed people do.
- ❖ Schizophrenics often respond to proper medication. Demon-possessed people do not.
- ❖ The conditions of schizophrenia will continue after a person trusts Christ as savior. The symptoms of demon possession will disappear as the Spirit takes up residence in the person and expels the demon.

We are not told exactly how one opens himself up for demon possession. If Judas' case is representative, he opened his heart to evil by the sin of covetousness or greed (John 12:6) and was indwelt by the devil himself. So, it may be possible that if an unsaved person allows his heart to be ruled by some habitual sin, it becomes an invitation for a demon to enter.

From missionaries' experiences, demon possession also seems to be related to the worship of heathen idols and the possession of occult materials. Scripture repeatedly relates idol worship to the actual worship of demons (Leviticus 17:7; Deuteronomy 32:17; Psalm 106:37; 1 Corinthians 10:20), since demons are behind these items. So, it should not be surprising that involvement with idolatry and the world of occult could lead to demon possession.

Based on the above scriptural passages and some of the experiences of missionaries, we can conclude that many unsaved people open their lives up to demon involvement through embracing some sin or through cultic involvement (either knowingly or unknowingly). Some examples when people open up themselves to demon possession may include immorality, drug/alcohol abuse that alters one's state of consciousness, rebellion, bitterness, and transcendental meditation. Of course, the belief in and spread of false doctrine, especially concerning Jesus Christ and His saving work (2 Corinthians 11:3-4, 13-15; 1 Timothy 4:1-5; 1 John 4:1-3), may also open someone up for demon indwelling. Yes, demons

may be living inside of many false teachers today who are propagating a false Gospel and sending people to hell.

What is the take home from this part of our study? I think there are several things we can apply to our lives. First, we can be thankful that God has delivered us from the realm, power, and world of Satan.

Hebrews 2:14-15

Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; And deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.

We no longer must live under Satan's rule and power. Thank God for this. We have come from the darkness to the light! Let us no longer live in the darkness.

Second, we must remember that God has limits on what Satan can do to us and that God rules over all – even temptation. Satan and his evil hosts can do nothing the Lord does not allow them to do (Job 1-2). This being the case, Satan, thinking he is accomplishing his own purposes, is actually accomplishing God's good purpose as it relates to our personal lives (Rom. 8:28).

A famous German First World War fighter pilot, known known as the Red Baron, flew a distinctive red Fokker aircraft. The Red Baron shot down more combat planes than anyone else on either side in the first World War. His known kill tally was 80. On 21st April 1918, he began chasing a Canadian plane that was trying to escape the battle. As the Red Baron pursued his prey, he strayed behind Allied lines. He dived too low into the enemy lines. And he also he missed a Canadian pilot coming up on his tail to help his comrade. We will never know whether it was a shot from the ground or a shot from the Canadian pilot that killed the Red Baron. But what we do know is that the "Red Baron" came to his end because he made the mistake of pursuing that Allied 'plane "too long, too far, and too low into enemy territory."

By comparison, many Christians have been shot down because they have followed temptation for too long, too far, and too low into enemy territory. As with the Red

Baron, they are then caught unawares and must deal with the consequences. We must keep our eyes on Christ and claim our victory. We must keep flying high (in the heavenlies) and claim our victorious union with the resurrection and ascended Christ, our Victor over sin and Satan.

Some Christians develop an unhealthy fascination with the occult and demonic activity. This is unwise and unbiblical. Our life is to revolve around Jesus Christ (Gal. 2:20; Heb. 12:2). Here is the promise that we can claim. If we pursue God, if we are clothing ourselves with the armor of God and relying upon His strength (Ephesians 6:10-18), then we have nothing to fear from Satan and demons, since God rules over our temptation and does not allow us to be tempted above what we can bear (1 Cor. 10:13).

19. Can a believer in Christ be demon possessed?

The Bible teaches that a Christian can be obsessed and oppressed by demons but not possessed by demons. In other words, God's saints today may be externally influenced by a demon, but not internally controlled or inhabited by a demon. A demon cannot move inside a genuine Christian and control them as they might do to an unsaved person. Some theologians do not believe this and cite several examples: King Saul (1 Sam. 16:14), the apostle Peter (Matt. 16:23), a woman afflicted with a physical deformity (Luke 13:11-16), Satan entering Judas (John 12:37), Ananias (Acts 5:3), a man delivered over to Satan (1 Cor. 5:5), Satan disguised as an angel of light (2 Cor. 11:14), and a messenger of Satan to buffet Paul (2 Cor. 12:7).

Of course, none of these passages actually say that a demon took up residence within a believer, let alone a saint living in the Church Age, where the Holy Spirit permanently indwells the believer (John 14:16). Judas was clearly not a genuine believer. The woman who was the daughter of Abraham in Luke 13 was simply a female citizen of Israel. She had no spiritual connection with Christ. A person must read the idea of demon possession into these texts in order to arrive at this conclusion, rather than deriving this teaching directly from the text. In every instance in the Bible, when Christ and the apostles cast out demons, the demon possessed people were unbelievers.

Many today base their answer regarding Christians being demon possessed on the basis of subjective experience, rather than God's Word. We must remember that a correct interpretation of our experience will never contradict the clear teaching of Scripture. Every experience we have must be weighed against the truth of scripture, and if our experience comes up short, it must be rejected as being false.

There are at least three reasons why Christians cannot be demon possessed.

a. The Spirit's indwelling

1 Corinthians 6:19

"What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost *which is* in you (indwelling), which ye have of God (gift), and ye are not your own (ownership)?"

The Bible teaches that the Holy Spirit permanently indwells our body in the Church Age. The Holy Spirit inhabits us in the present age and He lives inside of us forever (John 14:16). Our bodies are God's living temple. It is unthinkable that the Holy Spirit would share God's dwelling place with a foul spirit or fallen angel.

2 Corinthians 6:15-16

"And what concord (agreement or fellowship) hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in *them*; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people."

The Bible repeatedly teaches that our bodies are inhabited by the Holy Spirit – not demons. If the Holy Spirit lives on the inside of us, then demons cannot inhabit us. A temple can only be indwelt by one spiritual force at a time.

1 John 4:4 adds:

"Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them: because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world."

Demons and Satan are always portrayed as backing the antichrists or apostates in the world today. They are never portrayed as indwelling believers. Where is Satan and demons? They are "in the world" and where is the Holy Spirit? He is "in you."

This is what the Bible teaches. A demon cannot live in the same area and temple where God's Holy Spirit dwells. It is impossible.

A demon is not able to enter and take control of a believer's physical body because the Holy Spirit lives there. This means a true believer can never be indwelt and owned or totally controlled by a demon as an unbeliever can. It is inconceivable that a demon can override the temple of the Holy Spirit and live inside the body of a believer where the Holy Spirit lives.

2 Corinthians 3:17-18 goes on to say:

"Now the Lord is that Spirit: and where the Spirit of the Lord *is*, there *is* liberty. But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, *even* as by the Spirit of the Lord."

Where is the Holy Spirit today? He is living inside of our hearts and lives as Church Age saints (2 Cor. 3:2). The saints were like living letters whose lives were being transformed by the Holy Spirit, who was changing their inner character and being ("fleshly tables of the heart"). The Holy Spirit lives within us. Once again, this means a demon cannot live in the same abode as the Holy Spirit. And where the Holy Spirit lives, there is liberty from sin and Satan's power. Thank God for this. Yes, God's children can be outwardly influenced by demons, but not inwardly indwelt by demons. God has put limits on what Satan can do to His children.

With the Holy Spirit living inside of us, no demon or fallen angel can enter inside of us, and hold a believer hostage to Satan's power. This means that a true believer cannot be inwardly overtaken by a demon and have a demon living inside of them.

Robert Lightner summarizes well:

"I do not believe demons can indwell believers. Several reasons support the conclusion. First. None of the passages used to prove believers can be demon-possessed even use the word demons. Second, none of those who were actually demon-possessed can be proven to be believers. Third, it is inconceivable that God the Father, God the Son. Or the Holy Spirit would share their abode in believers with demons of hell."

The story is told about a little boy who was flying a kite. It was a windy day, and the kite kept going higher and higher. Finally, it got so high that it was out of sight. A

man passed by and saw the little boy holding onto the string. The man could not see the kite, and he asked the boy, "How do you even know you have a kite up there?" The boy replied, "Because I can feel it."

Although we cannot see the Holy Spirit, we should be able to sense His work in our lives changing us into the image of Christ. The Bible also repeatedly declares that every child of God living in the Church Age is safely placed "in Christ" which means that we share a living and victorious union with Jesus Christ along with all of His saving benefits. (Eph. 1:3; 3:17; Col. 3:3). This means that Jesus Christ lives within our hearts and lives as well.

Galatians 2:20

I am crucified with Christ (the past work): nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me (the present power): and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.

I know that some of you are interested in bird watching. One of the enjoyable things about it is identifying different birds. When you become familiar with them, they become quite easy to identify by their size, shape, flight pattern, coloring and song. However, some birds are very similar and it takes a careful look to see what they really are. The Eastern and Western Meadowlark are very close in size, shape, flight pattern and even coloring. You have to look very closely to distinguish them. Their call, however, is quite different and when you hear it there is no confusion.

How do you identify a Christian? People in other parts of the world believe that Canadians and Americans are Christian because they perceive our country to be a Christian country, but is that an adequate way to identify a Christian? Some might suggest that most people are Christians because most of them belong to a particular church. Is attending church an adequate way to identify a person as a Christian? Does keeping a certain code of conduct identify you as a Christian? Does your family background identify you as a Christian? How do we identify who is a Christian?

Galatians 2:20 tells us how. We live in union with Jesus Christ. Christ lives within us and we share His very own life. We claim our past victory with Him over sin (dying with Jesus) and the present application of this victory today (living with Jesus). Each Church Age believer possesses a spiritual position in Christ whereby all of Christ's

past and present saving work is applied to our lives. Also, being in Christ, means that we possess a spiritual union or partnership with Christ and share His actual life. Christ lives within us on a daily and unending basis to give of Himself to us.

Here is the point. If we are in Christ and Christ lives within us (position and union truth), then a demon cannot be inside of us. To be in Christ means that we have a living union with Jesus Christ and share in all of His victory and spiritual blessings. Beloved, Christ lives within us – not demons! This alone should confirm in our hearts and minds that a Christian cannot be demon possessed or overtaken by a demon that actually lives on the inside of us. Paul said in Colossians 1:27 that Christ

Colossians 1:27

“To whom God would make known what *is* the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.”

Once again, the Bible teaches that Christ lives within us – not demons. This is a very important observation. We must believe what the Bible says instead of believing in the error being propagated today among certain evangelical circles that demons can inhabit the body of a true Christian.

b. The Scriptures instruction

There are numerous statements in Scripture that talk about the relationship of Satan and demons to God’s Church Age saints, who are in Christ, which are inconsistent with the idea of demons possessing believers. The Bible teaches that each New Testament believer has a unique position of safety, severance from the old way of life, and security in Christ.

Let’s look at some examples.

Colossians 1:13

“Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated *us* into the kingdom of his dear Son.”

This is something that God has accomplished for every blood-washed believer. The phrase “hath delivered” (rescued) is in the aorist tense and refers to something that

occurs once and for all at the time of conversion which continues to have a similar affect upon us. At the moment of salvation, we are delivered from the blindness, bondage, and power of Satan.

This deliverance or rescue occurred at the new birth. This verse is not teaching that we are gradually, progressively delivered from Satan's power. When we place our faith in Christ, we were instantly and forever delivered from Satan's power. The old position in Adam, under Satan's power and authority, has been changed forever. This truth about a lifetime of deliverance from the realm of Satan's demonian and power does not align itself with being demon possessed. We have been delivered from spiritual darkness to be overtaken by spiritual darkness once again, inhabited by demons, and placed under the realm of inward Satanic control.

The Bible teaches that God's children were taken from a rebel kingdom, under Satan's jurisdiction and authority, and have now been placed under the sphere of Christ's power and rule which may be what is termed as "the kingdom of his dear son" which is something that is occurring today in connection with our lives.

Some dispensationalists also teach that the "kingdom of his dear Son" may be a reference to the Millennium. In other words, by virtue of our position in Christ, in God's mind and reckoning, we have already seen to be transported into the Millennial Kingdom. It's a done deal. We are not only seated in the heavenlies in Christ (Eph. 1:3), but we also are seated in the Millennial Kingdom, as complete victors over Satan, who will be bound during this future Millennium (Rev. 20:1-3). Positionally, the believer is already in heaven (Eph. 2:6) and the Millennial Kingdom (Col. 1:13), but he must await the practical realization of this experience.

2 Corinthians 5:17

"Therefore if any man *be* in Christ, *he is* a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new."

Think of a fish inside a fishbowl. It illustrates the analogy of a believer being in Christ. When we are in Christ, we receive a new position or placement in Him. It's here where we receive of His special, spiritual blessings (Eph. 1:3), it's here where



we share and experience His new life and companionship, as He lives within us. Since we are in Christ, we can be sure that no demon can be invited to share this “in Christ” position with us.

This verse is not teaching that we are gradually becoming a new creature over many years of our Christian experience and living. Second Corinthians 5:17 teaches that at the time of conversion (salvation), we immediately and forever pass out of the old position in Adam, the old arrangement with Satan and sin, and in a moment’s time, everything changes in relation to our new life in Christ. We become indwelt by Christ, rescued by Christ, protected by Christ, and victors in Christ. This is a transaction that occurs in a moment’s time, when we express faith in Christ.

Tis done, the great transaction’s done,
I am Lord’s and He is mine!

This means that we have been taken out of Satan’s realm and placed in Christ’s realm. We have been taken out of a rebel kingdom and placed in Christ’s victorious kingdom. And this will never change! Our position from being in Adam and under Satan’s clutches changes instantly when we are saved. Our position from the past changes and we are given a new position in Christ. Today, we must apply this new position and victory in Christ to our lives and gradually and progressively change in our daily living. The Bible teaches that believers do not need deliverance from the dominion of sin and Satan (we already possess it); they need to act as those who have been delivered and claim their deliverance in Jesus Christ (Rom. 6:2, 7, 11).

The point is this, the believer’s rescue or deliverance from the domain of darkness and Satan is inconsistent with being possessed by a demon. God has not promised us deliverance from Satan and new life in Christ, so that demons to invade our bodies, overtake us, and completely control our bodies. Our new position in Christ, and Christ living within us, argues against a demon indwelling our bodies and overtaking us as believers.

When Christian Herter was governor of Massachusetts, he was running hard for a second term in office. One day, after a busy morning chasing votes (and no lunch) he arrived at a church barbecue. It was late afternoon and Herter was famished.

As Herter moved down the serving line, he held out his plate to the woman serving chicken. She put a piece on his plate and turned to the next person in line. "Excuse me," Governor Herter said, "do you mind if I have another piece of chicken?" "Sorry," the woman told him. "I'm supposed to give one piece of chicken to each person." "But I'm starved," the governor said. "Sorry," the woman said again. "Only one to a customer." Governor Herter was a modest and unassuming man, but he decided that this time he would throw a little weight around. "Do you know who I am?" he said. "I am the governor of this state." "Do you know who I am?" the woman said. Her reply was this: "I'm the lady in charge of the chicken. Move along, mister."

Do we know who we are in Christ? We possess of a new position in Christ. We share His life, victory, spiritual blessing, and His presence forever. No demon can ever change this by overtaking our bodies, living on the inside of us, in the same place where Jesus Christ dwells and lives.

2 Thessalonians 3:3

"But the Lord is faithful, who shall stablish you, and keep *you* from evil."

This speaks of the Lord's special protective edge that He keeps about His children. God promises in some sense to faithfully guard us from the evil one (Satan). He has promised that Satan cannot and will not touch us and overcome our lives as he once did, when we his children and unregenerate. This world is often used of military protection against a violent assault. Jesus' faithfulness provides a special defense against even the touch of the enemy. This is a special promise that God gives to His children. How can this statement and promise be reconciled with one of God's children being possessed by a demon? If we could be indwelt by a demon, then this promise would be nullified.

1 John 5:18-19 is similar in tone and teaching:

"We know that whosoever is born of God sinneth not (does not continually and habitually practice sin because of Christ's new nature and life indwelling them); but he that is begotten of God keepeth himself (from the ongoing practice and power of sin because of the new nature and Christ's indwelling life), and that wicked one

(Satan) toucheth him not. *And* we know that we are of God, and the whole world lieth in wickedness.”

The expression “wicked one” is another name for Satan. For this reason, the entire world of unsaved humanity lies in wickedness or as some have said, the entire world lies in the lap of Satan. But this is not the case with God’s redeemed! God’s children have been delivered from the realm of Satan’s power and have a special protective hedge built around them so “that the wicked one toucheth him not.”

The word “touch” means that Satan cannot harm God’s children from a serious spiritual perspective and once again overtake their lives as he did previously in their unsaved state. There are limits that God has placed upon Satan’s involvement in the life of a child of God because of the new nature and life that we possess in Christ. Christ’s indwelling life and nature prevent Satan from overtaking us to the point that we have no victory over Satan, no resemblance of being born again, and no authority and power over demons, which would include demon possession.

Because each child of God possesses the sinless nature of the indwelling Christ, John could say that Christ, working through His children, keeps the child of God from a life of continuous defeat in sin and from Satan’s total debilitating power and touch upon their lives. In other words, in the life of the true child of God, there are limits to what sin and Satan can do.

It is hard to imagine how a believer could be demon possessed, or overcome by a demon living on the inside of him, when God promises that we will not be touched by the Wicked One, or protected from Satan’s overcoming power. Demon possession is inconsistent with what the Bible teaches about Christ’s indwelling life and God’s special protection of His children. Instead of Satan touching us in a way that would bring us back to the bondage and shackles of our unregenerate state, prior to salvation, we have the special protective touch of God upon our lives. In the words of the song writer, we might say, “He touched me, and made me whole.”

Shackled by a heavy burden
Neath the load of sin and shame
Then the hand of Jesus touched me
And now I am no longer the same

Demon possession of a believer in Christ is inconsistent with all of the wonderful and glorious transaction that occurred at the time of our salvation which includes a new position in Christ and a new promise of protection from the Evil One. Romans 8:36-37 explains this protective and reassuring touch of Christ upon our lives, through His intercessory work. "As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us."

c. The silence illustration

A third point against demon possessing for believers is that the New Testament epistles are strikingly silent on this issue. In other words, it can be illustrated by looking at the New Testament epistles that there is no such thing as a Christian being demon possessed. The silence of the Bible on demons possessing or indwelling Christians is an important point to consider. I realize this is an argument from silence, but sometimes silence speaks volumes!

John MacArthur correctly states:

"There is no clear example in the Bible were a demon every inhabited or invaded a true believer. Never in the New Testament epistles are believers warned about the possibility of being inhabited by demons. Neither do we see anyone rebuking, binding, or casting demons out of a true believer. The Epistles never instruct believers to cast out demons, whether from a believer or an unbeliever."

Think about this. If Christians can be demon possessed, then why do the New Testament epistles, which are given for church life and ministry, not warn us about it or instruct us about how to deal with this problem of demon possession?

Romans 4:3 asks this question: "For what saith the scripture?" It's unimaginable that the epistles which were written to teach God's New Testament saints on how to live victoriously, would omit something so important, if it could ever happen or become a reality in the life of a true believer. Therefore, the Spirit's indwelling, Scriptural instruction, and silence from the epistles all argue against a Christian being demon possessed or indwelt by a demon, or when a demon overtakes a person's internal life, personality, and controls them inwardly in the place of the Holy Spirit and Jesus Christ, who lives within them. We must believe what God's

Word tells us today. We cannot be possessed by a demon because we are indwelt by the Holy Spirit, Jesus Christ, and the Father lives inside of us.

Believing God's testimony is like signing or endorsing a check and cashing it. A gentleman went into the home of a very poor old lady who had applied for relief. He saw something on the wall that attracted his attention. It was a piece of paper in a neat frame. He asked, "What is that on the wall?" She replied, "I just don't know what it is, but it is a paper my uncle sent me and I just don't like to throw it away and so I keep it there in remembrance of him." He exclaimed, "Don't you see what it is!" "No, I just don't understand it." "Well, it's a bank check. Look! There is the name of the bank on which it is drawn and it says, 'Pay to Jennie Johnson the sum of \$5,000.00' and there is your uncle's name at the bottom of it." "What," she said, "did he intend me to have that money? and I have been living in poverty all these years!"

How many Christians are like this today? They believe the Word and God's promises to a certain extent. They know Jesus died and lives within them and has given them great spiritual riches (Eph. 1:3). But they have never cashed in, they have never applied these wonderful riches to their lives in a way that would lead them to greater victory and spiritual blessings. We do have many wonderful blessings given to us as New Testament saints. In our last study, we discovered how the indwelling life of the Holy Spirit and Christ argues against the notion that a Christian can be demon possessed (indwelt by a demon). Since the Holy Spirit and Christ Himself lives within us, we can be reassured that no demon can live on the inside of us. The presence of the Godhead in our bodies, and the new life and position we have in Christ, argues against demon possession.

Why is this part of our study important? It's because we can be led astray by the wind of false doctrine, follow rabbit trails, claim something God has not promised to us, be committed to following error, be deceived, stumble in our Christian life, and hinder our spiritual growth in Christ by following some pseudo-sanctification process.

Someone said:

"There are two ways to be fooled. One is to believe what isn't true; the other is to refuse to believe what is true."

Are we ready and willing to believe what is true?

20. Should Christians living today practice exorcism or try and deliver people from demon possession?

Delivering people from demon possess is also emphasized in the Charismatic deliverance ministries that we mentioned about earlier in this study. It's interesting that word "exorcism" is never used of a genuine believer expelling a demon from a person. The Biblical terms that is used is "cast out" a demon (Matt. 8:16; Mark 1:34, 39; 7:26; 16:17). Acts 19:13-15 does use the word exorcist in connection with the attempted work of nonbelievers: "Then certain of the vagabond (wandering) Jews, exorcists, took upon them to call over them which had evil spirits the name of the Lord Jesus, saying, We adjure you by Jesus whom Paul preacheth. And there were seven sons of *one* Sceva, a Jew, *and* chief of the priests, which did so. And the evil spirit answered and said, Jesus I know, and Paul I know; but who are ye?"

Some itinerant Jewish exorcists, who were not saved, actually used a variety of chants and methods to attempt to invoke Jesus' name over demon-possessed people, as they sought to release them from demon possession. These itinerant Jews were not of the apostolic band and apparently were not true believers but were making money off of exorcisms. They used magical rituals in an attempt to cast our demons. How do we know they were not true believers? It's because of what the demon tells us. The demon said that he knew Jesus and Paul, but he did not know Sceva's sons who were attempting to perform an exorcism.

Acts 19:16

"And the man in whom the evil spirit was leaped on them, and overcame them, and prevailed against them, so that they fled out of that house naked and wounded."

Apparently demons know who is genuinely from God. In this case, the exorcists were unsuccessful in casting out the demons. Instead of being exorcised of this demon, the possessed man became supernaturally strong and overcame all seven by beating them. The seven ran out of the house naked and bleeding. We have seen already that demons can sometimes cause those they possess to have unusual physical power (Mark 5:3-4).

Jesus warned that some who cast out demons in His name and performed many miracles would be rejected in the day of judgment (Matt. 7:21-23). Today Catholic priests claim to cast out demons and they certainly are not of God. This means that casting out a demon does not prove that a person is genuinely from God or a true believer. Let us never forget that Satan is a master fraud.

The practice of casting out demons is related to the healing ministry of Jesus, the 70, and the apostles. It's actually a form of healing. This miraculous ministry of Jesus was a sign of His person. The practice of casting out demons authenticated Jesus as the promised Messiah.

John 20:30-31

“And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book: But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ (Messiah), the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name.”

The 70, who were sent out by Jesus in Luke 10, also cast out demons (Luke 10:1-20), but they were given a special, limited commission by Jesus. They were to go ahead of Him and visit the cities that Jesus was about to visit in order to prepare the people for His entrance. Their ministry was limited in time and geography. There is no evidence that their special commission and promise which Jesus gave to them (immunity from harm) went beyond this limited scope and calling.

Luke 10:19

“Behold, I give unto you power to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy: and nothing shall by any means hurt you.”

This does not mean that these men went around trying to find poisonous snakes and step on them, creating a side show atmosphere. What it means is that God gave them authority to defeat the enemy in every way, even casting out demons. For this reason, Satan would try to hinder their work by putting obstacles before them. But God gives these workers the promise of no harm from snakes and scorpions would come to them as they went before the Messiah to do this special work. If you try this today, you will quickly discover that you are not one of the 70!

Of course, although no one today is given the gift of healing to cast out demons, we must never forget that we do possess a certain authority over the enemy that stems from our position of being in Christ. Because we are in Christ, we can claim our victory over Satan, and not be overcome by the obstacles he tries to put before us such as discouragement, doubting God, sexual temptation, or any sin. Yes, we do have power over the enemy through Christ. Thank God for this.

The apostles cast out demons on only three occasions in the book of Acts (Acts 8:5-8; 16:16-18; 19:11-12). The last recorded demon expulsion in Scripture is recorded in Acts 19:11-12. On this occasion, mere contact with Paul's sweat rags and apron resulted in deliverance from evil spirits. In Acts 5:15-16, people were healed, including delivered from demon possession, by Peter's shadow. Who can imitate these methods today with success? No one! There are no genuine or true apostles today who are given such gifts as these. The Book of Acts refers to demon expulsions as signs to authenticate the special and temporary ministry of the apostles. The casting out of demons was one of the special identifying signs of an apostle.

2 Corinthians 12:12

"Truly the signs of an apostle were wrought among you in all patience, in signs, and wonders, and mighty deeds."

The ministry of the apostles was temporary and foundational to the early days of the church (Ephesians 2:20; 1 Cor. 13:10-13). An apostle was to be a witness of the resurrected Christ and personally commissioned by Him (Acts 1:21-22). Since Christ is no longer verifying His resurrection through visible appearances, this means that the gifts of miracles and healing, including casting out demons (the unique signs of the apostles), has also ceased. The Book of Hebrews was written in the mid 60's and recognizes that the signs and wonders associated with the apostolic ministry were already a thing of the past (Hebrews 2:3-4). So, this specific gift of casting out demons is no longer given to specific people in the church today.

The only other person besides the apostles who cast out demons is Philip who was a close assistant to the apostles (Acts 6:5-6; 8:6-7). All of these people, who were given these special privileges, are a thing of the past. The Bible is unmistakably clear on this point.

It's interesting that the New Testament Epistles never mention the practice of casting out demons. No established pattern or practice of demon expulsion is presented in the New Testament. Once again, the Epistles, which reveal truth that is for the church today, do not give any instruction for casting out demons. The silence of New Testament saints practicing this once again speaks volumes against the practice of casting out demons. This means that casting out demons is not a gift or ability which God grants to believers today. However, this does not mean that believers today are left helpless to assist a person who is demon possessed.

The Bible gives us a clear answer on how to help those who are lost and demon-possessed. We share the Gospel with them which alone can deliver them from the power of Satan and demons. Sharing the Gospel with them is the greatest gift we could ever give a demon possessed person. Why? It's because upon being saved by the Gospel message, a demon will leave a person. This is because the Holy Spirit will take up residency in them at the time of salvation. Evangelism is the means of casting out demons today! Evangelism is the key that unlocks the door of deliverance from Satan's power.

Today we live in a world that is becoming increasing *abnormal* in every phase of living – home life, church life, and Christian life. So, we must ask ourselves an important question. What is *normal* for today? The norm for today in delivering people from the power of Satan and demon possession, is to declare the Gospel to them. This is how we are to help demon possessed people today.

Acts 26:17-18

“Delivering thee from the people, and *from* the Gentiles, unto whom now I send thee, To open their eyes, *and* to turn *them* from darkness to light, and *from* the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me.”

Upon belief in Christ as Savior, a nonbeliever is delivered not only from the penalty of his sin but also from the power of demon possession that might have afflicted him (Col. 1:13). So, the proper way to deliver an unbeliever from demons is to preach the Gospel to him. Any believer can deliver an unbeliever from demon possession by leading that person to Christ. Christ sweeps free the body that is

possessed by demons at the time of salvation and allows the Holy Spirit to enter (1 Cor. 6:19). The Godhead cannot share His residence with demons. This is why demons do not and cannot indwell believers today.

So what is happening in connection with the last day madness of the Charismatic healing and exorcism ministries of today? There are several short answers that can be given. And I will be brief.

First, since there are no apostles living today who have seen the resurrected Christ, and who possess the gift of casting out demons, we can conclude that there are many phonies or charlatans today, who are posing as God's servants, and who are not of God. In fact, there are those who may try and use the name of Jesus Christ for their own fame and fortune (Acts 19:13-15).

Second, there are Christians who are confused about what the Bible teaches on this subject and who attempt to mimic the apostolic gifts, even when they do not possess them. The results of such ministries can be proven to be primarily fraudulent, they are self-proclaimed results, psychosomatic, and even possibly Satanic (Matt. 7:21-22). We must remember that Satan will do anything to get the church's focus off of Jesus Christ and His sanctifying ministry within us (Gal. 2:20).

Yes, God can still do the miraculous today. Nobody doubts this. But we can be sure that people do not receive divine healing through would-be faith healers. They receive healing from God. The Epistles inform us that Christians receive healing through the ministry of prayer and faith.

James 5:15

"And the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him."

The Bible teaches that the early church centered upon the ministry of prayer and faith in God as the ONLY means to receiving healing from God. They did not attend healing meetings and try and find someone who possessed the gift of healing to give them healing. For the most part, they did not have this privilege, and neither do we. We must get others to pray for our healing and trust God's will to come to pass in connection with our lives.

It's true that God may certainly choose to heal a believer, when that believer possesses faith, in spite of a certain amount of ignorance that a person might have regarding God's healing program. God is a very merciful, gracious, and loving God. We must remember that God can do WHATEVER He wants to do, WHENEVER He wants to do it, so long as it aligns with His character and Word.

Luke 9:49-50 reveals this oft forgotten account which provides us with some personal application to our lives amidst this part of our study. "And John answered and said, Master, we saw one casting out devils in thy name; and we forbid him, because he followeth not with us. And Jesus said unto him, Forbid *him* not: for he that is not against us is for us."

Why Jesus permitted a genuine disciple, who was not one of the apostles, to cast out demons is not made clear. It may be that he would later be included as one of the seventy, who would have such power (Luke 10:17). God may have wanted to use this man as a special object lesson on humility for His disciples.

Christians must have the attitude of Paul, who rejoiced when the truth was proclaimed, even when those preaching it were cruel and hostile toward him and preaching Christ out of envy or jealousy of Paul's ministry (Phil. 1:15-18). During the days and time when the apostles were roaming the countryside and healing people, Christ acknowledged that others could be doing the same work of God (casting out demons), which was not necessarily contrary to what the apostles were doing. I think there is a lesson in this for all of us today. We should not think that those who are not in our camp cannot be used of God in any way. This is being way too narrow-minded and nitpicking. We must guard against the desire of exclusiveness and possessing a monopoly on spiritual power and God's blessing.

Let's sum up this part of our study. Christians receive healing (physical, spiritual, mental, emotional) through prayer and faith in God. God is very merciful to His own children.

Years after the death of President Calvin Coolidge, this story came to light. In the early days of his presidency, Coolidge awoke one morning in his hotel room to find a cat burglar going through his pockets. Coolidge spoke up, asking the burglar not to take his watch chain because it contained an engraved charm he wanted to keep. Coolidge then engaged the thief in quiet conversation and discovered he was a

college student who had no money to pay his hotel bill or buy a ticket back to campus. Coolidge counted \$32 out of his wallet -- which he had also persuaded the dazed young man to give back! He gave it to him and declared it to be a loan, and advised the young man to leave the way he had come so as to avoid the Secret Service! And yes, the loan was paid back.

We learn from Scripture and this story that God is a merciful God. He always blesses our lives in so many ways. Sometimes He chooses to heal us, but He always supplies us with what we need to go on in life. We also know that God is merciful to unbelievers for they can receive healing from demon possession by sharing the delivering message and power of the Gospel and their subsequent conversion (Col. 1:13). This is God's normal method for healing and deliverance. Any other practice is filled with deception and confusion and leads many people down the road of false promises and spiritual defeat.

21. Can people inherit demons or generational spirits?

The notion of generational spirits is being taught today which basically means that demon possession or occult practices can be inherited by children from their parents or other ancestors. In other words, these things are passed down from one generation to the next. It's true that children can inherit traits of their parents, but the idea of the passing down of generational demonic spirits is not Biblical. Support for this type of thing is taken from several Old Testament passages (Exodus 20:4-7; 34:6-7; Numb. 14:17-19, Duet. 5:7-10). These verses talk about visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children in the sense that the children will inherit similar sinful patterns as their fathers and ancestors.

Those who teach and believe in generational curses and demons will tell you that when their parents or grandparents engaged in occult practices, these practices must be uncovered and renounced to prevent the demonic curses from being transferred or passing on to their descendants. Let's consider what the Bible says about these generational curses.

First, these blessings and curses were promised under the Mosaic Law institution. The Bible repeatedly teaches that we are not living under these same blessings and

curses for we are no longer under the Law Dispensation (Rom. 6:14). I thank God that this is true!

Second, although pagan and unsaved living does adversely impact children, the Bible is not teaching in the verses stated above that a person was doomed to inherit the same generational curses of the previous family. The Bible actually teaches that God's disfavor was broken for any member of the family who wanted to change from loving idols to loving God and keeping His commandments.

Exodus 20:4-6

“Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness *of any thing* that *is* in heaven above, or that *is* in the earth beneath, or that *is* in the water under the earth: Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them: for I the LORD thy God *am* a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth *generation* of them that hate me (those who choose to follow the previous generation); And shewing mercy unto thousands of them that love me, and keep my commandments” (those who choose to break the sins of the previous generation).

If we choose to love God, we can break the past! This is God's wonderful promise. We can break the chain of our parents, grandparents, or any person who has gone before us. We don't have to follow in their same evil path or ways. God can change us and remake our life. I also thank God for this wonderful truth.

We learn from these verses that rebellion can be transferred from one generation to the next in that parents can teach their children to follow pagan ways, sinful actions, and repeat their same spiritual crimes against God. But this fact does not remove from the present generation their responsibility for their own sins. This means that no matter what false religion or way is passed on from one generation to the next, the children of the next generation decide to accept or reject it. Children and the next generation are punished and cursed for their own decision to follow a rebellious path of a parent or ancestor.

This was true during the times of the kings of Judah. We read about one good king having an evil son (rejecting the right way) and an evil king having a good son

(choosing the right way). Each new king was responsible for how he reacted to his father.

The point is this, the Bible nowhere records that generational curses and demonic spirits are passed down from one generation to the next and that exorcisms are required in order to renounce the demonic spirits of the previous generation, so that children might be delivered. Actually, in these verses, God is the one that promises to curse those who reject His ways – not Satan. We need to study our Bibles instead of following the false ideas or generational spirits being promoted today in the church. The Bible tells us how to get rid of our pagan past. We are to repent of our sinful ways (1 Thess. 1:9-10), believe the Gospel message, and then claim our victory in Christ.

We do learn a valuable lesson from this part of our study. We do pass down our lifestyle to our children. Our belief systems and sins can have an adverse effect on our children.

“A careful man I ought to be,
A little fellow follows me.
I do not dare to go astray
For fear he’ll go the selfsame way.
I cannot once escape his eyes,
What e’re he sees me do he tries.
Like me he says he’s going to be –
The little chap that follows me.
He thinks that I am good and fine,
Believes in every good word of mine.
The base in me he must not see –
The little chap who follows me.
I must remember as I go,
Thru summer’s sun and winter’s snow
I’m building for the years to be –
That little chap who follows me.”

Now let's switch gears once again in our angel study. At this point, we want to continue to answer some more general questions about the intriguing world of angels.

8. Who is the angel of the Lord?

Some teach that the reference to the "angel of the Lord" in the Old Testament refers to a pre-incarnate appearance of Jesus Christ (an appearance of Christ before He became a man). Is Christ the angel of the Lord in the Old Testament, appearing as the messenger of God the Father?

We do know that the Old Testament often speaks of the angel of the LORD as if he were God Himself (Gen. 16:10-13; 22:11-12; 32:24-30; Exodus 3:1-8; 23:20-25; Judged 2:1-3; 6:11-27; 13:3-22). These references are often identified by Bible students as theophany's (appearance of God in bodily form). However, they may also be more specifically a Christophany or physical or bodily appearance of the pre-incarnate Son of God who was sent out as the Father's messenger. One thing seems certain, the repeated mention of "the angel of the LORD" speaks of the presence of deity. The word "angel" means messenger (not necessarily an angel with wings) and references someone who appears in human form to provide help and strength to the people of God and perform specific tasks that fulfill with God's will.

When this specific messenger appeared to Hagar, she recognized that she was in the presence of God; she referred to Him as "the-God-Who-Sees" (Gen. 16:10-13). Speaking to Abraham on Mount Moriah, the Angel identified Himself as "the LORD" (Hebrew means Jehovah - Gen. 22:15-16). Jacob heard the Angel introduce Himself as the God of Bethel (Gen. 31:11-13). When blessing Joseph, Israel used the names "God" and "the Angel" interchangeably (Gen. 48:15, 16). Therefore, the angel of the LORD is a reference to deity – a reference to God Himself.

The early American Indians had a unique practice of training young braves. On the night of a boy's thirteenth birthday, after learning hunting, scouting, and fishing skills, he was put to one final test. He was placed in a dense forest to spend the entire night alone. Until then, he had never been away from the security of the family and the tribe. But on this night, he was blindfolded and taken several miles

away. When he took off the blindfold, he was in the middle of a thick woods and he was terrified!

Every time a twig snapped, he visualized a wild animal ready to pounce. After what seemed like an eternity, dawn broke and the first rays of sunlight entered the interior of the forest. Looking around, the boy saw flowers, trees, and the outline of the path. Then, to his utter astonishment, he beheld the figure of a man standing just a few feet away, armed with a bow and arrow. It was his father. He had been there all night long.

Friend, it's wonderful to realize that God is with us through the night! He stays up with us and promises to secure us and protect our lives.

Proverbs 18:10 promises:

“The name of the LORD is a strong tower: the righteous runneth into it, and is safe.”

We are always safe in the Lord! Either he delivers us out of our troubles or keeps us strong through them. No matter how we look at it, we are safe!

“Safe am I, safe am I,
In the hollow of His hands,
Sheltered o'er, sheltered o'er
With His love for evermore
No ill can harm me,
No foe alarm me,
For He keeps both day and night.
Safe am I, safe am I,
In the hollow of his hands.”

So who is the “angel of the LORD” that is spoken about in the Old Testament. We can conclude that this expression was a reference to God. The word “angel” means messenger (not necessarily an angel with wings) and references someone who appears in human form to provide help and strength to the people of God and perform specific tasks that fulfill with God's will. At the burning bush, it was “the Angel of the LORD” who appeared (Ex. 3:2), to Moses and Moses recognized who

this person was when he said that he “hid his face, for he was afraid to look upon God” (Exodus. 3:6).

The Lord who went before Israel in a pillar of cloud (Ex. 13:21) was none other than “the Angel of God” (Ex. 14:19). This may be another illusion to the angel of the LORD. Gideon feared that he would die because, in seeing the Angel of the LORD, he had seen God (Judg. 6:22, 23). The Angel of the LORD told Manoah that His name was Wonderful (Judg. 13:18), one of the names of God (Isa. 9:6). When Jacob struggled with the Angel, he struggled with God (Hos. 12:3, 4). These are convincing proofs that when the Angel of the LORD is referred to in the OT, the reference is to Deity. It was a manifestation of the presence of God in a theophany (taking on a human appearance).

In summary, the angel of the Lord is a theophany’s of God the Father or God the Son (Jesus Christ). The above summary supports this finding. The term “angel” simply means messenger. This does not mean that Jesus Himself is an angel as some of the cults teach. As the Angel of Jehovah, Christ is distinguished from other angels in that He is uncreated.

Remember that the angel of the LORD killed 185,000 sleeping Assyrian soldiers.

2 Kings 19:35 records these words:

“And it came to pass that night, that the angel of the LORD went out, and smote in the camp of the Assyrians an hundred fourscore and five thousand: and when they arose early in the morning, behold, they *were* all dead corpses.”

While the Assyrian army lay sprawled across the Judean countryside the Angel of the LORD executed 185,000 of their soldiers. When the Jerusalemites arose in the morning, they discovered the extent of the catastrophe. God showed His power that night long ago to defeat the enemy of Israel. Let us remember that if God can defeat the enemy with such power and magnitude as this, He can surely grant us victory over the enemy today. Jesus Christ comes to our aid today and He is there for us. Ephesians 6:10 reminds us: “Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might.”

Psalm 34:7

“The angel of the LORD encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them.”

Since the “angel of the LORD” is a reference to God’s presence, we can be sure that we can claim this promise today for our own personal lives. God’s presence is with us (Heb. 13:5) and His protective hand is also with us. He will give us spiritual aid and help throughout life’s journey. We must practice the presence of God!

Someone wrote:

“All the rivers of Thy grace, I claim;
Over every promise write my name.”

9. Do we become angels in the next life?

In the classic Christmas movie, “It’s a Wonderful Life,” Clarence, who was an angel that came down to earth, shared how a bell rings in Heaven whenever a person becomes an angel and gets their wings.



After doing his good deed on earth, apparently Clarence received his wings, since a bell was heard ringing in Heaven at the end of the movie.

Some people only know what Hollywood teaches about angels which is totally foreign to the Bible. We don’t become angels in the next life. We don’t earn wings and sit around on clouds playing harps. When you hear a bell ring on earth it does not mean that someone in Heaven has officially become an angel.

Dr. McGee once said:

“You may remember the song, ‘I want to be an angel and with the angels sing.’ When I was a little boy in Sunday school, the teacher would line up the little brats (I was the only good boy in the class) and have us sing, “I want to be an angel and

with the angels sing.” The last thing I wanted to be was an angel! And I still feel that way. I am very happy that the Scripture makes it clear that I am not going to be an angel.

Jesus taught in Matthew 22:30:

“For in the resurrection they neither marry, nor are given in marriage, but are as the angels of God in heaven.”

Resurrected Christians will be “as” or “like” the angels in Heaven but they won’t become angels in the resurrection. We must understand what Jesus was teaching here. Jesus said that we are equal or (Luke 20:34-36) similar to the angels in that we won’t be getting married and possess physical relationships in Heaven. We will not procreate. Although we will know each other in Heaven, we will not possess the same relationships we had on earth. This is all that Jesus means by this statement. We should not read more into what Jesus is teaching. Let’s study our Bibles!

10. Do we have guardian angels?

The ministry of angels on behalf of God’s people is clearly taught or implied in Scripture. Some feel that God has assigned specified “guardian angels” to His children. In other words, it’s taught by some that each Christian has a specific guardian angel watching over them. Does the Bible teach the concept of guardian angels? In short, the Bible does not teach that every child of God has one specific guardian angels that hovers over them throughout their entire lives. But the concept of angels protecting and guarding God’s people from specific harm is not foreign to the Bible.

If we mean by “guardian angels” that each Christians has a specific angel assigned to him for protection, then we must reject the notion of guardian angels. The Bible nowhere teaches this. However, if we mean by “guardian angels” that the angels of God do protect God’s people in conjunction with His plan and purpose for their lives, then we must believe in the concept of guardian angels. This means there are guardian angels. Why should we be surprised at such a truth? We know for certain that there are evil spirits or angels who wage unceasing conflict against God’s people (Eph. 6:12). It should not surprise us that there are many holy or good angels that watch over God’s children and have a protective ministry connected with their lives.

The Bible does teach that angels do have a general protective care which is extended to God's people. But let us beware of something. In a day of "angelmania," it's important to distinguish between angelic protection and angelic guidance. The New Testament epistles, which are written to confirm God's specific truth for church life and ministry, do teach that angels can protect us, but there is no teaching in the Church Epistles that angels guide us, give us strength, and provide wisdom for us. The Holy Spirit is to be our guide (John 14:26). Furthermore, we know that from a spiritual perspective (providing us with sustaining strength and grace), that it's the Lord that saves us out of troubles or either remains with us in our troubles. In both cases, the Lord is our helper, healer, and sustainer in life (Ps. 46:1, 10; 2 Cor. 1:3-4) – not angels.

The Old Testament promised that angels would sometimes physically deliver and protect believers in accordance with God's plans and purposes. For instance, an angel guarded Israel in the wilderness wanderings.

Exodus 23:20

"Behold, I send an Angel before thee, to keep thee in the way, and to bring thee into the place which I have prepared."

This protective and guarding angel demonstrates how God uses angels to protect His children so they might fulfill His God-ordained purposes for their lives. We need God's protection and care as we pass through the wilderness of our own lives. We hit desert and dry times. We pass through valleys. We cannot readily find our way. But we know that He is there! God is with us. In fact, when we look back, we will see that He was there all the time!

Although the New Testament epistles never instruct Church Age saints to expect, receive, and depend upon angels for guidance and spiritual strength, we do know that angels can and do *protect* God's children in relation to the fulfillment of God's overall purpose for their lives.

Psalms 91:11 is another case in point:

"For he shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways."

William MacDonald gives his touching testimony that includes this verse and Psalm. “In 1922, in the Western Hebrides, a five-year-old lad was dying of diphtheria. A mucous membrane was forming across his throat, and breathing was becoming increasingly difficult. His Christian mother turned her back so she would not see him take his last breath. At that very moment there was a knock at the door. It was her brother-in-law from an adjoining village. He said, ‘I’ve just come to tell you that you don’t have to worry about the child. He is going to recover, and one day God is going to save his soul.’ She was distracted and incredulous: ‘Whatever makes you say that?’ Then he explained he had been sitting at his fire reading Psalm 91 (which included God’s protective hand by the angels) when God distinctly spoke to him through the last three verses.”

Psalm 91:14-16

“Because he hath set his love upon me, therefore will I deliver him: I will set him on high, because he hath known my name. He shall call upon me, and I will answer him: I *will be* with him in trouble; I will deliver him, and honour him. With long life will I satisfy him, and shew him my salvation.”

MacDonald then says:

“I was that boy. God delivered me from death that night; He saved my soul thirteen years later, and He has satisfied me with long life. So you will understand why I refer to Psalm 91 as *my Psalm*. I usually add, with tongue in cheek, that I am willing to share it with others—but it is definitely *my Psalm!*”

And yes, we can claim this as applicable to our life as well. In Psalm 91:11, the psalmist explained that no harm or disaster can befall those who have made the Lord their refuge because He has commissioned angels to care for them. This is a very clear statement. This was true in the personal experience of the Psalmist and it’s also true in our lives today. This Psalm also has Messianic overtones. In other words, it should be seen as a prophecy about Messiah’s life. This is the passage which Satan quoted to the Lord Jesus when tempting Him to throw Himself down from the pinnacle of the temple.

Luke 4:10-11

“For it is written, He shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee: And in *their* hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone.”

The devil left out the words of the Psalm which says, “in all thy ways.” The Lord Jesus Christ came to do the Father’s will, and that meant to walk in His ways. He would have stepped out of the will of God if He had attempted to make the stones into bread, or if He had accepted the kingdoms of the world from Satan, or if He had cast Himself down from the pinnacle of the temple. To do any of that would have been out of the *way* of God. The promise is: “For he shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all *thy ways*.”

Jesus did not deny that Psalm 91:11 applied to Him, but He did deny that they could be used as a proof text for tempting God. Here is the simple truth. God had not told Jesus to jump down from the temple. If the Savior had jumped, He would have been acting outside the divine will, and then the promise of angelic protection would not have been valid. The same is true for us today. If you jump out of an airplane without a parachute, you are tempting God. The angels are not going to form a parachute around you and give you a soft landing. We understand by this that angels did protect Jesus as he lived out His life in accordance with God’s will. Angels also protect God’s children in ways we may never know or understand on this side of eternity.

The Old Testament speaks of angels protecting and intervening for God’s saints. The New Testament records angelic rescues. Here are several.

Acts 5:17-24

“Then the high priest rose up, and all they that were with him, (which is the sect of the Sadducees,) and were filled with indignation, And laid their hands on the apostles, and put them in the common prison. But the angel of the Lord by night opened the prison doors, and brought them forth, and said, Go, stand and speak in the temple to the people all the words of this life. And when they heard *that*, they entered into the temple early in the morning, and taught. But the high priest came, and they that were with him, and called the council together, and all the senate of

the children of Israel, and sent to the prison to have them brought. But when the officers came, and found them not in the prison, they returned, and told, Saying, The prison truly found we shut with all safety, and the keepers standing without before the doors: but when we had opened, we found no man within. Now when the high priest and the captain of the temple and the chief priests heard these things, they doubted of them whereunto this would grow.”

Here we see that an angel opened the prison doors for the apostles, and allowed them to continue to preach the Gospel. In this incident, the angel delivered them from prison and allowed them to keep declaring the message of Christ. This incident is an indication of how God can use angels to protect His own children.

Acts 12:7-10 records another prison break:

“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 raised him up, saying, Arise up quickly. And his chains fell off from *his* hands. And the angel said unto him, Gird thyself, and bind on thy sandals. And so he did. And he saith unto him, Cast thy garment about thee, and follow me. And he went out, and followed him; and wist not (knew not) that it was true which was done by the angel; but thought he saw a vision. When they were past the first and the second ward, they came unto the iron gate that leadeth unto 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.”

In this account, an angel opened the gates of the jail and left the apostles out of the prison. This was not only a jail-break but more specifically an “angel break.”

Acts 12:12-15 goes on to say:

“And when he had considered *the thing*, he came to the house of Mary the mother of John, whose surname was Mark; where many were gathered together praying. And as Peter knocked at the door of the gate, a damsel came to hearken, named Rhoda. And when she knew Peter's voice, she opened not the gate for gladness, but ran in, and told how Peter stood before the gate. And they said unto her, Thou art mad. But she constantly affirmed that it was even so. Then said they, It is his angel.”

Some have suggested that since the Christians concluded, “It is his angel” (Peter’s angel) that this means he had only one guardian angel for his entire lifetime. It is concluded that the possessive pronoun may imply that each child of God has his or

her own personal angel. However, this is simply an assumption and not a Bible fact. It is also trying to base a teaching upon a group of people that were in shock. Let's think about this conclusion. First, why would Peter's guardian angel be knocking at the door? The angel would walk right through the door! And why would this angel's voice sound exactly like Peter's voice? ("she knew Peter's voice" – Acts 12:14). This was not Peter's guardian angel.

The superstitious belief that every believer has only one guardian angel is superimposed upon this text, but it is neither taught nor substantiated here or anywhere else in Scripture. The Bible actually says in Acts 12:7 that "the angel of the Lord came upon *him*" which suggests that this specific angel was not always by Peter's side but in the providence of God came to him for this special purpose. Psalm 91:11 argues for more than one angel protecting us throughout our lifetime. "For he shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways." There seems to be a plurality of angels working on behalf of God's saints. It speaks of believers and their angels in a collective sense. To use a basketball analogy, we might think of angels as providing "zone coverage" rather than "man-to-man" coverage in their protection of God's people.

As we have mentioned earlier in this study, we cannot possibly know everything that goes on behind the curtain of the spirit world. But apparently God does use His angels to *protect* us in ways that we may not fully be aware of until we get to Heaven. At other times, we have a direct sense of the Lord's protection over us.

Elizabeth Elliot told about her father's experiences with what seemed to be angelic helpers: "My father, when he was a small boy, was climbing on an upper story of a house that was being built. He walked to the end of a board that was not nailed at the other end, and it slowly began to tip. He knew that he was doomed, but inexplicably the board began to tip the other way, as though a hand had pushed it down again. He always wondered if it was an angel's hand."

A veteran missionary tells of an experience she had during a terrorist uprising in the nation where she served. One night while she was in bed in the rear room of the two-room house in which she lived, a terrorist came running through the front doorway with a machete in his hand. When he reached the open doorway to her bedroom, he slammed into a barrier. The man staggered back in a daze. He then tried to run through the open doorway again but experienced the same result. He

furiously lashed the open pane of the doorway with his machete, but there was nothing there. As a result, he tried to run through the doorway a third time but again ran into an invisible but solid barrier. He finally gave up attempting to enter the bedroom and left. Neither the terrorist nor the missionary saw anything but empty space in the doorway. The missionary concluded that a holy angel blocked that doorway to protect her from harm.

Our conclusion has been that the Bible does not necessarily teach that each child of God is assigned one “guardian angel” for life. However, the Bible does teach that angels in a collective sense do protect us from harm and even premature death in ways we may never fully know. In this sense, we do have guardian angels. The superstitious belief that every believer has only one guardian angel is superimposed upon this text, but it is neither taught nor substantiated here or anywhere else in Scripture.

The issue of whether or not each person is assigned their own guardian angel for life is really not that important. What is crucial is the fact that each person who inherits salvation is guarded and preserved through angelic activity. The Bible seems to suggest that angels work together in fulfilling this ministry.

Let’s revisit Hebrews 1:14, which speaks of the good angels:

“Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?”

Yes, Hebrews 1:14 says that God has given us the unseen angels, who are “ministering spirits, sent forth to minister (by God) for them who shall be heirs of salvation?” Please notice that it’s God who sends out angels to ministry to the saints. We don’t pray for them to come, ask God to send them, or depend on them in any way. Let’s get our “angelology” straight. Some suggest that the “heirs of salvation” refer to those who are still lost but who will one day inherit the blessing of salvation. In other words, angels minister to those who are not yet converted, but who will one day become an heir of salvation from the penalty of sin. I don’t think this is what our verse is teaching. However, there is no reason why angels, operating within the realm of God’s sovereign program, cannot protect those who God knows will come to salvation. In fact, they may very well do this. Who can know how often God’s good angels protect unsaved people from death, who might otherwise be destroyed by Satan. The battles that take place for the souls of people

in the spiritual world cannot be fully comprehended or realized by those of us who are in the physical world.

A better option is to understand “the heirs of salvation” as relating to Christians and what they will enjoy in the future (Heaven, a new body, and their final redemption at the coming of Christ). An heir of salvation is normally presented as someone who has already received Christ as Savior and who is awaiting his full and final salvation and inheritance (Romans 8:17; 2 Pet. 1:4). The Bible teaches that we must be in the family of God to be the “heirs of salvation” as it pertains to our final salvation and blessings at Christ’s coming and in Heaven. This view of the “heirs of salvation” (they are saints) is followed up by Hebrews 2:1, where the saints are addressed: “Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip” (carelessly flow passed us).

The angels do serve God’s saints who are the heirs of salvation which refers to all their future blessings. One of the primary duties of angels is to care for believers. This obviously means that angels have some kind of hidden and yet helpful ministry to God’s people throughout their lives on earth. This is obviously a protective ministry of some kind that is linked to God’s saints. Yes, Hebrews 1:14 seems to suggest that there are “guardian angels” around us in ways we could never know or understand. Since they are “spirits” they are not seen unless, as in some rare cases presented during Bible times, they materialized and were seen by people who lived in the realm of the physical world.

As we have seen, there are specific cases where angels in a protective ways assisted God's people, such as Lot (Gen. 19:1-10), Elijah (1 Kings 19:5-6) and Peter (Acts 12:7-10), but the accounts of people actually knowing about angelic visitations and assistance is very rare. This implies that the protective ministry of angels towards the “heirs of salvation” is largely hidden from us, and there is deliberate reason for this. The Lord uses angelic services for the welfare of his people, but in a manner usually unseen and unknown, lest angels should become objects of devotion and worship (Col. 2:18). Some people, even Christians, become obsessed with the thought of possessing their own personal, guardian angel, and this inevitably gets their eyes way from Jesus Christ. We are called upon to be “looking unto Jesus” (Heb. 12:2) and God alone for our strength, peace, protection, and victory – not angels.

It is nevertheless comforting to realize that guardian angels do have a basis in Scripture as it relates to God's providential care over His people.

Some Christians have cited Hebrews 13:2 as referencing angels materializing in the physical realm and appearing in human form to people.

Hebrews 13:2

“Be not forgetful to entertain strangers: for thereby some have entertained angels unawares.”

This verse is often misunderstood by those who are caught up in “anglemania.” They claim that we might entertain angels as Abraham did. At one point during Abraham’s lifetime, three angels materialized into three men, possessing bodies (Gen. 18:1-15). Both Abraham (Gen 18:1–3) and Lot (Gen 19:1–2) were unaware that their guests were angels at the time they received them. However, great care must be taken so as not to read too much into this statement. The word “angels” is the word (aggelos) that literally means and reads “messengers.” This is what the word actually means in the original Greek language. It could easily be translated as messengers and this actually fits the context.

The word angel, as it appears in the KJV, may refer to superhuman beings (angelic spirits who are the messengers of God) or it may also reference human beings who are messengers from God. The context will tell us which is being spoken about – angels or human being. The same word (aggelos) is used to address the leaders of the seven churches of Asia Minor in chapters 2 and 3 of the Book of Revelation (Rev. 2:1, 8, 12, 18; 3:1, 7, 14). Angels (superhuman beings) were not the leaders of these local churches. I can assure you of this. Angels do not become pastors of local churches. However, the reference here refers to the “messengers” of these churches, the leaders or pastors which were heading up the church. This means that the word “angel” boils down to a translation matter. The word can literally mean “messenger” and this is what it means here and in Hebrews 13:2 (“some have entertained angels unawares.”

The Bible is not teaching in Hebrews 13:2 that angels appear in human form today and that we might show hospitality to them without knowing it. This term

messengers (not angels) refers primarily to believers who were fleeing from persecution and were hard-pressed to find food and lodging. There were also traveling ministers who needed places to stay (3 John 5–8). Where there is true Christian love, there will also be hospitality (Heb. 13:2). All the Bible is teaching us in this verse is that strangers could turn out to be a messenger of blessing to us. This is what the word “angel” simply means – a “messenger.” We may have had guests in our home who turned out to be messengers of God’s blessings. This is one reason why we should show hospitality to the saints.

I remember going to visit an elderly lady many years ago. She is now with the Lord. But I can remember going to be a blessing to her. However, it turned out that she was more of a blessing to me. She started telling me how God provides and what He wants to do through me and in me. I left there realizing something. She was the one giving the blessing and I was the blessed! She was a “visiting angel” (messenger) that was a blessing to my heart. Listen folks, we need to remember that God’s people can be a blessing to us in ways we cannot imagine. That is why we need to keep meeting together and faithfully attending church.

Hebrews 10:25

“Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some *is*; but exhorting *one another*: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching.”

There is another illustration of guardian angels in the Old Testament. A great angelic host and army was allowed to be seen by the human eye of the servant of Elisha. Ben-Hadad, the leader of the Syrian army came to destroy Elisha for revealing his military plans to Israel. The military would like to have Elisha on their side. God in a supernatural way revealed to him all the military secrets and movements of the Syrian army. The Book of Kings records this incident.

2 Kings 6:15-17 records this unique and very rare incident.

“And when the servant of the man of God was risen early, and gone forth, behold, an host compassed the city both with horses and chariots. And his servant said unto him, Alas, my master! how shall we do? And he answered, Fear not: for they that *be* with us *are* more than they that *be* with them. And Elisha prayed, and said, LORD, I pray thee, open his eyes, that he may see. And the LORD opened the eyes of the

young man; and he saw: and, behold, the mountain *was* full of horses and chariots of fire round about Elisha.”

In this case, the natural physical vision of the young man of 2 Kings 6:17 had to be divinely changed by God, so he could see within the spirit world. When God revealed this to him, the servant of Elisha saw the surrounding angelic armies of Jehovah protecting them. God peeled away the curtain into the spirit world for a brief moment and showed this man the great angelic army that would defend them.

While he was a missionary in the New Hebrides (Hebredez) Islands, hostile natives surrounded his mission headquarters one night, intent on burning the Paton’s out and killing them. Paton and his wife prayed, terror-stricken, all that night. At dawn, they were amazed to see the attackers just turn and leave. A year later, the chief of that very tribe was converted to Christianity. Paton then asked him what had kept him and his men from burning down the house and killing them that night. The chief asked Paton a return question: "Who were all those men you had with you there?" Paton told him that there were just he and his wife, but the chief insisted they had seen hundreds of men standing guard -- big men in shining garments with drawn swords.

What the evildoers evidently witnessed were an army of angelic beings which were sent by God to protect the Paton family. God had allowed this angelic army to materialize before the eyes of these hostile natives. We normally don’t know what goes on behind the veil of the spiritual world, but on this rare occasion God pulled back the curtain to reveal a powerful army of angels, which were ready to do war against Paton’s enemy.

Whenever and wherever angels assist us, we normally will not be able to detect their ministry. This is because they are ministering spirits which cannot be visible to us (Heb. 1:14). However, they are ministering to the heirs of salvation, those of us who are awaiting to enter our future and final inheritance in Heaven and at the Rapture. Until then, we must know and understand that God sometimes protects us in unknown and mysterious ways.

“Be not dismayed whatever betide
God will take care of you

Beneath His wings of love abide
God will take care of you
God will take care of you
Through everyday o'er all the way
He will care for you
God will take care of you."

Another passage in the Bible that is very interesting to review and study is what Jesus said about angels and children.

Jesus said in Matthew 18:10:

"Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones (children); for I say unto you, That in heaven their angels do always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven."

Some expositors conclude that the context of Matthew 18 is not talking about small children at all but is only referencing His disciples who have become humble like small children. However, this seems to be missing something that Jesus wanted to actually teach about children or "these little ones" (Matthew 18:6), while relating children to His disciples or followers, who have humbled themselves.

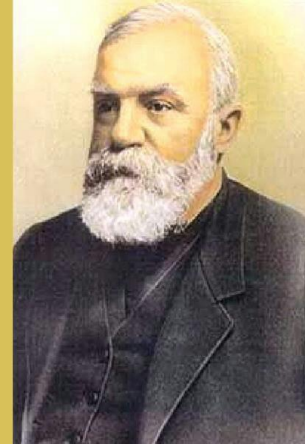
When reading verses 1-8, Jesus is not taking the focus off of young children. Yes, he has in mind that we are to become like little children, through conversion and discipleship, but at the same time, He does not lose sight of the little children themselves. The illustration and teaching that Jesus gives about children stands! And what is true of little children is true of His disciples or followers.

Benjamin Warfield taught, among others today, that the "angels" of the "little ones" are actually their spirits after death, and they always see the heavenly Father's face in Heaven. In other words, some teach that we are not to despise these little ones for their destiny is the unshielded glory of the Father's presence. This seems far-fetched to me. The Bible says that "their angels" are in Heaven (Matt. 18:10) – not the children themselves. We must remember that Jesus had a special love and concern for children (Matt. 19:14-15). We do know that children are important to God and very precious to Him. The same should be true of us and our churches today. We are to take time with young people.

We are to see their value and how special they are to God. Jesus revealed this truth about angels and children in the context of those who were offending little children (Matt. 18:2-6). For this reason, Jesus words are often interpreted as referencing guardian angels that are sent to help protect children from their offenders. There may be some truth to this. However, this is not the full story. God may also be speaking about angels bringing revenge upon those who abuse little children.

"If I could relive my life, I would devote my entire ministry to reaching children for God!"

Dwight L. Moody



Jesus is referencing how children have guardian angels, who are constantly reporting back to Heaven's throne. Before the throne of God angels receive instructions that somehow revolve around the lives of little children. Sometimes, these angels may receive instruction regarding the protection of little children, the bringing of God's vengeance against those who are offending little children, and also when to bring children to Heaven. However, Jesus is definitely teaching here that God has entrusted the care of little children to a specific group of His angelic beings ("their angels" – Matt. 18:10) who are in constant touch with the heavenly Father. In other words, these angels are constantly in the presence of God, beholding His face. This means that they wait attentively for His commands to serve the people of His love and this case it refers to little children.

That the holy angels always see the Father's face means that they belong to the innermost circle around God's throne. They have immediate access to God and are continually in His presence. The implication of what Jesus taught is that the holy angels never take their eyes off God, lest they miss some direction from Him regarding a task they are to perform on behalf of a child.

There is an important note of application for our lives today. We also need to behold the face of God today, staying close to Him, listening for His direction and will for our lives. There could be no greater privilege than to be before God always "beholding His face."

Psalm 27:8 gives us a practical lesson to follow:

“When thou saidst, Seek ye my face; my heart said unto thee, Thy face, LORD, will I seek.”

Seeking God’s face means to worship and fellowship with God and obey His commands for our life. As we reflect on guardian angels, watching over us, it’s important to remember that we should not keep our eyes on angels, but the One who sent them to help us! This is an amazing revelation of Scripture about children and angels. It means that angels may have a special kind of ministry toward children. What this exactly entails we cannot be sure but angels are constantly reporting before the throne of God on behalf of the little children and carrying out God’s will which revolves around little children. Angels are busy in this world!

John Philipps states:

“When Jacob was at Bethel his eyes were opened to see a constant stream of angelic traffic ‘ascending and descending’ a celestial stairway (Genesis 28:12). They were not descending and ascending; they were ascending and descending. The angels had been assigned duties on this planet and they were going up that shining ladder to give their reports to the One above (Genesis 28:13).”

Several suggestions have been given as to what this phrase “their angels” means. Some suggest that angels may be awaiting God’s orders to protect little children. This is possible since Jesus was talking about those who were harming little children. However, we also know that angels do not always protect children from physical harm. This is evident in a day when child molestation and abortion is on the rise. Children do suffer in this fallen world of sin and sinners.

Therefore, Since Jesus was condemning people for abusing little children, the appearance of these children’s angels before the Father in Heaven may also reveal how the angels appear in Heaven, awaiting God’s orders, to avenge those who harm the little ones (the children). Whether Jesus was teaching how angels protect children or bring revenge against others for abusing children, or a combination of both, we can be sure that Jesus loves and still does love the little children.

Jesus loves the little children
All the children of the world
Red and yellow

Black and white
They are precious in His sight.
Jesus loves the little children
Of the world.

Yes, Jesus loves the little children, and as He taught in this passage, He also loves His grown children (His saints).

During one of Dwight L. Moody's British campaigns he was repeatedly mocked in the press for his lack of proper English and his homey style. When asked to speak at Cambridge University, the epitome of British intellectualism and sophistication, Moody apparently decided to capitalize on that image in order to gain the attention of the audience. He opened his message with these words, and doing so, destroyed the King's English: "Don't let nobody never tell you God don't love you, cause He do."

I really believe that Jesus' main point is this, when you persecute His children, all of them, whether young children or God's saints, you will someday pay for it! If not in this life – the next life. This is because the angels in Heaven are awaiting God's commands to bring vengeance upon evildoers who are punishing children and God's children in general. A day of reckoning is coming. The main point of Matthew 18:10 is that children and God's saints are important to God, and if angels who serve them observe "one of these little ones" receiving harsh treatment, God will find out about it and act in accordance with His providential plan for the offender.

We need to finish this point on guardian angels. I truly believe that when believers get to glory, they will be amazed to learn how many times in this earthly life angelic protection kept them from harm and even premature physical death.

11. Do angels bring answers to our prayers?

A Christian shared this amusing story. He said that a friend of mine took his small son with him to town one day to run some errands. When lunch time arrived, the two of them went to a familiar diner for a sandwich. The father sat down on one of the stools at the counter and lifted the boy up to the seat beside him. They ordered lunch, and when the waiter brought the food, the father said, "Son, we'll just have a silent prayer."

Dad got through praying first and waited for the boy to finish his prayer, but he just sat with his head bowed for an unusually long time. When he finally looked up, his father asked him, "What in the world were you praying about all that time?" With the innocence and honesty of a child, he replied, "How do I know? It was a silent prayer."

This brings to mind a story about another little fellow -- one who had been sent to his room because he had been bad. A short time later he came out and said to his mother, "I've been thinking about what I did and I said a prayer." "That's fine," she said, "if you ask God to make you good, He will help you." "Oh, I didn't ask Him to help me be good," replied the boy. "I asked Him to help you put up with me."

As we think of prayers, do angels help bring answers to our prayers? Are they used by God to bring about answers to the prayers of God's saints?

Revelation 8:3 reveals this scene:

"And another angel came and stood at the altar, having a golden censer; and there was given unto him much incense, that he should offer *it* with the prayers of all saints upon the golden altar which was before the throne."

In the context, this verse is talking about how a specific angel was offering the prayers of the saints as a sweet smelling fragrance before God in Heaven. The saints mentioned here are likely a reference to the tribulation martyrs (Rev. 6:9-10). What is this angel doing with these prayers for the righteous justice and vengeance of God? The angel is presenting them in some way before God's throne, along with incense (the symbol of prayer) in order to bring about an answer to these prayers. The answer in this case will be the commencement of the Tribulation Period which is God's judgment upon the evildoers who have murdered these saints. In this scene in Heaven, the angel was executing an answer to the prayers of these saints.

Here is the important question. Is this a special and unique scene played out in Heaven in connection with the prayers of the Tribulation martyrs or is this a normal scene which is repeated in Heaven to bring about answers to the saint's prayers? We cannot be sure about this. However, we do recognize from this verse the possibility of angels assisting (in a general way) to bring about answers to the prayers of the saints by presenting them before God's throne. Of course, this in no

way suggests that we should pray to angels for answers to our prayers. The Bible forbids this and always reminds us to pray to the Heavenly Father – not the heavenly angels (“Our Father which art in Heaven” - Matt. 6:9). Furthermore, we must always remember that it’s the ministry of the Holy Spirit that actually intercedes in our prayer life (in a specific way) and takes our prayers before the throne of God in a way that angels cannot and do not.

Romans 8:26-27

“Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. And he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what *is* the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to *the will of God.*”

This verse has often been used in the Charismatic Church to teach that the Holy Spirit enables us to speak in tongues (an unknown gibberish). However, the groaning is done by the Holy Spirit, not believers. This verse has nothing to do with God’s saints speaking but the Holy Spirit Himself speaking before God’s throne on our behalf. The Bible teaches that it’s the specific ministry of the Holy Spirit to help our prayer infirmities by taking our prayers before God’s throne in Heaven (“maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered”). This is a unique ministry of the Holy Spirit. These groanings or sighs are understood only by the Father and in doing this ministry, the Holy Spirit helps align our prayers in accordance with God’s will and purpose for our lives.

The word “helpeth” pictures someone else helping us to carry a load. We are often perplexed in our prayer life. We do not know how to pray as we should. Sometime we might pray selfishly, ignorantly, and too narrowly. Sometimes we are in so much pain and stress we cannot pray effectively. All we can say is, “Lord help me.” It’s at these times the Holy Spirit (not angels) comes alongside to assist us in our prayer weakness, interceding for us with groanings (deep sighs) before the Father’s throne. It is the Holy Spirit praying for us with sighs and in doing so He is in some way rearranging, realigning, and reiterating our prayers to God in a way that is filled with deep emotion and energy.

William MacDonald says:

“There is mystery here which we cannot fully understand. We are peering into the unseen, spiritual realm where a great Person and great forces are at work on our

behalf. And although we cannot understand it all, we can take infinite encouragement from the fact that a groan may sometimes be the most spiritual prayer.”

The fact that the Holy Spirit intercedes for our prayer life does not cancel out the truth that angels may execute some answers to our prayers. We must once again remember that a holy angel freed Peter from prison while the church saints were praying on his behalf. It appears that angels can execute some of God’s answers to the prayers of the saints (Acts 12:5-9). However, we cannot conclude that this is true in every case when a saint of God receives and answer to a prayer. God may directly answer our prayers without angelic assistance. Again, we cannot possibly know what goes on in the spirit world all the time and in every case when we pray to God.

When we pray, remember three things:

- The love of God that wants the best for us;
- The wisdom of God that knows what is best for us;
- And the power of God that can accomplish it for us.

12. Will Christians judge or rule over angels someday?

What I am about to tell you is mind-boggling!

1 Corinthians 6:1-3

“Dare any of you, having a matter against another, go to law before the unjust, and not before the saints? Do ye not know that the saints shall judge the world? and if the world shall be judged by you, are ye unworthy to judge the smallest matters? Know ye not that we shall judge angels? how much more things that pertain to this life?”

The carnal Corinthian Christians were not working out their differences among themselves. Instead, they were taking their quarrels before the pagan courts of unsaved people and sewing one another. Paul realized that this was not a good testimony and forbids them to do this. Instead, he reminds them that they should be able to work out their differences in view of the fact that they someday will

actually participate in judging the world! This may seem mind-boggling to us but the Bible teaches us that someday the saints are going to have part in ruling this world.

Some expositors suggest that this refers to the actual judgment of wicked angels (Jude vs. 6, 2 Peter 2:4, 9). Others suggest that since we are joint heirs with Christ that we will participate in the judgment of sinful humanity at the Great White Throne Judgment (“the saints shall judge the world”) and also judge fallen angels someday (“we shall judge angels”). I don’t agree with this conclusion simply because these types of eternal judgments are committed to Jesus Christ alone (John 5:22; Rev. 20:11-15). Only Jesus Christ will dispense this type of judgment upon wicked sinners and angels. In fact, the judgment of the wicked angels is already decided by Jesus Christ.

The word “judge” does not merely apply to bringing a sentence of condemnation and doom upon others. It can also mean to make decisions and decrees that relate to governing. I believe this text in 1 Corinthians 6:1-3 looks ahead to the Millennium or the 1,000 years, when Jesus Christ is going to rule over the earth. The Bible concludes that God’s saints will also rule with Jesus Christ as co-rulers of planet earth. They will act as judges dispensing God’s will over the millennial earth. In acting as judges, they will rule over the unsaved who are born during the Millennium and also govern the good angels who are carrying out Christ’s orders during this period of time. Somehow the saints will be able to participate with this coming rulership over the earth.

Revelation 5:10

“And hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth.”

Revelation 2:26

“And he that overcometh, and keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations.”

The concept behind the word “judge” (1 Cor. 6:2-3) speaks of how the saints will someday, during the millennial reign of Jesus Christ, act as judges or governors, giving out orders and directions to both people and the angels. This is an amazing

prophetic revelation. Without any fanfare or build-up, Paul states the tremendous fact that Christians will one day judge angels. They will be joint-heirs with Jesus Christ and assist in ruling this world. In doing so, the saints will give commands and decrees to angels which must be carried out over the millennial earth. They will be in charge of the angels in specific ways. Yes, the saints who were actually made a little lower than the angels (Ps. 8:5; Heb. 2:6-7) will someday judge the angels by acting as a judge or governor over them, handing out orders to them and expecting the angels to fulfill these requests. How can this be? It's all because of God's amazing grace and decision to bless His Church.

13. Will fallen angels be present on earth during the Millennium?

The answer to this question is simple. No. The wicked or fallen angels will not be judged by the saints during the Millennium simply because they are bound, along with Satan (Rev. 20:1-3) during the 1,000 years. Although the good angels will be present during the earthly Kingdom, the wicked angels will be bound.

Zechariah 13:2 gives an interesting prophecy about this:

“And it shall come to pass in that day (the Millennium), saith the LORD of hosts, *that* I will cut off the names of the idols out of the land, and they shall no more be remembered: and also I will cause the prophets and the unclean spirit to pass out of the land.”

Isaiah 24:21-23 speaks of the same judgment and states:

“And it shall come to pass in that day, *that* the LORD shall punish the host of the high ones *that are* on high (all the spiritual/angelic forces opposed to God such as Satan and wicked angels – Rev. 20:1-3), and the kings of the earth upon the earth (the Antichrist and His armies and political forces that are banished - Rev. 19:19-20). And they (both the angels and unsaved in conjunction with the Second Coming) shall be gathered together, *as* prisoners are gathered in the pit, and shall be shut up in the prison (the realm of hades and the place of temporary judgment), and after many days (the 1,000 years of the Millennium) shall they be visited (the judgment of the wicked angels and unsaved in connection with the Great White Throne Judgment which occurs after the Millennium - Rev. 20:10-15). Then the moon shall be confounded, and the sun ashamed, when the LORD of hosts shall

reign in mount Zion, and in Jerusalem, and before his ancients gloriously” (Christ’s radiant glory coming from Jerusalem will put the sun and moon to shame!).

Here we discover that the fallen angels will be “shut up in the prison” “many days” which is a reference to the Millennium. Apparently this prison for the angelic beings refers to the same place where the angels which committed the Genesis debacle are now imprisoned (Tartarus), as revealed in several Bible verses (2 Pet. 2:4; Jude vs. 6) and the same place where the devil will be bound during the Millennium (Rev. 20:1-3). The Bible reveals that the wicked angels will not be present on earth during the Millennium. They are banned from planet earth during the Golden Age. Satan and all of his fallen angels will be removed from the earth and imprisoned in Tartarus (the bottomless pit) in conjunction with the Second Coming of Christ, which occurs after the seven-year Tribulation Period.

14. When will the wicked and fallen angels be judged?

In light of our previous question, we might as well address when the wicked angels are going to be judged by Jesus Christ. The Bible teaches that there is a coming a day of final reckoning and judgment for the fallen angels who decided to follow Satan in his rebellion against God.

2 Peter 2:4

“For if God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast *them* down to hell, and delivered *them* into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment.”

Some angels, who patriated in the societal sin in the years prior to the Genesis Flood are already bound or incarcerated in “hell” (Tatarus – the abyss or bottomless pit). But this is only a temporary place of confinement and judgment. They are awaiting a time of final judgment (“reserved unto judgment”).

The other day when I was driving, I was waiting at a stop sign. I kept waiting and waited some more. Why? It’s because there were some chickens who had made their way out on to the street and were strutting around in front of my car. Today they are called “free roaming chickens.” You know, you just put the chickens out in the field, let them eat and roam naturally, and you get better and fresher eggs.

Anyway, I had to get out of my car and scare the chickens so I would not run over them with my vehicle.

Here is my point. There were many wicked angels who did not participate in the wicked attempt to overthrow society and they are like the chickens, free-roaming about (Eph. 6:12). However, all wicked angels, both bound and free-roaming, will someday be judged.

Jude 1:6 mentions these same wicked angels:

“And the angels which kept not their first estate (the sphere of influence that God intended for angels - being a good influence patterned after God), but left their own habitation (dwelling place in the first Heaven), he hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day.”

When Jude speaks of “the judgment of the great day” he is referring to the final judgment of the wicked angels. It’s going to be a great day when Satan and his wicked angels are finally judged and the earth is forever released from the temptations and snares that these fallen angels bring. The Bible repeatedly reveals that there is coming a time of final judgment for all the wicked angels who have rebelled against God. In fact, some of these fallen angels did not want to enter this time of judgment before the specific time that God had allotted for it.

Matthew 8:29 records:

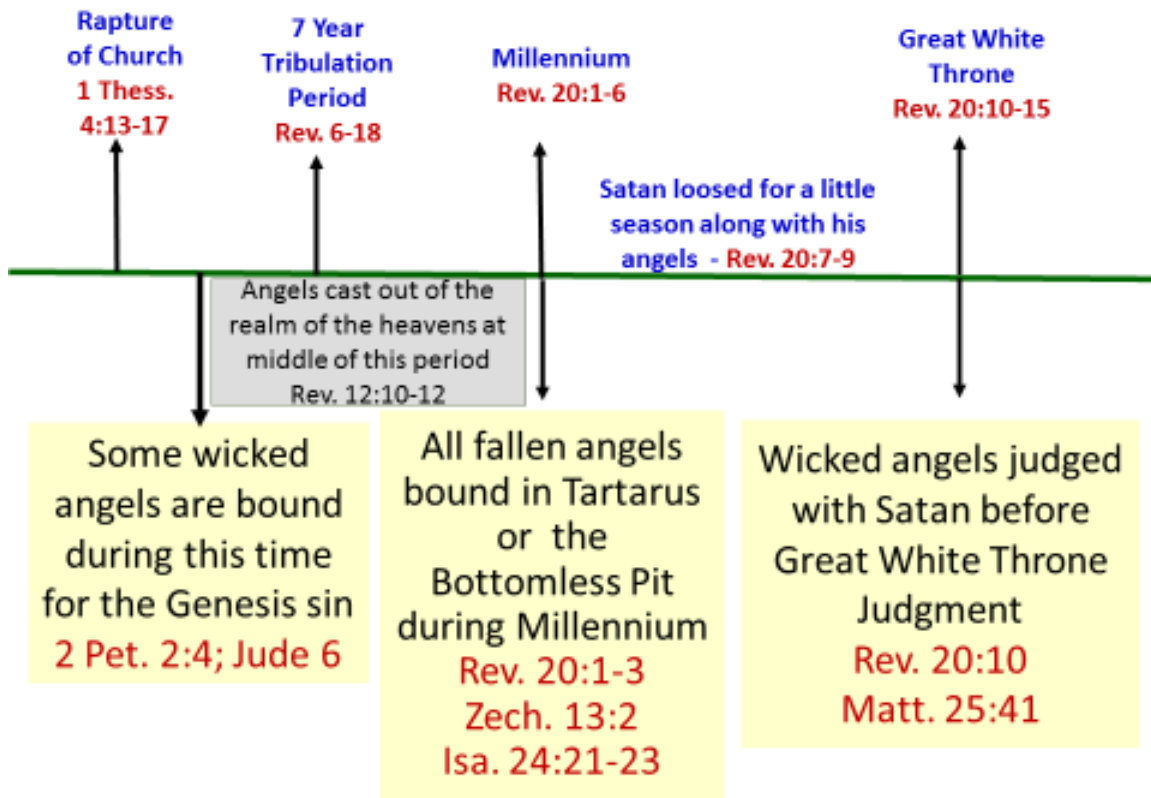
“And, behold, they cried out, saying, What have we to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of God? art thou come hither to torment us before the time?”

When will these wicked angels be judged? Apparently it will be the same time when Satan is judged. It will occur just before the Great White Throne Judgment.

Revelation 20:10

“And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet *are*, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever.”

We must remember that Satan is a created angel. Therefore, it's understandable and appropriate that all the wicked angels will be judged at the same time their angelic leader is judged. So, the fallen angels will be judged along with Satan just prior to the Great White Throne Judgment.



Jesus taught in Matthew 25:41:

“Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels.”

This reminds us that God’s plan is not to allow evil to continue to run ramped throughout the universe forever. There is coming a time of final reckoning that will finish the rule of evil in the world and universe. God has His limits and timetable for everything. In the words of Martin Luther’s magnificent hymn:

“The Prince of Darkness grim,
 We tremble not for him;
 His rage we can endure,

For lo, his doom is sure;
One little word shall fell him.”

What does all of this mean to us today as God’s saints? It reminds us that we have a joyful eternity that awaits us. It also causes us to reflect upon the fact that the devil and demons are defeated foes. We can claim our victory over them today through Christ’s victory.

Revelation 12:11

“And they overcame him (the devil) by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death.”

First, the basis of our victory is stated. The Bible says that we can overcome the devil “by the blood of the Lamb.” This means that through the shed blood of Jesus Christ, the Lamb of God, we can be victorious. There is no other way to victory over the Evil One. Second, the proclamation of our victory is mentioned as the “word of their testimony.” This looks back to the Lamb’s precious blood. In other words, these saints and you and me today, can give a verbal confession or testimony of our victory through Christ’s shed blood, embracing the message by faith. In other words, we are to claim their victory over the devil’s power, be assured of our forgiveness, and in the end enter Heaven, even if we give our lives for the cause of Jesus Christ.

Notice that these saints did not defeat Satan by means of incantations, exorcisms, ritual formulas, or by “binding” or rebuking him. Satan, being far more powerful than any human, is not defeated by these kind of fleshly tricks and gimmicks. Nor did these saints defeat Satan through their own personal power. They defeated him by the blood of the Lamb – the blood of Jesus Christ.

Herbert Lockyer said:

“In the hours of temptation, the blood ever avails as we plead its efficacy. Satan is a defeated foe, and such a defeat can be actualized in our lives as we seek the shelter of the blood.”

“Though Satan should buffet,
Though trials should come,
Let this blest assurance control,
That Christ hath regarded my helpless estate,
And hath shed his own blood for my soul.”

I found some famous last words expressed by some saints before they died.

John Knox

"Live in Christ, live in Christ, and the flesh need not fear death."

John Calvin

"Thou, Lord, bruise me; but I am abundantly satisfied, since it is from Thy hand."

Charles Wesley

"I shall be satisfied with Thy likeness--satisfied, satisfied!"

John Wesley preached his last sermon of Feb 17, 1791, in Lambeth on the text "Seek ye the Lord while He may be found, call ye upon Him while He is near" (Isa 55:6). The following day, a very sick man, he was put to bed in his home on City Road. During the days of his illness, he often repeated the words from one of his brother's hymns: "I the chief of sinners am, But Jesus died for me!" His last words were, "The best of all is, God is with us!" He died March 2, 1791.

On his deathbed, British preacher Charles Simeon smiled brightly and asked the people who were gathered in his room, 'Did Jehovah create the world or did I?' He did! Now if He made the world and all the rolling spheres of the universe, He certainly can take care of me. Into Jesus' hands I can safely commit my spirit!"

Hudson Taylor, founder of China Inland Mission, in the closing months of his life said to a friend, "I am so weak. I can't read my Bible. I can't even pray. I can only lie still in God's arms like a little child and trust."

The next question about angels deals with the matter of death.

15. Do angels have a ministry to the deceased?

Luke 16 seems to give us some Scriptural insights regarding this question. In recent years, there have been many who have died and then been revived, reporting their “after-life” experiences. These experiences are not Biblical, but the one we are about to look at is Scriptural. We can believe it. None of the so-called out-of-body experiences are inspired, inerrant, and authoritative, but the Biblical account we are about to look at is inspired.

When we die as God’s saints, do angels have part in transporting us to our final destination and resting place? Do they direct us on to our heavenly destination? Jesus seems to give us a hint regarding the ministry of the good angels and their ministry with those saints who die. Whether or not this was or was not a parable, makes no difference to me. Some critics seem to explain away the solemn implications of the story by waving it off as a parable. But elsewhere “hades” is described as a literal place of torment and judgment (Rev. 20:13-14).

If it is a parable, the reality of what Jesus taught here cannot be less than the word picture that He is describing. It’s description of the fate of people after death is both true and unchanging. The main characters of this account are the rich man (sometimes called Dives, a term meaning "wealth") and Lazarus (a name meaning "God is help"). What we want to look at is what happens to the saved man after death.

Luke 16:22

“And it came to pass, that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom: the rich man also died, and was buried.”

In this day, prior to Christ’s death and resurrection (Eph. 4:8), God’s saints went to the center of the earth in a place that was identified by Christ as Abraham’s bosom which was the place where Abraham went when he died. Abraham’s bosom (side) is a symbolic expression to denote the place of bliss. To any Jew, the thought of enjoying fellowship with Abraham would suggest inexpressible joy and blessing. The figure of Abraham’s bosom connotes a place of security, godly fellowship with other Old Testament believers. Paradise was apparently an intermediate place where believers went unto the resurrection of Christ occurred.

Again, we must remember that Abraham's bosom was not Heaven. The price for sin had to be paid on the cross, and Christ had to pass through death, hell, and the grave, and ascend to Heaven, acquiring the key of release from hades (Rev. 1:18). Therefore, none of His Old Testament saints could enter Heaven until after the resurrection (Eph. 4:8). So, there was a compartment in Hades where the righteous went when they died. It was an intermediate place where God saints went until Christ died and rose from the dead. Apparently there was a great divide between the place where God's saints went and the unsaved went prior to Christ resurrection. There were also two different experiences, one of punishment and the other of comfort (Luke 16:25-26).

The point is that Jesus spoke of how angels carried this man into this place in the afterlife which was called Abraham's bosom. I see no reason for doubting the plain force of the words that Jesus spoke here. Since the good angels minister to believers in this life, who are the heirs of salvation (Heb. 1:14), protecting them in various ways, there seems no reason why they should not do so at the time of death. At death, we are not left to find our own way home. It's likely that God's saints receive angelic protection and escort from the good angels at the time of their death. Satan would want to take their soul into hell but Jesus will have none of it. He apparently sends His angels to bring His beloved saints into His presence, which today is in Heaven.

Nothing is said about the unsaved rich man being escorted to the compartment in hades where he would suffer. We don't know if evil or fallen angels (or even good angels under God's direction – Rev. 14:10) assist the damned into their place of eternal torment.

Solomon B. Shaw was a wise recorder of life-and-death scenes. His best-known book is "Dying Testimonies of Saved and Unsaved", originally published in 1898. Shaw records the dying scenes, and the last words, of both the saved and unsaved, both famous and unknown. You will see the tremendous difference between those who are Born Again and those who have refused salvation, as they approach the hour of their death. Many dying believers, while they are in-between the life and death stage, hovering on the border of Heaven, give reports of seeing angels coming to escort them to Heaven and the lights of that wondrous abode shining around

them as they lay dying. On the other hand, many unsaved go through the agonies of terror as they approach death, some even feeling the fires of Hell and seeing demons in the room, coming to take their spirits to the Abyss. Friend, I'm glad I am saved and know that when I close my eyes in death, that I am going to Heaven.

16. Can fallen angels be saved?

We can conclude with absolute assurance that fallen angels cannot be saved.

Hebrews 2:14 declares:

“Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil.”

The Bible teaches that Christ took on the form of human beings and experienced humanity (human nature) in order to die for mankind. If Jesus wanted to save the fallen angels, then He would have to take on the form of an angel and die on a cross for the fallen angels. But the Bible says nothing of this sort.

Hebrews 2:16 teaches:

“For verily he took not on *him the nature of* angels; but he took on *him* the seed of Abraham.”

Jesus did not die to save angels since He did not take on the nature of angels. The Bible actually teaches that Christ died for mankind for He “tasted death for every man” (Hebrews 2:9) – not angels.

17. Can some of the good angels still rebel against God, become evil angels, and join Satan's angels?

I was asked this question recently. The Bible gives no indication that there will be a crossover of good angels becoming bad angels or bad angels becoming good angels. The Bible speaks of a one-time rebellion that occurred in Heaven (Rev. 12:1-4). It does not convey that there would be any more angelic rebellion after the original rebellion in Heaven. The Scriptures speak of “the angels which kept not their first

estate, but left their own habitation” or dwelling place in Heaven (Jude 6). This speaks of a one-time act of rebellion – not an ongoing rebellion. The Bible always speaks of the angelic rebellion in the past tense. So, the Bible gives no hint anywhere that good angels can change their allegiance and decide to rebel against Creator God.

18. How do the good angels respond to salvation?

Jesus taught in Luke 15:10:

“Likewise, I say unto you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth.”

The fact that there is joy in the presence of God’s angels over repenting sinners (vs. 10) shows that they are interested in our salvation. Angels apparently rejoice when sinners get saved. They possess a keen interest in the redemption of people and rejoice in Heaven over the salvation of sinners, which brings glory to God. There are few joys that match the joy of finding the lost and bringing them to the Savior. “The church has nothing to do but to save souls,” said John Wesley, the founder of Methodism. “Therefore, spend and be spent in this work.”

The herald angel who announced Christ’s birth also spoke about Christ’s entrance into the world as Savior. Why? It’s because angels are deeply interested in the salvation of people. God knows it and sends an angel to give this announcement.

Luke 2:9-11

“And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid. And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.”

The angel announced the birth of the Savior and the great joy that would come to the human race with the salvation that Jesus Christ would offer to the world. This angelic speech or announcement also indicates that angels are very interested in the plan and purpose of God regarding the salvation of lost sinners. Since angels cannot be saved, they obviously wonder what it would be like to be lost and then

saved. Because of angelic rebellion and man's rebellion, angels desire to understand God's gracious plan of salvation.

1 Peter 1:12

"Unto whom (the Old Testament prophets) it was revealed, that not unto themselves (by way of fulfillment), but unto us (New Testament believers) they did minister the things (their prophecies about the coming Redeemer who was Christ and who would bring salvation into the world), which are now (in the Gospel Age of fulfillment) reported unto you (Peter's recipients and you and me today) by them (New Testament apostles) that have preached the gospel unto you with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven; which things the angels desire to look into."

Peter is obviously looking back to the word "salvation" in verses 9-10. He ends this section in his epistle by mentioning how the angels are interested about studying, understanding, and experiencing what we have experienced today, which is salvation through the Messiah. The word "desire" speaks of how the angels have a longing, interest, and inner yearning to comprehend what it means to be saved. The verb "to look into" literally means to bend over or forward to examine more closely, as you would with your eyeglasses. Like a five-year old girl with pigtails, stooping down to look at a beautiful flower, the angels watch believers who are saved by grace and whose lives have been changed by grace.

The angels cannot fully grasp the mystery of human salvation since angels are not human beings and cannot be saved. But they sure would like to know what it's like, how it feels to be saved. Let me tell you – it feels great!!! To all the angels that are surrounding us today, we can say that salvation is so great and wonderful that it cannot be described. It can only be experienced!

Think about this. Peter informs us that the supernatural world of angels is eagerly observing God's program of human redemption. The concept seems grounded in Jesus' words where angels are said to rejoice over one repentant sinner!

Luke 15:10

"Likewise, I say unto you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth."

Throughout the ages of time the angels will watch us experiencing our salvation which is in Christ and they will wonder what it would be like to be saved.

Ephesians 3:8-10 declares:

“Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ; And to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ: To the intent (with this purpose) that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places (to the angels!) might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God” (His wisdom that relates to salvation and redemption).

The church is like an object lesson to angels, of what salvation is like to experience. But they will never know the joy of salvation. It is by far a more wonderful thing to be a redeemed human than an angel. There can be no question about the fact that God’s holy angels take a deep interest in our salvation. The Bible reveals that today and throughout the eternal ages of time the angels will watch us experiencing our salvation which is in Christ and they will wonder what it would be like to be saved.

In the Gospel Magazine of 1777 an unknown author wrote these words:

“Pause, my soul! adore and wonder!
Ask, 'O why such love to me?'
Grace has put me in the number
Of the Saviour's family;
Hallelujah!
Thanks, Eternal Love, to thee!”

Revelation 3:5 states:

“He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life, but I will confess his name before my Father, and before his angels.”

Christ will give special recognition and honor or accolades before the Father and His angels of the overcoming Christians who are in Christ. There is a day of reward

and recognition coming. And the angels will be there to witness the whole scene. This is because angels are deeply interested in God's people, and specifically how God's grace has changed their lives. The angels will see firsthand the recognition and reward that is received by God's saints because they are interested in the way God has worked in the hearts and lives of the children of God. This reminds us that faithfulness will be rewarded beyond measure in the life to come! This should encourage us to keep living according to our calling (Eph. 4:1).

19. Is Jesus Michael the archangel?

The Jehovah's Witness false teaching concludes that Michael, the archangel, is actually a reference to Jesus in His heavenly role.

On their website, JW.org., one reads their cultish conclusion:

The Bible states that "Michael and his angels battled with the dragon . . . and its angels." (Revelation 12:7) Thus, Michael is the Leader of an army of faithful angels. Revelation also describes Jesus as the Leader of an army of faithful angels. (Revelation 19:14-16) And the apostle Paul specifically mentions "the Lord Jesus" and "his powerful angels." (2 Thessalonians 1:7) So the Bible speaks of both Michael and "his angels" and Jesus and "his angels." (Matthew 13:41; 16:27; 24:31; 1 Peter 3:22) Since God's Word nowhere indicates that there are two armies of faithful angels in heaven—one headed by Michael and one headed by Jesus—it is logical to conclude that Michael is none other than Jesus Christ in his heavenly role.

Why has this cult notoriously taught this? It's because they are trying to demote Christ and His deity as Jehovah God. Of course, what is stated by the JW's is fanciful reasoning but not Scriptural reasoning. They claim it is logical to conclude that Michael and Jesus are one and the same since they both are leaders of the angels. That is like saying that Pastor William and Pastor Kelly are the same person because we are both pastors at the Berean Bible Church. This argument is ludicrous and soul-damning. All angels are created beings and Jesus is the Creator of all the angels (John 1:1-3; Col. 1:16-17; Heb. 1:2). To equate Jesus with an angel is nothing less than the second century Gnostic heresy which has been historically condemned by the Church.

20. Were angels created in the image of God?

The question is sometimes raised, were angels created in the image of God? Some suggest that angels possess personhood or personality that reflects their Creator, as man does (a capacity to live holy, possess morals, fellowship with God, high intelligence, eternal being). Therefore, they conclude that it is conceivable that angels were created in God's image, even though the Scripture does not assign this to their creation. They also conclude that man was made a little lower than the angels (Ps. 8:5; Heb. 2:7, 9). If this is true, then it's not unreasonable to assume that they angels were created in God's image as well, since man is lower than the created angelic realm. So, it's concluded by some that angels do bear the mark or the image of their Creator God in many ways.

I think there are two reasons why angels are not created in the image of God. First, the Bible says man was created in the image or likeness of God (Gen. 1:26-27). The Bible nowhere directly states that angels are created in God's image or likeness. Second, the image of God means more than just personality and holiness as some suggest. It also relates to having dominion over the earth (Gen. 1:26, 28). Angels do not have this, but people do. Third, the image of God also relates to having God's knowledge, holiness, and righteousness being restored in human beings through possessing a relationship with Jesus Christ (Eph. 4:22-25; Col. 3:9-10). This is something angels could never experience. So, there are more reasons to conclude that angels are not created in God's image. However, if they are image bearers of God in some way, they do not reflect God's image and likeness in the same capacity or way that man does.

21. Why does God allow Satan and demons to exist?

Another way to ask this question is why God did not send the devil and his angels straight to the Lake of Fire after they sinned? We could ask similar questions with regard to the human race. Why did God not wipe out Adam and Eve when they sinned? Why does God not bring sudden death upon us when we sin? The answer to all of these questions is that when God allowed evil to exist in the world, He chose the best possible plan to bring the most possible glory to Himself.

1 Chronicles 29:11-12

“Thine, O LORD, *is* the greatness, and the power, and the glory, and the victory, and the majesty: for all *that is* in the heaven and in the earth *is thine*; thine *is* the kingdom (God’s universal kingdom or rule over all events of all time), O LORD, and thou art exalted as head above all. Both riches and honour *come* of thee, and thou reignest over all; and in thine hand *is* power and might; and in thine hand *it is* to make great, and to give strength unto all.”

Romans 16:27

“To God only wise, *be* glory through Jesus Christ for ever. Amen.”

Jude 1:25

“To the only wise God our Saviour, *be* glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen.”

Revelation 7:11-12

“And all the angels stood round about the throne, and *about* the elders and the four beasts, and fell before the throne on their faces, and worshipped God, Saying, Amen: Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honour, and power, and might, *be* unto our God for ever and ever. Amen.”

God’s glory is displayed in everything that He does, even allowing evil to come into the world. God’s glory can be seen in the backdrop of everything that happens on earth and in the universe. The darkest sin and sinister plans of the devil, and even the devil himself, can reflect God’s glory in various ways, such as His amazing plan of grace, His mercy and love for sinners, His wisdom, knowledge, and patience. All of Heaven realizes this as they ascribe glory to God and we should realize it as well.

Everything that God does in some way brings glory to Himself. This includes allowing the devil and his angels to exist, sin to exist, and man to exist as a sinner. Also, God’s glory can be evidenced in our difficult trials and tests of life that we face. God’s glory is displayed in the infinite wisdom of God, His mercy and grace that He supplies to us, and also as we reflect His likeness while passing through the trials.

Someone said:

“Life is not a straight line leading from one blessing to the next and then finally to heaven. Life is a winding and troubled road. Switchback after switchback. And the point of biblical stories like Joseph and Job and Esther and Ruth is to help us feel in our bones (not just know in our heads) that God is for us in all these strange turns. God is not just showing up after the trouble and cleaning it up. He is plotting the course and managing the troubles with far-reaching purposes for our good and for the glory of Jesus Christ.”

22. How do we test the angels?

1 John 4:1

“Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world.”

When the Bible says that we are to test the spirits, it really means we are to test the angels for they are spirits. When it states that we are “to believe not every spirit” it is talking about demonic spirits or the messages that fallen angels are promoting in the church and the ranks of apostasy. This means that demonic spirits are behind the messages of false teachers who seek to overturn the key doctrinal teachings of the Bible (2 Cor. 11:13-15). Of course, the only way we can test the spirits is to place their message beside the Word of God, which informs us the key doctrines of the Christian faith must be embraced and upheld, such as that of the incarnation of Jesus Christ in bodily form (1 John 4:2-3). For instance, if a message denies what the Bible says, in relation to the doctrine of Christ and salvation, then you can be sure that a demonic spirit is behind the message.

1 John 4:6

“We are of God: he that knoweth God heareth us; he that is not of God heareth not us. Hereby know we the spirit of truth, and the spirit of error.”

The mention of “the spirit of truth” likely refers to the Holy Spirit as in 1 John 4:2, and the “spirit of error” references the demonic spirits of 1 John 4:1, who are not backing apostolic teaching or doctrine but promoting false teaching. By examining the Bible, with the use of proper hermeneutics, we can determine if a teaching is truth or error and if it has its source in the Holy Spirit or Satan. The way to

distinguish truth from error is to compare it with what the Scriptures teach. If a religious leader comes along with “something new” and something that contradicts what Christians have always embraced in the Bible, then that person and his message cannot be trusted. Isaiah said there is no light in them (Isa. 8:20).

23. Should we expect angels to visit us today?

In our day of “angelmania,” many are expecting to receive angelic appearances to give them messages from God. However, Bible-believing Christians should not expect angels to visit them today. We need to reiterate this once again as we close out our angel study.

Before the Scriptures were completely written, God occasionally, on rare occasions, sent holy angels as messengers to make His will known to individual saints. For example, God sent angels to make His will known to John the Baptists’ father (Luke 1:5-20), to the virgin Mary (Luke 1:26-28), and to Joseph (Matt. 1:18-25; 2:13-21). However, these rare occurrences took place prior to the formation of God’s canon (the completed Word of God). We have God’s completed mind today in the Scriptures, which give us all the direction and guidance we need for life and godliness (2 Timothy 3:16-17).

Angels no longer physically appear and reveal themselves to people, in order to give them messages from God. This is because we possess the Scriptures and need no added revelatory messages from angels (1 Cor. 13:10). The issue of the close of the canon of Scripture enter into answering this question about angels and revelatory message. Also, we also possess the permanent indwelling ministry of the Holy Spirit today who guides us in truth (John 14:16-17) and directs our lives (Rom. 8:14; Gal. 5:18).

The epistles, God’s messages given to the Church today, do not reveal any ongoing angelic, revelatory ministry. This means we should not expect an angel to show up at our doorstep to deliver to us a message from God. As we have stated previously, angels protecting God’s people is one thing but receiving revelatory messages from angels and depending upon them for comfort and strength is forbidden in Scripture (Col. 2:18). Many are replacing the Holy Spirit with angels (John 14:17-18; Acts 1:8;

Gal. 5:25). If you tell me that an angel visited you at 4:30 in the morning and gave you a message from Heaven, you probably should check with your doctor or a psychologist.

24. Can we contact angels today?

This is similar to the previous question. The Bible nowhere teaches that God's people should seek to contact angels in any way and receive messages from them. This is directly forbidden in Scripture. Emanuel Swedenborg (1688-1772), a mystic and scientist, wrote over thirty books, claiming that he contacted angels and that angels guided him in his work. New Agers are always talking about contacting angels and receiving messages and guidance from angels. According to some, there are angels for every occasion. It is claimed that some angels are experts in the area of our human needs and other angels are better at doing other things. This is all nonsense.

The Bible forbids attempting to contact angels and attempting to receive messages from them.

Colossians 2:18

“Let no man beguile you of your reward in a voluntary humility (self-imposed, false, and artificial type of godliness and humility – 2 Tim. 3:5) and worshipping of angels (which the Scripture forbids – Ex. 20:3-4), intruding into those things which he hath not seen (a reference to the illusionary dreams, mystical meditations, and visions of angels that allegedly dispense messages to them), vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind” (an unspiritual mind).

This Bible verses categorically condemns the worshipping of angels by depending upon angels to give us strength and messages from God. When we interact with angels, it becomes a form of paganized and mystical worship. The phrase “intruding into those things which he hath not seen” reveals how the Gnostics were claiming that angels appeared to them in dreams and visions in order to give them secret messages from God. They claimed to have experiences that no other person had. The Bible says that the false teacher “hath not seen” angels in their dreams and visions but were only making up this bold lie.

It's clear that God has no plan for His people to contact angels, so they can in return somehow rely on them for guidance and spiritual living. Some of the false teachers advocated the worship of angels by promoting the idea that they were the proper mediators of prayer and worship to God. Any adoration and dependency on angels involves the worship of angels for the angels are taking the place of God. The Bible teaches that angels are not mediators between God and man (John 14:6) and should never be worshipped (Rev. 22:8-9).

It's interesting that alleged angelic visions and messages are an important element in present-day heresies such as Mormonism, Spiritism, Catholicism, and Swedenborgianism. The Bible gives us no instructions about contacting angels. This is because we are not to contact angels through prayer and expect to receive guidance, comfort, and messages from God. Of course, mediums or spiritists can sometimes contact angels (fallen angels or demons) through the practices of sorcery, witchcraft, and necromancy. The Bible strongly condemns and forbids these practices (Deuteronomy 18:10-11).

25. Should we pray to angels and develop relationships with them?

The Bible teaches that we are to address God the Father in our prayers.

Jesus taught in Matthew 6:9

“After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name.”

We have dealt with this earlier in our study but it is very important to reiterate. Praying to angels and developing a dependency and relationship with them is not Scriptural. It demeans God and His role in our life as Christians (“The Lord is my shepherd” - Psalm 23:1). No angel is to become our personal shepherd and caretaker in life. Books on angels often encourage readers to pray to angels for protection, guidance, healing, and rescue them from danger. Praying to angels is anti-Scriptural and an extra-Scriptural experience that God categorically condemns. It is absolutely pagan and heathen. It is blasphemy against God. We never find any person in Scripture praying to angels who had a right relationship with God. We are

to derive our inspiration and give our devotion only to Christ. We are to be “looking unto Jesus” (Heb. 12:2) – not unto angels.

As I have repeatedly mentioned before in this study, we live in a day of angel-mania. By that I mean that many people, including Christians, have come to almost idolize and depend upon angels for assistance, guidance, and spiritual strength. The Scriptures condemn praying to angels, depending upon angels, and developing any kind of relationships with angels. The Christian has the sufficiency of Scriptures (2 Tim. 3:16-17) and the sufficiency of Christ (Col. 2:10) to meet all of our needs in life, in every situation and place that we find ourselves. The flood of books that blend psychology and Christianity assume that God is not sufficient for our emotional and relational problems. They do not direct us to His supremacy and sufficiency for life and godliness (2 Pet. 1:3). The same is true regarding the books that are being written concerning a person’s need to contact, depend upon angels, and develop personal relationships with angels. They take us away from our sufficiency in God alone and they become a replacement for God (2 Cor. 3:5). All of this is demeaning to God because we look to His created beings and other sources for help and strength.

Psalm 121:1-2

“I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills, from whence cometh my help. My help *cometh* from the LORD, which made heaven and earth.”

As a Christian, we are to always look to God for strength, peace, and help. No angel can ever supply us with that which only God has promised to give His children.

In conclusion, the Bible has more to say about angels than just about any other subject revealed in its sacred pages. However, we must keep angels in perspective and never elevate them above their Creator.

George Whitefield, the great British evangelist, was speaking to a man about his soul. He asked the man, “Sir, what do you believe?” “I believe what my church believes,” the man replied respectfully. “And what does your church believe?” “The same thing I believe.” “And what do both of you believe?” the preacher inquired again. “We both believe the same thing!” was the only reply he could get.

It's my prayer that as a result of this study on angels, we might really know what the Bible teaches regarding these spirit beings. We must believe what the Scriptures teach since the Bible is to be our final authority on any subject (2 Tim. 3:16). In believing the record that God gave to us concerning the angels, we will not follow the ever-increasing confusion being presented in the proliferation of books being written about angels, which are riddled with error and pagan practices, that do not glorify the true God of Heaven and Christianity.