

Spiritual War

- **Vs. 7-9.** In late 90s, angels: all/craze. Bks, movies, TV shows: re angels. In my fam, & many across cntry, ev Sun eve we sat dwn tog to watch "Tchd by Angl." Premise: small grp very human-like angels (Monica & Tess) visit ppl going thru tough time/life, facing tgh prob, and give comftrt/guidnc to make right decsn – like hvnlly counslr. Popl'r show w/clever cinmtc spin on beautfl biblcl truth. But unftrntly this skyrekt'd intrst in angels left ppl entering 21st cent w/some overly-sentmntl & rather inaccrt ideas re angels.
- Today we celbrt minor festvl called STMAA. Going back all way to 400s, Sept 29's been set aside as day to commrt min/God's holy angels amng us. Day called Michaelmas, celbrtn/Mchl – just like Xmas: celbrtn brth/Xp. And on Mchlms we don't wrshp St. Mchl, or any angels – just like don't wrshp St. Jn, even thgh ch named after him. No, Mchlms or festvl STMAA: spcl opp for us remem & give thanks that God cares for & protects us, by own pwr of course, but also thru these holy, hvnlly beings called angels.
- Here's what need know re angels, that you'd nvr learn fr "Tchd by Angl." Angels: not etrn'l way God etrn'l; creatd by God smtm during 6 days/crtn. (Talkd re this 2 wks ago: sermon on armor/God & origin/dvl.) There was a rebelln/hvn; and the rebel (called demons): cast into hell, but left w/pwr to tempt/trouble God's ppl. Good angels, hwvr: confrmd/holiness – no longer able sin. And in this sprtl realm of angels & dmns – realm: invisbl to us but very real & all arnd us – God's angels: hard at work.
- **Heb 1, "All angels [are] minstring sprts sent serve those who'll inherit salvtn" (14). Ps 34, "Angl/ Lord encamps arnd those who fear him" (7). Ps 91, "He will com his angels concerng you guard you in all your ways; they'll lift you up in their hands, so that you'll not strike your ft agnst a stone" (11-12).** Ev day your life you: surrdd by angels God sends to guard/prtct you. You can't see/talk them; and don't alwys know what they're doing. In fact, really have no idea how many catstrphes we've been spard fr spcfcly bec of protctn/angels. Story: accidnt; wonder if angels holdng back full force/semi. In his almghty govrrnc wrld, Lord has decidd use spcl class/creatrs call'd angels to quietly/invsbly guard his most spcl class/creatrs call'd humans. We don't know how many angels; Rev 5 portrays **"Ks upon Ks, and 10Kx10K" (11)** – an incalculbl #. Angels: not have physcl bdy; and even when appear in Scrptr w/human form & male name, angels: neither male/female. Don't marry, have prnts/chldr'n, die – which means: set # angels that does not change. So: same angels that guarded God's ppl in OT then NT: still guarding us today. Been arnd long time; seen lot thngs; observd ev human war/empire/advancmnt; seen ev act of cruelty/kindnss; know humans pretty well! And don't begrdg humans; aren't mad God sent Son redeem humans; praise God for it & are perfly sinless. And it's not as though God needs angels, as if: so overwhlmd w/govrrng unvrs that needs addtnl supprt staff. No, God: fully capbl govrrng unvrs w/o any help. And yet God made decision to create these anglic spirits to serve us. Why? Bec God loves us & wants reassure us: he surrounds us w/whole host of hvnlly defenders.
- There: diff kinds angels: cherbm (like: guardd Grdn/Eden; restd over ark/cvnt; image sewn into tapstrs of tabrncl); & serphm (like Isa saw, crying Holy). You also need know: don't become angl when die. When die: soul, hvn/hell; bdy, dust; and on Last Day, reuntd for etrn'ty; but don't become angl when die. Also, Scrptr does not tch: 1 grdian angl assgnd to you for lifetime. Actly, Scrptr tchs: lot grdian angels surrndng you all/time! Angels: not make-believe; myth, fairy tale fr fantasy wrld. Think: numrous times angels play imp role in story/salvtn. Speak to Mary, Joe, Zech to annc birth J & Jn (Lk 1 & Mt 1). Appear over hills of Bthlm to shphrds on night J's birth – **"great compny hvnlly host" (Lk 2:13)**. Help J after 40-day tempttn (Mt 4:11). Strngthn J while praying in Grdn/Gthsmn (Lk 22:43). Stand watch at empty tomb & tell women J risen (Mt 28). Address discs while J ascndng into hvn (Ac 1). J tght: angels'll accmpny him when returns on Last Day (Mt 25:31) & sepr't wckd fr rights (Mt 13:49). When J arrstd: **"Do you thnk I cannot call on my Fr, and he will at once put at my displ more than 12 legns/angls?" (Mt 26:53)**. And then there's incidnt fr 1st rdng. Prpht Elisha: surrdd by Aramean army, and his srvnt scared witless. But Elisha: **"Don't be afrd. Those who are w/us [God's angels] are more than those who are w/them" [enemy army] (2 Kngs 6:16)**. And when Elisha prayed, Lord actly pulled back curtain for just momnt & allowed them see w/own eyes this pwrfl hvnlly host, this army/angls – horses & chariots of fire. That's what I want see in movie re angels! You're nvr going see that in Touchd by Angl!

- Today, as celbrt Mchlms, fstvl STMAA, reminded: in invisbl realm arnd us, there is a sprtl war taking place. God's angls, under ldrshp Archangl Mchl: fighting on our behalf. Vs. 7-9. When was (better: is) this war fought? This not: casting out of Stn/dmns fr hvn after reblln. No, this war is fought right now, ev day, all arnd us. When read Rev 12, context shows it's talking re NT era, time after J's dth/res. When J died: finished; when rose: dscndd into hell to proclm vctry. J has defeated Stn, and there's nthng can chng that. Hwvr, right now Stn & his evil army: scrmbng, doing whtvr can to destruy your faith & prevnt spread/Gos. Rev 12 depicts celestial battlefield where this war for our souls is fought, btwn time J's res & J's return – NT era. Very last vs Rev 12: **“The drgn was enragd... and went off to wage war vs her [Ch's] offsprng – those who keep God's coms & hold fast their tstmny re J” (17) = bels.** This: sprtl war! Stn can't defeat J, but can defeat you; can devour you, chew up, & spit out into hell – and that's all wants do. Vs. 12bc. And in short time he has btwn now & J-Day, Stn: waging sprtl war.
- But St. Mchl fights back! Stn & Mchl, once holy/hvnly bros, each command armies/angls that battle for our souls. There are only 2 angls (besides Stn) named in Bbl: Gabriel, very active at birth/J, appearing to Zech & Mary (prob Joe); and Mchl. Bk Jude calls: **“archangel” (9)**. Bk Dan calls: **“one of chief princes” (10:13)**; in ch 12: **“At that time, Mchl, the great prince who prtets your ppl, will arise. There'll be a time/distress such as has not hapnd fr begnng/nations until then. But at that time your ppl – evone whose name is found written in the book – will be delivered” (1)**. Here, prince means angl; book is book/life; and this great distress is the sprtl war.
- The sprtl war is an invisible war. But smtms you can see it. I've seen it. I've seen defeats. I've seen bels fall fr faith; heard Xians curse God; watched God's ppl slip into false doctrn, indiffnc, & unbelf – vs. 9b. But I've also seen victories. Whnvr: God baptzs child or adult into fam; God's tchrs, prnts, pstr give instrctn in GW; God's ppl gather tog for wrshp; God's Son feeds his faithful in Sacred Meal; God's discs confess his name and refuse surrender to old evil foe – that is when: Mchl fights; Stn falls. J: **“I saw Stn fall like lightning fr hvn” (Lk 10:18)**. When? Whnvr God's Gos: proclmd & belvd.
- Do not undrstmt magntd of this sprtl war, or fury/enemy, or consqncs/defeat. But also, do not be discrdd or lose hrt. You are surrndd/guarded/protctd by love/pwr/angls of God. They fight for you, under ldrshp of St. Mchl, at command of King/angl, CJ himself. We praise God for commanding his angls to guard us in all our ways (Ps 91). We praise God by joining the angls and singing their songs: *“Glory to God in the highest, and peace to his ppl on earth;” “Holy, holy, holy Lord God of hosts; hvn & earth are full of your glory.”* So sing the songs of angls! For, vs. 10-11a; 12a. Happy Michaelmas!

Revelation 12:7-12

⁷Then war broke out in heaven. Michael and his angels fought against the dragon, and the dragon and his angels fought back. ⁸But he was not strong enough, and they lost their place in heaven. ⁹The great dragon was hurled down—that ancient serpent called the devil, or Satan, who leads the whole world astray. He was hurled to the earth, and his angels with him.

¹⁰Then I heard a loud voice in heaven say: “Now have come the salvation and the power and the kingdom of our God, and the authority of his Messiah. For the accuser of our brothers and sisters, who accuses them before our God day and night, has been hurled down. ¹¹They triumphed over him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony; they did not love their lives so much as to shrink from death. ¹²Therefore rejoice, you heavens and you who dwell in them! But woe to the earth and the sea, because the devil has gone down to you! He is filled with fury, because he knows that his time is short.”

