

DAY BY DAY

Bible Texts and Topics, With Comments,
For Personal Study and Use at Family Worship.

3.7: ANGELS

1. THEIR ORIGIN AND MINISTRY

“Where wast thou when I laid the foundations of the earth? declare, if thou hast understanding. Who hath laid the measures thereof, if thou knowest? or who hath stretched the line upon it? Whereupon are the foundations thereof fastened? or who laid the corner stone thereof; When the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy?” Job 38:4-7.

“But to which of the angels said He at any time, Sit on My right hand, until I make your enemies thy footstool? Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?” Hebrews 1:13, 14.

“Before the creation of man, angels were in existence; for when the foundations of the earth were laid, “the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy.” After the fall of man, angels were sent to guard the tree of life, and this before a human being had died. Angels are in nature superior to men; for the psalmist says that man was made “a little lower than the angels.”

“We are informed in Scripture as to the number and the power and glory of the heavenly beings, of their connection with the government of God, and also of their relation to the work of redemption. “The Lord hath prepared His throne in the heavens; and His kingdom rules over all.” And, says the prophet, “I heard the voice of many angels round about the throne. In the presence chamber of the King of kings they wait-”angels, that excel in strength,” “ministers of His, that do His pleasure,” “hearkening unto the voice of His word.” Ten thousand times ten thousand and thousands of thousands, were the heavenly messengers beheld by the prophet Daniel. The apostle Paul declared them “an innumerable company.” As God's messengers they go forth, like “the appearance of a flash of lightning,” so dazzling their glory, and so swift their flight....

“Angels are sent on missions of mercy to the children of God. To Abraham, with promises of blessing; to the gates of Sodom, to rescue righteous Lot from its fiery doom; to Elijah, as he was about to perish from weariness and hunger in the desert. To Elisha, with chariots and horses of fire surrounding the little town where he was shut in by his foes. To Daniel, while seeking divine wisdom in the court of a heathen king, or abandoned to become the lions' prey; to Peter, doomed to death in Herod's dungeon; to the prisoners at Philippi. To Paul and his companions in the night of tempest on the sea; to open the mind of Cornelius to receive the gospel; to dispatch Peter with the message of salvation to the Gentile stranger, thus holy angels have, in all ages, ministered to God's people....

“Thus God's people, exposed to the deceptive power and unsleeping malice of the prince of darkness, and in conflict with all the forces of evil, are assured of the unceasing guardianship of heavenly angels. Nor is such assurance given without need. If God has granted to His children promise of grace and protection, it is because there are mighty agencies of evil to be met, agencies numerous, determined, and untiring, of whose malignity and power none can safely be ignorant or unheeding.” The Great Controversy, 511-513.

2. MINISTRY TO ELIJAH

"Then Jezebel sent a messenger unto Elijah, saying, So let the gods do to me and more also, if I make not thy life as the life of one of them by tomorrow about this time. And when he saw that, he arose, and went for his life, and came to Beersheba, which belongs to Judah, and left his servant there. But he himself went a day's journey into the wilderness, and came and sat down under a juniper tree: and he requested for himself that he might die; and said, It is enough; now, O Lord, take away my life; for I am not better than my fathers.

"And as he lay and slept under a juniper tree, behold, then an angel touched him, and said unto him, Arise and eat. And he looked, and, behold there was a cake baked on the coals, and a cruse of water at his head. And he did eat and drink, and laid him down again. And the angel of the Lord came again the second time, and touched him, and said, Arise and eat; because the journey is too great for thee. And he arose, and did eat and drink, and went in the strength of that meat forty days and forty nights unto Horeb the mount of God." I Kings 19:2-8.

"Did God forsake Elijah in his hour of trial? Oh, no! He loved His servant no less when Elijah felt himself forsaken of God and man, than when, in answer to his prayer, fire flashed from heaven and illuminated the mountaintop. And now, as Elijah slept, a soft touch and a pleasant voice awoke him. He started up in terror, as if to flee, fearing that the enemy had discovered him. But the pitying face bending over him was not the face of an enemy, but of a friend. God had sent an angel from heaven with food for His servant. "Arise and eat," the angel said. "And he looked, and, behold, there was a cake baked on the coals, and a cruse of water at his head."

"After Elijah had partaken of the refreshment prepared for him, he slept again. A second time the angel came. Touching the exhausted man, he said with pitying tenderness, "Arise and eat; because the journey is too great for thee." "And he arose, and did eat and drink;" and in the strength of that food he was able to journey "forty days and forty nights unto Horeb the mount of God, where he found refuge in a cave." Prophets and Kings, 166.

Faith knows no fear. It trusts all To Him whom spheres obey;
It asks not sight, nor sense, nor call of man to teach the way.
Faith counts not cost. Prompt His command can be and shall be done;
Though men and kings His word withstand, Faith knows the goal as won.
Faith sees the unseen. Its vision looks beyond the ken of man;
When sense and reason fail, faith brooks No ill, but says, "I can."
Faith never doubts. What else men choose, it holds the end in view;
Should suns and worlds their way ever lose, Faith will its course pursue. I. H. Evans.

3. A WALL OF PROTECTION

"Therefore sent he thither horses, and chariots, and a great host: and they came by night, and compassed the city about. And when the servant of the man of God was risen early, and gone forth, behold, a host compassed the city both with horses and chariots. And his servant said unto him, Alas, my master! how shall we do? And he answered, Fear not: for they that be with us are more than they that be with them. And Elisha prayed, and said, Lord, I pray Thee, open his eyes, that he may see. And the Lord opened the eyes of the young man; and he saw: and, behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire round about Elisha." 2 Kings 6:14-17.

"The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear Him, and delivereth them." Psalm 34:7.

“Between the servant of God and the hosts of armed enemies was an encircling band of heavenly angels. They had come down in mighty power, not to destroy, not to exact homage, but to encamp round about and minister to the Lord's weak and helpless ones. When the people of God are brought into strait places, and apparently there is no escape for them, the Lord alone must be their dependence.” Prophets and Kings, 257.

“So, in all ages, angels have been near to Christ's faithful followers. The vast confederacy of evil is arrayed against all who would overcome; but Christ would have us look to the things which are not seen, to the armies of heaven encamped about all who love God, to deliver them. From what dangers, seen and unseen, we have been preserved through the interposition of the angels, we shall never know, until in the light of eternity we see the providence of God. Then we shall know that the whole family of heaven was interested in the family here below, and that messengers from the throne of God attended our steps from day to day.” The Desire of Ages, 240.

“It would be well to consider that in all our work we have the cooperation and care of heavenly beings. Invisible armies of light and power attend the meek and lowly ones who believe and claim the promises of God. Cherubim and seraphim and angels that excel in strength, ten thousand times ten thousand and thousands of thousands, stand at His right hand, “all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation.” Hebrews 1:14. Christ's Object Lessons, 176.

“Out of deep grief to Thee I cry, Who comfort has for those who mourn; But lay Thy hand upon my heart, Teach me to bear as Thou has borne.

“So dark the day and long the night, And I am weary, spent with grief; Oh, strengthen me but with Thine own, And to my spirit send relief;

“For I would feel Thee close beside, And know the healing peace can bring. So shall I, Lord, in others' woe Bid them look up to Thee and sing.” Inez Brasier

4. ORIGIN OF SATAN

“Son of man, take up a lamentation upon the king of Tyrus, and say unto him, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Thou sealest up the sum, full of wisdom, and perfect in beauty. Thou hast been in Eden the garden of God; every precious stone was thy covering, the sardius, topaz, and the diamond, the beryl, the onyx, and the jasper, the sapphire, the emerald, and the carbuncle, and gold: the workmanship of thy tabrets and of thy pipes was prepared in thee in the day that thou wast created. Thou art the anointed cherub that covereth; and I have set thee so: thou wast upon the holy mountain of God; thou hast walked up and down in the midst of the stones of fire. Thou wast perfect in thy ways from the day that thou wast created, till iniquity was found in thee.” Ezekiel 28:12-15.

“So long as all created beings acknowledged the allegiance of love, there was perfect harmony throughout the universe of God. It was the joy of the heavenly host to fulfill the purpose of their Creator. They delighted in reflecting His glory and showing forth His praise. And while love to God was supreme, love for one another was confiding and unselfish. There was no note of discord to mar the celestial harmonies. But a change came over this happy state. There was one who perverted the freedom that God had granted to His creatures. Sin originated with him who, next to Christ, had been most honored of God and was highest in power and glory among the inhabitants of heaven. Lucifer, "son of the morning," was first of the covering cherubs, holy and undefiled. He stood in the presence of the great Creator, and the ceaseless beams of glory enshrouding the eternal God rested upon him. "Thus saith the Lord God; Thou sealest up the sum, full of wisdom, and perfect in beauty. Thou hast been in Eden the garden of God; every precious stone was thy covering. . . . Thou art the anointed cherub that covereth; and I have set thee so: thou wast upon the holy mountain of God; thou hast walked up and

down in the midst of the stones of fire. Thou wast perfect in thy ways from the day that thou wast created, till iniquity was found in thee." Ezekiel 28:12-15. {PP 35.1}

"Little by little Lucifer came to indulge the desire for self-exaltation. The Scripture says, "Thine heart was lifted up because of thy beauty, thou hast corrupted thy wisdom by reason of thy brightness." Ezekiel 28:17. "Thou hast said in thine heart, . . . I will exalt my throne above the stars of God. . . . I will be like the Most High." Isaiah 14:13, 14. Though all his glory was from God, this mighty angel came to regard it as pertaining to himself. Not content with his position, though honored above the heavenly host, he ventured to covet homage due alone to the Creator. Instead of seeking to make God supreme in the affections and allegiance of all created beings, it was his endeavor to secure their service and loyalty to himself. And coveting the glory with which the infinite Father had invested His Son, this prince of angels aspired to power that was the prerogative of Christ alone. {PP 35.2}

"Now the perfect harmony of heaven was broken. Lucifer's disposition to serve himself instead of his Creator aroused a feeling of apprehension when observed by those who considered that the glory of God should be supreme. In heavenly council the angels pleaded with Lucifer. The Son of God presented before him the greatness, the goodness, and the justice of the Creator, and the sacred, unchanging nature of His law. God Himself had established the order of heaven; and in departing from it, Lucifer would dishonor his Maker and bring ruin upon himself. But the warning, given in infinite love and mercy, only aroused a spirit of resistance. Lucifer allowed his jealousy of Christ to prevail, and became the more determined.

"To dispute the supremacy of the Son of God, thus impeaching the wisdom and love of the Creator, had become the purpose of this prince of angels. To this object he was about to bend the energies of that mastermind, which, next to Christ's, was first among the hosts of God. But He who would have the will of all His creatures free, left none unguarded to the bewildering sophistry by which rebellion would seek to justify itself." Patriarchs and Prophets, 35, 36.

5. SATAN CAST OUT OF HEAVEN

"How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! how art thou cut down to the ground, which did weaken the nations!" Isaiah 14:12.

"There was war in heaven: Michael and His angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels, and prevailed not; neither was their place found any more in heaven. And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him." Revelation 12:7-9.

"Until this time all heaven had been in order, harmony, and perfect subjection to the government of God. It was the highest sin to rebel against His order and will. All heaven seemed in commotion. The angels were marshaled in companies, each division with a higher commanding angel at its head. Satan, ambitious to exalt himself, and unwilling to submit to the authority of Jesus, was insinuating against the government of God. Some of the angels sympathized with Satan in his rebellion, and others strongly contended for the honor and wisdom of God in giving authority to His Son.

"There was contention among the angels. Satan and his sympathizers were striving to reform the government of God. They wished to look into His unsearchable wisdom, and ascertain His purpose in exalting Jesus and endowing Him with such unlimited power and command. They rebelled against the authority of the Son. All the heavenly host were summoned to appear before the Father to have each case decided. It was there determined that Satan should be expelled from heaven, with all the angels who had joined him in the rebellion. Then there was war in heaven. Angels were engaged in the battle; Satan wished to conquer the Son of God, and those who were submissive to His will. But the good and

true angels prevailed, and Satan, with his followers, was driven from heaven." Early Writings, pages 145, 146.

"Even when he was cast out of heaven, Infinite Wisdom did not destroy Satan. Since only the service of love can be acceptable to God, the allegiance of His creatures must rest upon a conviction of His justice and benevolence. The inhabitants of heaven and of the worlds, being unprepared to comprehend the nature or consequences of sin, could not then have seen the justice of God in the destruction of Satan. Had he been immediately blotted out of existence, some would have served God from fear rather than from love. The influence of the deceiver would not have been fully destroyed, nor would the spirit of rebellion have been utterly eradicated. For the good of the entire universe through ceaseless ages, he must more fully develop his principles, that his charges against the divine government might be seen in their true light by all created beings. And that the justice and mercy of God and the immutability of His law might be forever placed beyond all question." Patriarchs and Prophets, 42.

6. CHARACTER OF SATAN

1. A Usurper. "For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north: I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the most High." Isaiah 14:13, 14.

2. A Liar. "Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it." John 8:44.

3. A Deceiver. "And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light." 2 Corinthians 11:14.

4. The Accuser of the Brethren. "And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ: for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night." Revelation 12:10.

"The history of the past shows an active, working devil. He can no more be idle than harmless. Satan was found in only one tree to endanger the safety of Adam and Eve. He planned to attract the holy pair to that one tree, that they might do the very thing God had said they should not do, eat of the tree of knowledge. There was no danger to them in approaching any other tree. How plausible his speech! He laid hold of the very arguments which he uses today, flattery, envy, distrust, questioning, and unbelief. If Satan was so cunning at first, what must he be now, after gaining an experience of many thousands of years? Yet God and holy angels, and all those who abide in obedience to all the Lord's expressed will, are wiser than he. The subtlety of Satan will not decrease, but the wisdom given to men through a living connection with the Source of all light and divine knowledge, will be proportionate to his arts and wiles." Testimonies 5, 504.

"We can do nothing of ourselves. In all our helpless unworthiness we must trust in the merits of the crucified and risen Savior. None will ever perish while they do this. The long, black catalogue of our delinquencies is before the eye of the Infinite. The register is complete; none of our offenses are forgotten. But He who listened to the cries of His servants of old, will hear the prayer of faith, and pardon our transgressions. He has promised, and He will fulfill His word.

"Those who are unwilling to forsake every sin and to seek earnestly for God's blessing, will not obtain it. But all who will lay hold of God's promises as did Jacob, and be as earnest and persevering as he was, will succeed as he succeeded. "Shall not God avenge His own elect, which cry day and night unto Him,

though He bear long with them? I tell you that He will avenge them speedily." Luke 18:7, 8. Patriarchs and Prophets, 203.

7. HOW TO OVERCOME SATAN

"(For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds.) Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ. 2 Corinthians 10:4, 5.

"And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death." Revelation 12:11.

"Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you. Cleanse your hands, ye sinners; and purify your hearts, ye double minded." James 4:7, 8.

"The example of Christ shows us that our only hope of victory is in continual resistance of Satan's attacks. He who triumphed over the adversary of souls in the conflict of temptation, understands Satan's power over the race, and has conquered him in our behalf. As an overcomer, He has given us the advantage of His victory, that in our efforts to resist the temptations of Satan we may unite our weakness to His strength, our worthlessness to His merits. And sustained by His enduring might under strong temptations, we may resist in His all-powerful name, and overcome as He overcame." Testimonies 3, 480.

"Many who profess the name of Christ and claim to be looking for His speedy coming, know not what it is to suffer for Christ's sake. Their hearts are not subdued by grace, and they are not dead to self, as is often shown in various ways. At the same time they are talking of having trials. But the principal cause of their trials is an unsubdued heart, which makes self so sensitive that it is often crossed. If such could realize what it is to be a humble follower of Christ, a true Christian, they would begin to work in good earnest, and begin right. They would first die to self, then be instant in prayer, and check every passion of the heart.

"Give up your self-confidence and self-sufficiency, brethren, and follow the meek Pattern. Ever keep Jesus in your mind, that He is your example, and you must tread in His footsteps. Look unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him, endured the cross, despising the shame. He endured the contradiction of sinners against Himself. He for our sins was once the meek, slain lamb, wounded, bruised, smitten, and afflicted.

"Let us, then, cheerfully suffer something for Jesus' sake, crucify self daily, and be partakers of Christ's sufferings here, that we may be made partakers with Him of His glory, and be crowned with glory, honor, immortality, and eternal life." Early Writings, 113, 114.