

Angels of God I Angels in Action

Michael Heiss—October 5, 2012

Good morning, everyone! Always a pleasure to be here with you. What we're going to be doing for the next four days is discuss a topic that has great fascination for me, and I hope it has great fascination for you. The topic is angels. I first was introduced to this idea by one of America's best known evangelists, perhaps the most famous of them all during the 20th century, a great Protestant Billy Graham.

Billy Graham in the 1970s talked about angels. Yes, I was part of God's Church, but angels was not exactly high on my priority at that time. He wrote a book on angels and even appeared on the old Merv Griffin Show and Merv said, 'Billy, tell us about angels.' Well, that launched my study; it's been going on for 30 years. In about four sessions, trust me, we're not even going to scratch the surface on angels, but we will get a good feel for them:

- Who they are
- What they are
- What they do

They're on missions from God and have great leeway in carrying out those missions—believe it or not! It's been in the Bible all along, it's just that I never saw them.

To start with, we need a good working definition of angels. The Apostle Paul gives us one, talking about angels: Hebrews 1:14: "Are they not all ministering spirits, being sent forth to minister to those who are about to inherit salvation?" They are servants.

Before I really get into the Bible, I want to point out four specific examples of God's angels at work, although you won't find them in the Bible.

This incident happened to our first President George Washington long before he became President. It happened during the French and Indian War, and many of you are familiar with this story. It used to be taught in American History textbooks. In fact, 1934 was the last time. It was removed! We don't realize how secular this country has become since the 1930s.

Here is the account of the Battle of Monongahela, July 9, 1755. This was the story when General Braddock was leading the British troops against the French and Indians. He was warned, 'Don't do it; don't march single file through the woods. The green leaves, the brown trees and your bright red coats, you're perfect targets.'

Well, General Braddock was of the 'old school'—we've always done it—so he proceeded to do just that and got slaughtered! The Indians fired and killed every British officer. At one point a great Indian chief said:

"I called to my young men and said, mark yon tall and daring warrior? He is not of the red-coat tribe—he hath an Indian's wisdom, and his warriors fight as we do—himself is alone exposed."

(therealamericanhis-story/gw.com)

That was George Washington!

They fired! And they fired! And they fired! They could not hit him! The great Indian Chief said, 'We leveled every British officer; we killed! We could not touch you'—when he met Washington years later. In fact, this is what George Washington said about that battle: "

"But by the All-Powerful Dispensations of Providence, I have been protected beyond all human probability or expectation; for I had four bullets through my coat, and two horses shot under me, yet escaped unhurt, although death was leveling my companions on every side of me!"

(by the All-Powerful Dispensations of Providence, July 18, 2012, by William J. Federer; American Minute [americanclarion.com])

Remember a certain Psalm that says, 'A thousand move to your left, a thousand to your right, but no harm will befall you.'

I don't want to wax elegant on this, but this Indian chief said, 'He cannot be killed in battle. He destined for greatness. He wanted to meet him and years later this Indian chief met George Washington, and he said:

"Our rifles were leveled, rifles which, but for you, **knew not how to miss**—'twas all in vain, a power mightier far than we, shielded you."

There's no doubt that God's angels protected George Washington, because God knew He was going to separate Ephraim from Manasseh, and George Washington was going to be His chosen instrument.

We have another incident, another military hero, although not as great as George Washington. You might have seen it in the movie with Gary Cooper, Sergeant Alvin York was the most decorated American soldier in WWI. He was a very

religious man. He did not know whether he should go to war. In fact he was 30-31 years old in 1917-18 when this occurred. He wasn't exactly a young guy. He wasn't old, but certainly no 19-20-year-old. At any rate, he didn't know what to do. His commanding officer argued with him, and they discussed the Bible: 'Render unto Caesar what is Caesar's,' said his commanding officer. *Ah, but thou shalt not kill!* said Sgt. York—and they went round and round. Still York was not convinced.

He was born in Tennessee and Alvin York went upon a mountain top in Tennessee, lit a fire and studied the Bible by the fire and prayed. He said in his own diary—which I have clippings from.

As he kept his vigil a peace came over him and understanding that he would serve God by preserving liberty.

He wrote that he

...would be protected from all harm and that so long has he believed in Him, He would not allow even a hair on his head to be harmed.

He wrote with absolute certainty on Oct. 8, 1918—corporal at that time—and his troop stumbled upon a German company and a firefight broke out. Half of York's company was cut down. He was the only officer left. Everyone was hugging the ground, but York, who became Sergeant, notice that the Germans had to show their heads when they fired. He was of the line of Jim Richard, Jedediah Smith—these guys were deadly shots!

He fired his rifle 17 times at gunners exposed themselves—17 Germans were killed. A lieutenant in the German army desperately led a charge against him to try and take him down. Well, York in the midst of his battle stands up, takes his colt and shoots eight more. After the battle they searched the ground. Every inch of it was riddled with machine-gun bullets except a couple of square feet where Sgt. York stood. This is what they said! There was a canteen nearby with 18 holes in it, but not a hole in Sgt. York. This is how they described it:

As if protected by an unseen force, York stood up and commonly began his firing!

Yes, I believe that.

Why did God protect Sgt. York? *I don't know, except he was a man a character, who called upon God!* When he came back he would not take advantage of what he had done. They offered him a million dollars for books and movies. Can you imagine what a million dollars was worth in 1918?

He said, 'Uncle Sam's uniform ain't for sale!' This is Sgt. York. *Clearly, God's angels at work!*

Now, two other incidents, and I happen to know both of these people—one of them is 'yours truly.' The man I knew fought under Patton in WWII in North Africa, Sicily and Italy. His company was engaged in a firefight and it didn't look like he would survive. He happened to look around and there caught up at the elbow was an outstretched hand. What is a hand doing without a body in the middle of a firefight?

You might think of another hand in ancient history writing on a wall. This was a hand and he touched that hand, and before you can blink an eye, he was someplace else nearby and he got away. Years later he was baptized in God's Church. A minister said, 'That was your guardian angel.' Well, maybe it was a guardian angel, maybe it wasn't, but it *was* an angel!

The final one: Seven-years-old I was, walking on the Jersey shore of the Atlantic Ocean. You know how waves come in and go out. Sometimes when they recede, they recede with unusual force. I was walking along that shore and the sand slipped beneath me, and there I was with my hands digging into the sand to try to stop from being sucked into this vicious undertow.

My hands hit what, I thought at the time, felt like a pole of some kind—steel, copper, wooden, I don't know. It held me there firmly until the wave receded and the next one started coming in. At seven-years-old I didn't know what to think. I wanted to get out of there. I wasn't going to tell dad and mom; that was the last thing I was going to do. I'd get a lecture but good!

I looked down and 'what was it my hand held onto?' *NOTHING!* Empty! Just smooth sand! Something was there. Did God know at one point He was going to call me? *I don't know!* But there was an angel there.

We have to ask ourselves a question: Some are protected; some aren't; many die—WHY? I've asked myself that. In addition to that there was a radio talk-show program I listened to one time and a caller called in and he was furious at God. The radio-talk show host—who was religious himself—asked WHY? What is your anger and beef with God? *He let David get away with murder and adultery! He should have been executed!* The talk-show host said, 'Maybe, yes, but he wasn't.'

And that's why he was angry with God! The best answer I can give you is found in Isaiah 55; it's the only answer I have, and I think the only answer we're going to get until the Kingdom.

Isaiah 55:6: “Seek the LORD while He may be found; call upon Him while He is near. Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; and let him return to the LORD, and He will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for He will abundantly pardon” (vs 6-7). God pardoned David because David repented bitterly! (Psa 51—if you want to understand his thoughts).

Verse 8: “‘For My thoughts *are* not your thoughts, nor your ways My ways,’ says the LORD. ‘For *as* the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways, and My thoughts than your thoughts’” (vs 8-9). *If I decide to have my angels protect certain people, because of MY purpose, it is MY business!* “...My ways [are] higher than your ways...” *If others may die then they will die, because one day I will resurrect all and all will have a chance!*

Secular people cannot understand that. They really can't. If you say, ‘The Lord protected me.’ *Oh, yeah, sure! What about the other people who died? What kind of a God is that?*

Let us begin to look at angels and see what they're like and see them in action. The Epistle of Colossians, chapter one, here the Apostle Paul is talking about principalities. We will notice what he says.

1. Angels are created

Colossians 1:16: “Because by Him [Christ] were all things created, the things in heaven and the things on earth, the visible and the invisible, whether *they be* thrones, or lordships, or principalities, or powers: **all things were created by Him and for Him.**” So, right off the bat, angels are created beings.

We're going to deal, in two or three days, when we talk about Lucifer, his mind and what he did, and how he thinks, once an angel. It talks about ‘Till the day you were created, until iniquity was found in you.’ *Lucifer was created!*

2. Angels do not reproduce

Another thing about angels: they're not able to reproduce. Jesus says about these angels, Matthew 22:30: “For in the resurrection... [talking about humans] ...**they neither marry nor are given in marriage**, but they are as *the* angels of God in heaven.” Angels cannot reproduce.

3. Millions of angels

Hebrews 12:22: “But you have come to Mount Zion, and to *the* city of *the* living God, heavenly Jerusalem; and to an **innumerable**

company of angels.” Many angels! How many?

Revelation 5:11 “And I saw and I heard *the* voices of many angels around the throne, and *the* voices of the living creatures and the elders, and **thousands of thousands.**” This will give you an idea of the number of angels.

4. Angels are given a charge to rescue us

Let's see that charge, that command that they have by implication: Palm 34:7: “The angel of the LORD encamps around those who fear Him and delivers them.”

Again, this is a general statement. God doesn't do that for everyone, but here is a charge how He “...encamps around those who fear Him and He delivers them.” They are commanded by God to do that.

Remember when the tempter tempted Christ when he said, ‘Cast Yourself down, for He will give His angels charge over you’? That charge is given to humans, as well. It's talking about human beings here; it's not talking about God.

Psalms 91:10: “No evil shall befall you, nor shall any plague come near your dwelling, for He shall give **His angels charge over you** to keep you in all your ways” (vs 10-11).

5. Guardian angels

Do we all have individual guardian angels? *Can't say 100% sure, but Jesus of Nazareth had some interesting comments to say about that!* Let's see what our Lord had to say about this subject. This is taken in context where the disciples are arguing: Who was going to be the ‘greatest’? Who will be the most high?

Matthew 18:1: “At that time the disciples came to Jesus, saying, ‘Who then is *the* greatest in the Kingdom of Heaven?’ And after calling a little child to *Him*, Jesus set him in their midst, and said, ‘Truly I say to you, unless you are converted and become as little children, there is no way that you shall enter into the Kingdom of Heaven. Therefore, whoever shall humble himself as this little child, he is the greatest in the Kingdom of Heaven’” (vs 1-4).

Verse 10: “Take heed *that* you do not despise one of these little ones; for I tell you that **their angels** in heaven continually look upon the face of My Father, Who is in heaven.”

Clearly, these little children had angels. Is a specific angel assigned to a specific one, I do not know, but there's an interesting comment made in passing. You'll find so many of these things made in

passing. These people had so much knowledge that didn't come down to us and specifically mentioned.

Do we each have a guardian angel? When Peter was put in prison after James was executed, and it looks as though Peter might be killed, too, an angel rescues him. Peter gets let out and:

Acts 12:13: "Now, when Peter knocked *at* the door of the porch, a damsel named Rhoda came to listen; and when she recognized Peter's voice, she was so excited *that* she did not open *the door to* the porch, but ran in *and* reported *that* Peter was standing in front of the porch.... [She leaves him standing there, she's so excited.] ...But they said to her, 'You are out of your mind.' Yet she strongly affirmed *that* it was so. And they said, '**It is his angel**'" (vs 13-15).

They had understanding that he had a guardian angel. How deep it was, how widespread it was, I don't know, but they recognized that. I'm not going to say dogmatically that everyone of us has an angel assigned at birth—I do not know that. But clearly they thought that Peter had an angel.

Angels in Action

We will see angels on a mission from God, a twofold mission.

➤ Abraham & Lot

Genesis 18:1: "And the LORD appeared to him in the plains of Mamre, and he sat at the tent door in the heat of the day. And he lifted up his eyes and looked, and lo, three men stood by him. And when he saw *them*, he ran to meet them from the tent door, and bowed himself toward the ground. And he said, 'My LORD... [That's a direct reference to God. Abraham *knew* to whom he was addressing.] ...if now I have found favor in Your sight, do not pass away, I pray, from Your servant'" (vs 1-3).

They talk and God says He's going to give Sarah a child, but the key for us is, v 16: "And the men rose up from there, and looked toward Sodom. And Abraham was going with them to send them on the way. And the LORD said, 'Shall I hide from Abraham the thing which I do'" (vs 16-17).

Verse 20: "And the LORD said, 'Because the cry of Sodom and Gomorrah is great, and because their sin is very grievous, I will go down now and see whether they have done altogether according to the cry of it...' [v 22]: ... And the men... [these were angels] ...turned their faces away from there, and went toward Sodom...." (vs 20-22).

The next several verses Abraham is the master diplomat. He gets God to reduce the number of people he must find to save Sodom from 50 to 10.

Now, for us, we're interested in Genesis 19:1: "And there came two angels to Sodom at evening. And Lot sat in the gate of Sodom. And Lot rose up to meet them when he saw *them*. And he bowed himself with his face toward the ground, and said, 'Behold now, my lords, please turn in to your servant's house and stay all night, and wash your feet, and *you shall* rise up early and go your way.' And they said, 'No, but we will stay in the street.' But he urgently pressed upon them, and they turned in to him and entered into his house...." (vs 1-3).

Why did Lot do that? *He knew what the men of Sodom were like!* He had been living there for several years.

Verse 4: "But before they lay down, the men of the city, the men of Sodom, surrounded the house, both old and young, all the people from every quarter. And they called to Lot, and said to him, 'Where are the men who came in to you this night? Bring them out to us, **that we may know them.**'" (vs 4-5)—sexually!

Lot goes out and tries to discuss with them. What do they say to him in v 9? "And they said, 'Stand back!' And they said, 'This one came in to sojourn, and *must* he now play the judge? Now we will deal worse with you than with them.' And they pressed hard upon the man Lot, and came near to breaking *down* the door. But the men put out their hands and pulled Lot into the house to them, and shut the door. And they smote the men that *were* at the door of the house with blindness..." (vs 9-11).

God didn't authorize anyone to smite with blindness! But the angels were on a twofold mission:

- 1) destroy Sodom and Gomorrah if you can't find ten righteous people
- 2) get Lot out of there

Verse 12: "And the men said to Lot, 'Have you anyone here besides yourself? Bring your sons-in-law, and your sons, and your daughters, and anyone *else you have* in the city, bring *them* out of this place, for we will destroy this place, because great is the cry of it before the face of the LORD. And the LORD has sent us to destroy it.' And Lot went out and spoke with his sons-in-law, who married his daughters, and said, 'Get up and get out of this place...' " (vs 12-14)—we must go!

Verse 15: "And when the morning dawned, then the angels hurried Lot, saying, 'Rise up!'..." Let's go! We don't have much time!

Verse 16: "But he lingered, so the men laid hold upon his hand..." They're angels and they've got to get Lot out of there. They have no choice; God commissioned them to do that. They're grabbing hold of him, pulling him out!

Verse 17: “And it came to pass, when they brought him outside, *they* said, ‘Escape for your life! Do not look behind you, nor stay anywhere in the plain. Escape to the mountain lest you be consumed.’ And Lot said to them, ‘Oh no, my LORD, behold now, your servant has found grace in your sight, and you have magnified your mercy, which you have shown to me in saving my life. But I cannot escape to the mountain, lest some evil overtake me and I die. Behold now, this city *is* near to flee to, and it is a little one. Oh let me escape there—is it not a little one?—and my soul shall live.’” (vs 17-20). If you could see the angel in physical countenance, you’d see him pulling his hair out! ‘Lot, what am I going to do with you?’

Verse 21: “And *the angel* said to him, ‘See, I have accepted you concerning this thing also that I will not overthrow this city for which you have spoken.’” This isn’t God speaking; the angel is going to spare a city? God never authorized him to destroy every city in the plain. It was Sodom and Gomorrah in particular that they were supposed to destroy if they couldn’t find righteous men.

So, the angel says, ‘Okay! Okay!’ “...I will not overthrow this city for which you have spoken. Hurry and escape there! For I cannot do anything till you arrive there.’....” (vs 21-22).

Verse 24: “Then the LORD rained upon Sodom and upon Gomorrah brimstone and fire, from the LORD out of heaven.”

Why did the angel say, ‘I can’t do anything until you get out of there?’ We’re going to find a key, v 29: “And when God destroyed the cities of the plain, it came to pass that God remembered Abraham... [Brethren, God never forgot him, but this is put to emphasize that Abraham was on God’s mind. He remembered His servant] ...and sent Lot out of the midst of the overthrow when He overthrew the cities in which Lot lived.” How did God send him out? *He had the angels yank him out!*

Can you imagine if they hadn’t done that, they would have to go back to God and say, ‘We sure smashed Sodom and Gomorrah, there’s not enough to mail home on a postage stamp! But in the process Lot didn’t make it.’ You think that those angels are going to report that to God? *NO!* That’s why they did what they did! Mission successful!

They were sent by God and with broad latitude in what they were allowed and what they didn’t allow, and they got Lot out. Remember, if you do want to criticize Lot for being willing to give up his daughters and all that—and I might criticize him, too—remember what Paul says about Lot, he calls him ‘righteous Lot’ (Heb. 11). Let’s be careful before we judge Lot too harshly.

That’s the first recorded instance, and we’re still going to be with Abraham in Genesis 24. This is the account when Abraham sends his servant Eliezer of Damascus to get a wife for his son Isaac. Abraham commissions him, Genesis 24:7: “The LORD, the God of heaven, Who took me from my father’s house and from the land of my kindred, and Who spoke to me, and Who swore to me, saying, “To your seed I will give this land”—**He shall send His angel before you.** And you shall take a wife for my son from there.” Don’t worry how to get there; don’t worry about the location. God will send His angel to guide you.

I don’t know how He did that. I don’t know what thoughts He might have put in Eliezer’s mind. There you come to being at the well and interestingly enough, modern scholars have developed what they call ‘the well motif.’ You see Eliezer going to get Rebecca, Jacob meeting Rachel and Jesus with the woman at the well in Samaria. There’s always a ‘well motif.’ They don’t really believe this is God’s Word. They don’t really believe this actually happened. So, ‘these story writers made up the story and put them at the well.’

NO! It happened! And we can read how Eliezer got there and when he’s reaffirming the story, he says, v 40: “And he [Eliezer] said to me [Laban], ‘The LORD, before Whom I walk, will send His angel with you and prosper your way....’” So, angels were sent.

Abraham didn’t ask the angel, but Abraham knew that God wanted a proper wife for his son Isaac. God commissioned an angel to lead Eliezer on the way.

➤ **Jacob**

Not that angels did a specific amount for Jacob as mentioned in the Bible, but let’s look at Gen. 28. When I talked about Jacob in the past, I’ve mentioned this Scripture, but we’re going to see this one in passing. This was a dream.

Genesis 28:12: “And he dreamed. And behold, a ladder was set up on the earth, and the top of it reached to heaven! And behold, the angels of God *were* ascending and descending on it!”

My point of interest today is that Jacob didn’t think a thing of it. Nothing strange! Everybody knows about angels—don’t they? This was his attitude, because at that time these people *knew* about angels. Go out to the world today and talk about angels, and they don’t really believe in angels. Some do. I don’t know what the angels did for Jacob. When Jacob was coming back from Laban:

Genesis 32:1: “And Jacob went on his way, and the angels of God met him.” What did they say? What did they indicate? *We don’t know, but God sent angels to meet Jacob!*

➤ Israel & Egypt

Now, let’s look at how an angel helped Israel get out of Egypt. You will see what God says to Moses:

Exodus 23:20: “Behold, I send an Angel before you, to keep you in the way, and to bring you to the place which I have prepared. Be on guard in His presence and obey His voice. Do not provoke Him, for He will not pardon your transgressions; for My name *is* in Him.... [A lot of authority and power given to this angel] ...But if you shall indeed obey His voice, and do all that I speak, then I will be an enemy to your enemies, and a foe to your foes; for My Angel shall go before you and bring you in to the Amorites and the Hittites and the Perizzites and the Canaanites and the Hivites and the Jebusites. And I will cut them off” (vs 20-23). So, God is sending an angel to lead Israel out. They didn’t just go out by themselves, an angel led them out.

Notice how Moses, years later, looked back on this, and this is the account where Israel is trying to get permission to cross Edom; Edom turned them down.

Numbers 20:14: “And Moses sent messengers from Kadesh to the king of Edom, ‘Thus says your brother Israel, ‘You know all the trouble that has happened to us, how our fathers went down into Egypt, and we have lived in Egypt a long time. And the Egyptians dealt harshly with us and our fathers. And when we cried to the LORD, He heard our voice **and sent an Angel**, and has brought us forth out of Egypt...’” (vs 14-16).

Moses looking back, understood that God sent an angel to lead them out. This is what angels do.

➤ Elijah

The mighty Elijah had to be helped by an angel. An incredible account where Elijah challenges Israel: If Baal be the Lord God, follow him; but if the LORD be God, then follow Him; and the offering and fire coming down out of heaven killing the prophets of Baal. What a triumph for Elijah. How you can go from the height to the depth is almost beyond understanding. But it happens because we’re all human:

1-Kings 19:1 “And Ahab told Jezebel all that Elijah had done, and all whom he had killed, all the prophets with the sword. And Jezebel sent a

messenger to Elijah saying, ‘So let the gods do *to me*, and more also, if I do not make your life like the life of one of them by tomorrow about this time.’ And when he saw *that*, he rose and ran for his life, and came to Beersheba of Judah, and left his servant there. Then he himself went a day’s journey into the wilderness, and came and sat down under a broom tree. And he begged for his life, that he might die....’ (vs 1-4). Just one chapter before he’s calling fire down from heaven in the name of God and now he’s begging that his life be taken from him.

“...And he said, ‘It is enough. O LORD, take away my life, for I *am* no better than my fathers.’ And as he lay and slept under a broom tree, behold, then **an angel touched him** and said to him, ‘Arise, eat.’ And he looked, and, behold, a cake *was* baked on the coals... [Elijah didn’t bake that cake! An angel did!] ...and a jug of water at his head. And he ate and drank, and lay down again. And the angel of the LORD came to him the second time and touched him, and said, ‘Arise, eat, because the journey *is* too great for you.’ And he arose, and ate and drank, and went in the strength of that food forty days and forty nights to Horeb, the mount of God” (vs 4-8).

Here God sent an angel to help out Elijah, because Elijah needed it.

➤ Daniel

Fascinating story in the book of Daniel. Talking about Darius, and the top echelons of the Persians didn’t like Daniel at all, they were jealous of him. They asked the king to establish a decree that it may not be changed, the law of the Medes and the Persians. That decree was that nobody should implore any other god for help for the next 30 days (Dan. 6_[transcriber’s correction]). They knew that Daniel was going to do that. They knew they had him!

Daniel 6:10: “And when he had learned that the document was signed, Daniel went to his house. And his windows were open in his upper room toward Jerusalem; and he kneeled on his knees three times a day and prayed, and gave thanks before his God, as he did before. Then these men came by agreement and found Daniel making petition and supplication before his God. Then they came near and spoke before the king concerning the king’s decree. ‘Have you not signed a decree that every man who shall ask a petition of any god or man within thirty days, except of you, O king, shall be thrown into the lions’ den?’ The king answered and said, ‘The thing is true, according to the law of the Medes and Persians, which cannot be revoked.’ Then they answered and said before the king, ‘That Daniel, who *is* of the exiled children of Judah, has

not respected you, O king, nor the decree that you have signed, but makes his prayer three times a day.’ Then the king, when he heard these words, was very much displeased with himself. And he set *his* heart on Daniel to deliver him. And he labored until sundown to deliver him. Then these men met before the king and said to the king, ‘Know, O king, that the law of the Medes and Persians *is* that no decree or statute which the king establishes may be revoked.’ Then the king commanded, and they brought Daniel and threw him into the lions’ den. The king spoke and said to Daniel, ‘Your God, Whom you serve continually, He will deliver you.’” (vs 10-16).

The king loved Daniel; greatly respected Daniel.

Verse 19: “Then the king arose very early in the morning and hurried to the lions’ den. And when he came near the den, he cried with a grieved voice to Daniel. The king spoke and said to Daniel, ‘O Daniel, servant of the living God, is your God Whom you serve continually able to deliver you from the lions?’ Then Daniel said to the king, ‘O king, live forever. **My God has sent His angel**, and has shut the lions’ mouths, and they have not hurt me because before Him innocence was found in me. And also before you, O king, I have done no harm” (vs 19-22).

God could have done it by Himself, but He sent His angel on a mission: save Daniel! And the angel did it!

➤ **The angel who almost destroyed Jerusalem**

The angel was commanded by God to destroy Jerusalem, but God relented and called back His angel.

1-Chronicles 21:1: “And Satan stood up against Israel and provoked David to number Israel.” Who was a work here? *The adversary, trying to trick David!* He did it and does his work well!

Verse 2: “And David said to Joab and to the rulers of the people, ‘Go number Israel from Beersheba to Dan. And bring the number of them to me so that I may know.’ And Joab answered, ‘May the LORD add to His people a hundred times, but my lord the king, *are* they not all my lord’s servants?....’” (vs 2-3). For once Joab was right. This murderer was right; David was wrong!

Verse 4: “But the king’s word prevailed against Joab....”

Verse 5: “And Joab gave the sum of the number of the people to David....”

Verse 7: “And God was displeased with this thing; therefore He struck Israel. And David said to

God, “I have sinned...” (vs 7-8).

So, God said, ‘You have a choice’ (v 11), and they chose the plague. Verse 14: “And God sent an angel to Jerusalem to destroy it. And as he was destroying, the LORD looked. And He repented of the evil and said to the angel who destroyed, ‘Enough! Stay your hand now!’ And the angel of the LORD stood by the threshing floor of Ornan the Jebusite” (vs 14-15). Here was an angel about to destroy Jerusalem upon the order of God. God changed! He repented! He relented! Jerusalem was saved!

Verse 20: “And Ornan turned back and saw the angel....” This angel was visible, about to destroy Jerusalem until God recalled him and said, ‘No, don’t do it!

We’re going to see that David saw the angel, too. You can read the entire 21st chapter. David did not want to fall into the hands of man; so therefore, God sent the plague. The parallel account of the same episode:

2-Samuel 24:1: “And again the anger of the LORD was kindled against Israel, and He incited David against them to say, ‘Go count Israel and Judah.’” It wasn’t that God moved David to do it, but He allowed Satan to do it.

God uses angels and demons for *His* purpose. Being incited, though it might have initiated with God, it was through Satan. We found in 1-Chronicles that Satan did this. Joab knows it’s wrong!

After he numbered the people, v 10: “And David’s heart condemned him after he had numbered the people. And David said to the LORD, ‘I have sinned greatly in what I have done. And now, I beseech You, O LORD, take away the iniquity of Your servant, for I have done very foolishly.’” And once again, there’s a choice:

Verse 15: “And the LORD sent a plague upon Israel from the morning even till the time appointed. And there died from the people, from Dan to Beersheba, seventy thousand men.” Seventy thousand Israelites died from this plague.

Verse 16: “And when the angel stretched out his hand upon Jerusalem to destroy it, the LORD turned from the evil, and said to the angel who destroyed the people, ‘Enough! And stay your hand.’ And the angel of the LORD was by the threshing place of Araunah the Jebusite. And David spoke to the LORD when he saw the angel who struck the people, and said, ‘Lo, I have sinned, and I have done wickedly.’....” (vs 16-17).

We’re going to go through and see how time and again God’s angels saved Peter, the apostles,

guided other evangelists to preach the Gospel, what the angel did with Philip. Fascinating story! An angel had to reassure Paul when he was shipwrecked, 'Paul, don't worry, you're going to get to Rome and be treated when you get there.' And how many times the angels rejoice when we repent!

Believe it or not, the angels are our cheering section before God! They really are, and our Lord Jesus Christ said so!

Scriptural References:

- 1) Hebrews 1:14
- 2) Isaiah 55:6-9
- 3) Colossians 1:16
- 4) Matthew 22:30
- 5) Hebrews 12:22
- 6) Revelation 5:11
- 7) Psalm 34:7
- 8) Psalm 91:10-11
- 9) Matthew 18:1-4, 10
- 10) Acts 12:13-15
- 11) Genesis 18:1-3, 16-17, 20-22
- 12) Genesis 19:1-5, 9-22, 24, 29
- 13) Genesis 24:7, 40
- 14) Genesis 28:12
- 15) Genesis 32:1
- 16) Exodus 23:20-23
- 17) Numbers 20:14-16
- 18) 1 Kings 19:1-8
- 19) Daniel 6:10-16, 19-22
- 20) 1 Chronicles 21:1-5, 7-8, 14-15, 20
- 21) 2 Samuel 24:1, 10, 15-17

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Psalm 51
- Hebrews 11
- 1 Chronicles 21:11

Also referenced: websites:

- therealamericanhis-story/gw.com
- americanclarion.com

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