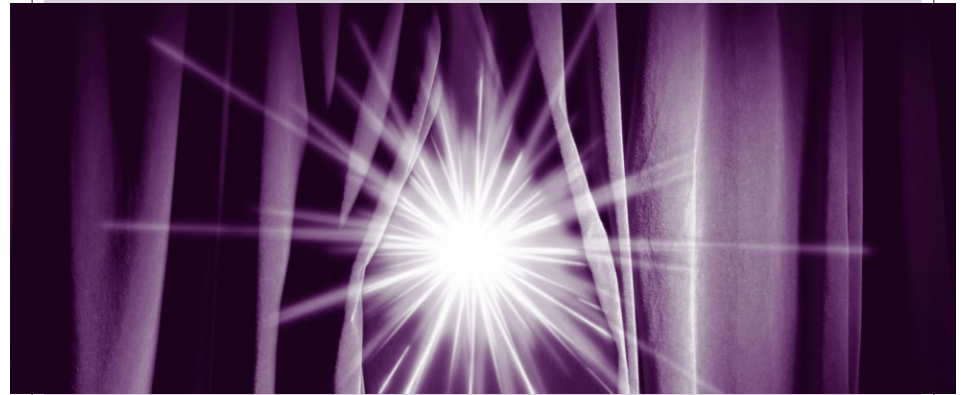


ANGELS, DEMONS AND



THE SPIRIT WORLD

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such freedom from death and corruption, this universe will have to be *changed* into SPIRIT, as we also will be changed into Spirit beings. In this way, the new heavens and the new earth *will* remain, for only the things that the human eye *cannot* see will remain.

When the heavenly Jerusalem comes down to this earth, as a spiritual city, *after* God has created new heavens and a new earth, it will *remain* as a spiritual city. It will not be changed into matter, into something physical. Why should it become physical? By that time, all of mankind who have chosen to live God's way of life will have become Spirit beings. *Physical* human beings will no longer exist. God will not become a physical being. Angels will not become physical beings. Every physical thing will have been destroyed in the all-encompassing fire that burns up the earth and dissolves the physical universe, as we read in 2 Peter 3:11. This will include those humans who have willfully refused to live God's way of life. (For further proof for that aspect of God's Master Plan, request our free booklet, "*Do We Have an Immortal Soul?*")

It is true that Ecclesiastes 1:4 says that the earth will remain forever. However, this does not necessarily mean that this earth will remain forever in a *physical* state. We know that ultimately, everything physical will decay and cease to exist. After all, *we* will remain forever, but we will not remain in this *physical* body. Rather, we will be *changed into Spirit beings*.

God will restore a condition that existed at the beginning of His creation when He first created spirit beings and spiritual things. Ultimately, all physical things, which have been patterned after things in the Spirit world, will be *changed* into spiritual things.

What an awesome potential man has! We, as insignificant, tiny, mortal, physical, temporary human beings, have the potential to become immortal members of God's Family, actually God beings, sharing in His spiritual world. We need to free ourselves from the bondage of temporary shortcomings and sufferings, step out of the restraint of physical limitations, and climb up, as it were, in our minds, to the *real* spiritual existence of God's world, which we can already visualize with our spiritual eyes. Let us keep our focus on those things, which are above, knowing that God will share them with us very soon.

nify the CHANGE of things which may be shaken, because they are made in order that things which cannot be shaken may remain.”

CHANGE INTO SPIRIT

Romans 8:18–23 tells us very clearly what those invisible things will be: “For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us. For the earnest expectation of the creation eagerly waits for the revealing of the sons of God. For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of Him who subjected it in hope; because the creation itself also will be *delivered from the bondage of corruption INTO the glorious liberty of the children of God*. For we know that the whole creation groans and labors with birth pangs together until now. Not only that, but we also who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, eagerly waiting for the adoption [sonship], the *redemption* of our body.”

We saw in verse 21 that the creation will be delivered from corruption “into” (“eis” in Greek) the glorious liberty of the children of God. *Moffat* renders verse 21 in this way: “The hope being that creation as well as man would one day be freed from its thralldom [bondage] to decay and gain the glorious freedom of God’s children.” The *Revised Standard Version* writes: “...the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to decay and OBTAIN the glorious liberty of the children of God.” The *Luther Bible* states, “The creation, too, will be freed from bondage of *temporary* existence INTO the glorious freedom of the children of God.”

The Greek word for corruption or decay that is used in verse 21 is “*phthora*.” It is the same word used in 1 Corinthians 15:42, where we read: “The body is sown in *corruption*, it is raised in incorruption.” It is also used in Galatians 6:8: “For he who sows to his flesh will of the flesh reap *corruption*.”

This physical creation, patterned after God’s spiritual creation, waits to be *delivered from corruption to obtain the glorious liberty of the children of God*. The glorious freedom, which the universe will receive, includes freedom from death. In that new universe, DEATH will be unknown, and so will decay and corruption.

We will be changed into Spirit. Spirit endures. Spirit cannot die or decay. Spirit remains. Spirit is INCORRUPTIBLE. The universe will *obtain* that same freedom from decay, corruption and death. In order to obtain

It is amazing how many professing Christians refuse to believe in angels or demons, let alone a spirit world “in heaven.” They consider such ideas as relics or superstitions from the distant past. While many have no problem believing in UFOs or alien life forms, they scoff at the idea of the existence of real angels and real demons. At best, they consider such beings as symbols of good and evil—a figurative way of describing a sense of right and wrong within us. The Bible clearly reveals, however, that angels and demons do exist.

There are others who do profess to believe in angels but swing the pendulum all the way to the other side and actually *worship* angels. The Bible is very clear that only God is to be worshiped, not angels.

In this booklet, we will present the biblical revelation of the little-understood spirit world. While it is important to believe what God’s Word reveals about the existence of angels and demons, it is even more important to have a true understanding of what these spirit beings are doing today, how they affect us, and what their existence means for us. In looking at the Scriptures and accepting the awesome truth contained therein, the spirit world will become plainly visible before our “spiritual eyes” and we will gain a clearer perception than ever before!

BEFORE THE PHYSICAL CREATION

The Bible reveals to us that there was a time when only God existed. However, that statement is coupled with the biblical understanding that God actually consists of two beings—the Father and the Son. John 1:1 tells us, “In the beginning [before anything else was created] was the Word [the Son of God—Jesus Christ], and the Word was with God [God the Father], and the Word was God.” God has always existed. There was never a time when God (both the Father and the Son) did not exist.

The Bible does not tell us what God did before He began creating within the spirit world and then the physical universe. We are told, however, that there was a time when God started His Work of creation. We might specu-

late that God spent a lot of time in planning His creation. We are not told, however, how long this took nor what God did before He began to plan His creation.

We humans tend to think of creation as referring to the physical universe—the galaxies, the suns, the stars and planets, and our own earth and the life forms on it, including man. God, however, did not start His work of creation by creating physical things. He first created spiritual things. This spirit realm still exists today, but since it is invisible to the human eye, many choose not to believe in it. However, when rightly understood, the spirit world is much more real than the physical world. It is, in fact, permanent, unlike the physical world, which is temporary. The created spirit world has existed much longer than anything physical, and it will continue to exist for all of eternity.

PART I—THE WORLD OF ANGELS

It is revealed to us in God’s Word that God created angels. Angels have not lived forever. Angels did have a beginning. Psalm 148:1–2, 5 tells us: “PRAISE the LORD!... Praise Him, all His angels; Praise Him, all His hosts!... For He commanded, and they were CREATED.”

Paul confirms in Colossians 1:16 that angels—invisible to the human eye—were created. They have not existed forever. “For by Him [Jesus Christ] all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible.”

ANGELS CANNOT DIE

Angels were created as immortal spirit beings, to live forever. Christ *compared* the immortality of angels with the POTENTIAL of man to *become* immortal when He said in Luke 20:36: “... nor can they [man made immortal in the resurrection] die anymore, for they are equal to the angels and are sons of God, being sons of the resurrection.” This truth is confirmed in 2 Corinthians 4:18: “... For the things which are seen are temporary, but the things which are not seen are eternal.” Angels are invisible; they are “not seen” by the human eye (compare Colossians 1:16).

ANGELS DON’T MARRY

Angels don’t experience physical marriage in the spirit realm, and resurrected Christians who are changed to Spirit beings won’t marry either.

(Ezekiel 47:1, 7–8, 12). There are differences, however. Ezekiel 47 talks about the existence of a *physical* temple. When the heavenly Jerusalem comes down to this earth, *after* the Millennium, there will be *no* temple in it, “for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are its temple” (Revelation 21:22).

NEW HEAVENS AND A NEW EARTH

The heavenly Jerusalem will come down from heaven, *after* the physical earth and the physical heavens are burned up, and after God creates new heavens and a new earth (2 Peter 3:7, 10–13). Isaiah 51:6 adds that “the heavens will vanish away like smoke.” Isaiah 34:4 tells us that “All the host of heaven shall be DISSOLVED,” and that “...the heavens shall be ROLLED UP like a scroll.” God will create new heavens and a new earth, which will *remain* (Isaiah 65:17; 66:22).

So, just what remains or endures? Does matter last forever? Will our new solar system, if we can call it that, even have a sun and a moon? Apparently not, as we read in passages such as Isaiah 60:19–20 and Revelation 21:23.

We find a description of God’s new creation in Psalm 102:25–26: “Of old You laid the foundation of the earth, And the heavens are the work of Your hands. They will perish, but You will endure; Yes, they will all grow old like a garment; Like a cloak You will change them, *And they will be changed.*”

In what way will God change them? 2 Corinthians 4:18 tells us: “...For the things which are seen are temporary, but the *things which are not seen are eternal.*”

Note also in Hebrews 12:25–29: “See that you do not refuse Him who speaks. For if they did not escape who refused Him who spoke on earth, much more shall we not escape if we turn away from Him who speaks from heaven, whose voice then shook the earth; but now He has promised, saying, ‘Yet once more I shake not only the earth, but also heaven.’ Now this, ‘Yet once more,’ indicates the removal of those things that are being shaken, as of things that are made, that *the things which cannot be shaken may remain.* Therefore, since we are receiving a kingdom which cannot be shaken, let us have grace, by which we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear. For our God is a consuming fire.”

Lamsa renders verse 27 in this way: “And these words, once more, sig-

were to cover the mercy seat. Again, God showed Moses, if he did not already know, what cherubim look like.

The Bible even tells us that there is a *spiritual mountain* in heaven. Isaiah 14:13 reports that Satan, formerly Lucifer, said: “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.” Ezekiel 28:14 adds what God said about Lucifer: “You were the anointed cherub who covers... You were on the holy mountain of God.” This spiritual mountain of God in heaven is also described in Hebrews 12:18–24.

We read about a *city* in heaven, the spiritual or heavenly Jerusalem (compare Hebrews 11:9–10; Revelation 3:12). It *will* come down to this earth in the future (Revelation 21:2–3, 10–21; 22:1–2).

Revelation 2:7 says that the *tree of life* is in the *Paradise of God*. Ezekiel 28:13–16 adds that Lucifer, who became Satan, was in the garden of God at the time of his creation, long before there ever was a physical world. So we see that there is a *spiritual garden* of God, a *Paradise*, in heaven. 2 Corinthians 12:2–4 mentions that “Paradise,” the spiritual garden, is in the third heaven where God dwells [The first two heavens—the physical heavens—can be divided into the earth’s atmosphere and the space beyond our atmosphere—commonly called the universe. In addition, the Bible speaks about another heaven, a heaven composed of spirit—the third heaven (2 Corinthians 12:2), where God lives (Psalm 11:4; Hebrews 9:24)]. The physical garden of Eden, which God later created for Adam and Eve, was patterned after the spiritual garden that exists in heaven, and in which is a spiritual tree of life. When the heavenly Jerusalem comes down to this earth, the heavenly garden, with the tree of life in it, will come down to this earth as well.

Revelation 21:1 tells us that the heavenly Jerusalem will come down from heaven to this earth, AFTER God has created a *new* heaven and a *new* earth. This will take place *after* all human beings have been changed into immortality, *or* have been burned up and destroyed in the lake of fire. By that time, as we read in Revelation 20:14, *death* will no longer exist. We are told that death will have been cast into the lake of fire. Revelation 21:4–5 confirms that there will be NO MORE DEATH from that time on.

It is true that during the Millennium, certain of the things mentioned in Revelation 21 and 22 will be found on this earth as *physical* forerunners

Christ confirmed this in Matthew 22:30: “For in the resurrection they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are like angels of God in heaven.”

ANGELS ENJOY EATING

Angels were created as spirit beings—they are composed of spirit. As such, they are not dependent on physical things, including food. Nevertheless, angels do enjoy eating. In fact, we are told that they have special food. Psalm 78:24–25 tells us: “[God] Had rained down manna on them to eat, And given them of the bread of heaven. Men ate angels’ food; He sent them food to the full.” Genesis 18:1–8 shows that the two angels (compare Genesis 19:1), accompanying the One identified as the LORD, also ate a meal that Abraham prepared.

MIGHTIER THAN MAN

As spirit beings, angels are much stronger and mightier than physical man. The Bible confirms in 2 Peter 2:11 the obvious fact that “...angels...are greater in power and might” than humans.

NOT AS KNOWLEDGEABLE AS GOD

Angels do not have the same knowledge and understanding that God has. In 1 Peter 1:12, we are told that God reveals spiritual knowledge to His church that even angels do not possess: “...things which angels desire to look into.” In fact, Ephesians 3:10 confirms that the time has come when “...the manifold wisdom of God might be made known by the church [to which God revealed His wisdom] to the principalities and powers in the heavenly places” [different ranks of angels, see below].”

HOW MANY ANGELS EXIST?

Man has no comprehension of how many angels exist. The revealed number is indeed mind-boggling. In Revelation 5:11, the number of angels that had assembled before the throne of God is given as “...ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands.” Hebrews 12:22 goes even further: “But you have come to... an innumerable company of angels.” The Greek word for “innumerable” is “*anarithmethos*,” literally meaning, “unnumbered” or “without number.” Certainly God knows how many angels He created but for man, angels are “without number.”

ANGELS HAVE FEELINGS

God did not create angels as robots. Rather, they are individual beings with emotions and feelings. In Job 38:7, angels sang together and shouted for joy when they saw God's beautiful creation of the earth. Also, they "rejoice" when a sinner repents (compare Luke 15:10).

ANGELS HAVE THEIR OWN LANGUAGE

Angels speak their own language, a language that is different from the languages of man. In 1 Corinthians 13:1, Paul says: "Though I speak with the tongues [languages] of men and of angels, but have not love, I have become [as] sounding brass or a clanging cymbal."

ANGELS HAVE THEIR OWN NAMES

As individual beings with feelings and emotions, and with their own language, God also knows them by individual names. The Bible reveals two angelic names to us—*Michael* and *Gabriel*. It also talks about a third angel—*Lucifer*—who became Satan the devil. It appears, however, that all of the other angels have God-given names too. In Hebrews 1:4, we are told that Christ "...obtained a more excellent name than they," and Ephesians 1:21, in comparing Christ with the angelic world, states that Christ was seated at the right hand of God the Father, "...far above...every name that is named." (Compare, too, Philippians 2:9.)

GOD'S ANGELS ARE NOT ALWAYS IN HEAVEN

Many Scriptures tell us that the abode of God's angels is in heaven. Revelation 7:11 points out: "All the angels stood around the throne... and fell on their faces before the throne and worshiped God." This does not mean, however, that the angels always stay in heaven. Jacob saw in a dream God's angels ascending and descending on a ladder reaching heaven. He understood that he had been shown the "gate of heaven" (Genesis 28:12–17). Christ explained to Philip that God's angels were ascending and descending upon the Son of Man (John 1:51). We will also see later in this booklet that angels are sent by God to "...walk to and fro throughout the earth" (Zechariah 6:7).

THE ANGEL OF THE LORD

The Bible repeatedly makes mention of "the angel of the LORD." Some

his own likeness, after his image." As Adam's son looked like Adam, God's son and daughter, Adam and Eve, looked like God. We also saw from Scripture that Christ, although a Spirit being, looks like a man. Better put, man looks like God and Christ, since God and Christ existed before the creation of man.

We discussed the appearance of angelic beings. We saw that they sometimes look like men, sometimes look like animals, and sometimes may appear as having combined features of animals and men. So we see again, that both men AND animals were apparently created after the pattern of the Spirit world, that is, God and angels.

SPIRITUAL OBJECTS

The Spirit world is not limited to God and His angels. Revelation 3:5 speaks of a "*Book of Life*." Revelation 4:2 mentions a "*throne set in heaven*." Revelation 4:4 describes *several thrones in heaven*. Revelation 4:6 speaks of a "*sea of glass*" before the throne in heaven.

In addition, Revelation 5:1 mentions a *spiritual scroll, sealed with seven spiritual seals*. Revelation 5:8 talks about a *spiritual harp and golden bowls*. Revelation 8:2–5 reveals the existence of a *spiritual golden censer, a spiritual golden altar, and even spiritual fire*.

We are informed in the book of Hebrews that all of these spiritual objects were used as a *pattern* for the creation of physical objects at the time of Moses.

We read in Hebrews 9:23–24, in the *Living Bible*: "That is why the sacred tent down here on earth, and everything in it—all copied from things in heaven—all had to be made pure by Moses in this way... But the REAL things in heaven, of which these down here are copies, were made pure with far more precious offerings... It was not in the earthly place of worship that He did this, for that was merely a copy of the REAL TEMPLE IN HEAVEN."

So, there is a spiritual *temple* in heaven (Revelation 11:19; 15:5–6, 8). Further, we read about the temple of the *tabernacle*. God showed Moses exactly on the mountain how to build the earthly tabernacle. Time and again we read (Exodus 25:9; 25:40; 26:30; and 27:8) that God showed Moses a *pattern* as to how to build the *tabernacle, the altar, the golden lamp stand and the sanctuary*. God showed Moses what the real spiritual heavenly things look like. Moses was also instructed to form two cherubim, which

creation of the physical universe—of physical matter—is described in Genesis 1:1. It is also alluded to in Hebrews 11:3, where the *New American Bible* states: “By faith we understand that the universe was ordered by the word of God, so that what is visible came into being through the invisible.” In Job 26:13, we are told that God, through His Spirit, adorned the heavens. We know that God the Father gave the command, and that the Word—Jesus Christ—spoke, and through the power of the Holy Spirit, the universe and the earth came into existence.

It is interesting how the German *Luther Bible* translates Hebrews 11:3: “Through faith we understand that the world has been created by the Word of God, so that everything which one can see came into being out of nothing.” What is meant here is that what is visible—what human eyes can see—came into being out of nothing visible, that is, out of nothing that the human eyes can see. In other words, it came into being *out of Spirit*.

In due time, a catastrophe destroyed the surface of our earth. Approximately 6,000 years ago, God renewed the face of this earth. At that time, He created something else, which was physical—modern man. The ultimate purpose of the creation of physical man was not for man to always remain a physical being, but rather, if man would qualify and meet the conditions given to him by His Creator, he was to become a *Spirit being*, the same as God is a *Spirit being*. John 4:23–24 tells us that God the Father is a Spirit being. 2 Corinthians 3:17 reveals to us that Jesus Christ is a Spirit being. 1 Corinthians 15:42–44 explains that it is the potential of man to become a Spirit being.

We also know that angels are spirit beings. They were created *before* anything physical was created. In that sense, God is even called “the Father of spirits” in Hebrews 12:9.

PHYSICAL WORLD PATTERNED AFTER SPIRIT WORLD

A careful analysis of the Scriptures shows that the created physical world, which we see, has been patterned after the Spirit world, which we can’t see.

We read, for example, in Genesis 1:26 that God created man in the image of God, according to the likeness of God. This is to be understood quite literally. Although man is physical, he nevertheless looks like God, except that God is composed of Spirit. We can understand this from the viewpoint of Genesis 5:3, which tells us that Adam brought forth a son, “in

claim that this expression *always* refers to Jesus Christ, as the Messenger of God the Father (see discussion below). However, in most cases, the word “LORD” in the Old Testament refers to Christ, though it *can* refer to the Father as well. (Refer to our free booklet, “*God is a Family*.”) We also read in Luke 2:9 that an “angel of the Lord” appeared to the shepherds in the field after Christ was born. In that passage, the term “angel of the Lord” could not possibly refer to Christ Himself, otherwise, He would have been in two different locations at the same time.

It appears that the phrase, “angel of the LORD,” *often* designates an angel sent by God. For instance, we read in 1 Kings 19:5 that “*an angel*” touched Elijah. In verse 7, the angel is referred to as “*the* angel of the LORD.” The *New King James Bible* arbitrarily capitalizes the word “angel” in some of those passages. Such rendering is simply an interpretation of the translator, and is of course not found in the original.

OTHER DIFFICULTIES WITH THE WORD, “ANGEL”

We read in Hosea 12:3–4 that Jacob “...struggled with *God*. Yes, he struggled with the *Angel* and prevailed.” We also read in Genesis 32:28, 30 that Jacob “...struggled with *God*,” and that he had seen “...*God* face to face.”

In addition, we are told in Exodus 3:2 that “...the *Angel of the LORD* appeared to him in a flame of fire.” In verse 4, we are told that Moses was called by *God* from the midst of the bush. However, in Acts 7:35, Stephen said that “...*the Angel*... appeared to him in the bush.”

As a third example, Exodus 19:18–21 tells us that “*the LORD*” and “*God*” spoke to Moses on the top of Mount Sinai. Stephen said in Acts 7:38 that “*the Angel*... spoke to him on Mount Sinai.”

How do we explain these apparent contradictions?

In Hebrew, the word for “angel” is “*malak*” or “*malech*,” which is derived from the Hebrew, “*l’k*,” meaning, “to deliver a message,” or “to carry out an assignment.” The word “*malak*” can be translated as “angel” or as “messenger.” The Greek word for “angel” is “*angelos*,” which also means “messenger.” The Latin word “*angelus*” is derived from the Greek word, “*angelos*,” and means, “angel.” Therefore, the words “*malak*” and “*angelos*” can refer to a created angelic being, and they can refer to human messengers. (Compare Genesis 32:3; Haggai 1:13; Matthew 11:10; and James 2:25. In these passages, the words “*malak*” and “*angelos*,” referring to human beings, are

translated as “messenger.”) These words can also refer to Jesus Christ, the “Messenger” of God the Father, as is the case in Malachi 3:1.

The “angel” or “messenger” who appeared to Moses and Jacob *was* Jesus Christ. It was Christ who dealt directly with ancient Israel and Judah. (For Biblical proof, please read our free booklet, “*God is a Family*.”) Therefore, the above-quoted passages in the books of Hosea, Genesis and Exodus identify the *Person within the God Family* who struggled with Jacob and who spoke with Moses—Jesus Christ, the “messenger” of the Father. In other passages, as we will see, the Bible may say that *God* did certain things, but the context reveals that He did it *through His angels*.

DIFFERENT ORDERS OF ANGELS

There seem to exist different orders, categories or ranks of angels, with varying degrees of power and authority. When describing the angelic world, Colossians 1:16 speaks about “...thrones or dominions or principalities or powers.” Ephesians 1:20–21 refers to angels as “...principality and power and might and dominion.” In Ephesians 3:10, angels are identified as “...principalities and powers in the heavenly places,” and 1 Peter 3:22 describes the created world of spirit beings as “...angels and authorities and powers.”

In light of these Scriptures, the Swiss *Zürcher Bible* does refer to ranks among the angels. The *Ryrie Study Bible* states in an annotation to Ephesians 1:21: “These words (i.e., principality, and power, and might, and dominion) in rabbinical thought of the time, described different orders of angels.”

As will become clearer in the remainder of this booklet, angels have been given varying degrees of power and glory. All of them are powerful and glorious, but not to the same extent. Revelation 5:2 speaks about a “strong angel.” Revelation 10:1 and 18:21 describe “mighty” angels. Revelation 18:1 introduces an angel “...coming down from heaven, having great authority, and the earth was illuminated with his glory.” Other Scriptures imply that specific angels were given special powers over fire (Revelation 14:18) and water (Revelation 16:5).

The following brief overview will summarize the **varying orders or categories of angels**, as revealed in Scripture:

(1) Archangels

The Bible talks at times about certain “archangels.” The meaning of

while a demon who consistently and tenaciously fights *against* God will not easily repent and accept God and His way of life.

God is concerned for all of His created beings, including His angels, both those who stayed loyal to Him and those who fell away from Him. Maybe God lets them continue to do what they want to do—be it good or bad—so that their final judgment will be manifestly righteous without any shadow of doubt. Perhaps God is still testing His angels and the demons to see which of the angels might not yet have made a final commitment never to sin, and which of the demons might not yet have made a final commitment to never repent. God might want us to participate in that process in the future, when we will be called upon to “judge angels.”

WHY GOD DOES NOT INTERVENE RIGHT NOW

Why does God not replace Satan and his demons right now? After all, God has already decreed that Christ WILL replace Satan’s rule (John 12:31; 16:11) at the time of His return (Revelation 11:15).

The answer is, God wants us to build holy, righteous, godly character. We must develop the *will* to never sin, as well as the ability to carry out that will to never sin. We are to prove to God that we mean business. That requires time, and it requires the help of God’s Holy Spirit in us. We have to learn to resist the downward pull of Satan and his demons. We must overcome temptations to sin, even in the face of satanic persecution. God wants to see that we will not give in to the “dark side.”

Further, God may not be done yet in determining the ultimate fate of all of His created spirit beings. As free moral agents, they too need to come to the point where their character has been formed and will not change. This has undoubtedly already occurred in many cases, but there might be other cases where God is still testing the spirits to see exactly where they stand.

PART 3—THE REALITY OF THE SPIRIT WORLD

God is Spirit. He has *always* existed. God created a *spirit* world after, perhaps, millions or billions of years, as man would count it. (Understand, though, that time is only a measurement for man’s benefit, and that to God, time is irrelevant. The Bible doesn’t reveal God’s timetable for creating non-physical things.) God eventually created a *physical* world—our physical universe with all of its galaxies, suns and planets, including our galaxy and our sun, the earth and all the planets in our solar system. God’s

COULD ANGELS STILL SIN AND BECOME DEMONS?

Paul makes this alarming comment in Galatians 1:8: “But even if we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel to you than what we have preached to you, let him be accursed.” Apparently, Paul felt it might be possible that an “angel from heaven” could sin, by preaching a wrong gospel message.

We also read that “Because the outcry against Sodom and Gomorrah is great, and because their sin is very grave, I will go down now and see whether they have done altogether according to the outcry against it that has come to Me; and if not, I will know” (Genesis 18:20–21).

It appears that God was told by some of His angels how sinful the people of Sodom and Gomorrah were, and that God wanted to see for Himself whether these reports were totally accurate. This would be one way God tests the spirits—to check out the accuracy of their reports.

In reference to the spirit being in 1 Kings 22 who wanted to become a lying spirit in the mouth of all the prophets so that king Ahab would fall in battle, was this spirit being a demon? It is very possible. We know that Satan has been appearing before God to accuse God’s people day and night (Revelation 12:10). Satan appeared before God twice to accuse Job, as recorded in the book of Job. Also, it appears from Zechariah 3:1–2 that Satan stood before God to accuse the high priest, Joshua.

On the other hand, the spirit being in 1 Kings 22 who is not described as an evil spirit or a demon, could very well have been an angel of God—part of the hosts of heaven—who decided at that moment to become a lying spirit. This would be an example of an angel who had not sinned before, but who decided at that time to sin because of pride about his own intelligence, as no one else came up with a solution as to how to defeat Ahab.

God might have conducted His council with His angels for the very reason to see what the angels would suggest to do in that particular situation—would they stay loyal to God’s Way of Life, even in times of difficulties, or would they be willing to deviate from it for the sake of “easy” solutions?

Does God allow spiritual battles between angels and demons to go on in order to allow character-building, either good or bad? Actions prove where one’s heart is. An angel who consistently and tenaciously fights for God, and against demons, will not be easily persuaded to deny God and to sin,

this word is, “chief messenger.” Only Michael is specifically referred to in Scripture as an “archangel.” The name “Michael” means, “Who is like God?” Jude 9 identifies him as an “archangel.” He is also referred to as “one of the chief princes,” (Daniel 10:13) showing that there must be additional “chief princes.” He is also described as “the great prince” (Daniel 12:1). He is clearly in charge of other angels, as Revelation 12:7 explains (“Michael and *his angels* fought...”).

Whether the second named angel in the Bible, Gabriel, is an archangel, is not clearly revealed. The name “Gabriel” means, “God is mighty.” While the Bible nowhere describes the appearance of Michael, the angel Gabriel has the “appearance of a man” (Daniel 8:15; 9:21; see also the detailed discussion later in this booklet). He “stands in the presence of God” (Luke 1:19) and is sent oftentimes by God to man with positive and important news (Luke 1:26, 31). He was sent several times to Daniel, and he was sent to Zacharias (Luke 1:11–13), and to Mary. Since the meaning of “archangel” is “chief messenger,” and since Gabriel is sent by God with important messages, the assumption is compelling that Gabriel is an archangel. He has been traditionally viewed as one of the other archangels and one of the chief princes.

1 Thessalonians 4:16 speaks of an “archangel” without specifically explaining his identity. We read, “For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an *archangel*, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first.” This wording indicates, too, the existence of more than one archangel; otherwise, it would just say, “the archangel.”

(2) Seraphim

The Bible specifically refers to angelic beings as “seraphim” in one place. The word “seraphim” means “burning” or “noble.” These beings are depicted as standing above God’s throne, each having “. . . six wings: with two he covered his face, with two he covered his feet, and with two he flew” (Isaiah 6:2). The voice of a seraphim is so powerful that “. . . the posts of the door were shaken by the voice of him who cried out” (Isaiah 6:4). Isaiah 6:6 describes one of the seraphim as touching a burning coal with his hand.

Whether this passage makes clear that seraphim look like men, is uncertain. The reference to “face,” “feet” and “hand” might suggest this. On the other hand, the Hebrew word for “seraphim,” “*saraph*,” (compare *Strong’s*

Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible, under “Seraphims” and “Serpent”, Number 8314) is also used in other passages, describing dragons or serpents. We read in Isaiah 14:29, “Do not rejoice, all you of Philistia, Because the rod that struck you is broken; For out of the serpent’s roots will come forth a viper, And its offspring will be a *fiery flying serpent*.” The Hebrew word for “fiery serpent” is “*saraph*.” The *New Jerusalem Bible* gives the rendering, “a flying dragon.” An additional passage can be found in Isaiah 30:6: “The burden against the beasts of the South. Through a land of trouble and anguish, From which came the lioness and lion, the viper and *fiery flying serpent* (“*saraph*” in Hebrew)...”

The Hebrew word “*saraph*” is also used in Numbers 21:8–9, when God instructed Moses to “Make a *fiery serpent*, and set it on a pole; and it shall be that everyone who is bitten, when he looks at it, shall live.’ So Moses made a bronze serpent, and put it on a pole...”

Rienecker’s *Commentary to the Bible* states the following: “Passages such as Isaiah 14:29 and 30:6, describing flying *seraphim* (plural of *saraph*, translated by Luther as ‘flying dragon’), as well as Isaiah 6:2, 6, using the word to describe six-winged beings above the throne of God, go beyond the idea of an ordinary snake or serpent, and impress on the reader the concept of dragon-like creatures...”

(3) Cherubim

Perhaps the best-known angelic beings mentioned in the Bible are the “cherubim.” As we will explain in more detail later in this booklet, the common idea as to what cherubim are, or how they look, is totally false. The meaning of “cherub” or “cherubim” is “those grasped, held fast.” God “...placed cherubim at the east of the garden of Eden and a flaming sword which turned every way, to guard the way to the tree of life” (Genesis 3:24). God “dwells between the cherubim” (Psalm 99:1; 2 Samuel 6:2), riding “upon a cherub” (Psalm 18:10; 2 Samuel 22:11). Moses was instructed to “...make two cherubim of gold... at the two ends of the mercy seat... And the cherubim shall stretch out their wings above, covering the mercy seat with their wings, and they shall face one another... and I will speak with you from above the mercy seat, from between the two cherubim which are on the ark of the Testimony” (Exodus 25:18, 20, 22).

We also read that the veil of the tabernacle “...shall be woven with an artistic design of cherubim” (Exodus 26:31); that the walls of Solomon’s

obedient, 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” (*Authorized Version*).

The correct understanding of this passage is that Jesus Christ preached to the spirits in prison—the demons—at the time of Noah, when God was about to protect Noah from destruction. Christ used this example to show that the demons who had sinned “sometime”—before the creation of man—were still awaiting their judgment.

Why did Christ preach to the demons? Was the only purpose to announce to them what they already knew, that they would be punished in the future? Or, was it done in order to bring some of them to repentance so that they could be spared from punishment?

Proverbs 16:2 tells us that “the LORD weighs the spirits.” If the fate of *all* spirit beings—good and bad—is sealed, why would God still weigh the spirits?

We are also told, in 1 Corinthians 6:3, that we will judge angels. This judgment might include demons who are called “angels” in Revelation 12:7. “Judgment” can mean “condemnation.” “Judgment” can also refer to a process of judging, leading, guiding and directing, which requires time, until at the end of the process, the verdict is pronounced. Is the Bible telling us that we are to judge demons, not only in the sense of condemning them for what they did, but also for the purpose of trying to lead some of them to repentance?

What does the Bible tell us about those angels who did not follow Satan? We are to judge them, but how? Did all the angels who refused to follow Satan at the time of his rebellion thereby make the irrevocable decision never to sin? Is it still possible for some of them to sin?

The Bible sometimes refers to the angels who followed God as being “holy.” This does not necessarily mean that they cannot sin. We who are called by God today are considered “holy” (1 Peter 2:9). Still, we do sin from time to time. ONLY God CANNOT sin. The Bible does not say that the angels who did not follow Satan, could not sin anymore. Since God cannot sin, we have to become God, higher than the angels, to guarantee that we, too, will not sin anymore as born-again members of the God Family. This is why God is in the process of reproducing Himself, through man, not through angels. (For more information, please read our free booklet, “*God is a Family*.”)

pare Revelation 20:3). The fact that they won't be able to destroy others will give them *spiritual torment*—that is why they asked Christ whether He had come to torment them before “the time.”

Satan's spiritual torment, and that of his angels, will continue. After a time period called the Great White Throne Judgment, Satan and his demons will be cast into the lake of fire, and they will be tormented day and night forever and ever (Revelation 20:10; Matthew 25:41). Their torment will be spiritual, as they will see all of their evil works destroyed by fire (compare 2 Peter 3:10–13), and their influence on others will be gone forever. Their final fate might be revealed in Jude 13, referring to “wandering stars for whom is reserved the blackness of darkness forever.” Compare, too, 2 Peter 2:17.

God knows what is in store for them, and so do they.

GOD IS TESTING THE SPIRITS

This brings us back to the question asked earlier as to why God does not intervene when angels fight with demons. Why does He not intervene right now and set up the Kingdom of God on earth and dethrone Satan?

God has set aside a time period of about 6,000 years during which He calls certain people to be trained to become kings and priests and to rule in the world to come. During this time of training, Satan must stay on his throne. In fact, our testing today involves our will and determination to resist Satan and to submit to God.

Also, God is the Creator of the spirit world. Angels were created as free moral agents. God wants them to make a final decision as to whether to sin or to live in righteousness. We know that the angels sinned when they followed Satan. What we don't know is whether *all of them* committed the *unpardonable sin*; in other words, whether or not some of them can still repent. We also don't know whether all of the angels who did not follow Satan thereby made the irrevocable decision to always stay loyal to God. As we will see, this may be the reason why God does not intervene when angels fight with demons.

COULD DEMONS STILL REPENT?

We are told in 1 Peter 3:19–20: “... by which [the Spirit] also he [Christ] went and preached unto the spirits in prison; Which sometime were dis-

temple were carved with “...figures of cherubim, palm trees, and open flowers” (1 Kings 6:29); and that “...on the panels [of the carts] that were between the frames were lions, oxen, and cherubim” (1 Kings 7:29).

A mighty and powerful angel is described in Ezekiel 28:14–16 as the “anointed cherub who covers... You were perfect in your ways from the day you were created, Till iniquity was found in you... 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.” Other passages, such as Isaiah 14:12, tell us that this cherub was “Lucifer,” who sinned against God and became Satan the devil (much more on this later).

The Bible does not tell us how many cherubs exist. Ezekiel, chapters 1 and 10, mention at least four cherubs, in addition to the former cherub Lucifer, who is now Satan.

Some have speculated whether Michael and Gabriel are not only arch-angels, but also cherubs. The Bible nowhere identifies these two angels as cherubs.

(4) Four Living Creatures

The Bible speaks about “four living creatures” in the book of Revelation that appear before the throne of God. Although their description is, to an extent, similar to that of seraphim, there are nevertheless distinctions, implying that these angelic beings belong to a separate category or order. Revelation 4:6–9 explains that they have six wings, and that all of them look different. One looks like a lion, one looks like a calf, one looks like a flying eagle, and one has the face of a man. In addition, they have voices of thunder (Revelation 6:1) and they carry out God's Will by directing other angels (compare Revelation 15:7).

(5) The Twenty-Four Elders

The book of Revelation also speaks about twenty-four high-ranking spirit beings within the angelic realm, called the “twenty-four elders.” They are in heaven, clothed in white robes, wearing crowns of gold on their heads and sitting on twenty-four thrones before the throne of God, whom they worship and serve (Revelation 4:4, 10–11). The high rank of the “four living creatures” and the “twenty-four elders” is expressed in Revelation 5:11: “Then I looked, and I heard the voice of many angels around

the throne [of God and the Lamb, Jesus Christ], the living creatures, and the elders..." (Compare, too, Revelation 7:11.)

(6) The Seven Spirits of God

As will be discussed later in more detail, the Bible reveals to us the existence of seven special angels of God, referred to as the "Seven Spirits of God," (Revelation 5:6) whose responsibility it is to walk through the earth to report their observations to God. It is possible that these seven spirit beings are identical with "...the seven angels who stand before God, and to them were given [the] seven [last] trumpets... So the seven angels who had the seven trumpets prepared themselves to sound" (Revelation 8:2, 6). These seven spirit beings are perhaps also identical with the "seven thunders" mentioned in Revelation 10:3–4, and with the seven angels of the seven churches mentioned in Revelation 1:20, as well as in Revelation 2:1, 8, 12, 18; 3:1, 7, and 14.

(7) The Remaining Angels

Many times, the Bible speaks in general terms of angels. We read of the archangel "Michael and his angels" (Revelation 12:7). 1 Peter 3:22 speaks of "angels and authorities and powers." Angels are also referred to as "sons of God" (compare Job 1:6; 38:7) or as "stars" (compare Isaiah 14:13; Revelation 12:4; Revelation 9:1–2; Revelation 1:20). As each physical star has a name given by God (Isaiah 40:26; Psalm 147:4), so it appears, as mentioned before, that God gave each angel his name, too, since "angels" are many times figuratively described as "stars." High-ranking angels are sometimes referred to as "morning stars," compare Job 38:7.

DON'T CONTACT AND WORSHIP ANGELS

The more we study the Scriptures about the world of angels, the more we will be struck by the awesome truth that unfolds in front of our eyes. We will learn about unknown and unheard of powers and abilities that angels possess. Their tremendous strength and might could perhaps motivate us to worship angels in our thoughts. The study of the angelic world might also tempt us to seek to get in contact with angels, and to literally worship them. These actions would be a terrible mistake. The Bible warns us explicitly NOT to do so.

John, an apostle of Jesus Christ, had to overcome the very same temp-

that what the demons want is good or right. Demons are free moral agents. God forces no one to sin or not to sin. He has told both angels and man what sin is, but it is up to them to decide whether or not to sin.

Since God permits demons to do certain things, the Bible sometimes says that God "sends" demons. It might even be worded in such a way that a demon "from God" appeared, or that God commanded the demon to do something. If the action is against God's Law, however, those statements must be understood exclusively in the way that God permits demons to do what *they* want to do. Even then, God allows such demonic activities for a reason.

THE FATE OF SATAN AND HIS DEMONS

We have already discussed the fact that a full one-third of God's angels sinned in times past, thus becoming demons. *God did not prevent them from sinning.* He created them as free moral agents and He knew that they could sin. The angels who sinned are presently in chains of darkness, to be reserved for future judgment (2 Peter 2:4; Jude 6). They are living today in a *state* of darkness. They are *spiritually* imprisoned by their own perversions. Sin has enslaved them. Before God frees us from sin, we, too, are slaves of sin. The same is true for Satan and his demons. They are *not literally* imprisoned and jailed at a certain place. Rather, they are roaming to and fro on this earth. Satan is compared to a roaring lion, *walking about*, to see whom he can devour (1 Peter 5:8).

Demons are waiting for their judgment. Demons asked Christ whether He had come to "torment" them "before the time" (Matthew 8:29). Luke 8:31 adds that they begged Christ not to command them "to go out into the abyss." At this point in time, they are not yet in that "abyss." Satan is not in it either; rather, he will be placed in it at the beginning of the Millennium (Revelation 20:1–3, 7—the word "abyss" is translated there as "bottomless pit").

What is the "abyss?" The word is used in Romans 10:7, where we read, "Who will descend into the abyss? (that is, to bring Christ up from the dead)."

In Romans 10, the "abyss" is used as an analogy in association with the dead who are buried. It is also used as an analogy in Luke 8 and in Revelation 20. When Satan and his demons will be placed in the "abyss" at the beginning of the Millennium, they will be as good as dead—unable to influence and deceive the nations any longer during that time period (com-

18). This included Job. In comparison with God, he was nothing, although he might have been “blameless” in comparison with other people. This does not mean that Job never sinned. In fact, pride and self-righteousness are sins.

God allowed Satan to plague Job so that Job could see his own self-righteousness and his pride, so that he could overcome these sins and ultimately enter God’s Kingdom. This shows God’s great mercy and compassion for Job.

We note that God used Satan, and in a sense, “sent” him to Job in order to accomplish an important role in God’s plan. However, Satan himself did not realize the role he was playing.

SATAN AND DAVID

We already read about David’s sin when he numbered his army. In 2 Samuel 24:1 we note that God’s anger was aroused against Israel, and “He moved David against them to say, ‘Go, number Israel and Judah.’” When we read the parallel account in 1 Chronicles 21:1, we are told that, “*Satan* stood up against Israel, and moved David to number Israel.” Plainly, it was Satan who directly influenced David, but God allowed it because it was part of God’s plan to test David and to punish Israel.

DEMONS ARE LIMITED IN WHAT THEY CAN DO

Satan and his demons know that they can only do what God and Christ allow them to do. James 2:19 tells us that demons believe in God “and tremble.” They believe that God exists and they know that He created them; moreover, they can still see Him. They tremble because they know that God has authority over them. They don’t want to be obedient to God, but they know that they can’t go against God’s Will. They are very aware of the sins they commit, and they don’t want to repent of them. They tremble, though, because they know judgment and condemnation are waiting for them.

One example showing the limitations of demons is when the demons had to ask Christ for permission to possess a herd of swine. Christ told them, “Go” (Matthew 8:32). It was stated as a command, but it was, in fact, Christ’s permission for the demons to do what they wanted to do (compare Mark 5:12–13; Luke 8:30–32).

When God permits demons to do what they want, it does not mean

tation that we are speaking of. After a mighty angel had shown John in a vision what would happen in the future, John thought that he had to worship this angel. Revelation 19:10 tells us: “And I fell at his feet to worship him. But he said to me, ‘See that you do not do that! I am your fellow servant, and of your brethren who have the testimony of Jesus. Worship God!’”

Human memory is short-lived. A few chapters later, John is about to repeat the same mistake. Revelation 22:8–9 records, “Now I, John, saw and heard these things. And when I heard and saw, I fell down to worship before the feet of the angel who showed me these things. Then he said to me, ‘See that you do not do that. For I am your fellow servant, and of your brethren the prophets, and of those who keep the words of this book. Worship God.’”

In addition, the Bible warns us not to make contact with angels. When God wants to send an angel with a message to us, He will do that. To attempt to make contact ourselves with angels is very dangerous. As we will see later in this booklet, we might end up making contact with the wrong kind of angel. Colossians 2:18 states: “Let no one cheat you of your reward, taking delight in false humility and worship of angels, intruding into those things which he has not seen, vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind.”

Most commentaries and translators point out that the Greek conveys here the meaning of someone who tries to initiate contact with the spirit world. For instance, *the New Jerusalem Bible* renders this verse as follows: “Do not be cheated of your prize by anyone who chooses to grovel to angels and worship them, pinning every hope on visions received...” The *Revised English Bible* states: “You are not to be disqualified by the decision of people who go in for self-mortification and angel-worship and access to some visionary world.”

We must keep firmly in mind that angels are created beings and that all worship must be directed toward the Creator, rather than anything or anyone created. Romans 1:25 tells us of pagans who “...exchanged the truth of God for the lie, and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever.”

We read that God the Father created everything, including the spirit world of angels, through Jesus Christ (compare again Colossians 1:16). We have seen that God the Father gave Jesus Christ a name which is far above

the name of anyone or anything else (compare again Hebrews 1:4; Ephesians 1:21; Philippians 2:9). Only Jesus Christ was worthy to open the scroll and loose its seals (Revelation 5:1–5) in order to show God’s servants “things which must shortly take place” (Revelation 1:1). *No angel* was worthy enough to do so!

When reading about the mighty deeds of angels, we need to always remember that God gave them such power. Rather than worshiping angels, we must worship the Creator God and stand in awe of His abilities and strength. Likewise, Exodus 20:4 sternly forbids creating any image of anything that is in heaven above for the purpose of *worshiping* it.

DON'T DISRESPECT ANGELS

On the other hand, the fact that we must never worship angels does not mean that we should ever look down on angels or speak evil of them. God would not leave a person unpunished who showed disrespect for angels, as such a person would thereby show disrespect and contempt for God, the Creator of the angelic world.

The Bible condemns those who speak evil of angels. We read in Jude 8 of “dreamers” who “defile the flesh, reject authority, and speak evil of dignitaries.” As the margin of the *New King James Bible* points out, the Greek word for “dignitaries” means “glories.” Jude is referring here to angelic beings. The *New International Version* and the *Revised English Bible* render this word as “celestial beings.” The *Revised Standard Version* says, “glorious ones,” and the *New American Bible* states, “glorious beings.”

In addition, 2 Peter 2:10 reiterates that those “who walk according to the flesh” are “not afraid to speak evil of dignitaries.” Again, in the Greek, the meaning is “glories.”

We find an example of a self-willed individual who is not afraid to speak evil of angels, in Revelation 13:6. This human being is also referred to in Scripture as the “beast,” the final leader of a resurrected Roman Empire in Europe. We read, “Then he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme His name, His tabernacle, and those who dwell in heaven.”

WHAT ANGELS LOOK LIKE

We know from Scripture that angels, in their created and glorious state, are invisible to the human eye. We also read, however, that angels did manifest themselves at times so as to be seen by humans. It may be surpris-

SATAN AND JOB

A very famous example of Satan’s involvement in God’s plan can be seen in the life of Job. Satan appeared before God, telling Him that he had been “going to and fro on the earth,” and that he had been “walking back and forth on it” (Job 1:7). Recall that God’s angels go to and fro on the earth, to serve and to strengthen God’s people. Satan and his demons walk back and forth on the earth, too, but their goal is to destroy God’s people (compare 1 Peter 5:8). Still, Satan can only do what God permits him to do. Satan told God that Job served God for ulterior motives. God allowed Satan to take away from Job all of his children and material possessions, but he was not permitted—at first—to “lay a hand on his person” (Job 1:8–12). We see that God set the limits of Satan’s actions. Satan the destroyer went out to destroy everything that Job had. Job’s reaction to this calamity is recorded in Job 1:21: “. . . The LORD gave, and the LORD has taken away.” Job attributed his calamity to God, and he was not wrong in doing so, as the next verse tells us, “In all this Job did not sin nor charge God with wrong” (Job 1:22).

Although Satan brought this disaster on Job, he did it with God’s express permission. It was not wrong for Job to say that God was ultimately responsible.

In Job 2:1–7, we are told that Satan obtained permission from God to bring terrible sickness upon Job, but he was not allowed to kill him. Again, we see that Satan must act within the limits given to him by God. Again, we are told that Job accepted this adversity from God, and that he did not sin in saying that it was God who had brought calamity upon Job (Job 2:10).

So then, why did God allow Satan to deal in this way with Job? Why didn’t God intervene and stop Satan? Why does God still allow Satan today to rule this world and continue to try to destroy God’s people?

According to James 5:11, God allowed this calamity to come upon Job *for a reason*—God wanted to show Job how merciful and compassionate He is. Job needed to see a very serious problem that he had, which, if he did not overcome, would have prevented him from entering the Kingdom of God. This problem was Job’s self-righteousness (compare, Job 32:1–2; 27:6; 40:8). Once God opened Job’s eyes to see himself, he confessed his guilt and repented (Job 42:1–6).

Job had to learn—and he did—that every human being sins (compare Romans 3:10; 1 Kings 8:46; 1 John 1:8–10; Ecclesiastes 7:15–20; 3:17–

spirit,” and the *New Jerusalem Bible* says, “a spirit of discord.”

There are also indications that God might have allowed evil spirits, or demons, to participate in the destruction of Egypt at the time of the Exodus. Psalm 78:49 reads, in the *Authorized Version*, “He cast upon them the fierceness of his anger, wrath, and indignation, and trouble, by sending evil angels among them.” *Lamsa* states, “He cast upon them the fierceness of his anger, wrath, indignation, and trouble, by the hand of an evil angel.”

A DEMON FROM GOD?

You may be familiar with the Biblical account of King Saul’s rejection by God. Notice how this rejection is described in 1 Samuel 16:14–16: “But the Spirit of the LORD departed from Saul, and a *distressing spirit from the LORD* troubled him. And Saul’s servants said to him, ‘Surely, a *distressing spirit from God* is troubling you. Let our master now command your servants, who are before you, to seek out a man who is a skillful player on the harp. And it shall be that he will play it with his hand when the *distressing spirit from God* is upon you, and you shall be well.’” Most translations say, “evil spirit.” So we see that an evil spirit—a demon—from God plagued Saul. Why did God allow this to happen?

Saul had been disobedient to God, by refusing to carry out God’s commandment. God had decreed that David would replace Saul. The demon “from the LORD” was a necessary link in the chain of events that would bring David to Saul’s court. God allowed the demon to do his bidding, so that God’s plan could be carried out. Since the demon could not do anything contrary to God’s Will, it is correct to say—in the ultimate sense and analysis—that the demon “from God” plagued Saul.

We find an additional account in 1 Samuel 18:10–12: “And it happened on the next day that the distressing [evil] spirit from God came upon Saul, and he *prophesied* [notice this!] inside the house. So David played music with his hand, as at other times; but there was a spear in Saul’s hand. And Saul cast the spear, for he said, ‘I will pin David to the wall!’ But David escaped his presence twice. Now Saul was afraid of David, because the LORD was with him, but had departed from Saul.”

The demon again played an important role in God’s plan. Saul deteriorated spiritually more and more, until he finally died in war, and David became the next king.

ing to learn HOW angels manifested themselves to humans. Many people have an entirely wrong idea as to what angels look like. When we see pictures of little naked babies with wings and golden trumpets or a bow with arrows, purporting to be angels, we get a totally wrong idea as to how angels really look. In fact, those pictures constitute a violation of the very command not to belittle or disrespect angels.

(1) Some Angels Have Man-like Features

The Bible reveals that some angels, when they appear to man in a physical state or in a vision in their glorious state, actually look like men. They have a body, a head, eyes, arms, hands, and feet. Let’s examine a few Scriptures in that regard.

Daniel 8 gives a description of one mighty and powerful angel, Gabriel, who appeared to Daniel. Although he looked like a man, his appearance was so overwhelming that Daniel was afraid and became sick. We read in Daniel 8:15–18, 27:

“Then it happened, when I, Daniel, had seen the vision and was seeking the meaning, that suddenly there stood before me one *having the appearance of a man*. And I heard a man’s voice between the banks of the Ulai, who called, and said, ‘Gabriel, make this man understand the vision.’ So he came near where I stood, and when he came I was afraid and fell on my face; but he said to me, ‘Understand, son of man, that the vision refers to the time of the end.’ Now, as he was speaking with me, I was in a deep sleep with my face to the ground; but he touched me, and stood me upright... And I, Daniel, fainted and was sick for days; afterward I arose and went about the king’s business.”

What Daniel encountered here was, in fact, a vision, as Daniel 9:20–21 explains: “Now while I was speaking, praying, and confessing my sin and the sin of my people Israel, and presenting my supplication before the LORD my God for the holy mountain of my God, yes, while I was speaking in prayer, the *man Gabriel*, whom I had seen *in the vision* at the beginning, being caused to fly swiftly, reached me about the time of the evening offering.”

Even in vision, the appearance of the angel Gabriel was so powerful that Daniel was afraid; he fell into a deep sleep; he fainted and became unconscious; and he was sick for several days. Gabriel did not look like just any man, although he had man-like features. We also learn from these

verses that Gabriel could fly swiftly, although we don't find that Gabriel is expressly portrayed with wings.

It is highly likely that Gabriel was sent a third time to Daniel with a message. If so, his glorious appearance is described in detail in Daniel 10:5–9: “I lifted my eyes and looked, and behold, a certain man clothed in linen, whose waist was girded with gold of Uphaz! His body was like beryl, his face like the appearance of lightning, his eyes like torches of fire, his arms and feet like burnished bronze in color, and the sound of his words like the voice of a multitude. And I, Daniel, alone saw the vision, for the men who were with me did not see the vision; but a great terror fell upon them, so that they fled to hide themselves. Therefore I was left alone when I saw this great vision, and no strength remained in me; for my vigor was turned to frailty in me, and I retained no strength. Yet I heard the sound of his words; and while I heard the sound of his words I was in a deep sleep on my face, with my face to the ground.”

Some claim that this is not a description of an angel, but of Christ, as the description of Christ in Revelation 1 is similar. However, Daniel could not possibly speak about Christ in that passage. As we will discuss fully in this booklet, the “glorious man,” the angel, reveals to Daniel that he was unable to overcome a demon without the help of another mighty angel, the archangel Michael (compare Daniel 10:13). Since Christ is much more powerful than *any* angel or demon [after all, He created all those beings in the first place], Daniel was visited by a *mighty angel*—in all likelihood, Gabriel—and *not* by Christ Himself. Further descriptions of Gabriel's appearances can be found in Luke 1:11–19 and 26–38.

There are other passages that tell us more about angels who look like men when they manifest themselves to the human eye. One such encounter with angels is described in Luke 24:4–5, relating the account when the women went to Jesus' grave, but could not find His body: “And it happened, as they were greatly perplexed about this, that behold, two men stood by them in shining garments. Then, as they were afraid and bowed their faces to the earth, they said to them, ‘Why do you seek the living among the dead?’”

These two men were angels, as the parallel account in John 20:11–12 reveals. Notice, too, this additional account of one of the two angels, in Mark 16:5, 8: “And entering the tomb, they saw a young man clothed in a long white robe sitting on the right side; and they were *alarmed*... So they

sel from anyone (compare Isaiah 40:13). As the discussion went on, a “spirit” volunteered to lie to all of Israel's prophets. Although God wanted to cut short Ahab's life, it was the spirit's choice. The Bible makes it very clear that God cannot and does not lie (Numbers 23:19; Titus 1:2; Hebrews 6:18). On the other hand, God does not force others not to lie. The spirit decided that he wanted to become “a lying spirit.” He knew that he needed God's permission. When he received it, he went and became a lying spirit in the mouths of all the prophets. Since God is in ultimate control, and since the spirit could only act with God's express permission, it would be correct to say that God “sent” the lying spirit to the prophets. Who or what was this spirit? Was this a demon? Or was this an angel of God who decided at that moment to lie, and therefore, to sin? We will come back to these questions later in this booklet.

In a similar way, God will “send” lying spirits to men in the end time. We read in 2 Thessalonians 2:9–12: “The coming of the lawless one is according to the working of Satan, with all power, signs, and lying wonders, and with all unrighteous deception among those who perish, because they did not receive the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this reason *God will send them strong delusion* [or, as the *New American Bible* says, “a deceiving power”], that they should believe the lie...”

Again, we read that God “sends” a strong delusion or a deceiving power so that people believe lies, just as He did in 1 Kings 22. There are several additional Scriptures showing that God allows deceiving spirit beings to do what they want to do. Nothing happens against God's Will, and God does not allow anything without a reason.

We read in Isaiah 19:14 that God has mingled “a perverse spirit” in the midst of Egypt. Other translations render this as, “a spirit of confusion (*Revised Standard Version*),” “a spirit of deceit (*Lamsa*),” “a spirit of dizziness (*New American Bible*),” or “a spirit that distorts their judgment (*Revised English Bible*).”

In Isaiah 37:7, we read God's words: “Surely I will send a spirit upon him, and he shall hear a rumor and return to his own land; and I will cause him to fall by the sword in his own land.” God sent an evil spirit to spread a rumor—a false report.

In Judges 9:23, we are told that “God sent a spirit of ill will between Abimelech and the men of Shechem; and the men of Shechem dealt treacherously with Abimelech.” *The Revised Standard Version* translates, “an evil

frogs [unclean animals] coming out of the mouth of the dragon [Satan], out of the mouth of the beast [the final military leader of a united Holy Roman Empire in Europe], and out of the mouth of the false prophet [the final religious leader of the Holy Roman Empire in Europe]. For they are spirits of demons, performing signs, which go out to the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty.”

Satan will use powerful demons to literally possess the “beast” and the “false prophet,” and to inspire all kings of the earth to fight against the returning Christ and His angelic army.

The archangel Michael once fought with words against Satan, as Jude 9 states: “Michael the archangel, in contending with the devil, when he disputed about the body of Moses, dared not bring against him a reviling accusation, but said, ‘The Lord rebuke you!’”

This, too, was a service for God’s people by the archangel Michael. According to tradition, Satan was apparently trying to display the body of Moses, so that it could be worshiped. The Bible prohibits such conduct, as only God is to be worshiped.

WHY DOESN’T GOD INTERVENE?

When reading about angelic warfare with demons, we might ask ourselves the question: “Why does God let these spiritual battles go on?” Since God is the Almighty, He could most certainly intervene at any time to stop Satan and his demons from trying to fight against God and His angels. Yes, He could have cut short Gabriel’s fight with the demon of Persia but He chose not to. Gabriel had to fight the demon for twenty-one days before he could bring a message to Daniel. A related question might be: “Why doesn’t God simply take away Satan’s power over this earth right now, and immediately establish His Kingdom on earth?”

HOW GOD USES DEMONS

In order to answer these questions, we need to analyze, in detail, the Biblical information pertaining to the roles of angels and demons as revealed in Scripture. For instance, we have read already in 1 Kings 22 that God discussed with the host of heaven how to overtake king Ahab. Why did God consult His angels? Certainly God does not need to obtain coun-

went out quickly and *fled* from the tomb, for they *trembled* and were amazed.” Their appearance was such that the women were *afraid*. Although having man-like features, they did not look like ordinary men.

The reason for their flight and emotional upheaval was not only because they could not find Christ’s body, it was also caused by the way in which the angel appeared to them. We find a detailed description of his appearance in Matthew 28:1–5, 8: “Now after the Sabbath, as the first day of the week began to dawn, Mary Magdalene, and the other Mary came to see the tomb. And behold, there was a great earthquake; for an angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and came and rolled back the stone from the door, and sat on it. *His countenance was like lightning, and his clothing as white as snow*. And the guards shook for fear of him, and became like *dead men*. But the angel answered and said to the women, ‘Do not be afraid...’ So they went out quickly from the tomb *with fear* and great joy.”

The appearance of this angel, although having man-like features, was like lightning, so that the guards who saw him shook for fear, as did the women, when they saw him. The guards then fainted and became unconscious.

In Ezekiel 40:3, an angel is described in this way, “...there was a man whose appearance was like the appearance of bronze.”

John further describes a powerful angel with man-like features in this way, “I saw another mighty angel coming down from heaven, clothed with a cloud. And a rainbow was on his head, his face was like the sun, and his feet like pillars of fire... and [he] cried with a loud voice, as when a lion roars” (Revelation 10:1–3).

(2) Some Angels May Look Like Women

We saw that angels commonly appear with man-like features, and some of them looked like young men. In addition, there is one Scripture that might perhaps indicate that some angels may look like women. Notice Zechariah 5:9–11: “Then I raised my eyes and looked, and there were *two women, coming with the wind in their wings; for they had wings like the wings of a stork*, and they lifted up the basket between earth and heaven. So I said to the angel who talked with me, ‘Where are they carrying the basket?’ And he said to me, ‘To build a house for it in the land of Shinar [Babylon, Genesis 11:2, 9]; when it is ready, the basket will be set there on its base.’”

(3) Unrecognized Angels

Angels have manifested themselves at times to humans without being recognized as angels. This means that they did not appear at those times in their glorified form, but in a different form. Angels can manifest themselves in such a way that they look entirely like ordinary men. Hebrews 13:2 tells us: “Do not forget to entertain strangers, for by so doing some have unwittingly entertained angels.” One such example can be found in Genesis 19:1–11, where Lot invited two angels into his house. Lot, as well as the men of Sodom, did not realize that these two strangers were angels. That is the reason why the depraved men of Sodom wanted to deal “carnally” with the strangers, and why Lot wanted to protect the strangers by foolishly offering his daughters to the citizens of Sodom. Nobody realized the power that these two angels possessed (compare verse 11).

Another episode has been recorded for us in Acts 12:13–15 when Peter had been imprisoned and the disciples prayed for his release. Unbeknown to the disciples, Peter had been freed by an angel: “And as Peter knocked at the door of the gate, a girl named Rhoda came to answer. When she recognized Peter’s voice, because of her gladness she did not open the gate, but ran in and announced that Peter stood before the gate. But they said to her, ‘You are beside yourself!’ Yet she kept insisting that it was so. So they said, ‘It is his angel.’”

The disciples thought it was possible that an angel could appear *as Peter*, speaking with *Peter’s voice*. After all, they had experienced that Jesus Christ, after His resurrection, could also appear in a different form. Christ did not appear to His disciples in His glorified state. He did not appear, prior to His ascension to heaven, with all His power and glory that He has today. We can find a description of His *glorious* appearance in Revelation 1:10, 12–17. We also find a description of *His glory*, prior to His human birth, in Ezekiel 1:26–28. When He appeared to His disciples after His resurrection, He appeared just as an ordinary man, so much so that they did not recognize Him. Accounts of His appearances can be found in John 20:14–16 and John 21:4–7. They only came to recognize Him after He spoke a certain way or performed a certain miracle that He had performed earlier before His death.

We read that the disciples on the road to Emmaus did not recognize the resurrected Christ until He “...took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to them. Then their eyes were opened and they knew Him; and He

counted worthy to escape the terrible times ahead, compare Luke 21:36 and Revelation 3:10] was given two wings of a great eagle [angelic protection], that she might fly into the wilderness to her place, where she is nourished for a time and times and half a time [3 ½ years], from the presence of the serpent.”

Verse 17 shows that not everyone in God’s Church will be protected: “And the dragon was enraged with the woman, and he went to make war with the rest of her offspring, who keep the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.” Yes, Satan will continue to try to destroy God’s people until Jesus Christ comes to overpower him. That is why the Bible warns us to be on guard and to wear the armor of God.

The Bible reports additional battles between angels and demons. Daniel 10:12–13, 20–21; 11:1 reveal a mind-boggling and awesome fight in the spirit world. A mighty angel—perhaps Gabriel—who had appeared to Daniel twice before, was sent to the prophet with a message. The angel told Daniel: “Do not fear, Daniel, for from the first day that you set your heart to understand, and to humble yourself before your God, your words were heard; and I have come because of your words. But the prince of the kingdom of Persia [a powerful demon ruling over Persia] withstood me twenty-one days; and behold, Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me, for I had been left alone there with the kings [demons] of Persia... And now I must return to fight with the prince of Persia; and when I have gone forth, indeed the prince of Greece [another powerful demon ruling over Greece] will come... No one upholds me against these, except Michael your prince. Also in the first year of Darius the Mede, I, even I, stood up to confirm and strengthen him.”

There are literal, terrible gigantic battles going on in the spirit world. Demons were ruling at the time of Daniel over Persia, Greece and Media. The demon of Persia fought with the angel of God—most likely Gabriel—for *twenty-one days*, trying to prevent him from reaching Daniel with his message. The archangel Michael had to help Gabriel by fighting in his stead with the demon of Persia, so that Gabriel could appear to Daniel in a vision. This is one way in which God’s angels serve us—they fight demons who want to destroy us.

The Bible tells us that something similar will happen again in the very last days. Revelation 16:13–14 reads: “And I saw three unclean spirits like

our booklet, “*Do We Have an Immortal Soul?*” We also recommend that you read pages 28, 31–33 of our booklet entitled, “*Baptism—a Requirement for Salvation?*” for the erroneous concept that just any member of God’s Church can cast out demons, and what “speaking in tongues” may have to do with communicating with demons.)

The good news is that God’s people don’t have to be afraid of Satan and his demons, because the One who is with us is more powerful than the god of this world. If we follow God, the demons will be subject to us (Luke 10:17–20).

However, if one rejects the existence of Satan and his demons, then he is rejecting the clear Word of God—the Bible. In addition, he becomes an easy prey for Satan’s devices, of which God’s true disciples must not be ignorant (2 Corinthians 2:11).

HOW GOD’S ANGELS FIGHT DEMONS

Scripture contains several accounts of a spiritual warfare between God’s angels and Satan and his demons. For instance, we read in Daniel 12:1: “At that time Michael shall stand up, the great prince who stands watch over the sons of your people; and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation, Even to that time. And at that time your people shall be delivered, Every one who is found written in the book.”

Michael will “stand up” at that time—at the time of the Great Tribulation—to literally *fight* against Satan and his demons, in order to protect God’s people. We read in Revelation 12:7–8 that “war broke out in heaven.” This war follows Satan’s original rebellion, described in verse 4, and the birth of Christ, described in verse 5. The Bible tells us in verse 7 that at the beginning of this new spiritual war, “Michael and his angels fought with the dragon; and the dragon and his angels fought; but they did not prevail, nor was a place found for them in heaven any longer.” This means that until that time, Satan and his demons could continue to appear before God in heaven.

Reading on in verse 9 of Revelation 12: “So the great dragon was cast out, that serpent of old, called the Devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world; he was cast to the earth, and his angels were cast out with him.” Satan’s expulsion from heaven will lead to the Great Tribulation, mentioned by Daniel. Revelation 12:13 states, “Now when the dragon saw that he had been cast to the earth, he persecuted the woman who gave birth to the male Child. But the woman [that part of God’s Church that is

vanished from their sight” (Luke 24:30–31). The reason that they did not recognize Him earlier is explained in Mark 16:12: “After that, He appeared *in another form* to two of them as they walked and went into the country.”

Angels, too, are given the power to manifest themselves “in another form,” looking like ordinary people so that they cannot be recognized by men as angels.

(4) Some Angels Look Like Animals

Not all angels have man-like features. The Bible contains many descriptions of angels that have animal features. For instance, as mentioned before, four very powerful angels—the “four living creatures”—are described in the fourth chapter of the book of Revelation in this way: “Before the throne [of God in heaven] 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!’” (Revelation 4:6–8).

Here we are introduced to angelic beings that look like a lion, a calf, and a flying eagle. One angelic being has the face of a man, implying that the rest of his appearance may not resemble that of a man. In addition, all have six wings.

(5) Some Angels Look Like Horses

We find additional accounts in the Bible, describing angels as fiery horses. Note, for example, 2 Kings 2:11–12: “Then it happened, as they continued on and talked, that suddenly a chariot of fire appeared with *horses of fire*, and separated the two of them; and Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven. And Elisha saw it, and he cried out, ‘My father, my father, the chariot of Israel and its horsemen!’ So he saw him no more.”

A similar account can be found in 2 Kings 6:15–17: “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."

Elisha knew that God had sent His angelic army to protect them. His servant Gehazi did not realize it. God "opened his eyes" so that he could see them, that is, God showed him in his mind the angels that had encamped around them. Again, this angelic army is described as "fiery horses."

We find a similar description of angels as horses in several places in the book of Zechariah. Let's review some of these accounts: In Zechariah 1:8–11, we are told, "I saw by night, and behold, a man riding on a *red horse*, and it stood among the myrtle trees in the hollow; and behind him were *horses: red, sorrel, and white*. Then I said, My lord, what are these?' So the angel who talked with me said to me, 'I will show you what they are.' And the man who stood among the myrtle trees answered and said, 'These are the ones *whom the LORD has sent to walk to and fro throughout the earth*.' So they answered the Angel [better rendered: angel] of the LORD, who stood among the myrtle trees, and said, 'We have walked to and fro throughout the earth, and behold, all the earth is resting quietly.'"

We are specifically told in this passage that God sent "red, sorrel and white horses" to walk to and fro throughout the earth. These horses are angelic beings. Zechariah 6:1–8 confirms this conclusion: "Then I turned and raised my eyes and looked, and behold, four chariots were coming from between two mountains, and the mountains were mountains of bronze. With the first chariot were *red horses*, with the second chariot *black horses*, with the third chariot *white horses*, and with the fourth chariot *dappled horses*—strong steeds. Then I answered and said to the angel who talked with me, 'What are these, my lord?' And the angel answered and said to me, 'These are *four spirits of heaven*, who go out from their station before the Lord of all the earth. The one with the black horses is going to the north country, the white are going after them, and the dappled are going toward the south country.' Then the strong steeds went out, eager to go, *that they might walk to and fro throughout the earth*. And He said, 'Go, walk to and fro throughout the earth.' So they walked to and fro throughout the earth. And He called to me, and spoke to me, saying, 'See, those who go toward the north country have given rest to My Spirit in the north country.'"

"*pneuma*" and can refer to demons (compare Matthew 8:16; 10:1; 12:43, 45; Luke 4:33, 36; 6:18; 7:21, etc.). We understand, of course, that Christ is not a being with flesh and bones. Rather, at His resurrection He received a spiritual body and became a life-giving Spirit (1 Corinthians 15:44–45, 50). He was able to manifest Himself, however, as a person with flesh and bones. We saw earlier that angels can manifest themselves as human beings as well. Demons cannot. Christ used this opportunity to show His disciples that He was not a spirit or a demon, because demons cannot manifest themselves as human beings with flesh and bones.

We read in Job 4:12–16 about Eliphaz' encounter with a spirit: "Now a word was secretly brought to me, And my ear received a whisper of it. In disquieting thoughts from the visions of the night, When deep sleep falls on men. Fear came upon me, and trembling, Which made all my bones shake. Then a spirit passed before my face; the hair on my body stood up. It stood still, *But I could not discern its appearance. A form was before my eyes; There was silence; then I heard a voice...*"

Eliphaz saw some kind of a form before his eyes but he could not discern the appearance of the spirit. This indicates that it was a demon, as the Bible does not show that God's angels appear to man in such a way. It was something like an apparition—a phantasm. It was what the disciples thought they saw, too, when Jesus was walking on the water.

Another encounter with a demon is recorded for us in 1 Samuel 28. This encounter is discussed in detail on pages 38 and 39 of our free booklet, "*Do We Have an Immortal Soul?*" To summarize here, King Saul consulted a witch to find out his future. During a séance, the witch "saw" a demon, who pretended to be the dead Samuel. Saul could not see the demon. The demon spoke through the witch to Saul. We note again that the demon did not materialize himself as a being with flesh and bones. Rather, it was an illusion.

We should never participate in any séance or "consult" demons. We should never contact fortune-tellers, sorcerers, witches, New Age "prophets" or "mediums" to "learn about" our future. In many cases, we would be contacting frauds. In other cases, we would be listening to demons communicating to us through their human agents. (For further information on the false idea that we can communicate with "departed loved ones," and who is, in fact, "communicating" with us, please read pages 37 and 38 of

Sorcery, witchcraft, hypnosis, and certain meditation practices are further methods of Satan to overpower the mind of a human being and to make him or her into a helpless victim. Whenever we give ourselves “over” to another influence, we have become victims of the powers of darkness.

SATAN AND DEMONS CANNOT MATERIALIZE THEMSELVES

It appears from Scripture that demons cannot materialize themselves the way that angels can. Demons cannot appear as men. They can, however, create an illusion, or an apparition that might look very real to people. Examples of those illusions would include the appearance of “ghosts,” or of a “lady,” claiming to be “Mother Mary.”

We find the following interesting record in Mark 6:47–50: “Now when evening came, the boat was in the middle of the sea; and He was alone on the land. Then He saw them straining at rowing, for the wind was against them. Now about the fourth watch of the night He came to them, walking on the sea, and would have passed them by. And when they saw Him walking on the sea, they supposed it was a ghost [*Authorized Version*: a spirit], and cried out; for they all saw Him and were troubled. But immediately He talked with them and said to them, ‘Be of good cheer! It is I; do not be afraid.’”

The disciples thought they saw a ghost or a spirit, that is, a demon. The Greek word for “ghost” is “*phantasma*,” which has the meaning of “phantasm” or “apparition.”

In Luke 24:36–42 we find another passage that sheds some light on the inability of demons to materialize themselves. We read: “Now as they said these things, Jesus Himself stood in the midst of them, and said to them, ‘Peace to you.’ But they were terrified and frightened, and supposed they had seen a spirit. And He said to them, ‘Why are you troubled? And why do doubts arise in your hearts? Behold My hands and My feet, that it is I Myself. Handle Me and see, for a spirit does not have flesh and bones as you see I have.’ When He had said this, He showed them His hands and His feet. But while they still did not believe for joy, and marveled, He said to them, ‘Have you any food here?’ So they gave Him a piece of a broiled fish and some honeycomb. And He took it and ate in their presence.”

Christ manifested Himself to the disciples as a being with flesh and bones. He even ate food in their presence to convince the disciples that it was He, not a spirit or a demon. The Greek word for “spirit” is

The “Eyes of the Lord”

The angel who spoke directly to Zechariah is described as a man. *The horses walking to and fro throughout the earth are called “spirits of heaven.”* They are spirit beings, or angelic beings, that look like horses. In Revelation 5:6, some of those spirit beings are described as “seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits [better translated: “spirits” or “spirit beings”] of God sent out into all the earth.” Notice that Zechariah, too, identifies these spirit beings as the “eyes of God,” in Zechariah 3:9 and 4:10: “Upon the stone are seven eyes... They are the eyes of the LORD, which scan *to and fro throughout the whole earth.*” 2 Chronicles 16:9 adds, “For the eyes of the LORD run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to show Himself strong on behalf of those whose heart is loyal to Him.” Proverbs 15:3 goes on to state, “The eyes of the LORD are in every place, *Keeping watch* on the evil and the good.”

These spirit beings that look like horses are called “the eyes of God,” or “watchers,” as they “keep watch on the evil and the good.” In Daniel 4:13–14, 17, Nebuchadnezzar told the prophet Daniel one of his dreams, stating, “I saw in the visions of my head while on my bed, and there was *a watcher, a holy one*, coming down from heaven. He cried aloud and said thus: ‘... This decision is by the decree of the *watchers*, And the sentence by the word of the *holy ones*...’” Daniel interpreted the dream for the king, recognizing that God had shown the king in a vision an angelic being or a watcher—one of the “spirits of heaven” or “eyes of the Lord.” Daniel said in verses 23–24, “And inasmuch as the king saw a *watcher, a holy one*, coming down from heaven... this is the decree of the Most High, which has come upon my lord the king...”

These watchers—“the eyes of the Lord”—are spirit beings, holy angels of God, having the appearance of horses. They run to and fro throughout the earth, keeping watch on the good and the evil.

Many commentaries agree that the term “watchers” in Daniel 4 refers to some of God’s holy angels. *Jamieson, Fausset and Brown* make these insightful comments to Daniel 4:13, which refers to “...[a] watcher, a holy one”: “Only one angel is intended, and he is not one of the bad, but of the holy angels. Called a ‘watcher,’ because ever on the watch to execute God’s will.”

We are told about another episode in 1 Kings 22:19–23, where God was talking to His angels as to how to bring about a certain outcome: “Then

Micaiah said, ‘Therefore hear the word of the LORD: I saw the LORD sitting on His throne, and all the host of heaven standing by, on His right hand and on His left. And the LORD said, “Who will persuade Ahab to go up, that he may fall at Ramoth Gilead?” So one spoke in this manner, and another spoke in that manner. Then a spirit [perhaps a demon, see discussion below] came forward and stood before the LORD, and said, “I will persuade him.” The LORD said to him, “In what way?” So he said, “I will go out and be a lying spirit in the mouth of all his prophets.” And the LORD said, ‘You shall persuade him, and also prevail. Go out and do so.’ Therefore look! The LORD has put [allowed] a lying spirit in the mouth of all these prophets of yours, and the LORD has declared disaster against you.’”

God’s angels watch on the good and the bad, and they report their findings to God. When doing so, they also express their feelings to God, participating thereby in God’s decisions and decrees.

White Horses At Christ’s Return

We find another description of angelic beings that look like horses in the famous passage in Revelation 19:11, 14, describing the return of Jesus Christ to this earth. Notice, however, what the Bible actually says in this little-understood passage: “Now I saw heaven opened, and behold, *a white horse*. And He who sat on him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He judges and makes war. . . . And the armies in heaven, clothed in fine linen, white and clean, followed Him *on white horses*.”

We are told here that Christ and His armies in heaven will come, riding on white horses. These horses must be spirit beings, because they come from heaven down to this earth. The armies in heaven, riding on white horses, are angelic beings that presumably look like men. As we will see later in this booklet, certain angels are “warriors.” Their main function is to fight the forces of evil. Other angels, like those who look like horses, have different or additional functions, including the task to carry Christ and His warrior angels.

(6) Some Angels Combine Man-like and Animal-like Features

The most spectacular group of angels is those called “cherubs” or “cherubim.” Unfortunately, due to a totally wrong concept conveyed through “art” and “mythology,” this world thinks that “cherubim” look like little

Satan and his demons can show great signs and wonders. It is prophesied that Satan will ultimately give his power to a religious leader who will work “signs. . . by which he deceived” the people (Revelation 19:20). False religious teachers, inspired by demons, might even be able to accurately foretell the future (Deuteronomy 13:1–4; Acts 16:16–19).

Satan has the power to inspire people to go to war (Job 1:9–15; Revelation 16:13–14; Revelation 20:7–10). He has the power to throw down fire to consume man and beast (In Job 1:16, people felt that God brought this fire, but the context shows that Satan was the power behind it). As the “prince of the power of the air” (Ephesians 2:2), he can bring destruction through mighty winds.

Though many people don’t believe in the existence of Satan and demons, they are quick to dabble in the occult, being ignorant of the danger therein. Demons are called “familiar spirits” because they want to *familiarize* themselves with man (Leviticus 19:31; 20:6, 27). Haunted houses, poltergeists, séances, communication with the dead, and contacts with “aliens” are all clearly of demonic origin. Satan and demons are destructive. They love to torment people (Luke 6:18). Once we have made “contact” with demons, we can’t get rid of them anymore, barring a miracle from God (Luke 11:24–26).

There are many Scriptures that prove that Satan or demons can possess animals and people, forcing them to do terrible things (Luke 22:3; John 13:27). Demon-possessed people can be extremely violent (Matthew 8:28) and self-destructive (Mark 5:2–5). They lose all sense of decency (Luke 8:27).

The Bible also shows that demons can possess or influence people to make them spiritually, psychologically, and physically sick. Even Paul was sick because “a thorn in the flesh was given to me, a messenger of Satan to buffet me” (2 Corinthians 12:7). Through the influence of demons, people can be mute, deaf and dumb (Mark 9:17, 25), epileptic (Matthew 17:15–18), and infirm (Luke 13:11, 16). When a demon leaves such a person, it may appear as if the person has been healed from a physical sickness.

Satan and demons have the power to transport a human being from one place to another (Matthew 4:5, 8; Luke 4:5, 9). This explains strange encounters with UFOs, where “abducted” people are sometimes found hundreds of miles away from their residence, without knowing how they got there.

Another attempt by Satan and his demons to fight against God is described in Revelation 12:7–9. This attempt will take place just prior to the return of Jesus Christ. This event is not the same as the event described in Revelation 12:4, but it shows the pattern. In both cases, Satan and his demons are thrown back to earth.

We read in Jude 6 about angels who did not keep their own domain (the earth), but left their own abode in order to go to heaven to dethrone God. They are now reserved in everlasting chains under darkness, that is, they are angels of darkness. They are still ruling this earth under Satan (compare Ephesians 6:12 where demons are called “the RULERS of the darkness of this age”). They are “chained,” or held captive, by their own spiritual perversion. We read in 2 Peter 2:4 that “...God did not spare the angels who sinned, but cast them down to hell [in Greek, *tartarus*, describing a condition, rather than a place] and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved for judgment.”

Satan and his demons are VERY REAL. They are not just symbols or metaphors of some unidentifiable “force” of evil. Satan tempted Christ. Satan offered him all the kingdoms of the world if Christ would only fall down and worship Him. Christ cast out many demons when He was here on earth. At one time, he asked a demon, “What is your name?” The demon answered, “Legion,” because Christ was dealing at that moment with many demons (Luke 8:30). As God’s holy angels have individual names, so do demons.

THE POWER OF SATAN AND HIS DEMONS

We must not underestimate the power and influence of Satan and his demons. The Bible tells us that Satan “deceives the whole world” (Revelation 12:9). His biggest deception, no doubt, is to convince unsuspecting man that he does not even exist. He deceives others by pretending that he is an “angel of light” (2 Corinthians 11:14). Many preach as “his ministers,” transforming themselves “into ministers of righteousness” (verse 15). John later said that “many deceivers have gone out into the world” (2 John 7), and he warned us in 1 John 4:1 to “...test the spirits, whether they are of God; because many false prophets have gone out into the world.” Christ prophesied for the end time that “...false christs and false prophets will rise and show great signs and wonders to deceive, if possible, even the elect” (Matthew 24:24).

naked boys, blowing trumpets, and shooting arrows. Nothing could be further from the truth. The Bible describes “cherubim” as extremely powerful and awesome-looking spirit beings. Most of them do not look like ordinary human beings at all, let alone little children or babies.

We find a very detailed description of their appearance in the book of Ezekiel. We read in Ezekiel 1:5–14: “Also from within it came the likeness of four living creatures. And this was their appearance: they had the likeness of a man. Each one had four faces, and each one had four wings. Their legs were straight, and the soles of their feet were like the soles of calves’ feet. They sparkled like the color of burnished bronze. The hands of a man were under their wings on their four sides; and *each of the four had faces* and wings. Their wings touched one another. The creatures did not turn when they went, but each one went straight forward. As for the likeness of their faces, *each had the face of a man; each of the four had the face of a lion on the right side, each of the four had the face of an ox on the left side, and each of the four had the face of an eagle.* Thus were their faces. Their wings stretched upward; two wings of each one touched one another, and two covered their bodies... As for the likeness of the living creatures, their appearance was like burning coals of fire, like the appearance of torches going back and forth among the living creatures. The fire was bright, and out of the fire went lightning. And the living creatures ran back and forth, in appearance like a flash of lightning.”

We are later told that these four living creatures were “cherubim” (Ezekiel 10:20–22). They were transporting a throne on which the “LORD” sat. Notice Ezekiel 1:26–28: “And above the firmament over their heads was the likeness of a throne, in appearance like a sapphire stone; on the likeness of the throne was a likeness with the appearance of a man high above it... This was the appearance of the likeness of the glory of the LORD.” We are told, for instance, in Psalm 18:10 that the LORD “rode upon a cherub, and flew; He flew upon the wings of the wind.”

Ezekiel 10:14 also reveals that the predominant facial features of a cherub are those of an ox. While we had read in Ezekiel 1:10 that the four cherubs had the face of an *ox*, a man, a lion, and an eagle, Ezekiel 10:14 lists those characteristics as the face a *cherub*, a man, a lion, and an eagle. Taken together, the Scriptures equate the predominant facial features of a cherub with that of an ox. Some have suggested that cherubs look mainly like oxen. Notice, though, that they are described with the “likeness of a man.”

Only their facial features and the soles of their feet are different from the “likeness of a man” (in addition to the fact that they have wings).

In additional passages, cherubs are depicted with “... two faces, so that the face of a man was toward a palm tree on one side, and the face of a young lion toward a palm tree on the other side; thus it was made throughout the temple all around” (Ezekiel 41:18–19). We also find in 1 Kings 6:23–27 that Solomon, when building the temple, made cherubs with two wings each.

There are several passages that imply that some of the cherubs might only have one face (as distinguished from the four faces of each cherub in Ezekiel 1). We read, for example, in Exodus 37:9: “The cherubim spread out their wings above, and covered the mercy seat with their wings. They faced one another; the faces of the cherubim were toward the mercy seat.” (Compare, too, Exodus 25:20 and 2 Chronicles 3:13.)

Rienecker’s *Commentary to the Bible* points out that “cherubim appear where God is personally present or where He reveals Himself in His glory... The cherubim are witnesses of the personal presence of God on earth... Today, cherubs are pictured similar to the winged creatures, called ‘*kurubu*,’ that have been dug out in Mesopotamia, Palestine and Syria.” Some of these “*kurubu*” look like creatures with a body of a lion, with wings, and with the head of a man, while others have the appearance of a man, with animal heads.

We need to remember that the Bible does not portray cherubs as having a body that resembles an animal. However, the four living creatures, as well as the “seven spirits,” are described in that way. One of the “living creatures” actually has the *face* of a man, suggesting that the *body* of that living creature may *not* look like the body of a man.

As angels that look like horses are associated with chariots, so the cherubs are associated with amazing wheels. Ezekiel 1:15, 19–20 tells us, “Now as I looked at the living creatures, behold, a wheel was on the earth beside each living creature with its four faces... When the living creatures went, the wheels went beside them; and when the living creatures were lifted up from the earth, the wheels were lifted up... for the spirit of the living creatures was in the wheels.”

Ezekiel mentions at least four cherubs. They are described as powerful angelic beings, having the likeness of a man, with four wings and four faces, three of which have animal features. Ezekiel 10:12 states: “And their whole body, with their back, their hands, their wings, and the wheels that

in the Garden of Eden. The serpent is identified as Satan the devil (Revelation 12:9). Since Satan appeared to the first man and his wife as the deceiver, he must have lived on this earth prior to man as Lucifer—when he was not yet the deceiver—before he tried to “ascend to heaven.”

Actually, before he was sent to earth, Lucifer had been trained in heaven before the very throne of God, and he had angels under his command. We read in Ezekiel 28:14 that he was the anointed cherub who covers. Recall that the cherubs covered the throne of God when God appeared to Moses in the Tabernacle. Also, we read in Ezekiel 28:14 that Lucifer was on the holy mountain of God in heaven (compare Hebrews 12:22). When he sinned by trying to ascend from this earth to heaven to dethrone God, he was cast out of the mountain of God (Ezekiel 28:16). Christ later said that He saw Satan fall from heaven like lightning (Luke 10:18).

In the Hebrew, the word translated as “Lucifer” in the *Authorized Version* and in many other translations, is “*helel*,” or “*heylel*,” which means “lightbringer,” “shining one,” “morning star,” or “shining star of the dawn.” The word “Lucifer” is the Latin translation of the Hebrew word “*helel*,” or “*heylel*,” conveying exactly the same meaning. It is therefore appropriate to use this word in describing the cherub who later became Satan (“*sawtwan*” in Hebrew).

Satan, the prince of darkness, is still ruling on this earth. Revelation 2:13 tells us expressly that Satan has a “throne” here on earth. He holds the people of this world captive to do his will (2 Timothy 2:26). He has authority over all the kingdoms of this world (Luke 4:5–7). He is called the “ruler of this world” in John 14:30. He is even called the “god of this age” in 2 Corinthians 4:4. Satan is called “the prince of the power of the air” in Ephesians 2:2.

ANGELS BECAME DEMONS

Lucifer was not the only spirit being who rebelled against God. The angels under his control accompanied him and became known as demons thereafter. A reference to that rebellion is made in Revelation 12:4, stating that one-third of the angels (referred to as “stars”) followed Satan and became demons. This indicates that the other two-thirds of the angels stayed loyal to God.

leader], the kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war against Him who sat on the horse and against His [angelic] army.” Even this angelic war serves God’s people, in that it constitutes punishment of the unrighteous (compare under point (5)).

(7) God’s Angels Serve Us by Fighting Satan and His Demons

The Bible reveals that spiritual warfare is going on right now. We can’t see it, but we can feel and perceive its consequences. Scripture teaches that God’s holy angels fight against Satan and his angels, in order to carry out God’s Will and Purpose, and in order to help and serve God’s people. We are even reminded that we, too, are engaged in spiritual warfare, and that we must resist Satan and his demons (Ephesians 6:12).

The fact that God’s angels serve us when they fight Satan and his demons will be discussed more fully later in the second part of this booklet. First, we need to address the truth that Satan and demons exist, and what exactly they do today.

PART 2—THE WORLD OF DEMONS

Just as most people don’t believe in the existence of *angels*, they also doubt that *Satan and his demons* really exist. The Bible teaches, however, the very real existence of the devil and his fallen angels. Where did they come from? Did God create a devil? If not, how could there be a devil and demons today?

LUCIFER AND SATAN

The Bible reveals that God created all of the angels. They were not created as robots, but as spirit beings with the power to choose and to decide. One high-ranking angel, a cherub by the name of Lucifer, rebelled and sinned against God (Isaiah 14:12–15; Ezekiel 28:11–17). Lucifer wanted to “ascend to heaven” to dethrone God (Isaiah 14:13). He wanted to “ascend above the heights of the clouds” (Isaiah 14:14). This shows us that he was here on earth, because he wanted to ascend above the clouds of the earth to go to heaven. When he sinned, he was thrown back to this earth (Isaiah 14:12). He became Satan, which means enemy or adversary. Lucifer, or Satan, was already here on earth when Adam and Eve were created. We are told that the serpent was already here in order to deceive Eve when Adam and Eve were placed

the four had, were full of eyes all around.” There are similarities with the four living creatures described in the book of Revelation (see above), but there are also obvious differences. The cherubs are introduced to us as carrying and transporting the throne of God.

PRIMARY ANGELIC FUNCTIONS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

There exists a very special relationship between angels and man, but it is far different than most people think. Yes, angels were created to assist and help people, but we need to understand just how they do that. The Bible shows us that they are assigned by God to help those whom God is calling to salvation.

Hebrews 1:14 says about angels: “Are they not all ministering spirits sent forth *to minister for those who will inherit salvation?*” Psalm 34:7 adds: “The angel of the LORD encamps all around those who fear Him [that is, “who will inherit salvation”], And delivers them.”

Why does this special relationship exist? Simply put, because it is the potential of man to rule over everything there is, along with, and under, Jesus Christ and the Father. Man, in fact, will rule over angels. Notice Hebrews 2:5–8: “For He has not put the world to come, of which we speak, in subjection to angels. But one testified in a certain place, saying: ‘What is man that You are mindful of him, Or the son of man that you take care of him? You have made him a little lower [or: a little while lower] than the angels; You have crowned him with glory and honor, And set him over the works of Your hands. *You have put all things in subjection under his feet.*’ For in that He put all in subjection under him, *He left nothing that is not put under him.* But now we do not yet see all things put under him.”

Paul tells us in the above-quoted Scripture that God has decreed to put everything in subjection under man. This has not happened yet, but it will. This is part of man’s salvation. Since everything will be put under man, man will rule over angels. Notice this in 1 Corinthians 6:2–3: “Do you not know that the saints will judge the world? And if the world will be judged by you, are you unworthy to judge the smallest matters? Do you not know that *we shall judge angels?* How much more, things that pertain to this life?”

God sends forth His angels to “minister,” that is, to serve and help man achieve his potential to inherit salvation—eternal life in the Family of God. With this understanding, let’s take note of the particular services that angels are called upon to perform.

(1) God's Angels Protect Us From Harm

God makes the following promise to us in Psalm 91:9–13: “Because you have made the LORD, who is my refuge, Even the Most High, your dwelling place, 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. In their hands they shall bear you up, Lest you dash your foot against a stone. You shall tread upon the lion and the cobra, The young lion and the serpent you shall trample underfoot.”

Jacob knew that God had sent a special angel to protect him from harm during his lifetime. He stated in Genesis 48:15–16: “And he blessed Joseph and said, ‘The God before whom my fathers Abraham and Isaac walked, the God who has led me all my life long to this day, the angel who had redeemed me from all evil, bless the lads...’” (*Revised Standard Version*).

Later, God promised Moses that He would send an angel to go with Israel, to protect them and to bring them to the Promised Land. We read in Exodus 23:20–23, “See, I am sending an angel ahead of you to guard you along the way and to bring you to the place I have prepared. Pay attention to him and listen to what he says. Do not rebel against him; he will not forgive your rebellion, since [My] Name is in him. If you listen carefully to what he says and do all that I say, I will be an enemy to your enemies and will oppose those who oppose you. My angel will go ahead of you and bring you into the land of the Amorites, Hittites, Perizzites, Canaanites, Hivites, and Jebusites, and I will wipe them out” (*New International Version*).

It is possible that this angel, sent by God, was the archangel, Michael. We read about this powerful angel in Daniel 12:1. Daniel is told in this Scripture that Michael “stands watch over the sons of your people.” We also find another reference to this particular angel, used by God to protect Israel, in Exodus 19:4: “You have seen what I did to the Egyptians, and how I bore you *on eagles’ wings* and brought you to Myself.” Compare this with Isaiah 63:9: “In all their affliction he was afflicted, and *the angel* of his presence saved them: in his love and his pity he redeemed them; and he bare them, and carried them all the days of old” (*Authorized Version*).

Let’s take a closer look at some examples of how God uses His angels to protect His people. For instance, when Israel left Egypt, God used His angel to save them from harm: “And the angel of God, which went before the camp of Israel, removed and went behind them; and the pillar of the

sinful conduct, God also wanted to punish the nation for their sins. 2 Samuel 24:15–17 reports: “So the LORD sent a plague upon Israel from the morning till the appointed time. From Dan to Beersheba seventy thousand men of the people died. And when the angel stretched out His [better translated: his] hand over Jerusalem to destroy it, the LORD relented from the destruction, and said to the angel who was destroying the people, ‘It is enough; now restrain your hand.’... Then David spoke to the LORD when he saw the angel who was striking the people, and said, ‘Surely I have sinned, and I have done wickedly; but these sheep, what have they done? Let Your hand, I pray, be against me and against my father’s house.’”

In the parallel account in 1 Chronicles 21:16, 27, and 30, note the following interesting details: “Then David lifted his eyes and saw the angel of the LORD standing between earth and heaven, having in his hand a drawn sword stretched out over Jerusalem... So the LORD commanded the angel, and he returned his sword to its sheath... But David could not go before it to inquire of God, for he was afraid of the sword of the angel of the LORD.”

Warrior Angels

Angels who punish man for their sins are often times described as “soldiers” or “warriors.” They have a sword in their hand to strike. In Numbers 22:23, God had sent an angel to strike the false prophet Balaam who was asked by king Balak of Moab to curse Israel. Christ used military language to describe the angels at His disposal, referring to them as more than twelve legions of angels (Matthew 26:53). Jesus Christ appeared to Joshua as the “Commander” of His many warrior angels to give Joshua encouragement for the upcoming battle with Jericho: “And it came to pass, when Joshua was by Jericho, that he lifted his eyes and looked, and behold, a Man stood opposite him with His sword drawn in His hand. And Joshua went to Him and said to Him, ‘Are You for us or for our adversaries?’ So He said, ‘No, but as Commander of the army of the LORD I have now come.’ And Joshua fell on his face to the earth and worshiped...” (Joshua 5:13–14). As an angel would not permit a man to worship him, the “Commander of the army of the LORD” was none other than Jesus Christ, leading the angelic army of His Father.

As we have seen already, this angelic army will fight against and punish men. Compare Revelation 19:19: “And I saw the beast [end-time military

any pity. Utterly slay old and young men, maidens and little children and women; but do not come near anyone on whom is the mark; and begin at My sanctuary.' So they began with the elders who were before the temple. Then He said to them, 'Defile the temple, and fill the courts with the slain. Go out!' And they went out and killed in the city... Then He said to me, 'The iniquity of the house of Israel and Judah is exceedingly great, and the land is full of bloodshed, and the city full of perversity; for they say, "The LORD has forsaken the land, and the LORD does not see!" And as for Me also, My eye will neither spare, nor will I have pity, but I will recompense their deeds on their own head.' Just then, the man clothed with linen, who had the inkhorn at his side, reported back and said, 'I have done as You commanded me.'"

Angels will destroy many of the people during the time described as the "Day of the Lord" who have not received, through the hands of angels, God's seal of protection (Revelation 7:1–4). The book of Revelation describes in great detail how God's angels will carry out His Will to punish the earth and many of those living on it.

For example, one angel will cause "noises, thunderings, lightnings, and an earthquake" (Revelation 8:5). Four angels will kill "a third of mankind" (Revelation 9:15). The seven angels with the seven last plagues will kill "every living creature in the sea" (Revelation 16:3) and they will "scorch men with fire" (Revelation 16:8).

(6) God's Angels Serve Us When They Punish Us for Our Sins

The primary function of God's angels is to minister to those who are to inherit salvation. We will never obtain eternal life in God's Kingdom, however, unless we overcome our sins (compare Revelation 3:5). To help us in conquering sin, we must be "chastened" (Hebrews 12:4–11). At times, God's angels carry out His Will in that regard. We read in Psalm 103:20–21: "Bless the LORD, you His angels, Who excel in strength, who do His word, Heeding the voice of His word. Bless the LORD, all you His hosts, You ministers of His, who do His pleasure."

In carrying out God's Will, God's angels serve us, even if this means inflicting punishment upon us for our sins. This is done for our good, so that we can become pure and clean in God's eyes.

We read about an awesome account regarding one of God's angels, bringing a plague over Israel. Although the immediate cause was David's

cloud went from before their face, and stood behind them: And it came between the camp of the Egyptians and the camp of Israel; and it was a cloud and darkness to them, but it gave light by night to these: so that the one came not near the other all the night" (Exodus 14:19–20, *Authorized Version*).

In another instance, two angels were sent to protect Lot and his daughters by striking the evil citizens of Sodom with blindness. God had sent the angels to destroy Sodom, but they were also instructed to protect Lot and to keep him alive. Let's read this encouraging account, in Genesis 19:15–16: "When the morning dawned, the angels urged Lot to hurry, saying, 'Arise, take your wife and your two daughters who are here, lest you be consumed in the punishment of the city.' And while he lingered, the men took hold of his hand, his wife's hand, and the hands of his two daughters, the LORD being *MERCIFUL* to him, and they brought him out and set him outside the city." When Lot asked for permission to flee to a small city nearby, one of the two angels responded, "Hurry, escape there. For I cannot do anything until you arrive there" (verse 22).

We see the *tremendous* responsibility that God assigned to these two angels—they *could not* destroy Sodom until they had protected Lot and brought him to safety.

Some of the most spectacular examples of angelic protection can be found in the book of Daniel. For instance, we read in Daniel 6:16: "So the king gave the command, and they brought Daniel and cast him into the den of lions. But the king spoke, saying to Daniel, 'Your God, whom you serve continually, He will deliver you.'... Then the king arose very early in the morning and went in haste to the den of lions. And when he came to the den, he cried out with a lamenting voice to Daniel. The king spoke, saying to Daniel, 'Daniel, servant of the living God, has your God, whom you serve continually, been able to deliver you from the lions?' Then Daniel said to the king, 'O king, live forever! My God sent His angel and shut the lions' mouths, so that they have not hurt me, because I was found innocent before Him, and also, O king, I have done no wrong before you.' Now the king was exceedingly glad for him, and commanded that they should take Daniel up out of the den. So Daniel was taken up out of the den, and no injury whatever was found on him, because he believed in his God" (Daniel 6:16, 19–23).

Daniel was protected by an angel because he served God day and night

and because he *believed* in God's protection. The vicious nature of the lions had not changed. The only reason that they did not devour Daniel was because an angel had restrained them from doing so. Notice what happened, once the angel ceased from preventing the lions to attack others: "And the king gave the command, and they brought those men who had accused Daniel, and they cast them into the den of lions—they, their children, and their wives; and the lions overpowered them, and broke all their bones in pieces before they ever came to the bottom of the den" (verse 24).

New Testament Scriptures relative to the early church contain several spectacular examples of angelic protection. When studying some of the passages, we might ask ourselves why we don't experience similar incidents today. First of all, it is important to understand that God is the same—He does not change—and His protection of His saints through angels is ongoing. Although angelic protection might not be as spectacular today as it was in the early New Testament Church, we certainly have been saved many times from harm and even death. Who is to say that God's angels did not protect us in miraculous ways, well beyond human comprehension?

Still, one reason why we don't experience angelic protection to the same spectacular degree as described in numerous passages in the Bible could be that we don't believe in such protection anymore. We might believe in it theoretically, but are we really *convinced* that God could do today what He did so often in times past?

Notice Acts 5:17–21: "Then the high priest rose up, and all those who were with him (which is the sect of the Sadducees), and they were filled with indignation, and laid their hands on the apostles and put them in the common prison. But at night an angel of the Lord opened the prison doors and brought them out, and said, 'Go, stand in the temple and speak to the people all the words of this life.' And when they heard that, they entered the temple early in the morning and taught."

They obeyed the voice of the angel, just as God had instructed Moses and the Israelites to obey the angel in their time. Believing in God's protection and obedience to God's commands are fundamental requirements and prerequisites if we are to count on angelic help.

Later, as recorded in Acts 12:5–11, Peter was again thrown into jail, because he obeyed God and did not cease from preaching the gospel and teaching God's Way of life. The disciples prayed constantly and persis-

Israel: "And it came to pass on a certain night that the angel of the LORD went out, and killed in the camp of the Assyrians one hundred and eighty-five thousand; and when people arose early in the morning, there were the corpses—all dead" (compare 2 Chronicles 32:21).

Exodus 12:23 tells us that God destroyed all the firstborn of Egypt through the hands of a mighty angel: "For the LORD will pass through to strike the Egyptians; and when He sees the blood on the lintel and on the two doorposts, the LORD will pass over the door and not allow the destroyer to come into your houses to strike you" (compare Hebrews 11:28).

In 1 Corinthians 10:10 we read that an angel killed many of the Israelites in the wilderness, because they murmured against God. They were "destroyed by the destroyer." God also sent *two angels* to Sodom to destroy it. We also read that *God* destroyed it—He did so *through His angels* (Compare Genesis 19:12–13, 24–25, 29).

A future destruction of the people in this world will occur just prior to the return of Christ, as the sins of man will have reached a climax. Along with them, many of God's people will also lose their lives because of having lost their "first love" and having become "lukewarm." They will think that they have need of nothing, that they "have it made," spiritually speaking. Yet, they will believe lies and fall for spiritual deception and error. They will even hate their fellow brethren and they will betray them, dragging them before courts and worldly powers, as well as religious authorities. God will use His angels to punish everyone who is not specifically marked by Him for protection.

We read in Ezekiel 9:1–11: "Then He called out in my hearing with a loud voice, saying, 'Let those who have charge over the city draw near, each with a deadly weapon in his hand.' And suddenly six men came from the direction of the upper gate, which faces north, each with his battle-ax in his hand. One man among them was clothed with linen and had a writer's inkhorn at his side. They went in and stood beside the bronze altar. Now the glory of the God of Israel had gone up from the cherub, where it had been, to the threshold of the temple. And He called to the man clothed with linen, who had the writer's inkhorn at his side; and the LORD said to him, 'Go through the midst of the city, through the midst of Jerusalem, and put a mark on the foreheads of the men who sigh and cry over all the abominations that are done within it.' To the others He said in my hearing, 'Go after him through the city and kill; do not let your eye spare, nor have

(5) God's Angels Serve Us by Punishing the Unrighteous

God's people are called out of this world, but they still must live in it. This world is filled with temptation, and many times unrighteous people will try to tempt Christians to sin. The Bible tells us that God uses angels to punish the unrighteous—those who live contrary to God's Way of life. He uses angels to help His people and to show them that He is just, and that judgment and condemnation awaits those who rebel against Him.

The terrible and uncompromising revelation of God's righteousness will begin to take place at the return of Jesus Christ, as Matthew 13:41–42, 49–50 explains: "The Son of Man will send out His angels, and they will gather out of His kingdom all things that offend, and those who practice lawlessness, and will cast them into the furnace of fire. There will be wailing and gnashing of teeth... So it will be at the end of the age. The angels will come forth, separate the wicked from among the just, and cast them into the furnace of fire. There will be wailing and gnashing of teeth."

The same future for unrepentant rebellious people is prophesied in 2 Thessalonians 1:6–10: "... it is a righteous thing with God to repay with tribulation those who trouble you, and to give you who are troubled rest with us when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven with His mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on those who do not know God, and on those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. These shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power, when He comes, in that Day, to be glorified in His saints and to be admired among all those who believe, because our testimony among you was believed."

Note, though, that God's angels don't necessarily have to wait until the time of Christ's return to punish wicked people. They have often intervened in this day and age to punish sinners so that God's word can be spread without hindrance. A spectacular and frightening account of such punishment can be found in Acts 12:21–24: "So on a set day Herod, arrayed in royal apparel, sat on his throne and gave an oration to them. And the people kept shouting, 'The voice of a god and not of a man!' Then immediately an angel of the Lord struck him, because he did not give glory to God. And he was eaten by worms and died. But the word of God grew and multiplied."

Also, we read in 2 Kings 19:35 a remarkable account of the power and might of just one of God's angels who punished Assyria for fighting against

tently for Peter's deliverance and God sent an angel to rescue and free Peter. "Peter was therefore kept in prison, but constant prayer was offered to God for him by the church. And when Herod was about to bring him out, that night Peter was sleeping, bound with two chains between two soldiers; and the guards before the door were keeping the prison. Now behold, an angel of the Lord stood by him, and a light shone in the prison; and he struck Peter on the side and raised him up, saying, 'Arise quickly!' And his chains fell off his hands. Then the angel said to him, 'Gird yourself and tie on your sandals'; and so he did. And he said to him, 'Put on your garment and follow me.' So he went out and followed him, and did not know that what was done by the angel was real, but thought he was seeing a vision. When they were past the first and the second guard posts, they came to the iron gate that leads to the city, which opened to them of its own accord; and they went out and went down one street, and immediately the angel departed from him. And when Peter had come to himself, he said, 'Now I know for certain that the Lord has sent His angel, and has delivered me from the hand of Herod and from all the expectation of the Jewish people.'"

God has promised to send His angels to minister to and protect those whom He has called for salvation. When we have such angelic protection, what is there to fear?

The Bible shows that angels may sometimes appear in dreams to people to warn of impending danger. This is another way that angels fulfill their responsibility to minister to the saints.

One such example can be found in Matthew 2:13: "Now when they [the wise men from the East] had departed, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream, saying, 'Arise, take the young Child and His mother, flee to Egypt, and stay there until I bring you word; for Herod will seek the young Child to destroy Him.'"

If we are obedient to God in our daily lives and honor Him in the way we live, then we can trust that He will provide angelic help and protection. When Jesus Christ was arrested, He knew that His Father could send Him more than twelve legions of angels—more than 72,000 spirit beings—to protect Him from the Romans. He also knew, however, that it was not the *WILL* of the Father to do so at that particular time, because the very reason Christ had come was for the purpose of being arrested, tortured and killed so that Scripture could be fulfilled (compare Matthew 26:52–54).

Do Guardian Angels Really Exist?

Many have speculated over the years whether or not the Bible teaches the existence of “guardian angels,” that is to say, a specific angel that God has assigned to a particular person. The Bible leaves no room for doubt that guardian angels do exist. We have already quoted Genesis 48:15–16, where Jacob acknowledged the presence of his guardian angel throughout his life. We read in the *Revised English Bible*, “The god in whose presence my forefathers lived, my forefathers Abraham and Isaac, the god who has been my shepherd all my life to this day, the angel who rescued me from all misfortune, may he bless these boys.” Jacob was convinced that God had been with him all of his life, and He was specifically present through a particular angel whom He had assigned to watch over Jacob.

Acts 12:15 shows that the disciples thought that Peter’s angel had appeared, as they believed Peter to be in prison. They specifically said, “It is *his* angel.” In other words, they thought it was the particular angel whom God had assigned to watch over Peter.

Notice, too, the following remarkable statement of Jesus Christ in Matthew 18:10, in talking about little children that believe in Him, as well as true Christians who must become “as” little children: “Take heed that you do not despise one of these little ones, for I say to you that in heaven *their* angels always see the face of My Father who is in heaven.”

In addition, Paul makes an interesting comment in 1 Corinthians 11:10. The context is the wearing of long hair for women. We read, “For this reason the woman ought to have a symbol of authority [i.e., long hair, compare verse 15] on her head, because of the angels.” Paul’s point is this: A woman is to submit to the authority of her husband (compare verse 3), and her wearing long hair is an outward symbol of such willingness. Paul went on to say that a woman should do so “because of the angels,” implying that in such case, the woman can be assured of angelic protection. Here, angels are referred to in the plural, showing that God may sometimes assign several guardian angels to one person. Notice also Psalm 91:11 where it says God “shall give *His* angels charge over you.”

We read that a star appeared to the wise men from the East, leading them to the place where Jesus Christ dwelt, after He had been born. We read in Matthew 2:1–2, 9–11:

“Now after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, behold, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem, saying, ‘Where

We read in John 5:2–4 where an angel of God assisted in the physical healing of people: “Now there is in Jerusalem by the Sheep Gate a pool, which is called in Hebrew, Bethesda, having five porches. In these lay a great multitude of sick people, blind, lame, paralyzed, waiting for the moving of the water. For an angel went down at a certain time into the pool and stirred up the water; then whoever stepped in first, after the stirring of the water, was made well of whatever disease he had.”

(4) God’s Angels Give Us Encouragement and Strength

When Jesus Christ was facing His arrest, torture and crucifixion, He wished desperately to not have to go through this grievous ordeal. He was human, having laid aside His divine nature. He had become totally human (John 1:14), and as such, it was His HUMAN DESIRE to escape such a violent, physical death. His death, though, was preordained so that mankind could be saved from eternal death. In that hour of trial, He prayed to God the Father, saying, “Father, if it is Your will, take this cup away from Me; nevertheless not My will, but Yours, be done.’ Then an angel appeared to Him from heaven, strengthening Him. And being in agony, He prayed more earnestly. Then His sweat became like great drops of blood falling down to the ground” (Luke 22:42–44). God sent one of His angels to give Jesus Christ encouragement. We don’t know what exactly the angel did, but we are told that he “strengthened” Christ.

A similar episode is recorded in Acts 27, where Paul, who was under arrest, was being transported by ship to Italy. He and his shipmates, as well as the soldiers who were transporting them, were troubled by a violent wind and had lost all hope for survival. Finally, Paul stood up to encourage his friends, the soldiers, and the sailors of the ship with these words: “And now I urge you to take heart, for there will be no loss of life among you, but only of the ship. For there stood by me this night an angel of the God to whom I belong and whom I serve, saying, “Do not be afraid, Paul; you must be brought before Caesar; and indeed God has granted you all those who sail with you.” Therefore take heart, men, for I believe God that it will be just as it was told me” (Acts 27:22–25). As happened with Christ in the garden of Gethsemane, God sent an angel to Paul to encourage him so that he could, in turn, encourage others.

Christ will send out His angels who accompany Him to bring the resurrected and changed Christians to Him, to be rewarded by Him. He gave us this promise, “Also I say to you, whoever confesses Me before men, him the Son of Man also will confess before the angels of God” (Luke 12:8).

(3) God’s Angels Guide Us in Physical Ways

When Joseph, Mary and Jesus had stayed long enough in Egypt, God sent an angel to Joseph in a dream, directing him what to do next. “Now when Herod was dead, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt, saying, ‘Arise, take the young Child and His mother, and go to the land of Israel, for those who sought the young Child’s life are dead’” (Matthew 2:19–20).

When Abraham sent out his servant to find a wife for Isaac, both Abraham and his servant knew that an angel of God would accompany him on his travel and direct him to the right place to find a wife for Isaac. We read the servant’s words in Genesis 24:40: “But he [Abraham] said to me, ‘The LORD, before whom I walk, will send His angel with you and prosper your way; and you shall take a wife for my son from my family and from my father’s house.’”

Such angelic guidance and help might even lead to bringing necessary physical sustenance. When Jesus had fasted for forty days and forty nights, He was very hungry and obviously very weakened. First, though, He had to overcome Satan, who tried to tempt Him to sin. Christ did not succumb to this temptation and the devil left Him. After that, “...behold, angels came and ministered to Him” (Matthew 4:11). They served Jesus Christ—the firstborn among many brethren destined to inherit salvation—by providing Him with food and drink.

We also find that an angel provided Elijah with food when he was discouraged and was ready and willing to die. We read in 1 Kings 19:5–8: “Then as he lay and slept under a broom tree, suddenly an angel touched him, and said to him, ‘Arise and eat.’ Then he looked, and there by his head was a cake baked on coals, and a jar of water. So he ate and drank, and lay down again. And the angel of the LORD came back the second time, and touched him, and said, ‘Arise, and eat, because the journey is too great for you.’ So he arose, and ate and drank; and he went in the strength of that food [obviously, this was not just ordinary food] forty days and forty nights as far as Horeb, the mountain of God.”

is He who has been born King of the Jews? For we have seen His star in the East and have come to worship Him.’... When they heard the king, they departed; and behold, the star which they had seen in the East went before them, till it came and stood over where the young Child was. When they saw the star, they rejoiced with exceedingly great joy. And when they had come into the house, they saw the young Child with Mary His mother, and fell down and worshiped Him.”

This star appeared to them in the East and led them to Jerusalem and from there to the place where Christ lived. This was not an ordinary star, but a bright, shining angel. The Bible identifies and compares stars with angels on numerous occasions (compare Revelation 1:20; 9:1–2; 12:4). Note that the wise men from the East refer to this star as “HIS star”—that is, the star, or angel, of the Christ Child. They understood that Christ was the newborn King and they came from the East to worship Him.

If they understood that the star was an angel, then they also knew that this angel was assigned to the Christ Child. This is not to say, of course, that only one angel watched over Christ. On one occasion, He mentioned to Peter that He could ask His Father for “more than twelve legions of angels” (Matthew 26:53)—more than 72,000 angels. Remember also that “angels” ministered to Christ after His lengthy fast (Matthew 4:11). Notice, too, Christ’s statement in John 1:51: “...hereafter you shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of Man.”

Christ knew that He was surrounded by angels. Angels were very real to Him. He did not doubt their existence—after all, it was He who created all of them.

We also saw that God may assign one angel to guard or protect numerous people, or an entire nation. For instance, the archangel Michael is described to Daniel as “The great prince who stands watch over the sons of your people” (Daniel 12:1).

(2) God’s Angels Lead Us Toward Salvation

Just as God’s angels protect us from harm, they are also sent to direct, guide and lead us on our path to spiritual salvation. Sometimes God sends His angels to direct His human servants in the Work of preaching the gospel and feeding the flock. In Old Testament times, God gave Israel the sacrificial law system through the hand of angels (Acts 7:53; Hebrews 2:2; Galatians 3:19), while God Himself spoke the Ten Commandments (Exodus 20:1; Deuteronomy 5:4–5). Even when God gave Israel the spiritual

law of the Ten Commandments, He was accompanied by “myriads of holy ones” (Deuteronomy 33:2, *New Revised Standard Version; Revised English Bible; New International Version*). Later, when Jesus Christ was born as the Savior of mankind, an angel appeared to the shepherds in the field, and “suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God” (Luke 2:9,13).

One striking example of an angel participating in the salvation of a human being is recorded in Acts 8:26–28: “Now an angel of the Lord spoke to Philip, saying, ‘Arise and go toward the south along the road which goes down from Jerusalem to Gaza.’ This is desert. So he arose and went. And behold, a man of Ethiopia, a eunuch of great authority under Candace the queen of the Ethiopians, who had charge of all her treasury, and had come to Jerusalem to worship, was returning. And sitting in his chariot, he was reading Isaiah the prophet.” God’s Spirit inspired Philip to begin a communication with the eunuch, and after some time, the eunuch asked Philip to baptize him. We see, then, that an angel of God directed Philip to meet with the eunuch in order to ultimately baptize him.

A similar example has been recorded for us in Acts 10. Again, it is an angel who appeared to Cornelius to send for Peter to baptize him. We read in verses 3–7: “About the ninth hour of the day he saw clearly in a vision an angel of God coming in and saying to him, ‘Cornelius!’ And when he observed him, he was afraid (note, in passing, that the appearance of the angel was not that of just an ordinary man), and said, ‘What is it, lord?’ So he said to him, ‘Your prayers and your alms have come up for a memorial before God. Now send men to Joppa, and send for Simon whose surname is Peter. He is lodging with Simon, a tanner, whose house is by the sea. He will tell you what you must do.’ And when the angel who spoke to him had departed, Cornelius called two of his household servants and a devout soldier from among those who waited on him continually.”

While on their way, God sent Peter a vision to instruct him to follow the three men to Cornelius, where he ultimately baptized him and his household. Again, an angel of God was involved in the events that led to the baptism of some loyal people.

Angels are, in fact, intimately involved with our salvation. They are not robots, mechanically obeying God’s Word. They joyfully and eagerly fulfill their task to minister to those who will inherit salvation. Jesus told us in Luke 15:10 that “there is JOY in the presence of the angels of God over

one sinner who repents.” Repentance is a requirement for man’s salvation. The angels rejoice when they see that a sinner repents of his sins and turns to God.

Paul also alluded to the involvement of angels in our lives relative to our salvation. He stated in 1 Corinthians 4:9: “For I think that God has displayed us, the apostles, last, as men condemned to death; for we have been made a spectacle to the world, both to angels and to men.”

The margin explains that the literal meaning of the Greek word, “*theatron*,” translated as “spectacle,” is “theater.” The same word is used in Acts 19:29, where it is correctly rendered as, “theater.” The *Amplified Bible* translates 1 Corinthians 4:9 as follows, “God has made an exhibit of us... a show in the word’s amphitheater—with both men and angels as spectators.”

Paul is viewing himself as standing in the arena of a great amphitheater with both men and angels—the observing audience—looking down on him as a spectacle. Men might watch, perhaps, in order to scoff and malign, while God’s angels observe us with a sincere desire for our success, eager to help us.

Paul instructed and charged Timothy in 1 Timothy 5:21: “...before God and the Lord Jesus Christ and the elect angels that you observe these things without prejudice, doing nothing with partiality.”

Paul does not specifically explain who these “elect angels” are, but it is possible that they are chosen angels, specifically assigned in a special way to look after individual Christians, and even entire Church organizations or Church eras. In Revelation 1:20, we read about seven angels of the seven churches, in other words, individual angels assigned to particular churches.

The involvement of God’s angels in the lives of Christians who are to inherit salvation will find its climax at the time of Christ’s return, when He comes to reward the faithful. We are told in Matthew 24:30–31: “Then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in heaven, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. And He will send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they will gather together His elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.”

The angels of God will have the privilege and honor to bring the faithful to Christ so that they may receive from Him their reward. Matthew 16:27 tells us: “For the Son of Man will come in the glory of His Father with His angels, and then He will reward each according to his works.”