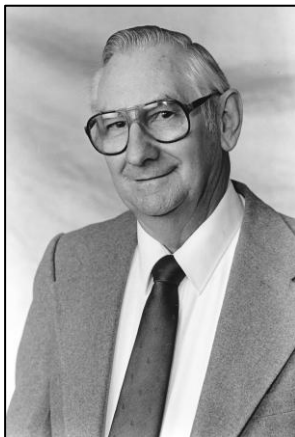




The unabridged writings of Fred Morris, Manna Publications

The Meaning of... **ANGELS**



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MANNA FOR ALL

To the reader: Have your Bible open as you study these notes. Remember that they have not been edited by the UK editorial team but are part of Fred's legacy of Bible teaching literature he wrote after his retirement to the USA in 1990. These notes also serve as the legacy of the late Jim Norman, Manna Publications UK, who checked and formatted and archived Fred's writings for him. Invite a friend to study with you. You will be blessed.



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ANGELS ARE REAL

When the Bible asks the question, "Are not all angels ministering spirits sent to serve those who will inherit salvation?" (Hebrews 1:14), it means exactly what it says. There is no room for argument. This Bible verse from the Book of Hebrews tells us all we really need to know about angels. But many want to know more and God has told us much more about His servants, the angels.

There are good angels and fallen angels. All angels were created spirit beings with superior intelligence and they enjoy their home in heaven (Jude 6). They belong to God's heavenly court and exist to serve and worship Him (Rev 4:5). Night and day they give praises to God Almighty and do His will (Psalm 103:20). David called them "heavenly beings" and "holy ones" (Psalm 89:6-7). But the Bible clearly warns us not to worship them (Col 2:18; Rev 19:10).

Angels help in the ordering of the affairs of men (Dan 12:1), God sends them to earth to tell men and women what is to come (Luke 1:26-27). They carry out God's work (Matt 28:2). Angels were present at Christ's birth and at His resurrection (Matthew 1 and 28). Finally, they will come with Jesus when He returns in glory (Matt 24:30).

Angels are usually described in relation to God. Two powerful angels are named in the bible, Michael and Gabriel. Michael is called "the great Prince" (Dan 12:1) and the leader of the other angels (Rev 12:7). Gabriel is the angel who announced the birth of Jesus (Luke 1:26). They are sometimes referred to as "guardian angels" because of the role they played in protecting God's people.

CHERUBIM AND SERAPHIM

After Adam and Eve were banished from the garden in Eden (Gen 3:24) Cherubim guarded the way back. When God told Moses how to make the Ark of the Covenant, He told Moses to make two Cherubim. They spread their wings over the mercy seat which was the top of the Ark (Exodus 25:17), so that God was said to be "enthroned above the Cherubim" (1 Samuel 4:4; Psalm 80:1). The prophet Isaiah had a vision of the glory of God and of the Lord seated on His throne. "Above Him were Seraphs, each with six wings: With two wings, they covered their faces, with two (wings) they covered their feet, and with two (wings) they were flying through heaven. As they flew, they called to one another, "Holy,, holy, holy is the Lord Almighty; the whole earth is full of His glory" (Isaiah 6:2-4).

Seraphim (the word means fiery or burning ones) attend the throne of God. They also served God's prophet, Isaiah. When he felt himself unclean, Seraphim took a burning coal from the altar and laid it on the prophet's lips, burning away the things pertaining to his fallen nature, thus preparing Isaiah for his ministry.

The Seraphim covered their faces in respect and their feet to show their humility and reverence. And with two wings they flew swiftly to do their Master's bidding (Dan 9:21).

WICKED ANGELS

Heaven was not always peaceful. The Book of Revelation says, "There was war in heaven, Michael and his angels fought against the dragon (Satan) and his angels..." (Rev 12:7).

God was not taken by surprise. He knew there was evil in the heart of one of His leading angels. He knew all about Satan. God had created all the angels with intelligence and the freedom to obey His commands.

Some think Satan was a very beautiful angel and held a high 'office' among the other angel beings. We don't know this for certain, but some believe the prophet Ezekiel wrote of Satan, others believe the prophet was speaking of the king of Tyre (Ezekiel 28:1-10).

The prophet uses the analogy of a sea monster, Leviathan, as a picture of God's enemies. And Satan became the chief of them. His heart rebelled and, in a moment of pride, he sought to take the glory due to God alone.

There was mutiny in heaven and many angels followed Satan. They were cast out of heaven with Satan. Some of them became demon spirits and trouble men and women on earth. Others God put away in secure dungeons to await the Day of Judgment (Jude 6).

These fallen angels did not keep their positions of authority, but abandoned their own home – these He (God) has kept in darkness, bound with everlasting chains for judgment on the great Day."

"Those who would not be servants to their Maker were made captives to His justice" (Matthew Henry, One volume Commentary pp 1968).

THROWN OUT OF HEAVEN

"Michael and his angels fought against the dragon (Satan) and the dragon and his angels fought back. But he (Satan) was not strong enough, and they lost their place in heaven" (Rev 12:7-8).

Some interpret this Scripture as the battle which rages between Satan and his seed and the woman and her seed (Gen 3:15). The Church of Jesus Christ is represented:

1. By the woman, Christ's bride (Rev 12:1).
2. As clothed with the sun, having put on Christ, the Sun of Righteousness. The Church reflects His light.
3. Her feet are standing on the moon. Her hope is in heaven
4. As having on her head a crown of twelve stars. That is the gospel of Jesus Christ preached by the twelve apostles

5. In pain of bringing forth a whole nation of holy people who will witness and worship God alone (Rev 1:6)..

What weapons did the faithful angels use against Satan's angels? I believe they used the same ones that we have to fight against him – the sword of the Spirit which is the word of God" (Eph 6:17; Rev 1:17).

God threw Satan and the angels who followed him out of heaven. God cannot look on evil and these angels had sinned against Him. He who now leads the whole world of men and women astray was "hurled to the earth, and his angels with him" (Rev 12:7). Paul calls him, "the god of this age" and says "he has blinded the minds of unbelievers, so that they cannot see the light of the gospel..." (2 Cor 4:4).

IN THE BEGINNING

Satan came to the beautiful garden in Eden and tried to spoil God's perfect creation. His goal was to take captive the spirits of the man and woman God had created. But nothing takes God by surprise. He had planned Satan's defeat from the beginning.

When Adam and Eve listened to Satan, they turned their backs on their Creator. They rebelled against God's command (Law), just as Satan had done in eternity past. They thought they could live their lives as they pleased and without God!

When they ate "the fruit" they embraced "the tree" and all that was evil. And they gave Satan an open door to their spirits.

At once Satan became their master. They had given themselves up to his control and put themselves under his power and rule. From that day on they were slaves of Satan and of sin (John 8:34; Rom 6:16)!

Satan's kingdom is a kingdom of darkness, violence and cruelty. Jesus said Satan was a murderer and a liar from the beginning (John 8:44). Every evil thing comes from Satan, working evil in men's hearts.

THE LAW OF SIN AND DEATH

God had warned Adam with the words, "You will surely die" (Gen 2:17). Adam may have known physical death, but God's punishment for sin meant so much more than that. The moment Adam and Eve sinned, the whole human race came under the curse of death. Man's spirit was cut off from God. Right then Adam's spirit died, and his body would die in due time.

The Bible says natural man's spirit is "dead in trespasses and sins" (Eph 2:1). Paul said all men are under "the law of sin and death" (Rom 8:2). It is spiritual law that is more certain than any natural law. The law of sin and death keeps every person in bondage from the moment he or she is born. Only God's Spirit can set us free!

The “spirit of life in Christ” can be ours. The Spirit of Life in Christ is stronger than the spirit of death. It overcomes the spirit of death just as Christ overcame death. Peter said this about Jesus Christ, “He was not abandoned to the grave, nor did His body see decay. God has raised this Jesus to life,” eternal life (Acts 2:31:32). After three days Jesus Christ rose again from the dead and appeared to His disciples.

JESUS OVERCAME THE LAW OF DEATH

Jesus Christ overcame the law of death. He is able to save our spirits from death if we trust in Him. The eternal life He gives to those who love Him is greater than the law of death.

When you ask God to forgive your sins, the Holy Spirit will give you a new birth. You will be born again by the Spirit of God. He brings Christ’s life to you.

Jude wrote, “To Him who is able to keep you from falling and to present you before His glorious presence without fault and with great joy – to the only God our Savior, be glory, power and authority...” (Jude 24).

Believe in Jesus Christ (Acts 16:31). Jesus will save you from your sins. He will keep you from sin as you trust Him. And He will take you to heaven when you die.



TALK ABOUT

1. Who was watching when God created the world?
2. What does the word ‘Satan’ mean?
3. What command did God give the man and the woman?
4. Did Adam and Eve obey God? What happened?
5. Who inspires men to do evil (John 8:44)?
6. What is “the law of sin and death (Rom 8:2)?
7. How is “the law of sin and death” like the natural law we call gravity?

JESUS OVERCAME SATAN

When Jesus died on the cross, He defeated Satan and all his demon spirits. “He (Jesus) shared in our humanity so that by His death He might destroy him who holds the power of death – that is, the devil – and free those who all their lives were held in slavery by their fear of death” (Heb 2:15).

Since their master has received a fatal blow which crushed his authority, evil spirits must obey Christ. When believers claim Christ’s shed blood and call on Him using His wonderful name, evil spirits they will always surrender.

Jesus gave His disciples and we who follow Him this authority, to cast out evil spirits. Luke tells us, “When Jesus had called the Twelve together, He gave them power and authority to drive out all demons...” (Luke 9:1). Again, He sent out 72 of His followers (Luke 10:1). They also returned with joy shouting, “Lord, even the demons submit to us in Your name” (Luke 10:17).

ANGELS ARE OUR FRIENDS

It is written in the Bible that some people saw angels. The angel appeared to them in a physical form. These angels carried messages from God, or told people what to do (Judges 6:11-23).. At other times angels appeared as men, performed honourable and helpful tasks and disappeared as quickly as they came.

Manoah was disappointed when an angel brought his wife a message from God. Manoah was away from their home at the time and missed seeing the "awesome" visitor (Judges 13:2-23). Manoah prayed that the angel would come again and bring them further instructions. God answered his prayer and the Angel of the Lord came again to their humble home. He told them how to raise the son that would be born, for God had a special work for him to do..

THE ANGEL OF THE LORD

In the Old Testament a special angel was sent by God for the special purpose of helping the people of Israel (Exodus 23:20-26). This is the same "angel of the Lord who appeared to Moses in the flames of fire from within a bush. Moses saw that although the bush was on fire it did not burn up. So Moses thought, I will go over and see this strange sight" (Exodus 3:2-3).

This special 'angel' is called "the Lord." Bible scholars believe this special angel is an Old Testament appearing of Jesus Christ. What is said of Him in Exodus confirms this conclusion.. Moses and the people are told, "Listen carefully to what He says. Do not rebel against Him; He will not forgive your rebellion" (Ex 23:: 21-22).

ANGELS IN BIBLE TIMES

Since the Bible was written, angels have not changed. Wesley Duewel writes, "God's holy angels are your invisible prayer partners." He points out some examples of how God sent angels to answer the prayers of His saints:

When Abram prayed for his nephew Lot who lived in Sodom. God sent angels to bring Lot and his family out of Sodom before He destroyed the city (Genesis 19).

The prophet Elijah was running from wicked Queen Jezebel, who threatened to kill him. God sent angels twice to take food to Elijah (1 Kings 19:5, 7).

God sent an angel to deliver Jerusalem from her enemies when king Hezekiah and the prophet Isaiah prayed for the city and its inhabitants (2 Chronicles 32:20-21).

When Daniel read the prophecies of Jeremiah and saw visions he did not understand, God sent Gabriel to interpret the vision for him (Dan 8:15-16). Again Daniel fasted and prayed and again god sent Gabriel to assure him that God was in control of affairs in Babylon (Dan 9:3, 20-23).

The Prince of the Persian Kingdom held back the answer to Daniel's prayer. We must conclude that this was a powerful evil being, for the archangel Gabriel was delayed for twenty one days. "Then Michael, one of the chief angels, came to help Gabriel" (Dan 10:10-14).

When the Christians prayed for Peter who was in prison, God sent an angel to loose him from his chains. The angel ordered him to "put on your clothes and sandals." The angel opened the prison doors and led Peter out into the street. Then Peter realized what had happened and he went to the house of Mary the mother of John Mark where they were praying for him (Acts 12:1-17).

THE PRINCE OF THIS WORLD

When the Father spoke from heaven Jesus said, "this voice was for your benefit, not for Mine. Now is the time for judgment on this world; now the prince of this world will be driven out. But I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all men to Myself" (John 12:30-33). Jesus spoke of being lifted up on a cross to die.

Satan and the demon spirits who obey him have great power in this world. A missionary told of casting evil spirits out of a person. They immediately went into a sick man and he died.

My wife and I met a young man who was crippled in his legs. He testified that demons had thrown him under an oncoming bus which ran over his legs.

SATAN IS A DEFEATED FOE

God has kept the promise He made to mankind when Adam and Eve sinned. At that time God cursed Satan and promised the world, "I will put enmity between you and the woman and between your offspring (or seed) and hers; he (Jesus Christ) will crush your head, and you (Satan) will strike His heel. (Gen 3:15; Gal 3:16).

Through Christ's suffering and death He triumphed over Satan and death (Heb 2:14-15). Satan's power and authority were broken at the cross. The writer of the book of Hebrews said, "He too (Jesus Christ) shared in their humanity so that by His death He might destroy him who holds the power of death – that is, the devil – and free those who all their lives were held in slavery by fear of death" (Hebrews 2:14-15).

"Now is the judgment of this world – the crisis or turning point – for the world. That day, when Jesus Christ was lifted up on the cross to die for the sins of all mankind, Judgment was pronounced upon Satan and this world which he had long held in his power. Indeed, the Holy Spirit was sent from heaven to convince the world of guilt because of sin – it is a law term of a judge summing up all the evidence and pronouncing Satan and his world guilty (John 16:8).

And Paul could shout, "Where O death, is your victory? Where, O death, is your sting" (1 Cor 15:55)?

WHEN IT IS TOO LATE

In his gospel, Mark made a remarkable observation: "Whenever the evil spirits saw Him (Jesus), they fell down before Him and cried out, 'You are the Son of God'." (Mark 3:11-12).

Jesus had healed many sick people, so that those with diseases "were pushing forward to touch Him," that they, too, might be healed." The lives of some had been invaded by evil spirits. When these people came close to Jesus, those with evil spirits fell to their knees and the demons begged for mercy. But it was too late – not for the sufferer, but for the demon spirits. Christ commanded the demons not to speak His name or tell who He was, "the Son of God." He did not want the testimony of Satan.

Did Jesus torture them? They feared that He might do this, because of the what had happened to the man at Gadara. When the disciples crossed the Lake of Galilee, they made landfall at the gentile town of Gadara. There they found a man possessed by evil spirits living among the tombs. He was public nuisance number one. The town's people had tried to subdue him with ropes and chains, but he broke them all and ran off (Mark 5:1-20). He was raving mad.

Those who reject Jesus' offer of a free pardon, open themselves to Satan and his demon spirits. The commands of God and the laws of the land are like ropes and chains meant to restrain people who would break the law. But they break the law anyway, because Satan has control over their lives.

Satan is a cruel taskmaster. The man at Gadara cried out in his pain and cut himself with sharp stones. He was a torment to himself and a terror to all who lived in the town nearby.

When the man saw Jesus get out of the boat, "he fell on his knees in front of Him," and would have worshipped Christ, but a spokesman for the evil spirits had control of the man's tongue and shouted, "What do You want with me, Jesus, Son of the Most High God. Swear to God that you won't torture me (or not to drive him out of the man)". For Jesus had said to the evil spirit, 'Come out of this man, you evil spirit'." (Mark 5:7).

WHAT IS YOUR NAME?

Jesus asked the demon spirit, "What is your name?"

"My Name is 'Legion,'" he replied, "for we are many." And the demon spirit begged Jesus again and again not to send them away from that place.

A large herd of pigs was feeding on the nearby hillside. The demons begged Jesus, "Send us among the pigs, allow us to go into them." (Mark 5:11-12).

Jesus gave the demons permission to go into the pigs. Then the herd of pigs rushed down the steep bank into the lake and were drowned. What happened to the evil spirits? We are not told, but we can believe that they

found other bodies to occupy. We conclude that from another parable Jesus told (Luke 11:24-26).

"When an evil spirit comes out of a man," Jesus said, "it goes through (desert) places seeking rest and does not find it. Then it says, 'I will return to the house I left.' When it arrives, it finds the house swept and clean and put in order. Then it goes and takes seven other spirits more wicked than itself, and they go and live there" (Luke 11:24-26).

There is a great difference between the demon "going out" and the demon being "driven out" by Christ's word of power. When Christ or His servants cast a demon out of a person, that demon is commanded not to return (Mark 9:25).

Here the demon went out of the man for a time. Maybe the evil spirit was seeking a better 'house.' The man, freed from the demon spirit, put his life in order. Maybe he turned away from things that formerly held him. His life was cleaner than before, but empty of God's power. So the evil spirit found the man's life open. The first spirit called seven other spirits, even more wicked than himself, to join him and they occupied the same man again. "And the final condition of that man is worse than the first" (Jesus said).

THE LAST DAYS

The apostle Paul and the aged apostle John, both tell us that the activities of demon spirits will increase in the last days. Paul told Timothy that many people would be seduced to follow after Satan. Paul wrote to Pastor Timothy, "The (Holy) Spirit says that in later times some will abandon the faith and follow deceiving spirits and things taught by demons" (1 Timothy 4:1).

In his vision on the Isle of Patmos, John saw judgments being poured out on the earth, He wrote, "Then I saw three evil spirits that looked like frogs; they came up out of the mouth of the dragon, out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet. They are the spirits of demons performing miraculous signs..." (Rev 16:13-14).

In the last days, many will be deceived by the 'miracles' performed by Satan and his demons and the false teaching that comes out of the mouths of false prophets. Timothy and Peter wrote warnings to the believers of their day. They apply just as much to us. And we must take a stand against all preachers of false doctrine.

THE HOLY SPIRIT WILL SHOW YOU THE TRUTH

How will you know false doctrine when it is preached or written? By studying God's word and prayer. Ask the Holy Spirit to show you the truth. Pray against false teachers and expose false teaching whenever you have opportunity.

LIKE THE ANGELS

I don't believe then I'll be like the angels when I get to heaven. The Bible says I will be "like Jesus." Paul wrote, "And just as we have borne the likeness of the earthly man, so we must bear the likeness of the man from heaven (1 Cor 15:49).

I do believe then I will be able to sing like the angels (Rev 7:9).

I have not been able to sing a note here on earth, so with that I will be satisfied?

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