

FOUNDATION OF FAITH!
ANGELOLOGY
THE STUDY OF ANGELS AND DEMONS

This morning in our series Foundation of Faith we are going to be looking at angelology or the study of angels and demons. The reason we are doing this is because there is a lot of confusion about both angels and demons, who they are, what they do or what their function is. And thus, I hope to clear that up by looking at what the Scriptures have to say regarding these angelic beings. In the 66 books of the Bible angels are referred to in 34 of them! Jesus spoke of their existence, (Matthew 8:10, 24:31, 26:53 etc.). So they are important to talk about and understand them.

Keep in mind that Angels were created by God. They have intellect. They have emotions. They even have a will to choose and we will see that with what Lucifer and one-third of the angels did and what the other two-thirds did! They do exist as spirits and yet there are times that some angels can be seen. Angels are not omnipresent or they are not present everywhere, they can only be in one place at one time. They do not die. And they do not reproduce, at least the holy angels don't, but it would seem, according to Genesis chapter 6 that there are some that left their domain and co-habitated with women prior to the flood. You can check out our Genesis study if you want more information on that. And angels can't be saved or redeemed!

We are going to first look at Satan and his demons because I would like to end on a positive note and not with them. And there is a lot we can look at but I hope to give you some foundational truths about them and then we will move on to angels as we finish up this morning and that will lead us into our next series, spiritual warfare!

1. SATAN AND DEMONS

Now some of you may be a little uncomfortable talking about this subject and may be wondering why we are even doing this. I will give you two reasons that I believe are important for us to understand. First of all Paul tells us in I Timothy 4:1, “**Now the Spirit expressly says that in latter times some will depart from the faith, giving heed to deceiving spirits and doctrines of demons.**”

Please understand that false doctrine does not originate in the mind of man. Paul is saying that false doctrine comes from demons that influence man on this path! Thus, it is important to understand that. Doctrines of demons are spoken in many churches across America and these demons are using these men and women to promote these false doctrines.

Secondly, Paul tells us in I Corinthians 10:19-20, “**What am I saying then? That an idol is anything, or what is offered to idols is anything? Rather, that the things which the Gentiles sacrifice they sacrifice to demons and not to God, and I do not want you to have fellowship with demons.**”

So not only do demons put forth false doctrine but they are also at the center of the false religions of the world. And to me that just makes sense. And look at how many of these false religious systems have a high incidence of demon possession among their people. And look at the demonic opposition of the missionaries that go throughout the world with the Gospel message. This is an issue and thus, we need to be aware of it and not come to unbiblical conclusions regarding Satan and his demons.

Now here is a question that many have a difficult time with and yet I think the Bible gives us the answer. This is the question, “When did Lucifer or Satan rebel against God?” Well, I think the Holy Spirit shows us in Job chapter 38. For some 36 chapters Job and his friends were trying to figure out why all this was happening to Job, all this calamity in his life. Job thought God was out to get him and Job’s friends thought that he had some sin in his life that he was covering. Both were wrong.

If you were with us in our study of the book of Job or if you have read through the book of Job, you can clearly see that God has been patient with Job and Job’s friends but now He is going to step in and set things right. He is going to show them who He is and who they are. What is interesting here is that God does not give Job or his friends the answers to why or how come this has come upon Job. What God does do is ask Job a series of some 70 questions through the remainder of the book and in the end you know what the answer is? It is very simple, God is the answer and understanding that is far more important than understanding the how’s and why’s of God!

In Job 38:1-7 we are told, **“Then the Lord answered Job out of the whirlwind, and said: ‘Who is this who darkens counsel By words without knowledge? Now prepare yourself like a man; I will question you, and you shall answer Me. Where were you when I laid the foundations of the earth? Tell Me, if you have understanding. Who determined its measurements? Surely you know! Or who stretched the line upon it? To what were its foundations fastened? Or who laid its cornerstone, When the morning stars sang together, And all the sons of God shouted for joy?’”**

Now notice what is taking place here. God is essentially saying to Job, “Job, if you can answer these things, then you are fit to question Me. If you cannot answer these things, then you do not have a place to demand answers from Me.” That is pretty straight forward and God just lays it all out on the table for Job. You see, Job is not able to answer these questions. What Questions?

God is asking Job if he was around when the earth was created. The angels were and they shouted for joy at what God had done. But Job was not around. Again, listen to what the Lord says in Job 38:7, “**When the morning stars sang together, And all the sons of God shouted for joy?**” This is speaking of angels and we are told that they were created before the foundations of the earth were created.

Of this Poole wrote, “*Shouted for joy*; rejoiced in and blessed God for his works; whereby he intimates that they neither did advise or any way assist him in his works, nor dislike or censure any of his works, as Job had presumed to do with the works of his providence, which are not inferior to those of creation.”

Now here is the thing and I think it is important because people want to know not only when the angels were created but when Satan fell. As we have seen they were created before the earth was created. But also notice that it says “**all the sons of God shouted for joy**” when God created the heavens and the earth. That tells me that Lucifer or Satan fell from his position as the anointed cherub sometime after God created the earth. When exactly we don’t know but it was before Genesis chapter 3 and the fall of man!

Please understand that Lucifer was not ruler of the earth before man was created and then sometime later he rebelled against God and God placed the earth in a deep freeze until He recreated it for man to dwell in. There is no gap theory found in Genesis chapter 1 between verses 1 and 2! When God created the heavens and the earth the angels shouted for joy and then, sometime before chapter 3 of Genesis Satan and one-third of the angels fell! So that is the timeframe.

How did Satan fall or why did he fall? You really only need one word to describe the reason and that is pride! There are two sections in the Scriptures that tell us of the fall of Lucifer or Satan. First we find why he fell in Isaiah 14:12-17, and we are going to look at the first 5 verses of this section where we are told, **“How you are fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! How you are cut down to the ground, You who weakened the nations! For you have said in your heart: ‘I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God; I will also sit on the mount of the congregation On the farthest sides of the north; I will ascend above the heights of the clouds, I will be like the Most High.’ Yet you shall be brought down to Sheol, To the lowest depths of the Pit.”**

Remember what Jesus said in Luke 10:18, “. . . **‘I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven.’**” Satan was the anointed cherub, in charge of the angelic realm, God’s number one created being and in charge of worship in heaven. He was full of beauty and wisdom. And yet that was not enough for him. And because of pride, he lost his position before God. His name, Lucifer, means “day star” or “son of the morning.” Think of it this way. As you look at the brilliance of a star in the early morning, suddenly it vanishes as the sun rises. Lucifer started out brilliant but has faded, and will eventually fade away completely!

And as you read this you see the five **“I will”** statements of Lucifer. Pride has filled his heart. No longer is he concerned with the will of God, but his own will, for he wants to be God. He wants to go higher, lifted up more than God – ascend into heaven. He wants to cease to be an angel and he wants to be God – exalt my throne above the stars of heaven. He wants to give his counsel – to sit on the mount of the congregation. He wants to ascend above the clouds or cloud, the Shekinah glory – he wants to have his glory exceed that of God’s! He wants to be like the Most High, he wants to be God and God put an end to that heart that was filled with pride and God brought him down!

Now that lie, of man becoming God, is seen in the Garden of Eden when it was waved before Eve, and she bought into it. Hinduism focuses on becoming gods. Mormonism does the same thing. And the New Age is into this idea also. M. Scott Peck said, “God wants us to become himself (or herself or itself). We are growing toward godhood. God is the goal of evolution.” Do you see how false doctrine and false religious systems stem from Satan and his demons!

Also, in Ezekiel 28:12-19 we see another section that deals with the fall of Lucifer or Satan and we are going to look at verses 12 through 17, which says, **“Son of man, take up a lamentation for the king of Tyre, and say to him, ‘Thus says the Lord God: “You were the seal of perfection, Full of wisdom and perfect in beauty. You were in Eden, the garden of God; Every precious stone was your covering: The sardius, topaz, and diamond, Beryl, onyx, and jasper, Sapphire, turquoise, and emerald with gold. The workmanship of your timbrels and pipes Was prepared for you on the day you were created. You were the anointed cherub who covers; I established you; You were on the holy mountain of God; You walked back and forth in the midst of fiery stones. You were perfect in your ways from the day you were created, Till iniquity was found in you. By the abundance of your trading You became filled with violence within, And you sinned; Therefore I cast you as a profane thing Out of the mountain of God; And I destroyed you, O covering cherub, From the midst of the fiery stones. Your heart was lifted up because of your beauty; You corrupted your wisdom for the sake of your splendor; I cast you to the ground, I laid you before kings, That they might gaze at you.””**

Notice once again why Satan or Lucifer fell, - **PRIDE!** This perfect creation of God became proud of his beauty. He saw himself as something special. And that is exactly what we read back in Isaiah chapter 14. Those five **“I will”** statements brought Lucifer, the light bearer, the shining one, down to the pit of Hell and he became Satan, destroyer, the dragon, the Devil, that serpent of old. His appearance hasn’t changed only his actions have!

And Isaiah continues on by saying in verse 15 of Isaiah chapter 14, “**Yet you shall be brought down to Sheol, to the lowest depths of the Pit. Those who see you will gaze at you, and consider you, saying: ‘Is this the man who made the earth tremble, who shook kingdoms, Who made the world as a wilderness and destroyed its cities, who did not open the house of his prisoners?’**” Isaiah 14:15-17. This creature that has destroyed so many lives, who we often give so much credit to, we will be amazed at. He is still beautiful; he does not look harmful or grotesque. He is not wearing red underwear with a pitch fork in his hand! And yet, look at what this one fallen angel has done because people are willing to listen to his lies. Not only that, but he was able to get one-third of the angels to rebel with him against God.

Now here is the thing I want you to remember. Satan and his demons are not gods. They might think they are but that does not make them gods. I may think that I am 6 feet tall but it does not change the fact, the reality that I am not even close! And in saying that, it means that he is not all knowing, he is not present everywhere, he does not have the power to do whatever he wants, only what God allows him to do! He is a created being!

In Colossians 1:16 Paul is speaking of how Jesus is preeminent in creation or unsurpassed in creation because He created everything. We are told, “**For by Him all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. All things were created through Him and for Him.**”

Then why in the world does God allow Satan and his demons to do the things they are doing in this world? Simply, God gives man a choice, to either turn to Him and serve Him or reject the Lord and by doing that you are serving the Devil! Now that may disturb some of you because you are not serving God, you are not a believer but that is just the way it is. There are not thousands of options here or even a dozen, there are only two choices, to serve the Lord or serve the Devil. One leads to eternal life with the Lord and the other leads to eternal life apart from the Lord!

And please understand that Satan is not the king of Hell; in fact he has never been there! That may surprise some of you but that is the reality. Another thing that may shock you is that Satan still has access to heaven and he is the accuser of the brethren, you and me! Yes, one day, in the middle of the seven-year Tribulation Period he will be cast out, but not yet! And don't you think that Satan loves when Christians lift him up and exalt him by spending so much time talking about him? Of course he does and that is why we are only going to spend a few more minutes looking at this issue of Satan and his demons.

Many of the top recording artists from the past and from today, including Bono who is exalted in the Emerging Church circles, is influenced by the Devil in their songs. When I was growing up, before I got saved I loved the Rolling Stones. And now, as I look at their lyrics I am ashamed and shocked. They too have been influenced by the Devil and his demons in what they write, sing and act. In their song Sympathy for the Devil, just listen to a few of the lyrics and keep in mind that this is written from the aspect of the Devil. He is the one who is speaking and thus, influencing millions upon millions of people. The song goes like this,

Please allow me to introduce myself
I'm a man of wealth and taste
I've been around for a long, long year
Stole many a man's soul and faith

And I was 'round when Jesus Christ
Had his moment of doubt and pain
Made damn sure that Pilate
Washed his hands and sealed his fate

Pleased to meet you
Hope you guess my name
But what's puzzling you
Is the nature of my game

Do you see how he mocks God and exalts the Devil, and makes Jesus to be unsure of what He was to do! When the Lord said through Paul that Satan is the prince of the power of the air, He wasn't joking! Man is puzzled by this demonic being because most reject the idea of serving him and yet, they fall prey to his game he is playing with them, leading them to the pit of Hell! We need to be wise and we will be dealing with this more as we look at spiritual warfare next, but make no mistake about it, there is a battle going on here in the spirit world that is manifested in the physical world!

Now here's the thing. For those who are Christians, we can be oppressed by demons, but we can never be possessed by demons, even though some like to teach this. The reason we can't be possessed by demons as Christians is that God has set up residence there and He is not going to share that space with any demon! But we can be oppressed by demons and thus, we need to be in prayer, we need to walk wisely in the days we are living in because the battle is intense. You can't lose your salvation but you can lose your witness and that is what they are trying to do in our lives. Destroy our families, destroy our witness, destroy us and keep us from being a witness to others so they might be saved!

Now there are many demons out there, millions upon millions, probably billions of these demons that sided with the Devil and the reason I say that is that Demons can only be in one place at a time and thus, with the billions of people in this world, there must be at least that many and probably more. And as Revelation 12:4 tells us, one-third of them sided with Lucifer or Satan and they turned from the Lord, they are what we call today demons! And like any military, they are in ranks; there is an order to them and the work that they are doing.

We will cover this more when we get to spiritual warfare but turn to Ephesians chapter 6 and let's begin reading in verse 10, where Paul tells us, "**Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places.**" Ephesians 6:10-12.

Notice that Paul does not tell us to go and look for this spiritual warfare, he just tells us it is a fact and if you are serving the Lord the enemy will come looking for you, not maybe, he will! We need to be ready!

You see, our battle is not against flesh and blood but it is a spiritual battle. Yes, it is played out through the flesh because Satan and his forces use man as he tools but it is truly a spiritual battle. In fact, Paul lists the rankings of these demonic forces, Satan being in charge, followed by principalities, powers, rulers of darkness, spiritual hosts of wickedness. The Scriptures don't elaborate much more on these and we really don't need to know more about them, what we need to know is our armor, how to protect ourselves, and that is what Paul speaks on as he continues in this section and we will deal with next time.

But there is one more point that I want to talk about in this section of Ephesians before we move on. Paul tells us that as Christians we are to **“withstand”** or ANTHISTEMI (anth-is'-tay-mee) in the Greek and it speaks of taking a stand against a great opposition. How many battles have been lost because soldiers did not take the battle seriously! Custer thought, “It's only a few Indians, not a big deal!” and that was the last stand he took! The **“evil day”** is not a specific day but a period of time when the enemies of God will grow stronger and more evil and the conflict will be intense, as we are seeing today! Thus, we need to be aware and we need to use the spiritual armor that God has given to us to fight off these attacks of the Devil and his demonic forces!

Let me sum this up and then we will move on to angels. Satan was the anointed cherub before he fell. He remains beautiful but his deeds are evil and thus, he is a master at deception. He is a created being and he is not God! Pride brought him down and he influences us in that direction to bring us down. We see Satan and his demons influence people and nations. He opposes God's plan by promoting evil in every way possible. He does that indirectly through the world, the flesh. He will use this evil world's system to exploit the fleshly nature that still wars within us.

His direct assault is against unbelievers in that he blinds their minds to the Gospel and when they hear the Gospel message he tries to hinder its effect. He also uses persecution and false religions as well as false doctrine to hinder the effect of the Gospel.

For believers, he tempts us to sin with pride, materialism, immorality, discouragement, unforgiveness and-so-on. He tries to hinder the work we are doing for God through discouragement. He promotes false teaching among believers. He does what he can to cause us to stumble and fall as he tempts us to sin and we need to be aware of his schemes so we do not fall prey to them!

Let me close this section with these words from James Montgomery Boice. He wrote,

Although Christians must never ignore or underestimate Satan and his stratagems, neither must they overestimate him. Above all, they must never concentrate on Satan to the point of taking their eyes away from God. God is our strength and our tower. He limits Satan. God will never permit Christians to be tempted above what we are able to bear, and he will always provide the way of escape that we may be able to bear it (1 Cor. 10:12). As for Satan, his end is the lake of fire (Mt. 25:41).

- James Montgomery Boice, foundation of the Christian Faith, p. 175

2. ANGELS

Now we have talked about the number of demons and said that there are billions of them and you may be wondering how I came up with that number. Let me give you two Scriptures. First of all in Hebrews 12:22 Paul tells us, “**But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, to an innumerable company of angels.**” Did you see that? Paul speaks of “**an innumerable company of angels.**” It is the Greek word MURIAS, (moo-ree’-as) and it speaks of ten thousand or really an indefinite number as we will see. Let me give you the next verse and then I will show you what I mean.

In Revelation 5:11-12 John tells us, **“Then I looked, and I heard the voice of many angels around the throne, the living creatures, 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 who was slain To receive power and riches and wisdom, And strength and honor and glory and blessing!’”**

John is telling us regarding these angelic beings that their numbers are too great to count, they are innumerable! You see, ten thousand was the largest Greek number they had a word for and thus, by multiplication it speaks of one hundred million plus millions more! It is innumerable, you can't count them is the point that is being made! And thus, you can see how if the angelic realm is that big, if one-third sided with Satan, that is a very large number of demons, but there are more, two-thirds more angels than demons!

And so, before man was created, before the heavens and the earth were created, God created these angelic beings and they have a variety of functions, some you may be familiar with and others you may not. And I think many times we have a warped concept of angels because of some of the television shows that have tried to portray them, and they are not Scriptural. One of them you may remember, Touched by an Angel and out of that came this angel craze. There were angels everywhere from pins to shirts to anything you could imagine and yet, their primary function is not their worship but the worship of God. In fact, that is what got Lucifer in trouble in the first place, he tried to usurp the position of God, he wanted the worship! So I guess you can guess where angel worship came from!

Now before we look at the ministries of angels, let me just share with you the different kinds of angels that are out there. And this may shock some of you, but not all angels have wings and some have several wings. We have developed a concept of what angels look like from television and writers and-so-on and many times or most of the time they are wrong because they go against what the Scriptures have to say about angels.

There are probably three main types of angels beside “holy angels” which encompass all the ones that did not fall with Satan. (Matthew 25:31). There are angels that are called Seraphim and they had six wings, two covered his face, two he covered his feet and with two he flew. (Isaiah 6:2). They are around the throne of God praising God and we will see that in a few minutes.

There are the Cherubim and are described sometimes with two faces and sometimes with four. They have wings and feet and hands and they seem to guard the sacred things. The Lord put Cherubim at the east of the Garden of Eden to protect God’s holiness and guard the way to the tree of life. (Genesis 3:24, Exodus 25:18, 20, Ezekiel 1:1-18).

And then there are Archangels who have a higher ranking than what we might call regular angels or principalities and powers. The Bible speaks of Michael being an archangel and he seems to be the defender of Israel. There is also Gabriel and he seems to be a messenger to Israel as he announced important messages to Daniel, Zacharias and Mary.

So there are clearly different rankings of angels but all have a role to play in the plan of God. They all have a function to perform as they are servants of Almighty God!

Now let me share with you a few Scriptures to show you what I mean in regards to some of the ministries of angels and the first and foremost, like I have said, it is the worship of God, the One who created them!

In Isaiah 6:1-3 we see the angels worshipping the Lord for his attributes, **“In the year that King Uzziah died, I saw the Lord sitting on a throne, high and lifted up, and the train of His robe filled the temple. Above it stood seraphim; each one had six wings: with two he covered his face, with two he covered his feet, and with two he flew. And one cried to another and said: ‘Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts; The whole earth is full of His glory!’”**

Obviously they praise the Lord as we are told in Revelation 4:6-8, **“Before the throne there was a sea of glass, like crystal. And in the midst of the throne, and around the throne, were four living creatures full of eyes in front and in back. The first living creature was like a lion, the second living creature like a calf, the third living creature had a face like a man, and the fourth living creature was like a flying eagle. The four living creatures, each having six wings, were full of eyes around and within. And they do not rest day or night, saying: ‘Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, Who was and is and is to come!’”** Again we see God’s holiness mentioned!

In His earthly ministry the angels ministered to Christ, they announced His birth, protected Him, strengthened Him, and explained to His disciples His resurrection and ascension. In other words, they carry out the work of God. They are truly God’s servants and minister to people of this world.

Let me show you what I mean. In Hebrews 1:14 we are told, **“Are they not all ministering spirits sent forth to minister for those who will inherit salvation?”** In other words, God sends His angels to help us, watch over us, protect us and for my angel, when I have power tools, I think I am pushing the envelope you might say!

In Psalm 34:7 we see that they do protect believers, **“The angel of the Lord encamps all around those who fear Him, And delivers them.”** Now is that speaking of Jesus or just angels? In either case, we are protected! And as we close this morning, not yet, but when we do, I will show you what I mean in regards to angels watching over us from a story in the Scriptures and then a few from the recent past.

They rejoice in heaven when someone comes to the Lord, when someone gets saved! We are told of this in Luke 15:10, **“Likewise, I say to you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents.”** That is awesome, to know that when someone gets saved there is rejoicing in heaven!

Just one more and that is they assist believers at death. We see this in Luke 16:22, **“So it was that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels to Abraham’s bosom. The rich man also died and was buried.”** No longer are we taken to Abraham’s bosom but to be with the Lord and it would seem that the angels escort us into His presence.

Now let me show you what the Scriptures say is going on behind the scenes and we are not even aware of many times. Let me set the stage for what is happening here and then we will look at these verses here in II Kings chapter 6. Ben-Hadad II, King of Syria, is making his battle plans against the Northern Kingdom of Israel. As he plans out his strategy, God tells Elisha what the King of Syria's plans are. You see, he was positioning himself in such a way as to catch the King of Israel off guard and thus would be able to capture him and the battle would be over before it had begun. But each plan that is carefully laid out, and then put into action, is told to the King of Israel by one of Elisha's servants, and thus, foiling the Syrian battle plan.

And understand that this was not just a once or twice chance happening, Israel did not just get lucky and guess what Syria was going to do. This happened on several different occasions foiling several different battle plans of Syria. And you can imagine that by now the King of Syria is not very happy about what is happening. Now the logical conclusion that most would come up with, Ben-Hadad II included, is that there was an informant in the camp. Someone was telling Israel of Syria's battle plans, and it had to be an insider. That is the conclusion that Ben-Hadad II came to. What else could it be?

And so he calls his servants together and demands that this traitor be brought forth so they could execute him and get on with their battle with Israel. The only problem was that there was no informant within the camp of Syria that was leaking this top secret information to the enemy. And that must have taken the King by surprise when his servant told him that. But he goes on to explain what he means and who is giving out this information. His servant tells him that this person who is telling our battle plans is none other than Elisha, the prophet of God. And I love the way he puts it, he tells the King that Elisha, **“Tells the king of Israel the words that you speak in your bedroom.”**

Basically, there are no secrets with this guy around. He knows everything you are going to do and even those words you speak in your bedroom, behind closed doors. Now that is a problem for any military man, and so the King is going to go after Elisha to kill him. I'm not sure why he thought he could sneak up on this prophet of God, but he puts his plan into operation, and is going to send his men out to capture this troublemaker. We are going to pick up our story this morning in the book of II Kings chapter 6, starting in verse 13, as the Syrians gather together to capture Elisha. Listen to what takes place.

We are told, **“So he said, ‘Go and see where he is, that I may send and get him.’ And it was told him, saying, ‘Surely he is in Dothan.’ Therefore he sent horses and chariots and a great army there, and they came by night and surrounded the city. And when the servant of the man of God arose early and went out, there was an army, surrounding the city with horses and chariots. And his servant said to him, ‘Alas, my master! What shall we do?’ So he answered, ‘Do not fear, for those who are with us are more than those who are with them.’ And Elisha prayed, and said, ‘Lord, I pray, open his eyes that he may see.’ Then the Lord opened the eyes of the young man, and he saw. And behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire all around Elisha.”** II Kings 6:13-17.

I love this story. We see that the Syrians surround Elisha and his servant in the city of Dothan, which was about 12 miles north of Samaria. And this was a sneak attack. All these Syrian troops came against Elisha and his servant under the cover of night, while all were asleep. Not a soul was aware that their city had been surrounded until the dawn broke. It was then that Elisha’s servant woke up, stretching his legs and maybe getting some water for Elisha, maybe putting on a pot of coffee or whatever. And as he looked he saw this Syrian army encircling the city of Dothan and he knew they were dead.

You see, there would be no way to escape now, for all the exits to the city have been sealed off. Through his eyes, there was no hope. As he reports this devastating news to Elisha, he tells his servant not to worry. “What do you mean don’t worry! Did you look outside, we are dead! And Elisha says, **“For those who are with us are more than those who are with them.”**”

Now I wish we had a camera to see the face of this servant when Elisha said that. And for this servant, those words were not too encouraging. Why is that? Because no matter how many times you did a head count, or no matter how many ways you tried to count, you still came up with two men against the whole Syrian army. And thus, these words were not comforting to this servant for he could not see what Elisha saw.

And Elisha prays that this young man could see what he see's, and now I'm sure his hopeless countenance changed to one of hope and encouragement. He now saw that **"The mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire all around Elisha."** You see, he no longer looked at the situation through the eyes of man, but through the eyes of God. He saw through spiritual eyes. And when you look at situations through spiritual eyes, the eyes of faith, there is always hope in any situation.

Now some like to dismiss this but you can't when the Scriptures speak so clearly about these angelic beings. In fact Spurgeon put it like this,

"That you have not perceived spiritual things is true; but it is no proof that there are none to perceive. The whole case is like that of the Irishman who tried to upset evidence by non-evidence. Four witnesses saw him commit a murder. He pleaded that he was not guilty, and wished to establish his innocence by producing forty persons who did not see him do it. Of what use would that have been? So, if forty people declare that there is no power of the Holy Ghost going with the word, this only proves that the forty people do not know what others do know."

- Charles Spurgeon, Three Sights Worth Seeing

Now with the rest of our time this morning I want to share a few faith stories with you so that you too can see that God still works in our lives as He worked in the life of Elisha. We are told,

The Reverend John G. Paton, pioneer missionary in the New Hebrides Islands, told a thrilling story involving the protective care of angels. Hostile natives surrounded his mission headquarters one night, intent on burning the Paton's out and killing them. John Paton and his wife prayed all during that terror-filled night that God would deliver them. When daylight came they were amazed to see that, unaccountably, the attackers had left. They thanked God for delivering them.

A year later, the chief of the tribe was converted to Jesus Christ, and Mr. Paton, remembering what had happened, asked the chief what had kept him and his men from burning down the house and killing them. The chief replied in surprise, "Who were all those men you had with you there?" The missionary answered, "There were no men there; just my wife and I." The chief argued that they had seen many men standing guard – hundreds of big men in shining garments with drawn swords in their hands. They seemed to circle the mission station so that the natives were afraid to attack. Only then did Mr. Paton realize that God had sent His angels to protect them. The chief agreed that there was no other explanation. Could it be that God had sent a legion of angels to protect His servants, whose lives were being endangered?

- Billy Graham, *Angels God's Secret Agents*, pp. 16-17

Also, we are told,

A celebrated Philadelphia neurologist had gone to bed after an exceptionally tiring day. Suddenly he was awakened by someone knocking on his door. Opening it he found a little girl, poorly dressed and deeply upset. She told him her mother was very sick and asked him if he would please come with her. It was a bitterly cold, snowy night, but though he was bone tired, the doctor dressed and followed the girl.

As the Reader's Digest reports the story, he found the mother desperately ill with pneumonia. After arranging for medical care, he complimented the sick woman on the intelligence and persistence of her little daughter. The woman looked at him strangely and then said, "My daughter died a month ago." She added, "Her shoes and coat are in the clothes closet there." Amazed and perplexed, the doctor went to the closet and opened the door. There hung the very coat worn by the little girl who had brought him to tend to her mother. It was warm and dry and could not possibly have been out in the wintry night.

Could the doctor have been called in the hour of desperate need by an angel who had appeared as this woman's young daughter? Was this the work of God's angels on behalf of the sick woman?

- Billy Graham, Angels God's Secret Agents, p. 16

And folks, what God did back then during the time of Elisha, He is still doing today. Case in point:

Corrie Ten Boom writes of a remarkable experience at the terrible Nazi Ravensbruck prison camp:

“Together we entered the terrifying building. At a table were women who took away all our possessions. Everyone had to undress completely and then go to a room where her hair was checked.

“I asked a woman who was busy checking the possessions of the new arrivals if I might use the toilet. She pointed to a door, and I discovered that the convenience was nothing more than a hole in the shower-room floor. Betsie, [her sister], stayed close beside me all the time. Suddenly I had an inspiration, ‘Quick, take off your woolen underwear,’ I whispered to her. I rolled it up with mine and laid the bundle in a corner with my little Bible. The spot was alive with cockroaches, but I didn’t worry about that. I felt wonderfully relieved and happy. ‘The Lord is busy answering our prayers, Betsie,’ I whispered. ‘We shall not have to make the sacrifice of all our clothes.’

“We hurried back to the row of women waiting to be undressed. A little later, after we had had our showers and put on our shirts and shabby dresses, I hid the roll of underwear and my Bible under my dress. It did bulge out obviously through my dress; but I prayed, ‘Lord, cause now Thine angels to surround me; and let them not be transparent today, for the guards must not see me.’ I felt perfectly at ease. Calmly I passed the guards. Everyone was checked, from the front, the sides, the back. Not a bulge escaped the eyes of the guard. The women just in front of me had hidden a woolen vest under her dress; it was taken from her. They let me pass, for they did not see me. Betsie, right behind me, was searched.

“But outside awaited another danger. On each side of the door were women who looked everyone over for a second time. They felt over the body of each one who passed. I knew they would not see me, for the angels were still surrounding me. I was not even surprised when they passed me by; but within me rose the jubilant cry, ‘O Lord, if Thou dost so answer prayer, I can face even Ravensbruck unafraid.’”

- Billy Graham, *Angels God's Secret Agents*, pp. 75-76

Not only that, but listen to what Elisabeth Elliot wrote:

In *A Slow and Certain Light*, Elisabeth Elliot told about her father's experiences with 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.”

- Billy Graham, *Angels God's Secret Agents*, pp. 15-16

Folks, have you ever found yourself in a situation in which you don't know how you escaped? Maybe God's holy angels brought you through it. I can remember several years ago, driving on the expressway, home from work at 11:30 at night, and going 65 mph and I noticed as I was passing her by, a deer standing in the left lane right next to my window. If my window was open I could have touched her. I believe that God was the one who kept that deer standing right there until I passed by, protecting me. Deer's get spooked easily and it should have taken off, it just stood there looking at me and I was looking at it and we were both shocked! And the instrument He could have used could have been one of His angels.

And I think that is true, many times we are not aware as Paul tells us in Hebrews,

“Do not forget to entertain strangers, for by so doing some have unwittingly entertained angels.” Hebrews 13:2.

We are told in Matthew 18:10, a verse that applies to all of us, **“Take heed that you do not despise one of these little ones, for I say to you that in heaven their angels see the face of My Father who is in heaven.”** As a child of God, each of us has what you may call guardian angels that are directed by God to watch over us. What a joy to know that God loves me that much that He has appointed someone to watch over me. I am not sure how the angels feel about that, but I am glad!

Now as I close I want to just set things up for study next week and that is spiritual warfare! You see, there are God’s holy angels working behind the scenes you might say and then there are the fallen angels, we call them demons who are also working behind the scenes. But what is taking place behind the scenes is being manifested in the lives of people all over the world. Thus, this is a spiritual battle we are facing and we need to put on the whole armor of God to fight against the scheming, the plans of the Devil!

Now if you doubt that there is a spiritual warfare that is going on you are sadly mistaken. Let me share this with you.

This is a true story of a Christian leader, we will call him Steve. Steve was recently traveling by plane and he noticed a man sitting two seats over from him. This man was thumbing through some little cards and moving his lips. He looked very professorial with his goatee and graying brown hair. Steve though he was fifty-something.

Now as he watched what this man was doing he thought he was a believer and he leaned over to engage in a conversation with him. “Looks to me like you’re memorizing something,” he said to the man. “No, actually I was praying,” the man said back to Steve.

Well, that peaked Steve's interest even more and he introduced himself and said, "I believe in prayer too!" The man replied back to Steve, "Well, I have a specific assignment." "What's that?" said Steve.

The man replied back, "I'm praying for the downfall of Christian pastors." Steve, shocked, said, "Well, I would certainly fit into that category. Is my name on the list?" "Not on my list" the man replied!

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And thus, **"Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places. Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. Stand therefore, having girded your waist with truth, having put on the breastplate of righteousness, and having shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace; above all, taking the shield of faith with which you will be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God; praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, being watchful to this end with all perseverance and supplication for all the saints."** Ephesians 6:10-18. May we do what God is calling us to do and put on the full armor of God because we are all in this battle together!