Grace to You :: *Unleashing God's Truth, One Verse at a Time*

Angels: God's Invisible Army, Part 1
Scripture: Selected Scriptures
Code: 1361

Tonight, we're going to begin a series called "The Invisible Army," talking about angels. And I really don't have to go too far tonight because we can just whack it off, this message is one of those that's like link sausage, you know, you can whack it off anywhere and get the whole thing. So, it's...it just comes in whatever segments it needs to come in because basically it's theological and we'll be dealing with theological subject matter. And so, tonight we're going to just begin to get into the message on angels and we'll be dealing with particularly, the godly, good, holy, elect angels as their called in Scripture, as opposed to the fallen evil angels known commonly as demons.

We've already covered them many times and recently in our study of Jude, you'll remember, we got very deeply involved in an understanding of the organization and something of the...the nature of fallen angels. And so, we want to look, at least giving equal time, to the holy angels in this study.

Clamille Flamarion said this, and this might help you to get an idea of what endless space means: "Then I understand that all the stars which have ever been observed in the sky, the millions of luminous bodies. suns of every magnitude and of every degree of brightness, solar systems, planets and satellites, which by millions and hundreds of millions succeed each other in the void around us, that whatever human tongues have designated by the name of the universe, do not in the infinite respresent more than an island, not more than a city, in grand total of population. In this city of the limitless empire, our sun and its system represents one house. A single house among millions of inhabitants, the earth is a room in that solar house." end quote.

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

For example, in Hebrews 13, verse 2, it says: "Don't forget to entertain strangers because in this manner some have entertained angels without knowing it." One of the most unique men who ever lived, and a man whose biography I was rereading again this week because it touches my heart every time I read it, is John Payton, a missionary to the New Hebrides. He tells a story about some angelic

care that he received in his lifetime. He said that one night wild natives surrounded his house, frantically dancing and jumping up and down in the jungle, desiring to kill John and his wife. Well, they got on their knees realizing there was no way they could protect themselves against these wild cannibals and they prayed. Soon after that the attackers all vanished into the jungle, they were gone. According to Payton's biographer, a year later the chief of the tribe became a Christian, and John asked him at that time, "What happened that night about a year ago when your natives surrounded our little lean-to there on the sand and near the beach and all of a sudden they left?" And this is what the chief said, "Well, because of all those men you had with you, we left."

John said, "There were no men, just myself and my wife." The chief said that they had seen men standing guard, hundreds of big men in shining clothes, with swords in their hands, totally circling his home. Did God dispatch a legion of angels to protect His servant? It wouldn't be the first time.

Second Kings chapter 6 tells us a very interesting thing...2 Kings 6:15: "And when the servant of the man of God was risen early," Elisha here is in a lot of trouble, the servant of the - man of God, the man of God is Elisha, "His servant rises early, is gone forth, Behold an host compassed the city, both with horses and chariots." Now here's a great army moving in.

"And his servant says unto him, Alas, my master, what do we do?" We're being besieged. "And he answered, Fear not, for they who are with us are more than they who are with them."

We have more on our side than their army has. You can imagine the response of the servant - We do? "And Elisha prayed and said, Lord," I like that, "Lord, I pray, open his eyes, that he may see. And the Lord opened the eyes of the young man and he saw." You know what he saw? "Behold the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire around about Elisha." Now that's the invisible army, folks.

During World War II, the famous story of Captain Eddie Rickenbacker, who was shot down in the Pacific Ocean, is recounted and he himself was telling this to Billy Graham.

For weeks he was lost, and you remember the story of his drifting in the ocean. Finally when he returned, rescued from the drifting, this was his story. Quote: "And this part I would hesitate to tell except that there were six witnesses who saw it with me, a gull, a sea gull, came out of nowhere and lighted on my head in the middle of the Pacific.

I reached up my hand very gently, took him, killed him. We divided him equally among us, we ate every bit, nothing ever tasted so good. I have no explanation except that God sent one of His angels to rescue us."

Have you ever read the startling story of the White Cavalry at Bethune, France in April of 1918? Gwinn Day records it in his book THE WONDER OF THE WORD, Moody press, lg57. This is what he says: "The story of the White Cavalry at Bethune is attested by thousands of Germans and related in the words of a Prussian officer goes like this," and I quote: "We were advancing at the head of our troops, all of whom were in excellent spirits, singing as they swung along...thinking that the British were now defeated and all that remained was to go forward without opposition and capture Paris. By my side was Lt. Fritz and he suddenly seized hold of my arm saying, -'Look, Herr Capitan, there is a large body of mounted men approaching Bethune from the other side.

Why, they are clad in white and are mounted on white horses. Who can they be?"' 'I don't know,' I replied. 'They may be British colonial mounted troops.' We halted instinctively and stood watching those white uniformed clad cavalry advancing quietly through the smoke. Their figures clearly outlined in the shining sun.

We saw the shells breaking into death-dealing fragments and bursting amidst their ranks with shattering crashes which shook the ground and this was soon followed by intensive machine gun fire which raked them to and fro until it would seem impossible for anyone to survive. But the White Cavalry came, quietly forward at a slow trot and not a man nor a horse fell. Resistless as the incoming tide, they advanced and in front of them rode their leader, a fine figure of a man. By his side was a great sword, not a cavalry sword but similar to that used by the Crusaders. And his hand lay quietly holding the reigns of his great white charger, as it bore proudly forward. Then a terror seized me and I found myself fleeing from that awe- inspiring body of White Cavalry, frightened, terrified. All around me were masses of men, formerly an army, now a rabble, broken and afraid. All fleeing from them. But more especially from that wonderful leader on his great white charger. The Oerman army is defeated, we have lost the war and it is due to the White Cavalry."

You say - What is that? Maybe Psalm 34:7 explains it: "The angel of the Lord encamps round about them that fear Him and delivers them." You know what some people believed about that story? They believed that God had answered the prayers of the British people and delivered England. Had He answered prayer by sending His invisible army? And given those people, at least the glimpse of His hosts? Very possible.

You see, the universe is occupied by these creatures. And though usually the natural human vision cannot perceive them, they mingle in the earth all around us. You know what is fascinating though, when you begin to talk about holy angels, people are more skeptical than they are when you begin to talk about demons, In a dimension that we can't comprehend, they're there. Einstein said: It is very possible that in a different dimension right now, a railroad train is coming right through the middle of this room, only we can't perceive it because it's in an entirely different dimension. This room is loaded with angels. They're all around the place. And there's probably a few demons milling around in here. And just because we can't see them doesn't mean they aren't there. They exist in a dimension that

we cannot perceive, but they're there.

Milton said, John Milton said: not Milton Berle, John Milton said...make...to make sure you understand the source..."Millions of spiritual creatures walk the earth unseen." Millions.

When the natural vision of that young man in 2 Kings6 was transformed he saw the invisible army, didn't he? He saw them.

Now, in spite of their reality, and there's no question about their reality, in spite of their reality the fact is that there are millions of them and yet people, for the most part, have ignored the holy angels.

You know, perfection and righteousness isn't very interesting.

We...we really get a lot more interested in demons than holy angels.

And maybe that's one reason why we ought to study this a little bit. We have a fascination with demons and I think the reason why, we're just kind of like everything else in the church, so much of it is riding the coattails of whatever happens to be going on in the world and the world started an occult movement, so we jumped on the bandwagon and got concerned about demons. But did you know there are 278 references in Scripture to angels?

Now how many times does God have to say something to make it true? Only once. If He had 273 different references to angels, I would say that that's too many to ignore, wouldn't you? Two hundred and seventy-three!

You say - Well then why have the holy angels been ignored?

If I..I were to ask most Christians that I meet - Tell me a little bit about angels. Well, let's see, they have wings and they...you know, they wear white and they fly around...273 references and we don't know much about them? You say - Why not? I tried to do a little thinking on this and...and reading back into a little history and checking back in my old church history books and just kind of getting an idea of what went on in the church that would make us forget about them. And I came up with some interesting things. Let me offer you some of the reasons why I think we have ignored the study of holy angels.

Number one, as a reaction against past speculation, in the early years of..of developing theology, there was a whole lot of speculative theology. You know, they were arguing about really stupid little piddly things...and fanciful, whimsical aspects of theology, and a whole lot of argument surrounded angels. And in the early debates of theology, they use to debate about the angels. They would..they would debate about how many could stand at the same time on the point of a needle. Or whether an angel could be two places at once. And if he couldn't, how fast were they. How long was it between

their creation and fall? And Rosetti said in Dante, that they fell twenty seconds after they were created. I don't know how he knew that, but that's what he said.

They argued about whether the sin of the first angel caused the sin of the rest, or whether they all sinned together. They argued about how many of them fell, and that seems to be somewhat clear from Revelation l2. They argued about whether our atmosphere is the place where the angels are now being punished. They argued about guardian angels and whether or not you got your guardian angel when you were baptized, when you were born, or when you were conceived.

And all of this dialogue and all of this speculation caused a reverse reaction and true biblical scholars gave a cold shoulder to the study of angels. Do you see? Because they were reacting against this foolishness. And so it just kind of got shelved. Responsible scholars just walked away from it.

A second reason that the study of holy angels has suffered in recent centuries even is because of the early veneration of angels by the Roman Catholic Church. And protestantism reacted against that. Did you know that along with worshiping God and worshiping Christ, that the Catholic Church promotes the worship of saints? Veneration and worship mean the same thing. But did you know, also, that the Catholic Church has always promoted the worship since the tourth century. the worship of angels? And this has caused a reaction. For example, Ott says. Ludwig Ott, in his...it's really a text book on Catholic theology...he is Catholic and he writes it for Catholic people...he says: "The worship of angels by men is justified." He says, "The decision in the Council of Trent which teaches us to invoke and worship saints, also may be applied to angels." So they worshiped angels and the number one angel they worship was Michael. In fact, did you know that in the Catholic calendar, there is an event called Michaelmas? And Michaelmas occurs on September 29. There were two churches famous and large churches, built to glorify and honor Michael. One was built by Constantine just a few miles outside of Constantinople, or Istanbul, and the other one was built in Rome.

Now do you know that prior to the fourth century, when the Roman Church introduced angel worship, there was angel worship but it was a heresy? In Colossians 2:18, and we're going to get in to Colossians as soon as we're done with this series as a lead in, in Colossians 2:18 Paul warns them against worshiping angels. That's precisely what happens. Well, as a reaction against the worship of angels, the protestant church sort of just didn't want to get involved in that whole thing, and there was sort of a reaction, a reversion to that.

There's a third reason, that I think, that the study of angels has suffered and this is a little more history for you, and that I call a reaction to paganism...a reaction to speculation, a reaction to Romanism, and a reaction to paganism. Do you know that in nearly every, and I'm not sure I know of any system of religion at all that wouldn't fit into this, in all systems of religion that I know about, and all the ones that I could study about historically, such beings as angels were believed in. Do you know that in the Orient, the Chinese, you know, they have the pointed roofs, the pagoda roofs, you know why? So that

when the demons slide down it will poke them on the seat and they won't come back anymore. They believe in spirit beings. That's right. They believe in spirit beings. And you see some other strange configurations on roofs and that's to make sure that demons have a hard time getting a footing.

The Gnostics, for example, believed in aeons, demon,. demi-gods. There were such things as genies. Right? In various kinds of religions. Sub-gods, angels... Heathen philosophers talked about spiritual beings. Socrates, for example, referred to a good demon. He called him a good demon, who took care of him. And so, paganism was just loaded with the worship of all different multiple spirits and sub-gods and semi-gods and demi-gods and etc. etc. And with all of this confusion, the church sort of retreated and concentrated...guess on whom?...on Christ. And sort of let that whole area alone because it was so confusing when it was mixed with paganism.

A fourth cause, I think, of the neglect of the study of angels is the age of rationalism and science. You know, once the world got into the...what is known as the industrial revolution, and everything kind of took a turn toward science. and everything kind of got rationalistic in the eighteenth century, and...and the mind of man became ultimate, to accept the fact that there were floating spirits everywhere, just wasn't reasonable and so it just was put out. And the age of rationalism just didn't allow for that. And it's only since the age of rationalism has ended and we're now into the age of...what?...existentialism, or experience, that people have begun to allow demons back into their consciousness or to their understanding and angels are going to come along with them.

And I think a fifth thing, in a very modern sense, has diverted the attention of Christian people from studying angels, holy angels, and that is the occult movement that has preoccupied us with demons.

Now that's just a little background to give you an idea of why I feel that there has been an ignoring of the holy angels.

And there's very little written on it. I notice that Billy Graham has a new book on the subject. And this is the first in a long time, you have to go way back to find much about angels. You can go way back into the years and years ago and find Gabelein's old book on the angels of God and a few little things in systematic theologies, but there isn't very much. So I think we ought to study angels. Two hundred and seventy-three times God refers to them, that's worthy of our attention, wouldn't you think? And by the time we're done with this study, you're going to have a total sensitivity to an entire universe full of new creatures that you have never really understood before, but with whom you will spend your whole eternity. So you might as well get to know them. You're going to be mingling around with them forever. No sense in going up there and saying - Who are you? They were there before you came anyway.

Now you say - What is the benefit of such a study? Well, I think the benefit of it is going to come from many...many angles.

Number one, it's going to show you a new view of God's creative power. It's going to show you a new view of God's tremendous sovereign control over the world and the universe. It's going to increase your...your appreciation of God when you see what He has created in this angelic host. And when you begin to see how they work, you're going to get a whole new vision of what God is like.

Secondly, I think you're going to be thrilled to find out that all of those angels that are holy angels, God has dispatched, not only to serve Him, but in serving Him to serve you and me. And that angels are busy attending on us. That's exciting. That's probably the most thrilling thing and I think that's what we're going to get to next week or the week after, I'm not sure yet.

So it's going to be helpful.

Now the third thing that I think is meaningful about this study is that it's going to force us to study the Scripture and that's good. Right? Because the only thing we know about them is in the Bible. Now obviously we can't study all 273 references so we're going to have to pick and choose a little bit, but it's going to drive us into the Word of God.

In his book, ANGELS, GOD'S SECRET AGENTS" Billy Graham says this, it's a helpful statement, "I am convinced that these heavenly beings exist and that they provide unseen aid on our behalf. I do not believe in angels because someone has told me about a dramatic visitation from an angel, impressive as such rare testimonies may be. I do not believe in angels because UFO's are astonishingly angel-like in some of their reported appearances. I do not believe in angels because ESP experts are making the realm of the spirit world seem more and more plausible. I do not believe in angels because of the sudden world-wide emphasis on the reality of Satan and demons. I do not believe in angels because I have ever seen one because I haven't. I believe in angels because the Bible says there are angels. And I believe the Bible to be the true Word of God.

That's a helpful statement, isn't it? And that pulls it right down to where it belongs. We believe in them because the Bible mentions them 273 times. And when our study is complete, I really feel you're going to have a clear meaningful knowledge of these wondrous, powerful, holy, beautiful, creatures who serve God and serve us.

Now I want us to look basically at three things. And don't worry about writing this down because it's...it's not that critical, just to keep it in mind as we go. We're going to find out who they are...what they are...and how we're to respond to them. Who they are. What they are. And how we're to respond.

Let's look, first of all, at who they are. And point one, the existence of angels. And we'll just go a little ways into this and then we'll pick it up next time. The existence of angels.

Now there have always been people who didn't believe in angels. You say - Even in biblical times? Yes. You mean - Even people who knew the Old Testament? Yes. There were some leaders in Israel who didn't believe in angels. Listen to Acts 23:8, I'm just going to read it to you, listen: "For the Sadducees say that there is no resurrection," that's why they were so sad, you see? "There is no resurrection...(laughter) I thought that was pretty good. It took me about three days to come up with that.

Okay, the Sadducees....you'll never forget it, I'll promise you that. "They say there is no resurrection, neither angel nor spirit." Now here were the...here were the rationalists, here were the materialists who denied angels. Were they right?

No. They were dead wrong.

You say - How could they be Jewish? I mean, how could they...Well, they were Jewish liberals. They didn't accept the resurrection and the Old Testament taught that even from the oldest book in the Old Testament. Job said: "Yet though worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God whom I shall see for myself and not another though the rains be consumed within me." And so he had a knowledge of resurrection. They were dead wrong. There is far too much evidence in the Word of God to say there aren't any angels. There are angels.

In fact, the Old Testament presents angels as personal beings, who are the messengers and the ministers of God. You read the Old Testament and...and I've been reading it in connection with our reading for this year, and woven all through the narrative of the Old Testament, angels are everywhere. They're everyplace.

If you were to just take all of the angels out of the Old Testament, you would have a mess. You would have inexplicable events, you would have gaping holes in the narrative. you would have events that had no possible way of occurring, you would have problems without solutions if you removed angels. They're too busy in the Old Testament. They're everywhere. And you know what? You'd put God in the same boat with everybody else, God would be having hallucinations like everybody else who thought they saw angels. Cause if there aren't any angels who was God sending all the time?

What about the New Testament? If you look into the New Testament, you'd have to reject the New Testament totally. Who would announce the birth of Christ? Who told the shepherds where to go? Who was it that came to Jesus at His temptation after He had fasted for forty days and ministered unto Him, if the angels didn't? Who came to the grave and announced the resurrection? Who is going to come to gather the elect from the four corners of the world? Who...who is it that freed Peter and John? I mean, how could they walk out of a jail with the locks on, the door shut, the guard still there and them gone?

Angels did it. Marvelous interventions by supernatural beings would be reduced to lies in the New Testament. There would be no spiritual warfare in the Christian life because there wouldn't be any angels, there wouldn't be any demons, there wouldn't be any demons, there wouldn't be any Satan...whoopee. Wha...what are we doing? We're just concentrating on something that isn't there. Christ would have only imagined His conflict with Satan, then He too was deluded. And try the book of Revelation without angels. All you have is the chapter headings. They're everywhere.

From the beginning of the Bible to the end of the Bible...there are angels everywhere.

I really feel that the greatest single testimony to the existence of angels is the testimony of Jesus Christ. Do you know that? Because I believe what He says. And Jesus in His own teaching talked about angels. In Matthew 22 He said: "They're like the angels in heaven." He was talking about angels. In Matthew 24 He talked about angels. In Matthew 26 He talked about angels. In Matthew 18 He talked about angels. And that's just a...a little smattering of the dozens of times that He talked about angels. Angels exist. I believe it because the Bible says it.

But I'll tell you something else. I believe it because I've encountered them. I've encountered the fallen ones and known it and I've encountered the holy ones and haven't known it...to perceive them. I know they're there. The Bible says so. And I've encountered Satan. Haven't you? And his hosts.

And so, the existence of angels is fairly well established. Now let's look secondly at the origin of angels. Once upon a time there were no angels. Now what does that mean to you? That angels were...what?...created. They're creatures.

Colossians 1:16 says: "For by Him," talking about Christ, "by Him were all things created that are in heaven, that are in earth," now watch this, "visible and...what?...invisible." Now there have been some things created in heaven. You say - Well, what are they? Angels. You say - Well, I can understand the things in earth, that's us. And I can understand the things that are visible, that's us. But the invisible things in heaven, what are they? Those are angels. And here are different names for angels: thrones, dominions, principalities, powers. All things created by Him for Him. He created angels. And they're called by different terms...thrones, dominions, principalities. Powers, they're also called authorities. Those are names of angels...ranks of angels in the invisible army. And the invisible army is organized. I'm telling you, that army is super-organized. It's all cataloged and ranked. They were made by God. It says right there - they were created by the Lord Jesus Christ.

Back in Nehemiah chapter 9 and verse 6, I'll show you a couple of passages here. Nehemiah 9:6: "Thou even Thou art Lord alone." Now listen, "Thou hast made heaven, the heaven of heavens with all their host." And there is the idea that God created not only heaven but those who occupy it, the angels. "And the earth and all the things that are in it." You've made heaven and everything in it.

You've made earth and everything in it. That is You've created angelic creatures and earthly creatures.

Now it's clear from just those passages that angels were created. Another indication, I think, is in I Timothy...don't look this up, I'll just mention it...I Timothy 6:15 says: "The King of kings and Lord of lords, who only has immortality." The only immortal being who ever...ever exists is...whom? God. And if God is the only one who has immortality, then angels don't. Right? They were created. They had to be created, that's I Timothy 6:15 and 16.

Now Psalm 148, verse 2: "Praise ye Him, all His angels. Praise ye Him all His hosts. Praise ye Him sun and moon. Praise Him all ye stars of light. Praise Him, ye heaven of heavens and ye waters that are above the heavens. Let them praise," that's clouds, "let them praise the name of the Lord," watch, "for He commanded and they were created." Angels in verse 2, they were created by the command of God, just like everything else. Like the clouds and the earth and the sun and the moon and everything else.

You say - John, when were they created? Well, I don't know when. They were created apparently before time began. They were created before man and the earth because they had fallen by Genesis chapter 3, hadn't they? So that Satan could be in the garden already to tempt Eve. But in Job 38:7 it says: "When the morning stars sang together and all the sons of God shouted for joy." Now what are these angels singing about? What are all these angels shouting about? I'll tell you what they're shouting about. Verse 4: "Where wast thou when I laid the foundations of the earth? Declare if you have understanding. Who hath laid the measure of it if you know? Who has stretched the line? Where upon are its foundation fastened? Or who laid its cornerstone when the morning stars sang together?" You see, you've got the...the angelic hosts singing and shouting at the creation, so they had to be created before the creation. So they predate the earth.

Now, there was no procreation among angels. There aren't mother and father angels, and a whole lot of little angels. They were all directly created by God. They have no capacity to reproduce. In Matthew chapter 22 when our Lord was discussing this very issue, He put it simply this way: "Jesus answered and said unto them, You do err not knowing the Scriptures nor the power of God for in the resurrection they neither marry nor are given in marriage but are like the angels of God in heaven." The angels of God in heaven don't marry and they're not given in marriage. That's what He's saying. There is no procreation. God instantly commanded...just think of it, people, just think of this...God instantly commanded and millions of creatures came into existence, each one independently created. They do not reproduce, there is no increase in the number. They do not die. So there's no decrease. The only change came when Revelation 12:4 says - Satan come out of heaven like a dragon and his tail took a third of the stars with him. Apparently a third of those angels fell and became demons. But they're all going to live forever...some in hell, some in heaven. Amazing angels...created instantly by God and everyone created independent of another.

You know what I believe? I believe they're like snowflakes. I don't believe any two are alike. People always want to say - Well, what are the angels like? I suppose whenever you see a scene, have you ever noticed this?...any kind of a painting, all the angels look the same. All the angels look the same. You see a whole string of angels, they're just like - bang-bang-bang- bang, like rubber stamp angels...they all look the...like God said -Okay, I'll take a million with this thing and that - and bang, you know and there they all were. All the cherubim - Boomp -all came out looking the same. No. I don't believe that. And another thing that I believe, and we'll get into this as we study, I believe that in a sense they were created in the image of God. They were created with the...with capacities that we understand like intelligence, and emotion, and will. And they were created as individual as everyone of them. I believe that God by one command out of His mouth, spoke into being millions of creatures that occupy the universe and everyone of them was different than every other one. Listen, if God does it with snowflakes. He can do it with angels...millions of them. They were unique.

People say - Well, how many were there? How many are there? They're the same. They've been around a long time, they've seen a lot of things. How many were there...when God made them? How many are there now? Same amount. It's hard to know how many.

It doesn't tell us how many. There's a whole lot of talk and speculation about it. Let me just give you some thoughts though, at the birth of Christ it says there appeared a multitude of heavenly host. Right? Singing and praising God and....praising God and saying, I should say. There was a multitude. Now that wasn't all of them. That was just part of them in Luke 2. At His arrest Jesus said - If I wanted to I could call on...what?...twelve legions. In the Old Testament, one angel slew 185 thousand. When those natives ran back in the jungle, they did right. The only thing, you don't want to mess with God's angels, they are something.

Now some say - Well, boy, how many legions are there? I don't know how many legions there are. Now other people have offered an interesting possibility. Matthew 18:10, Jesus here is talking about His own and how He loves them and how He cares for them. He says an interesting thing. "Take heed," Matthew 18:10, and He's been talking about, "Take heed that you despise not one of these little ones, for I say unto you, that in heaven," here's the interesting phrase, "their angels do always behold the face of My Father who is in heaven." Don't mess with these because the angels assigned to them keep reporting in what's going on. Why, isn't that interesting? Do you mean everybody's got a group of angels assigned to them? Well, if that's true, some say that there would have to be at least as many angels as there are people and if it's a plural there, there's going to be more angels than people. That would mean there's billions of them.

Others say - No. there are the same number of angels as there are stars. You say - How many stars are there? That doesn't help at all. We know this - there's at least billions. Right? At least billions.

They say - Why would they equate them with the stars? Because often the terms are used interchangeably, they're called the heavenly hosts and sometimes the stars are called the heavenly hosts. And so they're used interchangeably. But there is one verse that helps us to get some idea, and I don't think this is even all, but it's...it's a stab at it. Revelation 5...now just think about this, folks, this is a lot of angels: "And I beheld and I heard the voice of many angels." Does it say I heard the voice of all the angels? I heard the voice of most of the angels? I heard the voice of almost all the angels? No, just of...what?...just many, just a few, you know, some of the many. And how many were there? "And the number of them was 10 thousand times 10 thousand and thousands of thousands."

Now you say - Well, is that how many...what percentage? I have no idea, folks. But there's plenty. And if every little child has a group assigned to them, there's a lot because there are other things to do except take care of little children. I believe that there are billions of angels all over the place in the universe.

In Hebrews 12:22, we put the issue to rest. This is what it says: "You are come to mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem and to an innumerable company of angels." Too many to be...what?...counted. Can't number them. Beyond counting. Think of it. Think of it! Millions of angels, beautiful, mighty. Performing the commands of God. sweeping with great speed through the heavens and the earth, better organized than the armies of Caesar, the armies of Alexander or Napoleon, or Patton or anybody else, cherubim, seraphim, living creatures, thrones, dominions, principalities, authorities, powers, the archangel Michael, the warrior, the champion, the supporting Gabriel.

All of this fantastic host of angelic beings called in the Scripture:sons of the mighty in Psalm 89:6; called sons of God in Job; called gods, as they are literally attached to the supernatural divine level; called holy ones in Psalm 89. They're called stars in Job 38:7; called princes in Daniel 10, these fantastic beings. And all that mighty army created by God in a split second as He wished them into existence. What a God. What a creative God.

You study the Bible and you'll find them in the third heaven, the third heaven is where God lives. You'll find them in the second heaven, traversing the universe. You'll find them in the first heaven which is the atmosphere of the earth. They're in every one of those strata in the revelation of God. Sometimes they're before the throne of God. Sometimes they're in transit like Daniel chapter 10. In Revelation 4 and 5 they're by the throne of God.

In Daniel 10 they're in transit through the universe. And many times they're on the earth. We see it all throughout the Old and the New Testament, don't we?...angels in earth, mingling with men. Fantastic beings.

I'm going to close with some thoughts on what they're like. Thirdly, the nature of angels, just quickly let me give you this. What are they like? First of all they're personal, they are personal. You say - You mean that they're not just sort of a....supernatural robots? No. They're persons. they have personality. You say - Well, what are the attributes that make up personality? Intelligence, emotion and will. You say -Are angels intelligent? They're intelligent all right. They certainly are intelligent.

In Ezekiel 28:12 in describing Lucifer the son of the morning who was a...the highest of angels, it says: "He was the...he was the sum of beauty and full of wisdom." Angels are intelligent.

In Matthew 28:5, "The angel answered and said to the women' Fear not, I know that you seek Jesus who was crucified." That angel figured out what they were doing. He was intelligent. Intelligence communicates. It has conversations. It talks.

In Revelation 17 it is very clear that angels understand the plan of God, they unfold it. "There came one of the seven angels, in 17, who had the seven bowls and talked with me." And this is what he said - Come here and I'll show you something. That's intelligence, the ability to communicate. Now they don't know everything, they're not omniscient like God. In fact, in I Peter chapter l and verse 12 it says: "That the gospel is something which angels desire to look into." There are some things they don't understand. There are some things they have not yet knowledge in. But they're intelligent. Their intelligence is limited but they're intelligent.

Secondly, they have emotion. If...I know they have emotion because in Job 38:7 it says they sang together. And singing is a response to emotion, is it not? They have the emotion of joy. Do you know that the angels respond when one soul comes to Christ? There is joy in heaven over one sinner that repents. They experience joy.

Another thing that I think is an emotion is worship. And angels, for example...in Isaiah 6 - what were they doing? They were standing near the seraphim with their feet covered with two wings, and with two wings they'd fly. and two wings covered their face, and they cried out - Holy, holy, holy. That's an expression of worship and that's an emotion. Angels have the capacity for emotion and that's a trait of personality.

And thirdly, they have the capacity for self-determination or will. God appeals to their wills. For example, in Hebrews 1:6, and again He brings in the first begotten into the world, He says: "And let the angels of God worship Him." He says - Angels, worship that child that is born. The very fact that He invites the angels to do something indicates they had a will to do it. In fact, that's how Satan got into trouble, wasn't it? "I will, I will, I will, I will, I will," five times in Isaiah 14. So they are personalities. They're not just sort of ethereal, aerial spirits floating around without personalities, sort of a...sort of a squishy robot. They are persons. They have personality...every one is different from every other one.

They're unique.

And they're different from men, and that's obvious, because it says in Hebrews 2 that: "Jesus Christ became a man and was made a little lower than...what?...than the angels." They occupy a...a higher state than we do, for this time anyway. Some day we're going to rule over angels. I Corinthians 6:3 says, we'll rule the angels. In Christ we'll be exalted. Why? Because we'll be joint heirs with Christ, we'll be equal with Christ in His inheritance. We are in Christ. We are one spirit with Christ.

So, we in the Kingdom and we in eternity will reign over angels because we'll reign with Christ. Remember in Revelation he says:

"You'll sit with Me in My throne." But for this age and for this time we are a little lower than the angels. They're different than we are. Now both of us are creatures, both limited by time and space, both dependent on God for existence and well-being, both responsible to God and accountable to Him, yet we differ.

Now do you know that their life and their world is just as involved and just as active and just as complex as ours is? And it's going on all around us. The difference is we can't see it but they can see ours. They are spirits and that's the key difference, Hebrews 1:14, "Are they not all ministering spirits? And verse 13 says He's talking about the angels. "Are they not all ministering spirits?"

People say - Do angels have bodies? No, they're spirits. They do not have fleshly bodies like we do. But listen, is your body your personality? No. Your personhood is in your body. And angels are the person without the flesh and blood that we know. You say - Well, do they have some kind of stuff that...what are they? Are they a sheet, or you know, with nothing under it? Like we think of a ghost...what...what are they? Well, you know what I believe? I believe they have some kind of localized capacity. I think they're something...there a spirit something. It isn't a material fleshly body like ours but they have spatial limitations, they're not like God. God is a spirit. Right? But God is everywhere. Is that true? Omnipresent. His spirit fills infinity. Angelic spirits are sort of little spirits. And they're stuck in one spot at a time and they got to go places which means they have some kind of form. It's a form that I can't see and perceive, but nevertheless they have some kind of form. They fly through the heaven in Daniel 9 and Daniel 10 they're shooting around up there, having arguments in space. They're going from one place to the next.

They also have time limitations. Now they're often pictured with wings. Now I'm not convinced that those are literal wings, but that those wings represent speed, that they are symbols of swift obedience, that angels fly to obey the will of God, that they are swift to obey the will of God. Not so much that they're literally flying beings as that...in their spirit capacity. they can move and they speedily move in obedience to God.

Now, I..I..I don't know what kind of form they have but I believe they have some kind of thing and someday we'll be able to go up and say - So, that's what it is. But I don't know...

that's when we get to heaven. But in the meantime I don't know. You say - Well, what makes you think they have anything like that? Well, I Corinthians 15:44 makes me think that because it says this: "There's a natural body and a spiritual body." Oh! A natural body and a spiritual body...well, they must have a spiritual body then, they don't have a natural one. They have some kind of spiritual, celestial bodies.

Now, when they do appear, and sometimes God chooses to let them be manifest, they always appear as a man. There...there's a possibility of one exception, but it's only a possibility. we don't have enough evidence in interpreting the passage to be sure, but every other occasion they always appear in a masculine form. And the masculine pronoun is always used to speak of them. So, sometimes they do...like in Genesis l8, you remember, and Genesis 19, when the angels came to visit Abraham and when they went to the city of Sodom, now they were just handsome men. They sat down with Abraham. They ate.

They walked. They talked. They were made visible and took on some kind of visible form. In Matthew 28:3 the angel that appeared there, it says: "His countenance was like lightning and his raiment was as white as snow." His face was like...like the sun, like lightning. Now that's unusual. And sometimes they appear as men, sometimes they appear as very unusual men. But whenever they appear, their presence produces amazing effects. For example, the natives in the jungle - they ran. The soldiers in the German army that I read from you, - they were panicked. Mental turmoil came on Mary when Gabriel announced the news of the virgin birth. She was shaken. When Zechariah was told that he was going to have a son by the angel, he panicked, and terror gripped his heart...Luke l.

The shepherds to whom the angelic messenger announced the birth of Christ, it says: "They were sore afraid." They panicked...when they saw this host of beings. The Roman soldiers, it says in Matthew 28, who saw the angel roll back the stone, fell over and became like... what?...like dead men when they saw that angel. Now these are different beings. And when they're around strange responses occur because it's a...it's a trip into the other world, so to speak, something very abnormal.

Well, we're going to learn a lot about these glorious realities. Let's pray. Thank You, Father, for just helping us to get a little introduction tonight into this host of beings that You've set aside to serve Yourself and to minister to us. I don't know who the angels are that are attached to me but I want to thank You for the ministry they've had in my life, even unknown to me. And I want to thank You for opening the Word to us in this area, that we might better understand the kind of God You are, and what You're doing in this universe, now centered in...as if the earth were the stage in the redemptive plan, and You sent Your angels to bring it to pass. Thank You, our Father, praise You for our

fellowship tonight in Jesus' name. Amen.

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