

FOOTPRINTS OF ANGELS  
IN  
FIELDS OF REVELATION

HENRY W. RANKIN.

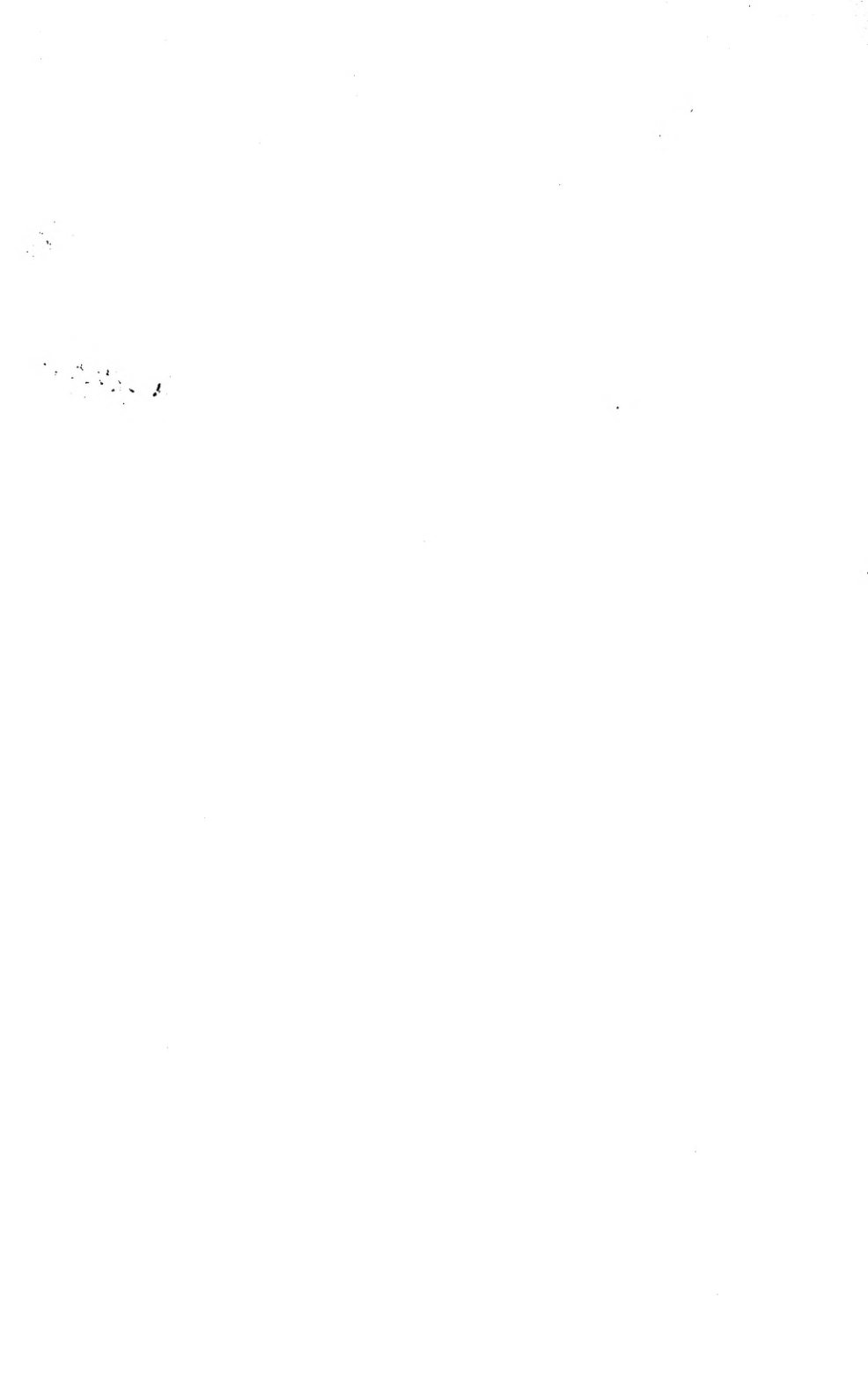
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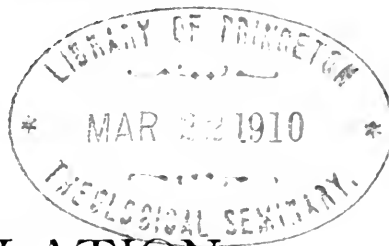
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Foot-prints of angels in  
fields of revelation





# FOOT-PRINTS OF ANGELS

IN



# FIELDS OF REVELATION.

✓ BY

E. A. STOCKMAN,

AUTHOR OF "OUR HOPE," "THE RIGHTFUL RULER OF THE WORLD,"  
"TRANSFIGURATION," "JUSTICE AND MERCY," ETC., ETC.

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"The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that  
fear him, and delivereth them."—Ps. 34: 7.

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## PREFACE.

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For many years the author of this little volume has been deeply interested in the contemplation of angelic ministries, as constituting an important element in the divine government of our world. Common experience recognizes the phenomena of personal manifestations by beings not of the human race. It is believed that the ministry of angels is the true and only solution of such phenomena.

The writer's purpose, however, is not to offer a scientific analysis of the existence and nature of angels, but rather to exhibit their relations to men in the mortal state and their activity in the work of redemption, as revealed in the Sacred Scriptures. And this unpretentious book is offered to the Christian reader in the hope that it may enlighten the doubting, confirm the believing, and comfort the sorrowing.

E. A. S.





## INTRODUCTION.

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That a higher order of beings than man exists somewhere in the universe of God, called angels, is apparent from the frequent reference made of them in the Holy Scriptures. Of their origin we know but very little, but they are doubtless created intelligences; created by God for some wise and noble purpose. It is thought by some that angels are the spirits of dead men; but this cannot be true since angels existed before the creation of man, and sang joyfully at the formation of our earth. They are a higher order of beings than man, since man at his creation was "made a little lower than the angels." How many there are of these wonderful beings we know not, but the Bible represents their number as being very great. In Psalms 68:17 we read, "The chariots of God are twenty thousand, even thousands of angels." At the birth of our Saviour, we are told "there was with the angel a *multitude* of the heavenly host praising God, and saying, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men."

When Peter attempted the defence of his Master with the sword, Jesus chided him, and asked if he did not know he could pray to his Father and he would presently give him "more than twelve legions of angels." (Matt. 26:53.) And when Paul wrote to the Hebrew church he spoke of their number as being innumerable. (Heb. 12:22.)

Some of these angels have been seen by mortal eyes. Seen

by Abraham as he sat in the door of his tent, in the "plains of Mamre," "in the heat of the day;" by Jacob, on his way home after an absence of more than twenty years in Padanaran; by Lot when they came to hasten him from the doomed city; by David when the angel came with judgment upon Israel for their sin; by Balaam when he was pursuing a course that God did not approve; by Zacharias as he ministered at the altar in the temple of God. Now we might multiply instances where these angels have been seen by mortal men, evidently wearing the human form; for Paul admonished the Hebrew church to entertain strangers, for thereby some had "entertained angels unawares." How could this be if they did not look like men? When the angels appeared to Abraham he called them men and besought them to tarry with him all night, and had cake baked and veal cooked and set before them and they did eat. And what marvel? We are told that the Israelites in eating the manna in the wilderness did eat "*angels' food.*"

Their strength and knowledge are superior to man, so that they are called "mighty angels" and are said to "*excel in strength*" and knowledge. This wonderful race of intelligences God has been pleased to employ as man's attendants. "Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?" How many errands of mercy these messengers have been sent on to this world of ours! In the far off ages of the past dispensation a poor, lone, forsaken, disconsolate woman was found by an angel of God, who gave her counsel such as she needed in her hour of great trial. To Abraham an angel appeared just at the point of time when most needed, for the knife had already been raised to take the life of his son. Lot was hastened by angels from

the burning city just in time to save him from the awful conflagration. Jacob wrestled with an angel all night long, and at break of day the angel bestowed on him the blessing he sought. All through Israel's weary journey in the wilderness from Egypt to the land of Canaan an angel of God went before them guiding them in the way. To Gideon an angel came with words of comfort at a time when his heart almost sank within him from the oppression of the enemy, and when David needed reproof for numbering Israel an angel was sent who met him at the threshing-place of Araunah the Jebusite. When Elijah was faint and hungry with his long journey, as he fled in terror from the face of Jezebel, who sought his life, an angel came to strengthen him. When the three young Hebrews were cast into the fiery furnace an angel of God stood by their side to protect them from the burning flames. An angel made Daniel the prophet several visits in hours of his greatest need. Once when in the lion's den an angel came and calmed those ferocious beasts, making them as harmless as gentle lambs; and when he needed skill to understand the mysterious visions of God an angel gave him the understanding he so much desired.

And so throughout the Bible where an account is given of the appearance of angels, whether good or bad, this beautiful little volume, *FOOTPRINTS OF ANGELS IN FIELDS OF REVELATION*, records a most sublime description of them, in the glowing language peculiar to the writer's style. Chapter 1st shows that from the remotest ages there has existed a belief in the existence of angels. Chapter 2nd shows the "dark ministeries of bad angels," and then comes the history of the good and holy angels both in the old and new dispensations, making the book very deeply interesting and instructive. As the reader

passes along from chapter to chapter he will be thrilled with the interesting events in the ministry of the holy angels as portrayed in this book. While reading chapter 7—"Angels at the open grave"—one almost imagines himself at the grave of our Blessed Lord, watching the angels as they roll the stone away, and Jesus comes forth a conqueror of death. One of the most thrillingly interesting themes is the gathering of the saints at the last day by the holy angels.

We say to this book, "Go into all lands, visit all homes, enlighten many minds and comfort many hearts, and when the final settlement shall come may it be shown what good thou hast done among men."

WM. H. MITCHELL.

*Kennebunk, June 1, 1889.*

# CONTENTS.

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	PAGE.
Preface by Author.....	iii.
Introduction by W. H. Mitchell.....	v.
CHAPTER I.	
Belief in the Existence of Angels.....	1
CHAPTER II.	
The Dark Ministries of the Bad Angels.....	9
CHAPTER III.	
The Good Angels.....	24
CHAPTER IV.	
The Holy Angels.....	36
CHAPTER V.	
The Holy Angels in the Christian Age.....	45
CHAPTER VI.	
Holy Angels Strengthen the Son of God.....	54
CHAPTER VII.	
Angels at the Open Grave.....	60
CHAPTER VIII.	
Jesus Went Away, but the Angels are With Us Still....	68
CHAPTER IX.	
An Angel Settles an International Question.....	83

## CHAPTER X.

Angels Assist in the Work of Salvation..... 95

## CHAPTER XI.

Angels in Patmos..... 104

## CHAPTER XII.

An Angel Preaches the Gospel..... 115

## CHAPTER XIII.

The Work of the Angels—The Work of the Spirit..... 129

## CHAPTER XIV.

Angelic Manifestations in Recent Times..... 136

## CHAPTER XV.

Instances of the Visible Appearance of Angels..... 147

## CHAPTER XVI.

An Angel Announces the Coming of the King..... 155

## CHAPTER XVII.

Angels Will Hail the Rising Dead..... 163

## CHAPTER XVIII.

Angels Will Marshal the Risen Dead..... 168

## CHAPTER I.

### Belief in the Existence of Angels.

---

“Are ye forever to your skies departed?  
O, will ye visit our dim world no more?  
Ye, whose bright wings a solemn splendor darted  
Through Eden’s fresh and flowering shades of yore!”  
—*Hemans.*

From the earliest historic ages belief in an order of beings distinct from and superior to the human race is clearly traceable. Finite imagination has graced every realm of nature with thronging intelligences of vast strength, surpassing wisdom, and inimitable beauty. The Greeks saw in all things the skillful fingers of gods and fauns, of nymphs and naiads. Hesiod, who was, next to Homer, the earliest Greek poet, said: “Millions of spiritual creatures walk the earth unseen.” And Socrates believed himself attended by a good *demon*—or knowing one—who gave him notice every morning of any evil that would befall him during the day; and when condemned to death he said, “My demon did not give me notice this morning of any evil to befall me to-day; therefore I cannot regard as any evil my being condemned to die.”

The crude and confused conceptions of the ancient heathens concerning various orders of unseen

beings whom the Greeks termed demons, and the Romans genii, were probably derived from tradition, in part, and partly borrowed from the sacred writings.

But only in the certain and heavenly light of Divine Inspiration is the beautiful and thrilling truth of an intermediate race of created beings, holier, wiser and mightier than men, placed beyond conjecture. What the heathen dimly inferred from the analogies of nature, and the phenomena of experience, the Christian perceives as a clear and divinely revealed fact.

The exact nature of the angelic race, and by what laws of being they subsist, are among the mysteries for whose solution we shall have to wait until the hour when we shall see as we are seen, and know as we are known. Various opinions have been obtained, but they are little more than conjecture. The synod of Nice invested them with a subtle, ethereal, fire-like body; but the Scholastics and Lateran Council of 1215 held to their strict materiality.

But in the light of Scripture intimation, which flashes now and then upon their persons and their ministries, we are led to believe that those wonderful and powerful intelligences possess the faculty of appearing in corporeal forms at will, or to come and go, plan and execute, unperceived by mortal sense; mingling with and variously serving the friends of God on earth without echo of footfall or gleam of wing.

The Holy Word is aglow with frequent reference



to loving ones, whose visitations to our world, and whose delicate ministries to our race suffuse all its pages with a radiance divine. All through the narratives of the Sacred Books angelic voices ring clear and sweet. All along the darksome way, from Paradise faded to Paradise reblooming, angelic footfalls are distinctly heard, in the darkness and the light. All adown the changeful ages angelic hosts, now appearing and now unseen, have led the way of the true and good. With many a dirge of earthly sorrow has come the glad refrain of angelic cheer. Over many a new-made grave of smitten hopes, from seraphic wings have flashed the splendors of resurrection glory. Above the mists of the weary centuries the hills of God are thronged with circling ranks of beings beautiful and pure, who stand one foot on earth and one in heaven. Between two worlds, on unseen golden steps they come and go, as in the patriarch's nightly vision, when he slept at Luz on his pillow of stone. Above us in rank of being, they interpose their loftier skill and strength, and high ministries maintain in our world's career and destinies. Why they visit us and how they serve it were joy to know. And know we may. And in the light of the Holy Oracles let us wonderingly contemplate their interest in our bewildered race and trace their glowing footsteps through the mortal ages.

#### GOOD AND EVIL ANGELS.

An infinitely good and holy God could not have been the creator of evil intelligences, nor in any sense the author of disloyalty to his own throne.

Therefore we must conclude that all the angels were endowed with the same immaculate nature. That the entire race was put under the law of allegiance is forcibly intimated by several Scripture expressions; and that a part of those heavenly hosts proved disloyal is more than implied.

“And angels which kept not their own principality, but left their proper habitation, he hath kept in everlasting bonds under darkness unto the judgment of the great day.” Jude 6. (*R. V.*)

These remarkable but somewhat involved words can mean no less than that the evil angels were once holy, but that for some reason they fell from their primal state and place, and became malevolent in spirit and nature, the enemies of God and of all good beings and things. The exact occasion of their apostacy who can tell? It has been conceived by some that the proclamation of the Creator that Jesus, the Son of God, should be above and over all principalities and powers (Ps. 2: 6, 7), and that his name should be exalted above every name, wounded the self-estimation and awakened the pride of those once immaculate creatures; and that giving way to dark passions they were plunged into open rebellion against the throne and government of the Most High.

This is little more than conjecture, yet it seems quite probable when it is remembered that for countless ages before they had stood next to Jehovah in dignity of being; the name Satan, Lucifer, or Michael signifying “*who is like God.*” Possibly, touched by some inexplicable feeling of treasonable

ambition at the mention of one to come who should be nearer the throne than himself, he said, "I too will have my throne. I will be equal to the Most High."

But what a mighty fall was there!—a fall from heaven to hell. What cutting disappointment! What bitter, burning chagrin, giving birth to rage and hate co-equal with their knowledge and their strength! And in that fall two races and a glorious world went down.

However great and terrible the moral change wrought in the nature of the fallen angels by their lapse into rebellion may have been, there is no reason to suppose that they suffered any diminution of knowledge or power, or any essential change of intellectual forces. The Scriptures habitually intimate that they are still possessed of vast mental foresight and cunning, coupled with immense bodily strength. That they understand the laws of matter and mind, and are able to control physical forces we cannot doubt. We see Lucifer wielding the wind and the lightning in his persecution of Job, and transporting the Saviour from the wilderness to the pinnacle of the temple, and thence to the top of an "exceeding high mountain;" and the miracles wrought by him in Egypt in imitation of those performed by Moses show his wonderful mastery of the physical elements. And Paul referring to the wicked one says: "Whose coming is after the *working* of Satan, with *all power* and signs and lying *wonders*;" and John ascribes to the "spirits of devils" the power to work miracles. And solemnly

does Inspiration warn us that we "wrestle against principalities and powers, and spiritual wickedness in *high* places." A most startling element of their power over weaker minds is disclosed in their ability to conceal their true character, appearing as holy things, almost deceiving the "very elect." They can transform themselves, at will, into the appearance of "angels of light," or loyal angels, and so artfully personate the sons of God that, by the unwary, Lucifer may be taken for Gabriel.

And it must also be remembered that the hordes of treason-stricken beings act not singly and at wild random, but in close unity of evil. What binds them together and inspires allegiance to their infernal leader, who can tell? But that,

"Devil with devil damned  
Firm concord holds,"

there is much reason to believe. Throughout the Scriptures one of the many fallen spirits, by way of distinction and eminence, is designated "the devil," "Apollyon," "the old serpent," "the angel of the bottomless pit," "the prince of darkness," "the god of this world." And of this chief of the confederacy of rebellion St. Paul affirms, "The whole world lieth in the wicked *one*."

Doubtless the great instigator of the revolt in heaven was an angel of high rank, one of the arch-angels, a very "son of the morning," who by his position near the throne, and his recognized superiority, was able to lead into rebellion and treason a large number of the heavenly hosts, who, under his leadership, were and are thoroughly organized in

their work of hate and rage and ruin. He, the unblushing, stupendous traitor, is their high priest of crime against the *Throne*, against the loyal seraphs, against the Christ, against all goodness; the captain of their dark damnation. Under his well skilled mastery and chieftainship all the sons of night are marshalled in their incessant, hellish invasion of our world and ruin of our race.

That the vast army of fiendish insurgents are divided into companies, and classed according to their skill in dark designs, and their strength to execute their great leader's will, is more than probable. Being finite creatures, and not omnipresent, though swift of unseen wing as lightning's flash, they cannot assault, in full force, all points at once, though they may be massed, for special purposes, with great rapidity. Scattered through all nations, cognizant of all notable events, in attendance at all courts, standing behind all thrones, watching all human leaders in church and state, marching with every general, entering the chancel with every priest—all in obedience to the dictates of the chief of devils—

“With rage that never ends,  
Their hellish arts they try;  
Legions of dire, malicious fiends,  
And spirits énthroned on high.”

It was an ancient and prevailing opinion among both Jews and Christians that, beside the general and organized malevolence of evil spirits, every man is personally attended by a good and a bad angel. While this can scarcely be proved by direct Scripture declaration, it seems not improbable that,

filled with black envy and furious hate towards the "angels of light," who refused to be betrayed into rebellion by Apollyon, the fallen ones should take special delight in seeking to countervail the gracious ministries of the shining ones sent forth of God to serve his elect. The thought that every *guardian* angel, tenderly caring for his precious trust, is shadowed and followed by a demon, seeking to prevent the intended blessing, may well awaken feelings of insecurity, o'ermastered by a grateful sense of safety; for our God and his holy angels are infinitely wiser and mightier than Satan and his angels. And ever repeating the prayer put into our lips by Bishop Kent, we may dismiss all fears:

"O. may thy angels, while I sleep,  
Around my bed their vigils keep;  
Their love angelical instill,  
Stop every avenue of ill.  
May they celestial joys rehearse,  
And thought to thought with me converse."

But this is only a glance at the dark and frightful work of the *bad* angels. We will add another chapter to this dismal theme, and then, dropping the terror out of our speech, we will lift up our eyes to the hills of God and survey with delight the ministries of the *holy* ones.

## CHAPTER II.

### **The Dark Ministries of the Bad Angels.**

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The facts of history concur with the statements of revelation in forcing upon us the unwelcome conviction that the human race is subject to the malevolent influence of an organized and all-pervading demonism. Alike in the career of nations and in the phenomena of personal destiny the presence of demoniacal skill and power is often prominent, frequently dominant, always evil.

Not content with openly and violently breaking allegiance to the Throne, the bad angels conspired to oppose and defeat, in every possible way, to every possible extent, the purposes and government of Jehovah, from whose presence they have been cast down into darkness, until the judgment of the great day. "Reserved in chains"—held under divinely-imposed limitation—they were still left free to prosecute their dark designs in those that "yield themselves servants to obey" their fiendish will and way.

In undiminished possession of their intelligence and strength they constantly assault us in every weakness; through every avenue; by every means;

by methods foul or fair ; in haggard shapes of taunting guilt, in garbs of light, falsely assumed ; in darkness when we know it not ; in open day when least suspected.

“A constant watch they keep ;  
They eye us night and day ;  
They never slumber, never sleep,  
Lest they should lose their prey.”

Whom they cannot destroy they cease not to worry, torment. They inspire evil tempers ; arouse dark passions ; instill ill will ; beget malice, envy ; impose care, fear, distrust ; suggest deceit, fraud, and all forms of crime. As one has said, “There is no evil done, or spoken, or thought without the assistance of the devil.”

Just when in the history of the universe their revolt and rebellion occurred we do not know ; or what desolation they may have wrought in other worlds than ours we may not even conjecture ; but clear it is that in the creation of the human race, endowed with perfect freedom of will, and placed under law of obedience, and accessible to temptation, the arch devil, the fallen “son of the morning,” saw opportunity most rare for the appliance of his angelic wisdom and infernal malice, in an attempt at once specious and audacious, to thwart the holy will of God and plunge untold millions of sentient beings, together with a beautiful creation fashioned for their happiness, into miseries of which only fiends, who once were angels, could have conceived. And amidst the faded splendors of the primal Eden the first foot-prints of the malign invader of our world are found. Well may he boast that his earliest and



all-sweeping triumph was won under the shadow of the cherubic wings.

Inspired by his much coveted, but scarcely expected success, he *did* not and *does* not fail to follow up his vast victory; reaping, through all the ages, the black spoils of his infernal triumph. Down through the suffering centuries the mocking voices of his confederate fiends are heard; and the tumult of his crimson chariot wheels breaks the peace of all lands.

When the first two brothers, born under the same roof of flowers, and cradled in the same mother's bosom, went forth together with their offerings to the Lord, the bad angel, with unheard steps, went forth with them, whispering the while a false thought to Cain, arousing dark passions in his heart, then plunging him into the ignominy of the first murderer's guilt and shame.

Moreover, on the day that the sons of God came to present themselves before the Most High, the chief of the evil angels came also among them, in quest of some victim of his malicious acts. And, being permitted by the Lord God, he boldly tried his destructive power upon the only perfect man in all the earth. At one fell stroke he robbed Job of all his oxen and asses, and slew all his servants with the edge of the sword. And before the holy man had time to recover from the terrible shock he called fire down from heaven and burned up all his sheep, and the shepherds that kept them. And then with another blow he destroyed all his camels, and their keepers. And, his satanic hate sharp-

ened by the sight of blood, he raised the winds of the wilderness, and therein smote down the house wherein all Job's children were gleefully assembled, and slew them all. And then in fiendish delight he *looked* and *listened* as the desolate patriarch bowed himself to the ground while his irrepressible grief broke forth in the sorrowful lament, "*Naked* came I out of my mother's womb, and *naked* shall I return thither." His hellish hate not even yet satiated, and enraged afresh that his robbed and bereaved victim had not surrendered his integrity and trust in God, by further permission he renewed his cruel assault on the person of his anguish-smitten subject. From the sole of his feet to the crown of his head he smote him with sore, corrupting, tormenting boils. And as the forlorn and heart-crushed servant of God—his property all gone, his sons and daughters every one slain, himself an object of disgust—betook himself to the ash heaps for relief, this relentless fallen angel, this very Apollyon of treason against Heaven, smiled a fiendish smile and said, I will smite his broken heart with one blow more, and it shall be the heaviest of them all. I will touch his lacerated soul in its tenderest, sorest spot. And then he frenzied his hitherto faithful and loving wife, with a revolting sense of her husband's forsaken and disgusting condition, and put into her once caressing lips the barbed dagger of distrusting and discarding words: "*Renounce God, and die.*"

And *this* is *he*—the chief of the disloyal angels, the fallen seraphs, the spirits of the pit, the hordes

of darkness, the black army of demons, who from Job's time till now have never slumbered nor slept, but day and night, in the darkness and in the open day, infest our world and prosecute with tireless infernal zeal and zest their black-hearted plans to torture and destroy.

And now the head of the fallen ones tries his hand with a king of Israel for a subject and a witch for a medium. A strange conjunction of characters! Saul was first possessed by a spirit of periodical lunacy, or madness. This led him into other follies, and cut him off from access to divine guidance. And when a critical moment in his warlike career came, he was instigated by satanic influence to apply to a necromancer for information and direction, which resulted in the defeat of the armies of Israel and the death of Saul and both his sons. Thus the bad angels accomplished a great *national* calamity.

The resurrection of the dead must be very especially annoying to the apostate angels, for the introduction of death was a chief purpose and a great triumph of their invasion of paradise; and the resurrection annuls that dark phase of their wicked work. And so, when Michael was sent from Heaven to superintend the resurrection of Moses from his royal grave among the cliffs of Nebo, as the prototype of the general resurrection, the chief of the fallen hosts appeared on the spot and sharply contended with him over the body of the great leader of Israel, doubtless insisting that *he* had "the power of death" until probation shall end and the judg-

ment shall sit, and that God himself had no right to revive any of the dead "before the time." And it was only when the Almighty rebuked his insolent assumption that he quit the field and left Michael to fulfill his grand commission.

This instance of audacious interference with the purposes of the Almighty forcibly suggests that the chief of devils, by the aid of his myriad associates, knows what is transpiring in our world, and watches with sleepless jealousy the progress of events, surely discerning coming occasions for some bold attempt to defeat the success of mercy and truth. And in the resurrection of Moses he saw the prophecy of that hour when all the millions of our race, slain and consigned to *hades* as the result of his first foul falsehood, shall awake and arise; and *death*, and himself who had and sought to retain the power of death, should be utterly destroyed; and to prevent that great antecedent resurrection he measured swords with Michael over the first opened tomb of earth. But he was vanquished, and Moses arose and went forth to gloriously enact his pre-eminent part in the more than half heavenly scenes on Tabor.

Of all classes of men employed by the Heavenly Father in the work of redemption, none are more fiercely hated by the wicked angels than the whole line of the prophets. For from the first to the last they foretell the final and eternal overthrow and utter extinction of the "powers of darkness," the "spirits of disobedience."

When Daniel had obtained audience with Heaven,

and a loyal angel was sent to give him "skill and understanding," and to reveal to him coming events of the greatest moment to his people Israel and to the saints of all time, the "prince of the kingdom of Persia," the *evil angel* specially appointed to influence and, if possible, to control the "Persian world power to which Israel was then subject"—met the holy angel at the Persian court, and fiercely resisted his efforts to influence the rulers to allow Israel's restoration; and also, perhaps, sought to retard the holy one's visit to the waiting prophet. For twenty-one days did the arch traitor press his opposing skill and power against the messenger of the Lord. And only when Michael, the archangel—the same who contended with the demon over the body of Moses—came to the assistance of his fellow angel, was the persistent spirit of darkness repulsed and Jehovah's purpose accomplished.

These few instances selected from Old Testament history are quite sufficient to demonstrate the reality and potency of the interference of bad angels, both in personal experience and destiny, and in the broader and graver issues of state.

And yet, startled as we well may be at this merest glance at the blackness and darkness of the two well laid plots and plans of fiendish cunning and strength, there is much more that ought to be said and pondered, especially as related to Christian history, and to our own times.

#### WORK OF THE BAD ANGELS IN THE CHRISTIAN AGE.

The old dispensation closed darkly and gloomily for the hope of Israel, but auspiciously for the em-

pire of darkness. Satanic dominance had fatally demoralized the house of David. The enemies of Judah held sway over the royal people and city. All the nations of the world were governed by one sceptre, and that the sceptre of Rome; always oppressive, always cruel, *often* bloody Rome. And the dawn of the new dispensation awakened afresh the jealous hate and dark forebodings of the primal apostate, and startled with peculiar alarm the whole confederacy of evil. In the earliest light of the gospel era they saw the gleam of the power and glory of Messiah's kingdom, which they understood had been promised by Jehovah and predicted by all the ancient prophets; and in the possible triumph of the Nazarene they saw their own discomfiture and final extinction; for they knew who Jesus was and whence he came, and that he was "manifested to destroy the works of the devil." Their chief once said to Christ, "Art thou come to destroy us? I know thee whom thou art; the Holy One of God."

Well they knew their only chance to perpetuate their power or maintain their personal existence was in some well laid fiendish strategy to destroy or traduce the Son of God, and circumvent his redemptive undertaking. Their first plot was to destroy the Christ in his mother's arms by means of the inflamed jealousy of the cruel Herod. Foiled in this by the interference of a good angel, and unable to affect the Son of Mary by any evil disease, or to possess him with any evil spirit, they awaited his entrance upon his public ministry. Doubtless, in curious envy, they thronged, unseen of men, the

green shores of the Jordan, but were not allowed to mar the beauty and holiness of the baptismal scene by so much as a whisper of their malicious lips or a motion of their black wings.

But as soon as our Lord assumed the functions of his redemptive priesthood, before he had opened his lips to teach, or wrought a single miracle, the arch deceiver confronted him, full armed with his ancient cunning and well dissembled falsehood. In the midst of a gloomy Judean desert, surrounded by howling "wild beasts"—fit place and circumstance for foul satanic assault—face to face they stood, the immaculate and anointed Son of God, and the black-hearted traitor, the chief of the fallen angels. And that encounter was as real and personal as was that in Eden ; as literal as the meeting of Napoleon and Wellington at Waterloo. To deny that Apollyon was really there, is to deny that Jesus was there, thus turning the whole account into an allegory.

For forty terrible days the Michael of the dark world plied his hellish arts to seduce the second Adam as he had seduced the first. Could he with subtlety supreme but induce the High Priest of our redemption to distrust the divinity of his commission, audibly bestowed on him at the baptism ; could he but wring from his breast, by the torture of lying words, the consciousness that he was the "Son of the living God ;" could he only awaken in his mind the dim shadow of one dark doubt, the assault would be a success far greater than that achieved in paradise, in the morning of the world.

All his subtlety of speech, fair and foul; all his plausibility of reasoning, failing to shake the constancy of the Prince of life, at the end of his long fasting, when hunger in its resistless, bewildering power returned upon him, the practical chief of the devils suddenly changed his method of attack, and with beguiling phrase sought to plunge the Saviour into damning presumption. "If thou be the Son of God," demonstrate thy divinity and godlike power by commanding that "these stones be made bread," he said.

Foiled still, as a last resort he re-attempts the bold, audacious strategy that had served his malign intent so well upon the first pair in the garden. And, throwing off all disguise he boldly assumes rivalry with God himself in his claims to homage and worship. To Eve and Adam he presented the alluring promise of becoming gods themselves. To Jesus he offers the immediate possession and rulership of all the kingdoms of the world, and their untold glory, for one moment of homage. Standing upon an exceeding high mountain, he pointed out the enchanting loveliness of all the surrounding country, the flowering beauty of hill and vale, and, by some panoramic skill, brought into ravishing view the glory of "all the kingdoms of the world;" then, recklessly assuming entire control and full right of conveyance, he held the glittering temptation before the eyes of Christ, and offered to give him all if he would by one brief overt act confess his satanic princeliness. Had he succeeded he would, through the defection of the second Adam, have



wrecked the plan and purpose of redemption; as, through the surrender of the first Adam, he wrecked the primal bliss of both man and nature, and thereby would have prolonged the tenure of his own existence and the dominance of his empire of treason and ruin. And in this whole adroitly planned and cunningly prosecuted conflict for the seduction and capture of the "Captain of our salvation," we see the hand of an unmistakably personal being—the head and chief of the infernal confederacy of apostate angels.

Utterly defeated in every attempt to corrupt the Saviour or shake his confidence in his divine mission for the salvation of the just, and the extinction of the wicked—the destruction of the "work of the devil" and the devil himself—the next strategy of the arch fiend was to cut off his triumph by procuring his premature death while his work was in its incipient stages. For this he found a ready and pliant agent in the person of one of the chosen discipleship, himself an apostate, and so like the fallen ones that he is called "a devil." Every fiend has his Judas. "Then entered Satan into Judas, surnamed Iscariot, being one of the twelve. And he went his way and communed with the chief priests and captains how he might betray him unto them."

But when Christ had risen from the dead and ascended to the court in heaven, it flashed like consuming lightning on the whole race of the fallen sons of light, that the encounters of their chief with the personal Jesus had ended in ignominious defeat and disaster. And then they knew their fate was

sealed ; the die of their damnation was cast. And it only remained to them to hunt and worry and torment the friends of God until the appointed time.

And, remembering his success of infamy in be-reaving and torturing Job, the doomed leader of the doomed army of the apostates massed his full force upon the exposed followers of the ascended Saviour. And the startling phenomena of demonism which so saddened the history of the early Christian church furnishes the painful proof of the reality and terrible power of bad angels over the minds and bodies of men.

Nor has their malign energy ceased or abated as the centuries have come and gone. It was their malice and hate, firing the hearts of their willing human allies, that drenched the church in the blood of her martyrs for more than a thousand years. It was their infernal ingenuity, finding ready agents in Pagan and Papal Rome, that invented the *rack*, the *thumb-screw*, the *guillotine*. It was their fiendish malevolence that conceived and organized and inspired the bloodthirsty Inquisition. It was their damning hate, through their zealous Roman co-conspirators, that made the tortures enacted by the Papacy possible. They smiled and laughed when the crackling flames besported themselves with the dying agonies of Ridley and Latimer and their heroic associates at the stake. They grinned and danced in hellish glee while the gardens of Nero—their favorite and eager vicegerent—were lighted by the blazing bodies of the witnesses of God. They hold high jubilee, through all their dark caverns,

while Leo the Pope is holding jubilee at Rome. The Vatican of the Holy See is but an adjunct of their Vatican in the Pit. The arch devil and the arch Romanist are no strangers. All the bulls issued from the seven-hilled city are countersigned by the chief of the apostate angels. It is but one short *step* from Rome to Gehenna.

As the closing scene of human probation and satanic existence approaches, we might expect an appalling increase of demoniacal manifestation. The words of revelation are very significant: "Woe for the earth and for the sea ; because the devil is gone down unto you, having great wrath, knowing that his *time* is short." And that these times are distinguished by unparalleled displays of evil agencies is frightfully apparent. They affect us in many ways. As Satan covered Job with excruciating sores, and bound a daughter of Abraham so that she could not raise herself up for eighteen years (Luke 13 : 16), so now much of the suffering from diseases and many cases of lunacy and insanity are doubtless produced, directly or indirectly, by evil angels. They are full of bitter envy and burning revenge towards all classes of human beings ; and they rest not day nor night in their cruel work of afflicting and tormenting all within their reach. It is more than probable that many of the accidents and physical calamities which befall us are produced by their power over material forces. That the hurricanes and cyclones are fanned into destructive fury by their black wings we may well believe. And atmospheric disturbances, producing new forms of

disease which baffle the skill of the doctors, are doubtless the baleful work of the "prince of the power of the air."

Familiar with the laws which govern mental conditions, the fallen hosts ply all their specious arts to excite personal suspicions and animosities, and to create national resentments and bloody conflicts, their chief delight being to compass the destruction of peace and the banishment of concord from the earth; to embitter the poor children of sin and sorrow against each other, and turn our world into an arena of strife and crime.

Another and a foremost achievement of the wicked angels is the propagation of false doctrines. Their work began with a colossal lie, and has been prosecuted in stupendous deception. The Holy Oracles give special warning against "DOCTRINES of devils," as one of the signs of the judgment day at hand. Necromancy, incantation and witchcraft were the fruit of their deceitful inspiration in the ancient years, as Spiritualism and Christian Science are in our times.

But supremely do they revel in the criminal domain. They foster falsehood, incite revenge, fan jealousy, beget quarrels, help on thefts, robbery and arson, further divorces, plan defalcations, instigate murders. They run the saloons and edit the *Police News*.

Their masterpiece of wrathful power will be witnessed in their leadership of the wicked nations, living and dead, in the universal fray, with whose terrific scenes of unrestrained and crimson carnage

our doomed world's tragical history will close. The saints will be safely shielded beyond the reach of their fiery breath, while they will be left to wreak their final vengeance on the myriad victims of their cruel deceit and fiendish malice. But fire will come down from God out of heaven and destroy them all. The chief and personal leader of the fallen seraphs, with his numerous followers and confederates in treason and rebellion, and all the poor children of men who have yielded consent to his dark devices and followed his black banners, will be consumed together by the devouring flames; and all the loyal angels and all the ransomed saints will join in high acclaim of joy that heaven and earth are forever freed from the malicious ministries of the evil angels.

“AND THE GOD OF PEACE SHALL BRUISE SATAN UNDER YOUR FEET SHORTLY.”

## CHAPTER III.

### The Good Angels.

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“Yet by your shining eyes not all forsaken,  
Man wandered from his Paradise away ;  
Ye, from forgetfulness his heart to waken,  
Came down, high guests, in many a later day ;  
And with the patriarchs, under vine or oak,  
Midst noontide calm or hush of evening, *spoke.*”

The Heavenly Father governs his universe not by sovereign fiat alone, but largely by chosen and commissioned messengers, royal ministers, plenipotentiaries direct from the throne and court in heaven ; invested with adequate power to instruct, deliver, guide and bless the children of God, in their tearful and exposed pilgrimage on earth. Ten thousand times ten thousand holy beings wait, and ever wait, on poised and ready wing, before the Almighty Presence, eager to fly on heavenly behests to any world, to every race. In the darkness and in the light, when men sleep and when they wake, in the hour of peace and in the fiery shock of arms, incessantly they come and go, unerringly fulfilling the will of Him who sitteth on the throne. Nor are they merely obsequious servants of the sovereign God, but are instinct with lofty interest in all the issues of the divine government, in all the purposes

and plans of truth and grace. With seraphic wonder they watch the unfoldings of the Infinite wisdom and goodness, and glow with holy delight in the mighty trusts to which they are elected. When Jehovah unveiled to their enraptured sight the splendors of his finished creations, all their shining ranks broke forth in shouts of joy. And ever from that august moment, even unto these dark hours, they have high ministries performed between heaven and earth.

*Are the good angels specially interested in the good of earth! And why?*

It was by an apostate of their own race and rank that the pure and fair creatures of Paradise were seduced. The terrible curse and blight of sin and pain and death was wrought by the malicious skill of angelic envy. As the unerring seraphs survey the ceaseless sorrows of our world, they cannot but feel most humiliating shame and sadness that those who were once pure and loyal as themselves, their own blissful associates, blest with the smiles of the same loving Creator, should have been the betrayers of a race fashioned for supreme delights.

By the invasion of Eden all the holy angels were defamed. And naturally they are intensely anxious to aid in undoing the cruel work of the spirits of darkness. It must afford them peculiar pleasure to be able to defeat, in any measure, the hateful designs and prevent the malevolent intent of the angelic traitors. By all the instincts of self-vindication, by all the pride of untainted loyalty, by all their infinite hatred of rebellion, by all their love of

purity and peace, by their supreme devotion to the hope of a universe redeemed, they joyfully bring all their wisdom and strength and skill into unceasing conflict with the powers of darkness.

Moreover, their holy natures throb with pity and compassion for the poor victims of satanic deception; and their love for those who are struggling for redemption knows no limit. With vast knowledge of the human heart and mind, and clear foresight of the adroit devices of the devil, they keenly sympathize with us in our exposure to temptation and assault, and gladly interpose their higher skill and power to strike the poisoned darts from the uplifted hand of the cruel and crafty foe. In bands and troops, led by their invincible Michael, they sorely press the traitor hordes on every field, and crown many a sanguine battle with triumph for the friends of God.

The holy angels are specially interested in our race as the objects of the Saviour's love and redemptive work. They are indissolubly bound to Christ by the profoundest affections of their being. They joined hands in holy worship around the cradle of his infancy. They love and adore him as the only Son of God. Their admiration is boundless as they see *in* him the promised and certain victor of the evil angels, and the rightful and mighty ruler of our alien world. In lofty acclaim, which startles the dark conclave of the demons, they cast their crowns at Jesus' feet, and enter with keen delight into his divinely conceived movement for the defeat of the arch-fiend and the ransom and recovery of his



deluded followers. Christ's infinite love of men they deeply share; and in his conquests and kingship their highest and holiest aspirations are crowned. As allies of Jesus they are the "ministering spirits" of the saints, sent forth to "serve" the heirs of salvation.

*The good angels are an host.* Though the fallen ones are *legion*, their secession did not seriously decimate the holy race. The loyal angels are spoken of in Scripture in terms which imply that their number baffles human computation. Jesus said he could in an instant call to his aid more than twelve legions. They by far outnumber the traitors. There are more of them than there are of righteous men, living and dead. They can fortify every point of assault, "*encamp*" around all who fear God, escort all the armies of the saints, hold an invincible shield over all the messengers of truth, cover with their flashing cimeters every sad, weeping, friendless orphan, furnish a body guard for every Lazarus, keep vigil at every sick bed, supply pall bearers for every funeral cortege, and stand sentinel at every grave, and then have a reserved force of ten thousand times ten thousand, even thousands of thousands.

*The good angels are very strong.* Finite beings, infinitely below their Creator, they are inconceivably more powerful than men. Each one of them has the strength of an hundred Hercules. A single one of them by his good right arm smote an hundred and eighty-five thousand Assyrians in one night; and one angel destroyed in the space of a

few hours, "all the first-born of Egypt, both of man and beast." And in Revelation four angels are said "to hold the four winds of heaven." The Holy Book declares that they "*excel* in strength." "*Excel*" not God nor Christ, but all finite beings; even the apostate angels; for a loyal archangel must possess more power than an "*archangel ruined*." We may not doubt that these first-born children of light could, if Jehovah's name or cause required it, dissolve our entire planetary system, crush the whole frame of nature, and pile wrecked worlds in heaps. Yet the tender infant of days is as safe in their keeping, as if it were slumbering in the bosom of God.

The wisdom and knowledge of the holy angels must be equal to their strength. Created in type of intelligence next to that of the Infinite, and schooled in the developments of providence for at least six thousand years, what Pisgahs of knowledge they must have reached who can conceive? Familiar with the works of God, constant messengers to all worlds, how vast their understanding of natural and sentient forces! How easily they comprehend the circumstances and even the hidden thoughts of men and fiends!

And then their scope of vision! A few years since there was a boy in Kentucky, born with a telescopic eye. He could look into the face of the planets without the aid of a glass, and describe their surfaces with wonderful accuracy. It was called a freak of nature; but we believe it was a slight intimation of the primal power of human vis-

ion. But what was that compared to the grasp of an angel's eye! The scope of seraphic vision, undimmed by the mists of evil, unclouded by the night of sin! The good angels are not omniscient. But that they can sweep with a single glance

“Tenfold the length of this terrene”

who dares to doubt?

And these are they, the guardians of the good of earth; the sleepless watchers of our lives and destinies: sentinels at the gates of danger; cherubim with flaming sword, flashing every way in the face of all invaders of our peace; the benign messengers sent from Heaven to guide homeward the wandering children of sorrow. Though they salute us with no audible voices, and cheer us by no visible signs, their presence and their ministries are as real as when they announced the birth of Jesus with song and flashing glory.

#### THE MINISTRY OF ANGELS IN THE OLD TESTAMENT.

The “service” of the holy angels in the government and redemption of our world is as clearly a subject of Old Testament record as the exodus, the call of Abram, or the creation of man. The inspired history of pre-Messianic times is replete with the presence and power of the seraphic race. They are the aid-de-camps of the Throne; the unrecognized plenipotentiaries of all courts and councils; often the divinely commissioned arbiters of the destiny of nations and of men. They guide, protect, deliver, punish, destroy. The patriarchal ages knew their voices, and were familiar with their visitations.

The demons recognized and dreaded their avenging hand.

It is highly probable that in all the instances, narrated in the first fifteen chapters of Genesis, in which the Lord is said to have spoken to Noah, Lot and Abraham, the *audible voice* was that of an angel—Jehovah speaking by his commissioned messengers. It may be assumed without violence to the Sacred Oracles that God has usually *spoken* to man by his holy angels, excepting when he has spoken by the prophets, or by his Son. As in Heb. 2: 2, "If the word *spoken* by angels was steadfast, and every transgression received a just recompense of reward," the reference being, without doubt, to what the Lord said to Noah and Lot.

But the earliest and one of the most pathetic cases of explicitly stated angelic intervention is that of Hagar, twice banished by the jealousy of her mistress. In the desolate desert, alone with her ill-starred boy, the bread and water exhausted, she sat apart from her starving child, her mother's heart unable to bear the pangs of his terrible death, and sent into the veiled heavens her cry of wild despair, mingled with the dying moans of the lad who was more the fruit of Sarah's pride than of his slave mother's sin. There was silence in heaven. The sobbings of two breaking hearts had touched the bosom of God. An "*angel* called to Hagar, out of heaven, and said unto her, What aileth thee, Hagar? Fear not, for God hath heard the voice of the lad where he is. Arise, lift up the lad and hold him in thine hand, for I will make of him a great

nation. And God opened her eyes, and she saw a well of water; and she went and filled the bottle with water, and gave it to the lad to drink." We know whose sturdy hand broke the turf of that wild wilderness soil and drew from the depths the sweet cooling beverage, and bade the happy mother bear it to the parched lips of her precious offspring. This was the first rich chance for a seraph to show his deep pure sympathy with human suffering. And with eager joy did he make the most of it. Let all the Hagers of our world's dark history of jealousy and desertion know that when there is no earthly ear to hear, nor heart to pity, their penitent, imploring prayer will have a hearing in heaven.

When Abraham was an hundred years old save one, sitting at noontide heat in the opening of his tent, he was surprised by the approach of three strangers in the garb of eastern travelers. There was a royalty in their persons and bearing to which the well-bred patriarch at once responded by advancing and bowing himself to the ground, and offering the ample hospitalities of his station as the "chief Sheik" of that land.

Now, as the sequel shows, these strangers were angelic messengers direct from the court of God, charged with wonderfully interesting and important intelligence for Abraham, and with an announcement of the gravest and grandest *national* import. They had come to reveal Jehovah's purpose and promise to raise up from the loins of the age-stricken patriarch a seed that should outnumber the sands of the seashore; a royal nation who,

including the lineage of faith, shall constitute the rightful and everlasting citizenship of a kingdom universal, whose peaceful and plentiful domain shall stretch from shore to shore, from the rivers to the ends of the earth; whose glory shall never tarnish, whose beauty fadeth not, whose sceptre shall never change hands, whose throne shall stand forever, whose sweet virgin soil shall never be desecrated by alien feet, whose streets shall never echo the plaintive cry of oppression, whose flowering hills shall give back no prayer for bread. This trio of angels from heaven had come down to the plains of Mamre to announce to incredulous Sarah and highly pleased Abraham that a child of singular divine intentions, and of wonderfully typical character, should be born to them in their extreme old age. And against science and the laws of nature that strange angelic announcement stood fast. Never has any seraph gone forth from the presence of the Most High to any world, nation, people or person with uncertain tidings. The "word spoken by angels" is the utterance of the lips of God; and though thrones and dominions and principalities and powers conspire to thwart its accomplishment, not one jot or tittle shall fail.

But that same angelic band was on double ministry intent. With other and strangely diverse work they were charged. When they had finished dining with Abraham, with cakes warm from the hearth, and butter and milk and the fatted calf for viands, and the friendly shade of the tall graceful palms for a shelter; and had delivered with the dignity of

state their instructions to the wondering aged pair, they went on their way toward the self-doomed cities of the plain. At even, as the babbling sounds of Sodom's lewdness rose towards the shuddering skies, two angels entered the gates and stood in the presence of the only righteous man in all that metropolis. It was their wish to spend the night in the open streets, taking unseen, swift witness of their crying abominations, but Lot's importunities drew them at length into his dwelling, where they warned him to quickly gather together all his family and substance, and hasten out of the city, saying, "For *we* will destroy this place . . . for the Lord hath sent us to destroy it." During the night the lecherous rabble assailed Lot's house and attempted to break in the doors, when the angels put forth their hands and smote them all with blindness—a slight example of their power over men and the forces of nature.

At the break of day those ministers of mercy to Lot and of wrath to Sodom hastened the elect out of the doomed enclosures, and when they hesitated they laid hold of them and drew them forth, and bade them flee for their lives. And when they were safe in Zoar, just as the rising sun poured its reluctant light in upon the lingering orgies of the corrupted multitudes, the angels waved their hands toward heaven, and bursting from the clouds came avenging torrents of brimstone and fire; and the smoke of their swift and appalling destruction rose over all the country and mantled the hills, as if to hide from the heavenly hosts the revolting spectacle

of a people so debauched that they did not know their right hand from their left. And therein was a gloomy type of another scene yet to come, in the end of the ages, with which the avenging angels will be as closely connected as with this.

But now we turn our eyes to a spot consecrated by one of the most pleasing and inspiring angelic manifestations to be found in the Sacred Annals.

Jacob, fleeing from the wrath of his brother Esau, found himself at the close of day weary and shelterless, a lonely fugitive, in the midst of an open field, with only the darkness for a curtain and the sleepless stars for sentinels. Gathering a few stones for his pillow he composed his tired limbs for a little sleep. Never before did so hard a pillow bring dreams so sweet, or couch so rude attract visitors so royal. In his slumbers he saw a ladder—or more likely a mountain with indented sides—reaching from earth to heaven, thronged with *angels*, coming and going with tireless feet, on errands of peace and blessing, between God's footstool and his throne. Royal embassy! Not to court or council, but to one lone wanderer sunk to defenceless rest on the bare bosom of the pitying ground. What type and prophecy are here of cherubic vigils over the weary and exposed pilgrims of this vale of sorrows, this wilderness of sighs! But it was only a dream. Well, does not angelic presence oft inspire the beauty of our nightly visions? Without a doubt the shining ones, whom Jacob saw coming from heaven and going to heaven, were grouped around his pillow of stone, watching the happy workings of



his face, turned towards the stars, as they suffused his mind with visions of their own tender ministries to the troubled friends of God. Well might Jacob have called the lonely spot of that night's slumbers *Bethel*—the house of God—and set up a stone in memory of the wonders he had seen in his dream. Angelic hands can change a rough and rocky couch to a restful bed, and make an heap of stones “feel soft as downy pillows are.”

## CHAPTER IV.

### The Holy Angels.

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It is true that the doctrine of the ministration of angels has been the occasion of fanatical extravagances. In the fifth century the "*Feast of St. Michael*" was instituted, which was celebrated in honor of the angels; and still earlier Ambrose and others insisted on the *invocation* of angels; and the Phrygian sect of "*Angelici*" practised for a time the idolatrous adoration of angels. But the Laodicean Council condemned their views as heretical.

Sure it is that our heavenly visitants, in all their varied ministries, have never by act or word invited adoration. They have always appeared as simple messengers from Heaven and *servers* of men. If the doctrine of angels—or any Bible truth—is to be rejected because of fanatical abuses, alas! for the Holy Oracles. Satan, the arch fiend, is the only one of all the seraphic race to set himself up as an object of worship. And he was so crushingly rebuked by the Son of God that he has never repeated the experiment. The good angels find sufficient happiness in their holy and enrapturing trusts as the high ministers of the Throne in the sublime economy of

redemption. Let us resume our joyful meditations of their loving and mighty interventions in the history of our race and world.

In the 34th Psalm occurs an expression at once most forcibly and touchingly descriptive of angelic protection and deliverance. "The angel of the Lord *encampeth* round about them that fear him, and *delivereth* them." The righteous are like a slender band in an open plain, exposed on every side to malignant demoniacal assault, having in their own control no means of defence, no fortifications to cover them, no shelter from the merciless fury of the army of fiends, marching on them from every point. But happily the loyal angels, "who *excel* in strength," are not forced to look on silently and see the hapless victims of infernal cunning and malice utterly destroyed by the traitorous insurgents. But the holy warriors of Heaven, the angels of the Lord armed with high commission, appear on the field, unseen it may be by the fearing and trembling saints, and pitch their white tents in serried lines close around the friends of God, and spread over their "defenceless heads" their shields of invincible skill and power. "The angel of the Lord *ENCAMPETH* round about them that fear him." They do not come and go simply in great and dire perils, just when the righteous are well nigh lost; but they tent on the field, they are never absent, but always on duty, full armed and vigilant; not like Sheridan—"twenty miles away"—when some sudden assault is made, breaking the lines and scattering the saints in panic and dismay. Their commissions run to the end of

mortal danger and strife. They will not relax their herculean arms, nor withdraw the lines of their defences, till their Lord and our Lord shall have made the conquest of the world, and crushed out beneath his victorious chariot wheels the last of his enemies and ours.

“*Encampeth* ROUND ABOUT.” They cannot be flanked. They leave open no exposed gap inviting massed attack. They are a cloud of darkness, as between Israel and Pharaoh’s pursuing hosts; a wall of consuming fire between God’s people and their satanic invaders; a front guard and rereward of two-edged swords, turning every way to keep the camp of Israel, as the cherubim kept the tree of life amid the faded splendors of Eden.

“Oh not wholly lost, our Father! is this evil world of ours:  
Upward through its blood and ashes spring afresh its Eden  
flowers;  
From its smoking hell of battle love and pity send their prayer,  
And the white-winged *angels* hover dimly in our earthly air.”

In the year of King Uzziah’s death the prophet Isaiah, who lived in an atmosphere suffused with heavenly manifestation, was enveloped by such overmastering views of the holiness of Jehovah, and the purity and devotion of the attendants upon his immediate presence, that, smitten to the heart by a sense of his own impurity, he cried out, “Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips; for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts.”

Then one of the seraphim took a live coal from the altar and, swiftly flying to the prostrated prophet,

pressed it to his lips, saying, "Thine iniquity is taken away, and thy sin is purged."

This is the only instance where "*seraphim*" is applied to angels. The word means *burning, to burn*; and the use of it in this case may indicate a particular class of angelic beings who are nearest God and specially charged with holy offices in the work of redemption. They are described as having physical form, with "*face*" and "*feet*" and "*wings*," always ready for flight, under special divine mandate, on errands of mercy and grace. "*Seraphim*"—*burning*—must indicate their ardent, superhuman *zeal* in serving Jehovah in visitations of salvation to men. And the appearance of the seraphim to Isaiah was to qualify and commission him for a special and most important ministration to his people Israel.

But let it be noted that the seraphim took the "live coal" from the "*altar*," showing that in himself there was no power to purge Isaiah's iniquity. Of the divine compassion and grace, which take away sins, the holy angels, even the seraphim, are only the administrators. But that they are both messengers and administrators is so clearly revealed that to deny it would be the repudiation of revelation itself.

"Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to do *service for the sake* of them that shall inherit salvation?" Heb. 1: 14, "For if the word spoken *through angels* proved steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward, how shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation?" Heb. 2: 2. "Which of the

prophets did not your fathers persecute? and they killed them which shewed before of the coming of the Just One; of whom ye have now become betrayers and murderers; ye who received the *law* as it was *ordained by angels*, and keep it not." Acts 7: 53.

In the light of these, and many other correlative scriptures, is it not infidelity to the Word of God to question that to the holy angels are committed important ministerial and administrative trusts in the work of salvation and restitution?

Moreover it is a matter of inspired certainty that angels have been sent to convey to men *prophetical* instructions. Not possessed in themselves of foreknowledge, they are charged with revelations of God to his servants. Not always fully understanding the import of their instructions, they are plenipotentiaries of Heaven, bearing to the holy seers information of coming events; and sometimes upon their communications the destinies of great peoples and nations depend; they are ambassadors from Heaven to earth; and disregard of their ministries and messages is fatal alike to nations and to men.

No portion of inspired revelation is more interesting or important than the prophecy of Daniel. His predictions run to the end of mortal years; cover all the great governments of the world; include the Messianic advent, the crucifixion and resurrection, the return of Christ to this earth, the reliving of all the dead, the destruction of evil, the regenesis of nature, and the establishment of an everlasting kingdom on the ruins of the Cæsarism of all ages—a

kingdom of righteousness and peace. And much of Daniel's instruction came to him through the lips of an angel; the key which unlocked the mystery of the unseen eras was furnished to the prophet by angel hands. For much which Daniel predicted, Michael was the authority. And the "words spoken by angels" to the prophets *have stood, are standing, will stand fast.* Around the angelic revealments of prophetic events the tumultuous centuries have surged and broken like the waves of Algesiras against unconscious Gibraltar. Above the wreck of all earthly thrones and powers, and of the earth itself, the angelic messages will rise, imperishable peaks of inspired truth, evermore reflecting the glory of Christ in the redemption of men.

Daniel was a captive in a foreign land, but he was true to the traditions of his people and to the God of his fathers. He resisted the fascinations and corruptions of court life, and challenged the admiration of his enemies by the exalted purity and dignity of his character and conduct. And Jehovah honored him as few men have been honored in the divine administration.

But the preferments bestowed upon Daniel by the king awakened in the hearts of the officials the most cruel jealousy, and by a wicked plot the young Hebrew captive was cast into a den of ferocious lions. The lions were very hungry, and the beautiful young Hebrew, full of blood and life, would furnish a precious and dainty meal for their voracious appetites. Calmly our prophet submitted to this awful fate. By the rude hands of those who hated him he

was cast down among the beasts howling for their prey, and the king's unalterable signet was quickly placed upon the stone which covered the mouth of the den. The king, filled with sadness and horror, fled to his chambers and refused meat or music. We instinctively put our ear close down to the great stone with the royal seal upon it, and, shuddering, listen for the dying moans of the fair martyr. All is still. Have the merciless animals consumed their sweet morsel so quickly? Was the terrible agony soon over? Alas, that death so shameful should have come to one so true, so pure, so noble of blood, so beloved of God! He went into the jaws of the lions in his full dress. May there not be a remnant of his garments left, precious legacy of his lofty heroism? The beasts are satiated and quiet. Let us peer into the cavern. Amazement most amazing! The lions are lying in a group like loving lambs. The light of unwonted kindness is in their eyes. And in the midst sits Daniel, serene as a seraph in heaven, busying his unsoiled fingers with the shaggy manes of his charmed companions. Scene most wonderful! Miracle most stupendous! What strange power is here? Look again! The den is wondrous radiant. Erect, by Daniel's side, with right hand laid on the lions' heads, stands a *holy angel*. But the voice of Darius the king is heard: "O Daniel, servant of the living God, is thy God whom thou servest continually able to deliver thee from the lions? Then Daniel said unto the king, O king, live for ever. My God hath sent his *angel*, and hath shut the lions' mouths that they have not hurt me." Who dares



dispute? What *Christian* wishes to deny that “the angel of the Lord *encampeth* round about those who fear him, and delivereth them”?

But more than once or thrice was Daniel the prophet visited by messengers from the Throne. He was visited by dreams and visions of the night which covered the history of nations from his day to the end of time; the rise and succession of the four great world powers, the destruction of the last of them, and the coming of the King of kings to establish a kingdom of immutable foundations, whose domain shall stretch far and wide, even “under the whole heavens.” These visions he could not comprehend. He was amazed at their vastness and grandeur. Their mighty significance oppressed his strongest thought. His mind was in a maze. He made long and earnest supplication to Jehovah for instruction, and an *angel* was specially commissioned to explain to the prophet the import of what had appeared to him in visions of the silent night, while “at Shushan in the palace.” “And while I was speaking, and praying, and confessing my sin and the sin of my people Israel, and presenting my supplication before the Lord my God for the holy mountain of my God; yea, while I was speaking in prayer, even the man Gabriel, whom I had seen in the vision at the beginning, being caused to fly swiftly, touched me about the time of the evening oblation. And he informed me, and talked with me, and said, O Daniel, I am now come forth to give thee skill and understanding.” Dan. 9 : 20-22.

And upon the explanations and instructions given

by the *angel* depends, largely, our hope of the Saviour's return, the resurrection of the dead, and the endless reign of the Son of God on the throne of David, on this earth, restored to Edenic conditions. The succession of prophetic and historical events, the meaning and ending of the prophetic numbers, the ushering in of the "*time of the end*," the appearing of the Ancient of days, the final scenes of human history, the adjustment of the eternal order of nature and of ransomed men, were all included in the interpretations of Gabriel, who was commanded to make Daniel "*understand the vision.*"

If any are anxious to know why the great code of doctrines called *Adventism* has stood the test of half a century's popular discredit and denunciation, and still holds its grip on the faith and hope and love of hundreds of thousands of God-fearing Scripture-searchers, we will answer: Because *Adventism* rests, in an essential sense, upon interpretation given by *holy angels* sent directly from the world of light, from the throne of God.

## CHAPTER V.

### The Holy Angels in the Christian Age.

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The Christian dispensation dawned in resplendent display of angelic manifestation. Personally familiar with all the prophets, interpreting to them their most intricate predictions, often bringing to them wonderful messages direct from the court of God, they did not fail to comprehend, in outline at least, the prophetic travail of the ages. Standing near the Throne, they witnessed with wondering delight the majestic preparations for the great dispensational change—the new order of priesthood and princeship—and made themselves ready to give the coming Heir of the vacant throne of David a reception and announcement befitting the glory of his promised conquest and endless kingship. From within the veil they noted the swift progress of the *numbered* years which would bring the advent of “Messiah the Prince,” and looked with rapture to the hour that would crown the august event.

Their first ministries were personal and private. They withheld their anthems till the supreme moment struck. Jehovah’s preparations are often unnoticed by men. Even the righteous are sometimes

taken in glad surprise. A great glory bursts on the hope of the world as light of a new star of instantaneous birth. The holy angels can keep "the secrets of the Lord" till the appointed time.

Just as the meridian between the old order and the new was nearing, a righteous but childless priest was burning incense in the temple of God, and all the people were praying without, when suddenly there appeared unto him an ANGEL, standing on the right side of the altar. The good Zacharias was overcome with fear at the presence of his shining visitor from worlds unseen. But the angel soothed his alarm with words which divided his heart between amazement and delight. "Fear not, Zacharias," he said, "for thy prayer is heard, and thy wife Elizabeth shall bear thee a son, and thou shalt call his name John." But Zacharias, remembering that he and his wife Elizabeth were "well stricken in years," could scarcely accept the joyous tidings, though they came from an angel's lips: and he said, "Whereby shall I know this? . . . And the angel answered and said unto him, I am Gabriel, that stand in the presence of God; and am *sent* to speak unto thee, and to show thee these glad tidings. And, behold, thou shalt be dumb, and not able to speak until the day that these things shall be performed." And instantly his priestly lips were sealed, and he *beckoned* to the wondering people and remained speechless.

The Messiah, about to come, must needs have fitting heraldry. And this John, promised by Gabriel, of pure Israelitish blood, the first and *only*

born of a priestly family, a child of miracle, was to be the honored forerunner, messenger of the mighty Prince, the long-looked-for Redeemer. He was to go before the Christ, in the spirit and power of Elias, to make ready a people prepared for the Lord.

But other and grander aspects of God's preparation for the advent of his Son waited attention. Other minds and hearts were to be apprised of the order and imminence of the greatest and grandest event in the annals of the universe. And six months after the visit to Zacharias Gabriel was again dispatched on special embassy. But now to Nazareth, a city of Galilee. A poor, but fair and pure Jewish virgin was espoused to a young man then unknown to fame, but of direct lineage from the house of David: and the virgin's name was Mary. One morning, as Mary was busy with her household tasks, cheerfully humming the refrain of some ancient Hebrew song, the imposing figure of a mighty angel stood on the threshold, and said to the bewildered maiden, "Hail, thou that art highly favored, the Lord is with thee; blessed art thou among women. And when she saw him she was troubled at his saying, and cast in her mind what manner of salutation this should be. And the angel said unto her, Fear not, Mary, for thou hast found favor with God. And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name Jesus. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest; and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David; and

he shall reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there shall be no end."

During the period from Gabriel's promise to Mary to the birth of her son the Christ, there must have been a strangely intense interest among the angels in heaven, and *anxiety* as well, if seraphs know what anxiety means. We may seem to see them, gathered in radiant groups in the shadows of the throne, interchanging rapt thoughts concerning the great mystery. Is the promised son of Mary to be the "seed of the woman" who shall bruise the head of the arch-traitor of their race? Will the virgin's son Jesus be their mighty leader and Lord who shall commission them to overthrow and utterly destroy the alien hordes? Will this heir to the throne of David, under their angelic ministrations finally recover Adam's lost dominion, and restore the Edenic beauty and glory and peace? Will this child of miracle, whose birth and greatness, whose kingdom and sceptre have been announced by Gabriel, be able to annul death and restore forfeited immortality? Since the sons of God shouted for joy over the finished universe, there had been no other period of interest so singular, so intense, among the holy angels as the waiting for Gabriel's assurance to Mary to reach its fulfillment. Upon the issue of those few strange words of the heavenly messenger to the Hebrew virgin trembled the hopes of millions, dead, living and unborn. If that promised miraculous birth shall fail, no star of Bethlehem will ever rise over Adam's lost world. But it did not fail. The promise of God, by the *mouth* of his holy *angel*,

stood fast, though its fulfilment contradicted reason and disregarded the laws of nature.

In the green pastures, on the Judean slopes, the shepherds silently "watched their flocks by night," leaning half slumberous on their "friendly crooks," when suddenly a light brighter than of a thousand morning stars suffused the sky and flooded the hills. To their astonished eyes there appeared, standing in mid air above them, a holy ANGEL, in attitude of speech. Sore afraid, the simple shepherds covered their faces with their hands. But the royal visitant said unto them, "Fear not; for, behold, I bring you glad tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born *this day* in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord. And this shall be a sign unto you; ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger." And waving his right hand towards the throne, a full vast choir of the heavenly songsters were instantly at his side, and, breaking the midnight silence, o'er the echoing hills rolled the mighty anthem, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men."

And so the first announcement of the Saviour's birth was made by an *angel*. The first *advent* sermon was preached by an *angel*. The first redemption song e'er sung to mortal ears burst in wondrous melody from a thousand *angel* voices. The inauguration of the gospel age, in its essential, divine, saving power, was made by the Holy Ghost at the Pentecost. But the glorious *prelude* was rendered in vocal music of a *multitude* of holy *angels*, under

the nightly skies of Bethlehem, with only the humble, rustic shepherds and the listening stars for an audience.

“As shepherds watched their flocks by night,  
All seated on the ground,  
The angel of the Lord came down,  
And glory shone around.”

Who shall question that the administration of angels, which so bountifully marked the *old* dispensation, has come over into the *new*? The *opening* of the gospel era is resplendent with the *presence* and *ministries* of the holy angels of God. And *all through* the Christian times they fulfill what the inspired Paul has said of them: “To which of the *angels* said he at any time, “Sit on my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool? Are *they*—the angels—not all ministering spirits, *sent forth* to minister—*serve*—for them who *shall be* heirs of salvation?” Heb. 1: 13, 14.

Let it be noted that this statement of St. Paul was made a considerable time *after* the gift of the Holy Spirit at the Pentecost. And he employs the present participle—“*being sent forth*”—the sense is *continually*, as their appointed regular *service* for *all ages*. And, as we shall show by and by, in the end of this age the angels will manifest themselves, and execute personal ministries, more grand, awful, glorious, than any of their past achievements.

#### THE BABE OF BETHLEHEM DELIVERED BY AN ANGEL.

At the time of the Saviour's birth there prevailed, among the intelligent and learned classes, a profound belief that some remarkable personage was



about to appear among men, who would change the order of history and sway a scepter of unusual power over the people. In the East,—Arabia, Persia, or Mesopotamia— some Magi or Magians, who, perhaps, had heard by tradition of the prophecy of Daniel 9 : 24, saw, suddenly appearing in the heavens, a luminous body or meteor, which they regarded as a signal that the long expected wonderful person had made his advent into the world. Regarding Jerusalem as the center of knowledge concerning sacred things they hastened to the renowned metropolis in search of the mighty one destined to be greater and wiser than any man or god who had preceded him. Great excitement and wonder were awakened in the city by the visit and strange story of the “wise men from the east.”

The air was full of the breath of prophecy. Half articulate voices seemed murmuring in the skies the forgotten words of the seers of God. The priests, ministering in the temple grew suddenly anxious. The story of the birth, at an inn, of a strangely beautiful son of a virgin mother spread rapidly among the people. Wonder was on all faces. The more devout asked, one of another, what if it shall be the promised Messiah, Israel's long expected King? Herod heard the ominous whisperings of the multitude, who came and went with an air of curious inquiry ; and the guilty monarch sat uneasily on his throne of crime. The jealousy of his low cunning nature was fiercely aroused. He knew the tradition of the Jews that some day the yoke of foreign rule would be broken from their necks. He

feared that strange birth in the manger meant rivalry of his scepter and his crown. Hastily he gathered together all the priests and scribes of the people, and demanded of them where the promised Messiah should be born, and they told him "in Bethlehem of Judea." And then, privately calling the Magi he questioned them closely as to what time the "star in the east" appeared. With well concealed intent of evil he bade the Magi make diligent search for the young child, and bring him word when they had found him. But one of greater authority gave orders to the wise men; and when they had bestowed their rich gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh upon the precious object of their search, they returned by another way. Herod, foiled in his well-laid strategy, madly issued a murderous edict against every male child in his realm under the age of two years. Sure was he now of reaching that babe of days whom he feared more than all the armed men of his kingdom.

What a moment was that for the hope of the world! On that young life in the manger of the inn, hung the stupendous scheme of redemption for a vast race. Let Herod's cruel mandate but succeed, and mercy for man is forever departed. Poor and helpless are Joseph and Mary; and all unconscious of the king's murderous malice toward the infant Jesus. An hour is sufficient for the execution of the fateful order. O! what can interpose between that *throne* and that *cradle*?

*Another* mandate is issued. And quickly as lightning flash, a seraph, tall, majestic, with burning eye,

stands before the throne in Heaven, with strength enough in his right arm to overturn a world. Swiftly descending he came and spread his unseen shield over that babe in that lowly place. And when the last faint echo of the Magi's departing steps had died away, a voice of touching kindness, blended with imposing power, fell on the wondering ears of Joseph and the mother of Jesus. An ANGEL stood beside them, "Herod would kill thy child," he said, "But I am come to give thee warning and safe conduct. Arise, Joseph; and take the young child and his mother and flee into Egypt, and be thou there till *I* shall bring thee word."

Instantly they obeyed. And all night long, under the silent stars, they made their anxious journey, guided by the strong, radiant form of their ANGELIC deliverer, who left them not till they were safe beyond the power of Herod's officers of blood. Was ever a life so precious in peril so startling! Was ever deliverance so signal, so momentous! Was ever *angelic* intervention grander, more beautiful!

Nor did their heavenly guardian forget his trust; for when Herod was dead he again visited Joseph and Mary in Egypt, and escorted them to their own land. How beautiful! The holy angels keeping watch over the child Jesus! "He shall give his angels charge concerning thee, and in their hands they shall bear thee up in all thy ways, lest at any time thou shouldst dash thy feet against a stone."

## CHAPTER VI.

### Holy Angels Strengthen the Son of God.

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Amazing transition! From the divine overshadowing and visible glory of the baptism the Saviour hastened to the mysterious conflict with the powers of darkness in the wilderness. That encounter was fierce and protracted. Satan massed all his subtle power on the Son of God at the threshold of his ministry. He had vanquished the first Adam amid the splendors of Eden, and he meant to achieve a more brilliant triumph over the second Adam before he should be able to exercise a single function of his divine ministry. Jesus could not avoid the conflict. He must conquer his mighty personal foe before he could win victories for his followers. The issue made up in Paradise and won by Satan must be recovered by Christ in the wilderness ere he could enter upon his career of miracle and mercy for a race enslaved by the prince of darkness.

The scene of the struggle was in the wilderness, away from the sight and sympathy of men. As yet Jesus had selected no ministry, had no followers. He must fight this battle single-handed and alone. He must demonstrate the prowess of his own per-

sonal might unaided by heaven or earth. If he could not vanquish the chief of the fallen spirits by his intrinsic power it were vain for him to undertake the ransom of the captive sons of men. As at the death on the cross, so now even his Father hid his face. His own arm must bring salvation. The holy angels, in anxious groups, from within the shadows watched the imposing trial of skill and power between the lion of the tribe of Judah, and the ancient seducer of the head of a new race. The issue must be distinctly made and the result must be decisive. No word or sign of sympathy could be allowed to the Nazarene. Standing alone face to face with the mighty traitor he must conquer or abandon his undertaking of a world's redemption. Fierce and long the conflict raged. Again and again the prince of perdition changed his base of assault, and readjusted his skillful tactics. Hungry and weak and faint the Son of Jesse held his ground and repulsed his foe. Each well chosen onset was but the occasion of a greater triumph for the Saviour.

And when at last, foiled, defeated, repulsed, rebuked, Satan sullenly retreated and the Christ was crowned with victory full, complete, then holy *angels* came and *strengthened* him. Jesus was a *man*. He had all the attributes of a human being. He ate and drank; hungered and thirsted; wept and prayed. And when he emerged from that terrible ordeal, and was freed from the fearful pressure of satanic power, faint from long fasting, he sank down in exhaustion, and craved the sympathy and

aid of some friendly hand and voice. The holy ones of Heaven clustered around him, and ministered to his weakness and his sadness. With strong arms they held him up, and brought him water and bread, and strengthened him. During his struggle with the devil they could not aid him by act of power, or look of love ; the conquest must be wholly his own. But now that he had won, and conquered the tempter they throng him in tenderness and sustaining might. As they guarded his cradle in infancy so now they minister to him in his redemptive work.

Here is a majestic truth. The angels of Heaven are the body-guard, the allies, the swift and powerful ministers of the Redeemer. Through all his earthly career they attended him day and night. They *were* and still *are* his messengers of love and power. Swift of wing as gleam of light, powerful enough to control demons and men and the wildest forces of nature, they wait, in myriad ranks to execute his will, on visits of comfort to his followers sorely buffeted of Satan as he was in the wilderness ; on errands of deliverance from personal and mortal peril ; on missions of state controlling the destinies of nations ; on embassies of judgment sweeping away the foes of his people and clearing the way for the proclamation of his gospel and opening dark continents to the ingress of his word ; in soothing hearts breaking with some great anguish ; and healing the sick who are ready to die ; in moving redundant wealth to feed the hungry and clothe the naked. Ten thousand times ten thou-

sand, stand before him. Thousands of thousands minister unto him.

#### THE MYSTERIOUS CRISIS.

The scene of the great mystery in Christ's life was laid in Gethsemane. In that garden of olive trees, in the silence of night, heaven and earth came together in the inscrutable agony of the prostrate Son of Mary. In that awful hour justice and mercy met face to face. To the divinely sensitive nature of Jesus the ghastly horrors of death by Roman crucifixion assumed their most terrifying forms. His immaculate human being shrank affrighted from the oppressive spectacle. Well he knew that on the morrow, faint and bleeding, followed by the heartless jeering rabble, led on by the high priests wildly clamoring for his life, he would be dragged through the streets of his own beloved Jerusalem to the ignominy of a felon's death. He saw the dreadful cross, and heard the cruel blows that drove the unwilling nails through his quivering flesh. He heard the mad cry of those who should be his followers and defenders, "Crucify him, crucify him." He saw the face of his Father in Heaven turned away from him, the sun become black as sackcloth of hair, and felt the ground tremble with the palsy of a mighty earthquake. Before the awful scene his human heart grew faint, and in his agony of soul the flesh threatened to give way.

Beside, and more terrible still, the guilt or a world came rolling in as an ocean of darkness upon his spirit. He felt the awful power of divine wrath

against sin. He saw the flashing lightning of the angry law. He heard the thunder of incensed holiness. He looked toward the throne and it was veiled in displeasure while justice with collected might prepared to smite his defenceless head.

The dread crisis, at which perdition laughed and Heaven wept, was reached. The promise of God, the triumph of Christ, and the hopes of the world hung trembling on that awful moment. "Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me" sadly the sinking Saviour said, and for a moment all seemed lost, when swiftly as a sunbeam from the heart of light, AN ANGEL came and strengthened him, and, girded with new might, firmly he added, "Not my will but thine be done." The crisis was passed and all was safe. Jehovah's word stood fast. The woman's seed had stood the fiery ordeal. The sulen throne of darkness was vanquished. Hope rose benignly over a lost world.

But for that *angel's* visit to the sufferer in the garden, at that critical, that august moment, what might have been, who dares to contemplate? Would his human nature have *failed*? That it faltered we know. Was there real danger? Else why did Heaven send a special messenger to support the lone Jesus in the matchless struggle? And how did the timely angel strengthen the fainting Son of God? Did he remind him of the glory promised by his Father, to follow the suffering? Did he cause to flash on his darkened vision the splendors of the throne and kingdom that should be his forever when the agony and darkness should be



past? Did he hold before his quivering view the radiant massive crown and mighty scepter of universal lordship awaiting his triumph? Did he cause him to hear the acclaim of all the hosts of Heaven, and the great song of all the redeemed that should rend the skies when his coronation hour should come? Perhaps he laid his hand above his breaking heart and from his own exhaustless might sent needed power through the faltering forces of his human frame, giving way under a weight of anguish too heavy to be borne by one in mortal form. Perhaps he spake in his anxious ear articulate words of love and assuring cheer—words of his Father's confidence and admiration; words of the loyalty of the heavenly hosts; words of power and glory and kingship which rallied his hesitating trust, and girded afresh his weary soul for the initial victory of his great ministry to earth. Sure it is an angel strengthened him, and he conquered.

And sure too it is that the same bright, holy, powerful beings who attended the Saviour all through his earthly career, and ministered to him all his trials and sufferings, as really and constantly attend all his saints; the poorest and weakest even; guarding their weary steps from dangers; delivering them from the "snare of the fowler;" defending them against the assaults of demons; healing their diseases; assauging their sorrows; providing for their necessities, and strengthening them for all their toils and labors of love. "The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him and delivereth them."

## CHAPTER VII.

### Angels at an Open Grave.

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“Bright angels, bright angels, at the breaking of the day.”

Not a harp was heard in Heaven. The angel bands stood around the throne with folded wings and bowed heads. The holy Son of God sleeps in his snow-white shroud in a tomb of stone. He who made the worlds lies silent and cold in death. The hands that fashioned the stars and grouped the pleiades in kindred beauty have lost their skill. The heart that broke over a world's guilt is pulseless now and still. Jesus, the Christ, has fallen beneath the sword of the conqueror of Eden. Slain is he, but not vanquished. Before he surrendered he said, “Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.” On those words hangs the destiny of two worlds. If that prediction and pledge shall fail hope for man is ended. If that tomb opens not death is eternal sleep. The fallen star of Bethlehem must rise again out of the gloom of death, or endless night covers our world and race. The slain Captain of our salvation must conquer in his fall, or the prince of darkness is an unchallenged victor.

But how can the dead Christ arise? His sepul-

chre is solid rock. One egress only, and that is made sure by a huge stone bearing the seal of Rome, which means death to him who dares touch it. And the soldiers of the king, clad in the garb of battle, guard well the scarred sleeper lest his strange prophecy shall, somehow, prove true. What a moment of suspense in Heaven, and of destiny on earth! The hopes of men, the veracity of God, the confidence of angels are bound up in the silent folds of that cold, winding sheet. If that death slumber be not broken within threescore and twelve hours the travail of the ages has miscarried; the light of two worlds is quenched forever.

One day has come and gone and there is no sign. Another sun has risen and set; another silent, sad night has past, and the dead Prince—promised Prince of life—stirs not in his shroud. The slow hours of the last day, on which hangs the awful issue, are wearing on, and grim, sullen death hath him still. 'Tis high twelve at night and the slow-pacing sentinels cry, "All is well." The morn begins to break. Another hour and all is lost. But hark! The shimmer of a wing! And instantly a twain of *angels*, swiftly descending from the throne on high, appear and spread their wings of light over the dead Jesus in his marble tomb. At their shining presence the mailed keepers fall back as dead. And with their strong hands they roll the stone away, and sit upon the seal it bears. One glance from their eyes annuls the power of Rome. The grave's mouth is opened wide. And he that

was dead awoke, cast off the cerements of his tomb, and came forth.

“He burst death’s bars asunder, and he triumphed o’er the grave;  
He holds the keys of hades; the almighty One to save.  
Behold my hands, said Jesus; I’m your living Lord and King;  
From the grave I will redeem you; all my jewels I will bring.”

“Bright angels, bright angels, at the breaking of the day;  
Bright angels, bright angels, they rolled the stone away.”

Shout, ye seraphs of the skies! He whose birth ye sang in mighty chorus to the listening stars, though he was dead is alive again; and, behold, he liveth forevermore. Rejoice, O David, the Psalmist, for his “soul is not left in *hades*, neither has his holy one seen corruption.” Be glad, “ye that dwell in dust, for now your dew shall be as the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast out her dead.” Sing, ye martyrs, in your bloody shrouds, for your avenging is made sure. Clap your hands, ye Rachels, for your scattered children shall come from the enemy’s land. Lift up your voices, ye mothers all, for he who loved and blessed the little children has opened wide the doors of the tomb, and all your precious ones shall come from the dark valley, as doves to their windows.

“Rejoice and be glad,  
For the Lamb that was slain,  
O’er death is triumphant  
And liveth again.”

#### A COMPANY OF WOMEN MEET TWO ANGELS.

“Last at the cross and first at the sepulchre.” True to the instinct of womanly affection, a company of those who had followed Jesus from Galilee,

forsaking him not in death, visited the sepulchre to see that his sacred form was tenderly and decently composed in its divinely appointed resting-place, and then retired to their dwellings to prepare spices and ointments for his burial. And very early on the morning of the first day of the week they returned bringing their spices. On approaching the tomb they were filled with amazement to find that the stone was rolled away. The soldiers were gone, and all was silent around. There was perfume of peace and hope in the balmy morning air. The orient was just breaking into light, and blushed in beauty as if seraphs were smiling on its radiant brow. As the fast gathering rays flooded the mouth of the tomb the women of Galilee, whose love for the dead Saviour had banished their nightly slumbers, timidly entered. Quickly and tenderly their anxious eyes searched the empty sepulchre for the body of their slain Lord. Great was their wonder when they found him not. Sore the perplexity that seized their pained hearts. Had rude hands stolen him away? Was added insult to be offered to his clay in death? Was not the mockery, the thorns, the nails, the spear which rioted with his last agonies enough to satisfy their quenchless hate? They had marred his fair visage in life; could they not allow him the common repose of death? They had cruelly taunted his dying grief; must they now invade his grave of charity?

As with sinking hearts they stood, dismayed, "Two men"—angels—stood beside them in shining garments. Startled and sore afraid at the presence

of visitants whose majesty of mien and splendor of person they had never seen or conceived before, they bowed their faces to the earth in awe-stricken wonder; when the holy messengers *spake*, and said, "Why seek ye the living among the dead? He is not here, he is risen." Were ever words before, or in the ages since, so articulate with love and hope? The echo of that utterance flew, with wings of light, up to the throne, and rang along the lines of the heavenly hosts till farthest herald, on embassy to distant worlds, heard, and shouted on to worlds more distant: "He is risen." The far realms of "demons damned" heard it; and sullenly, through all their caverns of despair repeated: "He is risen." Death, trembling, heard it. From grave to grave the tidings ran; and every grain of saintly dust grew instinct with surety of coming life, and seemed to say, in symphony of myriad voices, "He is risen."

Nor did the angels pause with the great announcement of Christ's victory over the grave and *hades*; but still conversing, they repeated to Mary Magdalene, and Joanna, and Mary the mother of James and the other women, their Master's half-forgotten words: "Remember how he spake unto you when he was yet in Galilee, saying, The Son of man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, and be crucified, and the third day rise again."

This is an indisputable case of audible angelic intercourse with human beings. These heavenly messengers talked to the astonished women in human language. The words of Jesus which they quoted the women remembered and understood. It

was no illusion. The women were not entranced, for they hastened to find the rest of their company and rehearsed to them what the angels had said.

How clearly appears the interesting truth that the holy angels attended the Son of God in all his ministry on earth. They must have been at his side when he uttered the words which he quoted to the women. And though Mary and Joanna, and the rest had forgotten them the angels had not forgotten.

#### ANGELS PRESENT AT THE ASCENSION.

The Saviour's ministry of miracle and grace was supremely crowned by his conquest of death and his resurrection from the grave. He had won on every field and conquered every foe. He had rent the confines of the tomb and led captivity captive. He had spoiled principalities and powers, putting them to an open shame. He had transfixed his accusers to his own triumphant cross, and chained the powers of darkness to his chariot wheels. He had only now to ascend to the right hand of the Majesty on high whence he came for the rescue of an imperiled world. The heavenly hosts were impatient to welcome the returning "Captain of our salvation." For the last time he led his "little flock" out as far as Bethany; and having tenderly given them his final words of instruction and affection, he was parted from them and taken up into heaven. Dazed with disappointment and grief they followed him, in his upward flight, until his sacred form was lost to their sorrowing gaze; when, suddenly emerging from the shadows, two angels, in the form of men,

clad in glistening garments, audibly, in their own tongue, address them. And thus they said: "Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven."

The same holy twain of angels which comforted and strengthened the sad and fainting Jesus in the garden, and announced to the delighted women his resurrection at the dawning of the third day, now reappear to make known to earth another truth of equal grandeur and glory—that the resurrected and ascended Lord will, some splendid day, return to the scenes of his earthly humiliations and sorrows, to complete his triumphs in the deliverance from death and *hades* of those who have followed him in the regeneration.

But did the heavenly heralds reappear? Were they not, rather, always with him, from the moment of his birth to the hour when, in the majesty of triumphant power, he mounted the obedient skies, and made a chariot of the clouds; sweeping through the rejoicing heavens, bearing to his Father's throne the trophies of a vanquished prince of evil, and an opened grave? We dare believe the selfsame holy guardians who kept watch over the infant Jesus in his manger cradle, and escorted the family of three, in their flight for safety, into Egypt, turning the darkness into light, were always at his side, leaving him not day nor night; his heaven-appointed body guard; honored above their fellow seraphs; the royal staff of the Saviour-King,—at once Redeemer



and Lord. And, as though men might count these not enough, did he not say, I can ask of my Father and he will send me "twelve legions" more? But these were quite enough. Two mighty sons of God, one at his right hand, one at his left, could defend their royal charge against a universe of devils. At a single volition they could stay ten score Assyrians; beat back the massed foe in Gethsemane; strike the kings's soldiers dead before the sepulchre, and roll away the Rome-sealed stone without hindrance.

The Saviour's whole career beneath our skies was angel-guarded, angel-led. Beneath the invincible shield of angelic arms, he slept and woke, and fought his conflicts; save now and then, when to pay the full debt of justice he must win by his own merit alone, he stood apart and coped with the crafty foe single handed; while the watching seraphs stood within the shadows proudly witnessing his easy victory.

The complete narrative of our Lord's birth, life, miracles, death, reliving, and glorious ascension is radiant with angelic ministry. To discredit this great and brilliant aspect of the redemptive scheme were like blotting a seventh part of the stars from the vault of heaven. The foot-prints of angels in this mortal vale are as visible as the foot-prints of their Lord, the Christ. He who cannot hear the rustle of their wings in the fields of divine revelation is deaf to all heavenly voices.

## CHAPTER VIII.

### Jesus Went Away, but the Angels are With us Still.

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When the Saviour returned to his Father he did not leave his own to the sorrows of orphanage. "I will not leave you comfortless," he said. Among the choicest gifts bequeathed to his church was the royal legacy of angelic ministration. The footprints of those holy beings have not ceased to appear in this vale of tears since our Lord departed. Twelve legions of the shining ones waited, and wait still, upon his divine behest. And though his specially selected personal attendants escorted him to the courts above, others were commissioned to "encamp round about" his church and assume the guardianship of the "little flock" which he left behind. For they are the appointed "ministering spirits," not to Christ alone, but to "them who shall be heirs of salvation." The apostolic era and the entire Christian age are instinct with their presence, and with their skillful and mighty interventions. Under the Redeemer they "rule this lower world."

Jacob's ladder has not been drawn up to Heaven, only its head has ascended and become attached to

the pillars of the throne. Daily and nightly still they come and go "upon the Son of man." They watch from the hills and encamp in the valleys. They are the tireless messengers of their ascended Lord. They sing his praise above and work his will below. They often still the storm as would their master if he was here. They drive back the thronging demons in his name. They turn the steps leading to dangers; and sometimes palsy the well-aimed shafts of death. Diseases know their presence and surrender at their touch. They are the vicegerents of the great Conqueror, the allies of the Spirit, and the heralds of the Word. "If the word spoken by angels was steadfast."

Angelic ministry is as frequent and marked since the ascension as before. The Epistles and the Apocalypse are vocal with their instructions and their consolations. So long as the New Testament narratives were kept up angelic interposition was visible. And since the sacred books were closed, even unto this hour, had all the well authenticated instances of angelic ministries been preserved to us, in the history of the church, they would show an unbroken succession of this wonderful agency in the workings of the gospel economy. There are abundant grounds for the belief that these intermediate beings, in rank between men and God, bear incessant and effective part in all the trophies of grace. "Are they not serving spirits, sent forth to serve them that shall be heirs of salvation?" What a grand trinity of forces is here! The Spirit, the Word, and the holy plenipotentiaries of the throne.

The ministry of anointed men, with these for a "front guard and rereward" is majestic and invincible. With these potent co-workers why need we fear? Defended by these powerful and faithful guardians sent from Heaven, why need we distrust?

ANGELS DISPUTE THE AUTHORITY OF THE HIGH PRIESTS.

Jerusalem was wild with excitement. The apostles were performing the most startling miracles. Ananias and his wife had fallen dead at Peter's rebuke of their deception and falsehood. And many signs and wonders were wrought among the people. The sick were brought out on their couches and laid in the streets that the shadow of the passing apostles might fall on them and heal them. The whole surrounding country was stirred to its profoundest depths. Every hearth stone was the scene of solemn and excited inquiry and discussion. Swiftly the tidings grew that all manner of maladies were instantly cured by the touch, the word, the look of Peter the well-known fisherman, and the others who followed with him. Mothers looked anxiously on their sick and dying children and prayed that the strangely gifted men might pass their doors. Surrounding cities caught up the amazing news, and every group and household was wildly agitated. The stories grew in wonder from lip to lip. One thing alone was thought of. Was it true that men were among them who had power to heal, and actually were healing all the sick who were placed in their presence; and casting the demons out of all possessed of them? Credulity spurned all bounds;

a spontaneous movement broke forth; a simultaneous rush towards Jerusalem set in from all points. On beds, on couches, in vehicles of every kind, the sick were borne along as if it were resurrection day in the old metropolis. Children at the point of death were carried in their mother's arms. And the strong keepers of "them which were vexed with unclean spirits," hurried their raving patients, in their clanging fetters, toward the spot where the apostles were assembled. And of all who came not one returned unhealed. Each victim, whatever was his disease, went back made whole. The children, already in the approaching chills of death, returned prattling with innocent glee in their joyful mother's bosoms, unconscious of the power that had turned the suffering of their young lives into gladness. The maniac, who unwilling came, biting his chains, returned without his keeper, "clothed and in his right mind."

"There came also a multitude out of the cities round about, unto Jerusalem, bringing sick folks, and them which were vexed with unclean spirits; and they were healed every one." Acts 5: 16.

The high priests were wild with rage because all these wonderful works were done in the name and by the power of him whom, in their blind hatred, they had so lately caused to be put to death. They feared all Jerusalem would be carried away by these miracles and themselves become the scorn of the people.

They could not dissuade the multitude for it was plain that the miracles wrought by the apostles were

real, and that the popular sympathy was intense. Every moment's delay increased the excitement. The boldest measures must be adopted at once or the matter would outgrow their authority and render interference dangerous to the peace of the city and the personal safety of the priests themselves. In reckless anger, the high priest, aided by the Sadducees, laid violent hands on the men of God, and shut them up in the common prison.

But where now were their heavenly guardians? Were they the silent, unseen spectators of the insults offered the legates of their Master? Did they stand in awe of the sacred office filled, though dishonored, by the priests of God? Would they leave the objects of their care to suffer in chains without remonstrance?

The last rays of the setting sun had faded from the spires of the city of David. The hush of advancing night lay on the great populace. The lights in the prison were out. The sentinels cried, "Twelve o'clock, and all is well." The drowsy high priest, sure that his victims were safely guarded, sank to his guilty slumbers. The keepers of the prison trod to and fro before the well barred doors. The innocent inmates were grouped in silent prayer, when, noiselessly, an angel entered. A motion of his hand and all the prison gates stood open. Calmly he led them forth. So quietly, even, the watchful guard knew not that their precious charge was eluding their vigilance. The doors closed softly after their receding forms; and the faithful sentinels kept watch around an empty jail.

When well outside, in the faintly breaking light of day, the delivered servants of God stood around their angelic guardian, who, in tones that made the Jewish priests seem pitiably ignominious, said, "Go, stand and speak to the people in the temple all the words of this life."

With the high priest's returning wakefulness came afresh his bitter indignation; and early in the morning he assembled the council and all the senate, and sent to the prison to have the apostles brought forth that he might consummate his wicked intent in having them more severely punished, perhaps put to death. But great was his chagrin and anger when the officers returned without the prisoners; and when closely examined, said, "The prison truly found we shut with all safety, and the keepers standing before the doors; but when we had opened we found no man within." And presently one came, and said, "The men whom ye put in prison are standing in the temple and teaching the people."

Finely art thou baffled, cruel and crafty high priest, in thy foul design to stifle the healing power of him, whose blood, shed by thy wanton hands, is "upon" thee and thy "children." In thy plotting thou shouldest have remembered that the God of Abraham and of Isaac and of Jacob had said, "The angel of the Lord encampeth around them that fear him, and delivereth them."

If some, by entertaining strangers have thereby entertained angels unawares; others, by assaulting God's servants have thereby encountered angels when least expecting it. And thus we meet again

the palpable fact that the ministration of the angelic race is a marked and majestic feature in the economy of redemption. In personal experiences, in dispensational visitations, and in the marching and countermarching of mighty forces in the history of nations, these holy beings act important and decisive parts. They foil wicked machinations by opening the guarded doors of gloomy prisons, and setting the chained sufferers free. They defeat plotting councils; overrule grave senates; drive back mighty armies; spread their invincible shields over the defenceless heads of Christ's ambassadors; escort the church in her struggling pilgrimage to the land of promise; protect the widows and the fatherless; attend in darkness and in day, the poorest, weakest, most disconsolate saint. They mingle, unseen, in all the gatherings of the righteous; they poise mid-air over baptismal scenes; they tenderly lead on, with unheard footfall, the sad companies who go out to the burial; they steady the faltering steps of age, and watch the cradles of helpless infancy.

“Angels now are hovering round us,  
Unperceived they mix the throng;  
Wondering at the love that crowns us.  
Glad to join the holy throng.”

#### ANOTHER WONDERFUL DELIVERANCE.

Mystery and miracle enswathe us. Above, below, around, the supernatural is all pervading. God is above nature; and the seraphs are his swift-winged messengers. What we call physical law is no obstruction to angelic ministries. Bolts and



bars and prison gates disappear at their volition, and dungeons like palaces shine in their presence. No place can be so dismal, no cavern so deep and dark, no Inquisition cell so hidden and fetid, no fortress so strongly guarded, that they cannot find quick and easy access, if a child of God be there. The heaviest manacles forged by popes and tyrants, and riveted by skill and strength of demons, dissolve at their slightest touch.

Here is a spectacle! An angel within prison walls! Our pained ears have heard of prophets, apostles, martyrs and saints, wasting, starving, dying in cruel incarceration. Our tear-dimmed eyes have traced the story of Toussaint L'Ouverture starved to death in the castle of Joux, by order of the great Napoleon, for his devotion to human liberty. We cherish as a sacred legacy the narrative of John Bunyan's sufferings and faith in Bedford jail. We recall with undisguised indignation the record of the thousands who pined in the dungeons of the infamous Inquisition, waiting for the guillotine or the stake. But here we have the rare case of a veritable living angel in a jail. Wherefore, and with what ending, we shall see.

It was night in the Hebrew city. Within the outer wall stood the common prison. Before the gate a quaternion of soldiers kept vigilant guard. Some victim of offended justice of rare importance must be confined within those grim old walls. Let us look in. Lying there on the cold stone floor, heavily manacled, is a manly form, scarce fashioned for such a place as this. Two chains were on his

hands, two galling his feet—one chain was deemed enough for common criminals. Four quaternions of soldiers—sixteen in all—watched by turns their precious trophy of Jewish hate. Who may this doubly dangerous captive be? This is Peter, the late fisherman of Galilee, now the legate of the crucified but living Jesus. He dies in the morning. James had already been beheaded; he was being kept till the Easter festival should be ended, when he was to be made a spectacle to the people. Nor was he ignorant of his fate. He knew too well the unrelenting hatred of his blinded countrymen to the name of Him whose avowed disciple and apostle he was.

Our hearts go out tenderly towards him. Torn from his home and kindred, and awaiting, in that loathsome place, the headman's cruel axe, he must be sore stricken with inconsolable grief. But see! He sleeps! Quietly, sweetly, a victorious but tired warrior on his untarnished shield. Why should he not slumber? True, it seemed his last night on earth, and bloody seemed his doom. But was he not Jehovah's faithful herald? Had he not seen his Lord and Master triumphantly expire while heaven and earth gave visible, audible witness to the glory of his death, changing his dying agonies into signals of his power and majesty? Was he not Christ's heroic ambassador? and had not the Captian of his salvation given pledge to succor him to the end, and forever? What ultimate or essential harm could befall him under any condition, in any world?

Yet, to all eyes but God's and angels' his lot was

most forlorn. His enemies were dead to justice or mercy. His friends were powerless as himself. The cause which he impersonated was the scorn of all men. Despair was at its height. So was faith. One weapon alone remained. But that was mighty to the pulling down of strong holds. It had proved potent enough to shut and open the heavens. It had enthroned monarchs, and dethroned tyrants. It had changed the purpose of kings, and determined the destiny of nations. It had reached the throne of Omnipotence and called messengers from heaven.

*Prayer* went up, and an angel came down. *One* angel. That was enough. Against the Jewish priests wild with rage; against four quaternions of soldiers; against Herod; against Rome; against the arch fiend, back of them all, *one* angel was sufficient.

When the rush and roar of the great city had died away into silence, and the lights in the halls of revelry were out, and the gloating priests had sunk into their guilty slumbers, a slender band of women secretly gathered at Mary's house to spend the night in incessant prayer. Between that humble kitchen in that remote quarter of the city and the courts of heaven, telephonic communication was quickly established, and before the voice of supplication had gone round that little circle, an angel, tall and mighty, was bending over Peter sleeping in his chains, and the gloomy dungeon was suddenly as light as heaven. As that holy envoy, flying swiftly through the darkness, descried the prison and the

cell where the manacled apostle was lying, so will the commissioned bands find every grave, in earth and sea—the marble tomb fenced in by wealth and royal insignia, and the humble grave obscured by debris of ages. And as the light, radiating from the personal presence, filled the prison, so will the glory of the Lord fill all the earth in its restitution splendor.

Angelic power, under divine commission, is superior to physical law. Untouched, Peter's chains fell off, and the huge iron gate, at the heavenly visitant's approach, opened of its own accord.

The scene at the house of Mary was true to the inconsistencies of faith. Left by his heavenly guide in the open street, the miraculously delivered apostle instinctively hastened to the place where the women were praying. The valiant group were on their knees when Peter's well known knock was heard on the door. At that very instant they were fervently entreating God to interpose for the deliverance of his servant. Yet when the answer came so swift, so grand, they for the moment would not accept it. Their mighty faith was dazed by the majesty of its achievement. The literal fulfillment of their petition shocked their mental confidence, and they ready to accept, as a compromise, the ghost of Peter for Peter himself. So is *our* faith often staggered by the miracle of its triumphs; and we are ready to fall back to a position of half doubt and half expectancy. We pray for the angel to come straight from heaven, and fill our dungeons with the light of day, and melt off our chains and

set us free. But when God begins to answer in his mighty way, we are afraid, and say it may be partly true.

AN ANGEL AT THE HELM IN A STORM.

Saint Paul was under arrest for preaching Christ and the resurrection; and having appealed to Cæsar was on his way to Rome for trial. Soon after they had passed Crete they encountered a tempest fiercely driven by a terrible wind known by mariners as Euroclydon; and when they had been tossed and driven, the sport of the unabating storm, for many days, seeing neither the sun nor the stars, the officers and crew gave up all hope of being saved. The apostle had warned them of their danger and advised a course of safety, but they did not regard his words.

There were on board two hundred and seventy-six souls, all exposed to certain death, so far as they could see. At the height of their despair Paul devoted himself to fasting and prayer. For many days and nights he wrestled with God for the deliverance of the ship's company as Jacob wrestled with an angel at Peniel in the years of old. At dead of night, in the darkness and the gloom, an unseen holy one mounted the wings of the tempest at its wildest mood; and treading the mad winds beneath his feet, passed swiftly to the laboring and helpless vessel. Around the apostle, prone in agony of prayer, suddenly shone a light as it had been of Heaven, much resembling the glory which overwhelmed him when on his way to Damascus to hail the friends of Jesus

to prison and death. Over his weary frame came a glow of peace and strength as a voice of unearthly sweetness and power, said: "Fear not, Paul; thou must be brought before Cæsar; and, lo, God hath given thee all them that sail with thee;" and lifting up his eyes he saw an *angel* by his side.

This was no new delight to the great legate of Christ. He had met angels before, and been addressed in speech not of earth. He had learned to trust without misgiving the assurances of heavenly visitants. He knew their control of the warring elements of nature. All fear forsook him. In calm confidence he stood among the frightened and despairing people, and said; "Sirs, be of good cheer; for I believe God, that it shall be even as it was told me." And well he might believe; for the records of all time bear no instance of failure of any word or jot or tittle spoken by a holy angel. Angelic announcements have ever stood fast; immutable as the voice of Jehovah whose commissioned messengers they are. Nations have arisen and fallen at their command; and dynasties have crumbled at their breath. Whoever gets tidings from a good angel may rest in certainty of accomplishment.

The Greek mythology abounds in gods and goddesses to whom is ascribed the control of all forces both of land and sea; Poseidon, the god of water, and the storm-bearing Harpies, swift as the blast of the winter wind; a progeny of gods and nymphs, who are guardians of air and sky; Phorcys, the ruler of the sea; and the Sirens who still the winds of heaven with their songs. But the angry ele-

ments failed to acknowledge the power of these creatures of the imagination. Only at the voice of him who fashioned the worlds, and under the mandate of those whom he has sent forth as the messengers of his will, has ruffled nature surrendered; the wild winds been stilled; the storms grown calm; the angry deep smoothed its brow to rest.

In bringing safe to land the "two hundred threescore and sixteen souls," whether the angel undergirded the ship by his own might, making her strong to battle against the Euroclydon and resist the power of the tempest, or by his breath calmed the temper of the storm until the ship with its precious freight could be run ashore, or both, we may not know; but sure it is that the guardian one was master of both the vessel and the storm, and held the helm in his unseen grasp; and all the winds and waves of sky and sea could not fatally wreck those whom he had promised to rescue in response to Paul's fasting and supplication.

The ministering angels are at home alike on the sea and on the land. They can stand on the earth, or walk on the water, or fly through the midst of heaven. They can speak from the skies, feed a disconsolate prophet in the wilderness, or pluck a foundering ship from a tempest in mid-ocean. Wherever God's presence is there are they. They traverse the ethereal spaces with lightning swiftness. They need no winged flotilla to make the circuit of the sea, nor chariots of steam and flame to compass the land. Contrary winds and wild storms cannot obstruct their flight. They are never

behind the appointed time. They are not omnipresent, but they can go round our globe as quickly as an electric flash. No danger can elude their sight. No demon can escape their vigilance. No darkness can obscure the objects of their guardianship. They can people the sea and the dry land at will. If they encamp about us we cannot be outnumbered. If an angel be at the helm our vessel cannot founder.



## CHAPTER IX.

### **An Angel Settles an International Question.**

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In the progress of the divine purpose of grace for our entire humanity the time had come for the "partition wall" of national caste to be smitten down. The water of life, hitherto pent up in the narrow channels of the Hebrew blood, must flow to every nation, tribe and kindred. The illimitable Gentile peoples must become heirs to the love of God in Christ the Saviour. But the barriers are high and strong, and fortified by the mutual hate of many centuries of growth. How can unity be reached? Who shall act as mediator between the proud, haughty, boastful and exclusive Jew and the hated heathen Gentile? No Gentile ambassador would be received at a Jewish court. And no Jew would consent to make overtures to the Gentile "dogs."

At Cæsarea, in Palestine, lived a remarkable man named Cornelius. To be sure he was a military character, a centurion, or captain in the Roman army. But he was "A devout man, and one that feared God with all his house, which gave much alms to the people, and prayed to God always."

But he was a Gentile ; what the Jews would call "common" or "unclean." He had been circumcised. How fit that such a character should be chosen of the Lord as the door through which the gospel should be introduced to the Gentile world.

But of the more complete knowledge of Christ and his gospel which Cornelius needed, the apostles held the key. And all the accredited legates of Christ were Jews, and shared their nation's prejudice against all other peoples. And to this time they had preached to the "Lost sheep of the house of Israel" alone. Peter, with his vehement nature, was intensely Jewish. He was particularly proud of his ancestral purity. He had always kept himself clean from alliance or sympathy with the outside world. Nothing less than special divine interposition could soften his aristocracy of blood. He would have deemed a proposition to preach Christ to the heathen world sacrilegious. And how could the gospel flow to the Gentiles through such hands?

As Cornelius was alone at about the ninth hour of the day, devoutly worshipping, "He saw in a vision openly, an angel of God coming in unto him, and saying to him, Cornelius. And he, fastening his eyes upon him, and being frightened, said, What is it, Lord? And he said unto him, Thy prayers and thine alms are gone up for a memorial before God. And now send men to Joppa, and fetch one Simon, who is surnamed Peter ; he lodgeth with one Simon, a tanner, whose house is by the seaside. And when the angel that spake unto him was departed, he called two of his household

servants, and a devout soldier of them who waited on him continually ; and having rehearsed all things unto them, he sent them to Joppa."

Dr. Adam Clark says of this passage, "This text is as plain as it can be that an angel of God did appear to Cornelius." This appearance to Cornelius was similar to that made to Daniel, 9 : 20-23, and especially like that to Zachariah, the father of John the Baptist, Luke 1 : 11. Here, as in the other instances, the angel held actual conversation with the centurion, and his person was visible. There is every reason to believe that the whole transaction was entirely real and literal. And this view accords perfectly with many other cases of angelic visitation, both in the New Testament and in the Old.

At the same hour of the angel's visit to Cæsarea, Peter was at Joppa ; and while the embassy, sent by the centurion, was approaching their destination, the apostle became unusually hungry while praying on the housetop ; but as he waited for the meal to be prepared he fell into a trance, or an ecstasy, a transport of spiritual delight, coming over him as he communed with God ; preparing him for the revelation which was to be made to him by the messengers of Cornelius, as prefigured by the vision of the sheet filled with all manner of beasts. Accompanying this wonderful exhibition was a *voice*, addressing Peter in audible words. No doubt it was the same angel that communicated with Cornelius who spake twice to Peter directing him what to do with regard to the vision ; and instructing him that what God had cleansed should not be called com-

mon or unclean ; thus preparing him to receive the messengers of the Gentile centurion. And so was the apostle affected by the voice which spake to him, and the recital that an angel had visited Cornelius with reference to the same matter, that he willingly went with the man, on the next day to Casarea, where the great question was forever settled that God was no respecter of national blood, and the partition wall between Jew and Gentile was broken down.

It is clear that, in this case, a holy angel was commissioned to adjudicate a most important and difficult international matter, and open the Gentile world to the gospel of redemption. And did ever an earthly diplomatist display greater foresight and skill? How vastly intelligent and trustworthy must those holy ones be. And if our Heavenly Father trusts them to manage the most weighty affairs of the divine administration, ought we not to accept with entire confidence the inspired assurance that, "All these are ministering spirits, sent forth to serve them that shall be heirs of salvation.?" And may we not believe that the Word of God, as fulfilled in the career of the nations, is superintended still by those wise and true representatives of the throne of heaven?

#### AN ANGEL DIRECTING A BAPTISM.

The church at Jerusalem was terrorized by the ferocious persecution of Saul of Tarsus. In fear of being slain the disciples fled in all directions. Philip, a deacon and Evangelist, went down to

Damascus, and preached to the mixed population, Christ and the resurrection with great success.

In Ethiopia lived a man of high character, who was lord chamberlain of Queen Candace's household. Though in great authority, having full charge of the queen's treasury, he was a devout man and worshipped God; but he needed Christian enlightenment and baptism. He was on his way to Jerusalem to engage in religious devotion, when an angel appeared to Philip, and said to him, "Arise, go toward the south, unto the way that goeth down from Jerusalem unto Gaza which is desert." Acts 8: 26.

What could the angel have had in view in so particularly directing Philip as to what course he should take? Did he know that the Ethiopian was on his way to Jerusalem; and did he desire to bring the two men, Philip and the eunuch, together for some important purpose? The sequel will show.

As Philip went on his way, as the angel had directed him, he caught sight of a man, of royal equipage, riding in a chariot and reading a book. Specially impressed by the Spirit, he joined himself to the chariot, and heard the royal traveler reading from the prophet Esaias, and soon found himself enlisted in a very interesting conversation with none other than a chief officer from Ethiopia, the treasurer of Queen Candace's Court. Now the light begins to shine. The angel was sent to superinduce the baptism of the eunuch. And this was his ingenious method. He knew when the treasurer would leave Ethiopia, and by what route he would make

his journey, and at what speed he would travel ; and he started Philip out towards the south by just the road to intercept the Ethiopian.

Philip lost no time in more fully instructing his deeply interested listener, who presently enquired of the Evangelist if he could not be baptized? At that moment they opportunely came upon a "certain water" by the wayside. And the treasurer commanded the chariot to stand still ; "And they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch ; and he baptized him."

And here is another beautiful lesson of angelic ministrations. These holy beings not only interpose their shield of mighty power between the friends of Jesus and the bad angels ; take part in great national issues ; control important religious events ; but they also maintain an intense concern in the personal experience and career of each child of God. They overrule circumstances to induce obedience to duty. They prepare the way for the ordinances of the gospel to be honored. They predispose the ministers of truth to the ways they should take. They bring royalty and peasantry into sweetest fellowship by their tender mediations. They cause officers who ride in chariots and Evangelists who go on foot to go down, arm-in-arm into the baptismal waters.

While the Spirit by a subtle force which we cannot analyze, acts directly on our moral and mental faculties ; illuminating the fields of truth, and revealing to human perception the divine character and purposes ; quickening torpid sensibilities ; arousing con-

science to a sense of obligation, and softening the will into obedience ; the angels have control of outward conditions ; the mastery of physical elements ; the marshaling of human agencies ; the disposal of historic and providential coincidences ; the issues of armed conflicts ; the fulfillment of divine prediction ; and the general superintendence of the affairs of our world. The Scriptures warrant us in saying that the Almighty largely governs our world by the direct interposition and powerful ministry of his holy angels.

“The chariots of God are twenty thousand, even thousands of angels. The Lord is among them, as in Sinai in the holy place.” “Who maketh his angels spirits ; his ministers a flaming fire.”

#### AN ANGEL CURES DISEASES.

At Jerusalem, near the sheep market, there was a *pool* or *bath* which had obtained great notoriety. It was called in Hebrew Bethesda, or Bethchasadah, *The house of mercy*. It had derived this name from the many cures which had come to the sick from bathing in its waters. But it was not believed the healing virtue was in the water naturally for all manner of diseases were instantly cured ; diseases entirely unlike, positively opposite in their nature and producing causes, disappeared in a moment. All kinds and classes of sufferers were made whole, whatsoever maladies afflicted them, the instant they entered the pool. A result which has never been claimed for any other medicinal waters, at any time, or in any land. Beside, Bethesda had no heal-

ing property except at particular times, when its waters were strangely agitated. All of which proved that the curative power, whatever it was, did not inhere in the water in its natural condition.

Around Bethesda were built five porches or porticoes for the accommodation of the sick and halt and withered people who thronged the place in hope of being cured. The porticoes were all free, no charge being made for their occupancy; for the Jews never allowed a tax to be collected of the poor invalids who sought relief in these healing waters; a further proof that they regarded the cures as supernatural.

“After this there was a feast of the Jews.” John 5: 1. This was doubtless the feast of the Passover. At these feasts only was there any healing virtue in the waters of Bethesda. On this occasion “A great multitude of impotent folk, of blind, halt, withered, crowded the porches; some on beds, some on crutches, some carried in the arms of their friends, some lying helpless and friendless on the floors; all “waiting for the moving of the water.” For it was only when the water was troubled or put in motion that it possessed healing virtue. But at a “certain season,” probably during the feast only, an “angel went down and troubled the water; whosoever then first after the troubling of the water, stepped in, was made whole of whatsoever disease he had.” John 5: 4.

Just how the healing virtue was communicated to the pool no one can tell; but certain it is that somehow the angel of the Lord had power to infuse into



the water an efficacy that instantly cured every kind of malady. And this shows that angels have, under special commission at least, control of diseases. Nor need we stumble at all this, for in more than one case they have been sent to destroy as well as to heal. Life and death are, under the divine direction, subject to their will. Doubtless many instances of sudden healing of obstinate ailments come of angelic interposition. What is called "faith healing," in our own times, when it is genuine, may be regarded as the merciful ministry of holy angels. For if demons—fallen angels—have power over human bodies, and can inflict diseases, as in the case of Job, and can cast into water and into fire, as did the demons in Christ's time, need we doubt that the holy angels are charged with ability to counterwork the wicked designs of the spirits of darkness? There are best of scriptural reasons for believing that much of the pain and sickness we endure is superinduced by the malevolence of bad angels; and that many deliverances of God's people when all human ill has failed, are to be attributed to the power of the angels of the Lord. If they ministered to the Saviour, relieving him from pain and weakness, as in the garden and after his sore conflict with Satan in the wilderness, why should they not, in like manner, render their tender services to the "followers of the Lamb?" That they are not visible at our side amid danger, nor in the chambers of the sick, does not disprove their presence. The angel who came down and troubled the Bethesda pool was, probably, not seen

by the people, not even by the sufferers, who waited for his merciful ministries; yet the Divine Record declares that an angel was there, and that the miraculous cures were wrought by his hand.

A most beautiful feature in the scene at Bethesda was the intimate relation between the angel and the Lord Jesus. The angel troubled the waters and impregnated them with curative virtue, and Jesus took the most helpless one of all that sad company by the hand and made him whole without being immersed in the troubled pool at all; showing that there was one greater even than the angels, and that from him these subordinate healers derive all their power; and that when he, the infinite healer, should be no longer among them in person, his holy angels would still be commissioned to perpetuate his Bethesda work for the comfort of his people until he himself shall return to our world again.

Some have thought the angel in his work of making the sick, and maimed, and halt, and blind whole was a type of Christ in his great redemptive ministry. Dr. Adam Clark says: "Was not the whole a type of Christ? He is the true Bethesda or house of mercy, the fountain opened to the house of David, and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, for sin and for uncleanness; unto which all the diseased may come, and find health and life eternal." To which we add, if the Bethesda scene was typical then it follows that healing the diseases of the body, according to the will of God, is an element in Christ's gracious work; and that the angels are divinely appointed agents for its accomplishment.

Indeed, is it a more difficult problem for Christian faith that the holy angels should have power of our physical conditions than that the Holy Spirit should control our mental and spiritual moods?

“Surely he shall deliver thee from the snare of the fowler, and from the noisome pestilence. He shall cover thee with his feathers, and under his wings shalt thou trust; his truth shall be thy shield and buckler. Thou shalt not be afraid for the terror by night; nor for the arrow that flieth by day; nor for the pestilence that walketh in darkness; nor for the destruction that wasteth at noonday. A thousand shall fall at thy side, and ten thousand at thy right hand, but it shall not come nigh thee. Only with thine eyes shalt thou behold and see the reward of the wicked. Because thou hast made the Lord which is my refuge, even the most High thy habitation; there shall no evil befall thee, neither shall any plague come nigh thy dwelling, for he shall give his angels *charge* over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways. They shall bear thee up in their hands lest thou dash thy foot against a stone.” Ps. 91.

What a graphic description of personal safety! How varied and comprehensive this assurance of physical protection! What an ample guardianship amidst any and all dangers! What foresight and strength must be requisite for such deliverance and protection! What tireless and sleepless fidelity must such constant and certain interposition require! Yet all this is the work of an angel. “*For* he will give his *angels charge* over thee,”—to do all

this. Such power for protection must include control of diseases, and mastery of all physical forces. "No *plague* shall come nigh thy dwelling." There may come around thee the bloody clash of arms, and "ten thousand may fall at thy right hand but it shall not come nigh thee."

How subduing, how sacred, how comforting the assurance that :

"Angels *now* are hovering round us ;  
Unperceived they mix the throng."

And so it surely is ; these holy ones of heaven find it their chief delight to spread the shield of their tender love over the head of helpless infancy ; and steady the faltering steps of trembling age along the margin of the tomb ; and shed from their radiant wings the smile of peace and rest which so often settles on the faces of the holy dead.

Yes, the angel hosts are the executors of the providence of heaven. They do the behests of the infinite love towards the "church of the first-born" in her tearful pilgrimage through this shadowy life. They unflinchingly attend her going out and her coming in. They guard her when, in her tents, she slumbers, and when, under burning skies, she presses on in her sore journeyings towards the fragrant shores of rest. They are near when earth's best beloved are afar. They leave us not when human friendship decay. They are not missing when fortune frowns and want darkens the fireside. They depart not when forms beloved are borne from our sight. They stand, unseen maybe, beside the empty chair and beckon us to resurrection glory.

## CHAPTER X.

### **Angels Assist in the Work of Salvation.**

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The incessant and intense devotion of the holy angels to the Lord Jesus from his birth to his ascension must extend to all his gracious work, both in heaven and on earth. We may believe that a distinguishing phase of their constant ministrations is active and effective participation in the work of turning sinners to God. Their quenchless desire for their Master's success in his vast undertaking to recover a belligerent world; their deep and pure sympathy with him in his personal intercession at the throne in heaven; their sacred love for a betrayed race; their burning zeal for the defeat of the rebellious sons of the morning, and their delight in the holiness and happiness of the saved; these all conspire to make them willing and grateful ministers in winning bewildered, guilty sinners to the fold of the great Shepherd. Surely they must be more than curious observers of the grand struggle in the realm of mercy and grace, waxing more and more intense as the years rush on and the end draws near. It is impossible that they should be content to watch from the battlements of the skies

the friends of Jesus contending with the principalities and powers of darkness, fighting nobly against vast odds, sealing their fidelity with their willing blood, and not interpose their strong arms, nor cover the fainting ranks with their invincible shields. They cannot witness the tears and prayers and pleadings of the saints for the rescue of perishing ones dear to themselves and precious to the Saviour, and remain silent in heaven. The sight of the bloodstained banners of the cross, on ten thousand fields, must fire their seraphic natures with irrepressible enthusiasm to mingle in the holy conflict and help to bear off trophies to their Master's power to ransom those for whom he died. "The cries of the wounded and the shouts of the redeemed" bring recruits from above till there are more angels on earth than in heaven.

They are in every pulpit which in the power of Christ's constraining love calls the lost sons of men to repentance. They lead the way of all true workers who heroically advance into the "highways and hedges." They *doubly guard* the desolate and sore stricken wife and mother who enters the saloon—that vestibule of hell—to win home the victims of the cup. They take passage on all missionary ships which really carry the glad tidings to dark lands, as they sailed with Paul on his adventurous voyage to Rome. They bend over every altar on Christian or on heathen shores, where sin-sick souls seek the crucified Saviour. They throng the green banks of all Bethesda fountains where believers are buried, in baptism, with their Lord. In

all the fields of mercy and grace they mingle with the reapers, and lend an unseen hand in binding up the sheaves. And in the harvest home theirs will be a grandly joyful part.

Now, does this accord with the Holy Oracles of God? Luther said: "One plain text is as good as forty." And this thrilling theme is encircled by more than forty inspired assurances. Take the following as examples.

"But to which of the *angels* said he at any time, sit on my right hand until I make thy enemies thy footstool? "Are *they* not all ministering spirits sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?" Heb. 1: 14. That is, they *are* all ministering spirits; for the Hebrews often express the strongest affirmative by an interrogation.

Let it be noted that the "*spirits*" in the 14th verse are stated to be "*angels*" in the 13th verse. "*They*" in the 14th relates to "*angels*" in the 13th. There cannot be any dispute about the meaning of these words. It is the holy angels of whom the apostle is here speaking.

"*Sent forth*". *From* God; from the throne; from heaven. *To* our world where they "that shall be heirs of salvation" are. So the angels actually come, come in person, to men, "sent forth" by the Lord.

"*To minister to*" or "*serve*." Not to observe and report; but to *serve*; to aid; to take part in the salvation of those who shall be heirs. Can any words more plainly teach that, somehow, the angels of God do actually participate in the instrumental

work of bringing sinners to Christ—of saving lost men? We do not, we cannot, doubt that the heavenly ones really and most effectively join in all the efforts of the Christian church and workers to turn sinful men to repentance and salvation. This Scripture alone settles the whole matter. And St. Paul who thus taught the Hebrew church, doubtless wrote from vivid recollections of the wonderful part which the angels bore in his own miraculous conversion and ministerial work. He was too familiar with angels to doubt their presence among men. And he knew quite too well the value of their services in the work of salvation to allow the church to be indifferent to their co-operation. With him angelic ministry was as real as his own ministry.

And here is another scripture which glows with angelic delight in the work of Christ.

“Likewise I say unto you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth.” Luke 15 : 10.

We know not that the angels in heaven are always joyful. There is silence in heaven sometimes ; and may there not sometimes be sadness? When the malign invader entered the fair garden in Eden with dark designs toward the happy creatures who reposed amid its fragrant flowers, and with fiendish cunning seduced them from their loyalty to their loving Creator, did not a feeling of gloom fall on the holy worshippers around the throne? Were not the angels sad when they saw Eve listening to the tempter? Did not a shade of sorrow pass over their bright faces as they heard the acclaim of tri-



umph from "demons damned" when those blissful children of paradise turned their faces away from the smiles of the throne, and gave credence to Satan rather than to God? Was there not gloom in heaven when a race was swept into sin, and a fair creation fell from primal splendor and peace? Was there not silence of harp and voice when the blight and curse swept over the fair domain, and all its royal beauty was eclipsed?

But when the decree from the Throne went forth: "The seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent's head," from all the seraphs of the skies rolled in mighty volume a responsive, triumphant—Amen. And from that glad moment every triumph of the Saviour, every victory of his cross, every trophy of his grace has filled the hearts of the holy angels with supreme delight. With eager interest they have watched the progress of the tidings of redemption, and witnessed with ecstatic pleasure the conquests of gospel grace. Great was their joy at creation's birth, but greater far when a benighted soul is recovered, and a lost sinner is converted to God. Every falling tear of repentant souls awakens a new strain of gladness among the harpers of the heavenly world. A peculiar happiness fills the seraphic bosom when a victim of sin is rescued, and a servant of Satan becomes the friend of Christ.

But how do the angels know when a sinner repents? Let the Master answer: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, hereafter ye shall see heaven open,

and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of man." John 1 : 51.

The ascending and descending of the angels upon the Son of man is a metaphor borrowed from the custom of sending couriers to ambassadors at foreign courts, by which Christ must have intended to teach that constant intercourse is kept up between earth, the scene of God's gracious work, and the court of heaven, by means of angelic embassy. And when the holy messengers, who attend all the work of the Holy Spirit and of the church on earth, carry the glad news of the repentance of sinners up to the courts above, not only is Jesus made glad, but all the angels around the throne are filled with a new joy; and though it be but "*one* sinner who repenteth," they strike their harps and join their seraphic voices in fresh delight. The angels are not omniscient, and they can only know when sinners repent by being present and witnessing the penitential tear. And the heavenly hosts can know only by the ministering ones flying swiftly to bear the news above.

How exhilarating to Christian toilers to be assured the angels of God are their co-workers and mighty allies in all their efforts to reach and win lost souls! How often it chances that the most incorrigible, after all human effort has seemed to fail, are suddenly overwhelmed with fear and conviction, and, turning to Christ, declare that they heard a voice, or saw some omen, which so wrought on them that they were constrained to sue for mercy. We have known of hardened men being arrested,

in the midst of their evil work, by an audible warning, which so startled them that they could neither eat nor sleep till they sought God in penitence and anguish of soul. And instances are not wanting, even in recent times, of the personal visitation of angelic beings, which resulted in the conversion of desperately wicked men. There can be no doubt that jointly with the influence of preaching, praying, reading the Word; and in conjunction with the power of the Spirit, direct angelic ministrations are a potent factor in all the work of redemption; and that it is a chief pleasure of the cherubic hosts to participate in foiling the designs of evil spirits, and rescuing their victims from ruin and endless death.

Even Satan himself recognizes the ministry of the loyal angels. In 2 Cor. 11: 14, we find this remarkable statement of St. Paul: "For even Satan fashioneth himself into an angel of light" (R V.) Now what is Satan's object in impersonating good angels—in passing himself off as an "angel of light"—but to secure the confidence of saints that he may more easily deceive and injure them? But would the arch devil, who has lost none of his intelligence by his apostacy, undertake to imitate the angels of light, in their ministry to saints, if nothing of the kind exists? In the chapter from which we have quoted the apostle compares false ministers who assumes a righteous character which they do not possess, to Satan who represents himself as an "angel of light," that he may countervail the influence of holy angels in delivering and saving men. When the chief of the fallen

spirits presents himself to the church as a good angel he thereby distinctly confesses that there are "angels of light" and loyalty whose ministry of mercy he desires to frustrate.

Nor is this cunning strategy of the chief of devils altogether unsuccessful. He often approaches unwary saints, who are not familiar with his devices, in most sanctimonious seeming. And under pretense of giving new light, and leading to greater achievements of faith, he plunges his deceived victims into fanaticism, and self-conceited absurdities which end in spiritual disaster.

It was in just this way that he deceived and seduced the first pair in the garden. And from that sad hour to this he has used his favorite scheme of pretending to be an angel of light, with fruitful success. When once he is received as a good angel, his way is clear for all infamous designs. Sometimes he deludes his unsuspecting subject with the belief that he is holy above his brethren; that he is a favorite with Christ; that he is so completely led by the Spirit that he cannot sin; that God wants to make of him some wonderful example of faith; that he can walk on the water and not sink; that he is commanded to slay some human being, as Abraham was told to offer Isaac, and God will raise him up again. Now all these wicked ends Satan accomplishes by first getting himself recognized as an "angel of light." But in so doing he confesses that there *are* good and true angels who maintain a righteous and saving ministry over the church in her militant state.

Under the present dominance of evil every good thing has its counterfeit. Even the ministrations of God's holy angels are attended, step by step, by the base imitations of evil angels, whose dark work it is first to delude, then to destroy. But we must not renounce the gracious work of the pure and commissioned sons of light because the spirits of darkness flaunt their malicious power.

## CHAPTER XI.

### Angels in Patmos.

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St. John was sent to Patmos for banishment and solitude; but never was prince or potentate so grandly attended by guests so royal. Scarcely had his weary feet touched those sterile shores—ere he could feel the silent loneliness—when the Spirit's flashing light, and the glory of angelic presence changed the desolation into the beauty of heaven; and that barren Palmosa, in the Ægean Sea, was nearer the infinite throne than any other spot of earth. As soon as that cheerless isle became the home of the beloved disciple, in exile for his devotion to Christ, its dreary wastes glowed with the light of angelic ministry; and its solitude was broken by the melody of seraphic voices.

The Lord Jesus turned the banishment of his faithful servant into occasion for the most wonderful and glorious revelations ever made to a mortal man; an unfolding of events covering the career of the nations and the progress and experience of the church thenceforth to the end of time. Those grand and awful revelations were intended for the enlightenment of the saints through the centuries

to follow, including the last scenes of human history, and the opening grandeurs of the world to come. But the "*Revelation*" was first made to Jesus by God his Father. But Christ was already at the right hand of the throne in heaven prosecuting his official intercessory priesthood which he could not abandon even for an hour, without breaking the Scriptures. How could he convey to his church on earth all the words and scenes of the new unveiling which the Father had made to him? To whom, in all the universe, could he entrust matters so infinitely pregnant with the destinies of worlds? *Simply* human lips were unworthy even to repeat things so august. There was his servant John in far away Patmos. But he was only a man. And then, how could the new wonders be made known to him?

First of all the Holy Spirit was sent to the apostle to suffuse his being with superhuman light and strength, exalting all his faculties into a state of rapture and intensity adequate to communications directly from the courts of God. And this is John's way of stating his mood of mind and heart; "*I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day.*" Supernaturally prepared he waited for what heaven had to make known to him.

But where is the messenger, high enough, holy enough, swift enough to be sent on embassy so divine? Who shall be honored by representing the court of Jehovah in a distant and belligerent world? Into whose hands and lips shall be committed the unveiling of messages the miscarriage of

which, in one jot or tittle, would wreck an undertaking far more grave than the creation of a world.

From among the shining hosts that ever wait around the throne one is chosen—a holy *angel*—and from Jesus the Christ he receives commission to fly swiftly to the “isle that is called Patmos” and reveal to St. John all the “things which must shortly come to pass.”

“The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him to show unto his servants, even the things which must shortly come to pass; and he sent and signified it by his *angel* unto his servant John; who bare witness of the word of God, and of the testimony of Jesus Christ, even of all things that he saw.” Rev. 1: 1, 2.

Amazing truth! An *angel* is taken into the counsels of the Father and the Son! To an *angel* are entrusted most critical transactions in the redemptive work of the Son of God! An angel is an equal agent with the Spirit of God in matters of divine revelation! An angel acts and speaks in Christ’s stead, when life or death depends upon his word! An angel is charged with the last message of heaven to earth! Jehovah made “The Revelation” to Jesus Christ; and Christ communicated “The Revelation” to his angel; and his angel, by special commission, conveyed “The Revelation,” to John in Patmos; and John communicated all things that he saw to the churches.

Thus, unmistakably and most vividly, is angelic ministry interwoven with all the work of revelation and grace; enacting solemn and most delicate mis-



sions in the proclamation of divine messages to the church and to the nations. It may be that there are *angels of state*, who are retained for special administrative services, as in this case of the angel sent to Patmos; who are engaged in visitations to governments, and rulers, and courts, and armies; who exercise the combining and controlling influence, over great events, which we call "*providence*;" who are put in charge of the historic fulfillment of God's prophetic word, seeing to it that no jot or tittle fails. History is full of instances of sudden and unexpected procedure of armies and bodies of men, who can give no natural reason for their own conduct. Great military movements are checked and changed in ways entirely inscrutable. Who can deny that the inexplicable falling back of the Roman army in the siege of Jerusalem was caused by angelic influence, so that God's people might escape to the mountains, as the holy oracles had predicted? May we not believe that the terrific storm at sea which made the Spanish Armada a pitiable and helpless wreck, was called up by the power of angels over the elements, for the protection of England as the stronghold of the Protestant faith? In the light of Old Testament history and of the apostolic period, it is not difficult to believe that the terrific thunder-storm that burst on Rome and the Vatican at the moment when the Pope was impiously proclaiming himself infallible, and blasphemously assuming the prerogatives of God, was raised to its strange fury by angelic interposition. Did not the incensed heralds of the Almighty break

the terrific thunders over the guilty head of the "Man of sin," and flash the red lightnings in his brazen face?

"And he [Christ] sent and signified it by his *angel* to his servant John." Rev. 1: 1. The word "*signify*" means to point out or show by tokens or emblems. The angel sent to John not only appeared to him personally and talked with him, but he presented to his enraptured view, in emblems, all the wonderful things which he "*saw.*" He was commissioned to unfold to the apostle, in appropriate signs and symbols, the entire Revelation which God had given to Jesus. This he did in a succession of views and scenic representations, some laid in heaven, and some on earth; the whole covering, it seems likely, a number of days.

#### THE ANGELS WORSHIP HIM WHO OPENED THE BOOK.

St. John beheld an impressive transaction in heaven. He saw the throne and him that sat on it. And at the right hand of the Infinite Majesty he saw a singular book. It was written within, and inscribed on the back side; the inscription indicating the great importance of its contents; and it was sealed with seven seals; the number of the seals showing the sacredness of the book, and the skill and strength required to open it. And as he looked in wonder on the strangely sealed volume he saw an angel proclaiming, "Who is worthy to open the book and to loose the seals thereof?" The angel was scarcely less notable than the book. He was unusually "strong," and his voice was mighty.

Loud and long was his proclamation made, reaching the farthest ends of the earth, and reverberating through all the dismal caverns of the alien hosts. But no response was heard, for "No man in heaven, nor in earth, nor under the earth was able to open the book, neither to look thereon." Rev. 5: 3.

So deeply was John impressed with the significance of the wonderful volume that he "wept much" because no one was found worthy to open and read it. But one of the elders informed him, to his great joy, that the "Lion of the tribe of Juda, the root of David, had prevailed to open the book, and to loose the seven seals thereof." Then the scene assumed a new and imposing aspect. In the midst of the throne and the beasts and the elders, stood a Lamb as it had been slain, and he came and took the book from the hand of him who sat on the throne. This was the signal for a great outburst of joy. The whole company of the elders, and all the living creatures prostrated themselves at the feet of the Lamb, each one having a harp and a vial full of odors. And then arose a mighty chorus of voices, interblended with the music of their harps; and they sung in strains of new and wondrous melody, a song never heard before in heaven or earth: "Thou art worthy to take the book and to open the seals thereof; for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people; and hast made us unto our God kings and priests; and we shall reign on the earth." Rev. 5: 9-10.

An *angel* had made the proclamation; but could

he and his fellow seraphs take part in the worship and the song? It is a prevalent sentiment that the holy ones of heaven cannot participate in praise to God and Christ because they have not experienced pardoning grace, not being subjects of redemption by the blood of the Lamb. But this is erroneous. True, they cannot share the peculiar joy of forgiven and redeemed men. But they can, after the higher order of their sensibilities, profoundly sympathize with the saved hosts, and enter into admiration and praise of the Son of God for his manifestation of love for his enemies, and his infinite sacrifice to rescue a helpless race. Do not men enter most heartily into the joy and happiness of those who have been rescued from some great peril, though themselves were not involved in the danger? And do we not enthusiastically join in praise of the self-forgetful deliverer, though he did nothing for us personally? How often the whole world is moved to tearful and most tender admiration of some brave fellow who imperiled his own life to save others.

And how can the holy angels of God, with their pure and exquisite sympathies, fail to be moved to most lofty and glowing delight at the rescue of sinners by the mercy of heaven? And how can they refrain from adoration of him who gladly poured out his own life for the ransom of the doomed prisoners of sin and death?

Look again at this thrilling scene of song and joy around the throne of heaven. "And I beheld and heard the voice of many *angels* round about the throne and the living creatures and the elders ;

and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands." And they all united,—the angels with the rest—in ascribing blessing, and honor and glory and power to him who had broken the seals and opened the book.

Surely the loyal and loving angels who sang in gladness at the birth, and comforted the Saviour in the garden, and in the wilderness, and opened the sealed mouth of his tomb, and were first to publish his rising, do not forget to shout anew in heaven at every trophy of his grace: and when "the redeemed of the ages" shall throng the hills of God, and the great, boundless, endless "new song" shall break from myriad lips of the blood-washed, the "*twelve legions*" will not stand mute, with the silent voice and harp. If they cannot help swell the sweet refrain: "Who hath washed us in his blood," they can touch the highest notes of: "Worthy is the Lamb that was to receive power and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing."

#### ANGELS HOLD THE WINDS.

"And after these things I saw four angels standing on the four corners of the earth, holding the four winds of the earth, that the wind should not blow on the earth, nor on the sea, nor upon any tree." Rev. 7: 1.

It may be very difficult to determine just what the "*four winds*" were intended to symbolize. Some think great wars of universal prevalence are meant; and some say, terrific physical disturb-

ances. But certain it is that vast and fearful national calamities, of some kind, are prefigured, which will affect the whole creation; occurring immediately previous to the final judgment scenes. But whatever the mighty and destructive forces, here pointed out may be, the *angels* are represented as holding them in positive control. If great governments and peoples are eager for bloody conflict they are held in check by angelic influence; binding councils, cabinets and kings. If pent-up natural forces are ready for appalling disruption, angelic hands are on the valves staying the wild energies until the saints of God shall be sealed. If hostile armaments are all prepared for mutual and universal assault and carnage, not a ship of war can weigh its anchor; not a battery can be planted; no line of march can be taken up; no sword can be unsheathed; no alliances can be executed; not a drop of blood can be shed until the *four angels* shall loose the winds. No rage of nations; no skill of great commanders; no decree of councils of war can enforce a collision while a single child of God is exposed to the fury of the conflict. What vast power is vested in the superintendence of holy angels. How majestic the conception! On the "four corners of the earth" stand four stalwart seraphs of heaven, clasping their unseen hands across continents and seas, keeping the peace of the world! No voice is heard, no banner seen; but there they stand, silent but mighty; and beneath their sleepless eyes men and nature, and furious demons are held at bay, until every servant

of God is covered and made secure. How grand! Four angels the joint monarchs of the world; the arbiters of national destiny! The winds and waves obey their behest; and flashing swords refuse to kill or hurt at their nod. This great, wild, rolling orb, pressed by their feet, grows calm, and not a "tree" or any living thing is "hurt" without their command. True they are not God; but they are Jehovah's ministers, by whose skill and strength he governs, in part, this nether world. Bearing commissions from heaven, the plotting of despots, the cunning of courts, backed by gold and arms, cannot annul their sway nor force their retreat. They are here to stay till earth's sad drama is finished.

#### AN ANGEL SEALING THE HEIRS OF SALVATION.

"And I saw another angel ascending from the east, having the seal of the living God; and he cried aloud to the four angels, to whom it was given to hurt the earth and the sea, Saying, "Hurt not the earth neither the sea, nor the trees, till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads." Rev. 7: 2, 3.

Here an angel is represented as the chancellor of God himself, bearing the "*seal of the living God,*" entrusted with setting the divine signet on the brow of the sons and daughters of the Almighty. Whoever received this angelic signature was safe from the terrors of the "four winds;" and was assured of recognition by the throne of heaven as an heir of the eternal kingdom. Just what the sealing is, or is to be, we cannot tell. But this is clear, that

it is the mark of God by which his people are to be distinguished from the wicked ; and by which they are to be protected from the final judgments of heaven on sinners. And the solemn and critical trust of thus designating the children of the Lord is committed to angels. And this implies their accurate and absolute knowledge of the character of men, and the relation of each one to the great matter of salvation. They must have perfect perception of who the saints are. They must be able to distinguish the righteous at a glance under any circumstances. It must be utterly impossible for them to be deceived by false appearances, or by impious pretence, or by the testimony of their fellows. No illusion of pious seeming or personal charms can dim their unerring scrutiny. The lack of the wedding garment they instantly discern, in palace or hovel. For the slightest mistake in "*sealing*" would admit a demon into heaven, or banish a saint to endless night. And this delicate work which marks eternal destiny is committed to angels. What confidence the Almighty must have in these holy ones who have been true through the numberless ages.



## CHAPTER XII.

### An Angel Preaches the Gospel.

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“And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach to them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people.” Rev. 14: 6.

We give entire the views of Horatius Bonar, D. D., upon this text. “This world-wide proclamation of the glad message has been going on for ages. It is to be wider, and louder, and more urgent as the end draws near. The gospel is to be preached to all nations for a witness ere the end come.

“The proclamation is made by an *angel*,—an angel flying in mid-heaven, the position of the sun at noon—that all may see and hear. Angels in this book are representatives of the invisible agencies at work on earth. They are *living and personal agencies*, though they be invisible; not dead, mute laws, but superhuman powers, setting in motion all the machinery of the world; and in the case of the present angel, the special machinery for the promulgation of the everlasting gospel. This book of the revelation, (like Daniel and Zechariah) takes

us within the veil that hides the material from the spiritual, the human from the supernatural. It gives us the inner or superhuman side of church history; the secret springs and invisible agencies which produce events and facts—changes for good or evil; it gives us a glimpse of the true laws of nature, or at least of those living powers and processes by which these laws are regulated and made to subserve the Creator's purpose; it shows us that the angels have far more to do with our world and its history than we suppose; it keeps before us, what is so much needed in our day, the supernatural world of intelligence, and life, and strength, outside of ours, yet quite as real and true—closely though invisibly connected with us, and operating at all points, animate and inanimate, spiritual and physical, upon the course of things in this lower sphere of ours. These 'ministering spirits' (Heb. 1: 14) have far more to do in connection with earth and its history than we usually ascribe to them.

“This angel is seen *‘preaching’* (he has the ‘evangel to evangelize’ as the words are literally), making the good news known. Not that he actually preaches as men do; but in ways unknown to us he sends the gospel abroad, both by stirring up human agencies and in other more secret way communicating it to men. Satan and his angels work for evil, in the dissemination of error, the sowing of tares, the inventing of strong delusions; and why should it be thought incredible that good angels might, in their sphere of good, do the like service for truth and righteousness? How Satan

tempted Christ—how he made Ananias lie to God—how he sowed the tares—how he leavens the world with error—how he beguiles with his subtlety—we know not; but he does so. Just as the law was given by angels, as the word was spoken by angels (Heb. 2: 1), as the angels testified ‘these things in the churches’ (Rev. 22: 16), so this angel in mid-heaven may be understood as proclaiming the everlasting gospel. Angelic lips may not be heard; but human lips, set in motion by agencies which eye hath not seen, may proclaim it. There is here a new proclamation of an old thing; a re-proclamation on a wider scale of the everlasting gospel in the last days just before the great act of judgment is consummated.” And as in this special proclamation the *angel* is prominently and effectively active, so throughout the entire divine administration, angels are the agents of God, on earth.

#### AN ANGEL ANNOUNCES THE FALL OF ROME.

“And there followed another angel saying, Babylon is fallen, is fallen, that great city, because she made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication.” Rev. 14: 8.

Babylon is held to mean Rome, by most expositors. In the rabbinical writings, Rome is called Babylon—*Romi rabbetha*, the great Rome. The angel which was seen flying in the midst of heaven “having the everlasting gospel to preach” also proclaimed “with loud voice, Fear God and give glory to him; for the hour of his judgment is come.”

Immediately following this proclamation came "another angel" announcing the fall of Rome.

Rome, the city and seat of fornication, the persecuting and incorrigible power; the false church, drunk with the blood of martyrs, whose seat is on the seven hills; the head and center of idolatrous worship; the seducer and corrupter of all nations; the infamous Papacy, with its cruel inquisition and hidden haunts of lechery and murder;—even crimson-guilty Rome has not escaped angelic surveillance. Her rise, her ascendancy, her blasphemy, her decadence, have been keenly watched by God's ministering angels; and when her hour of doom approaches an angel will announce, with a loud voice of special gladness, her sudden and utter overthrow. That hour has not yet come, but it even now hovers over Pope and Vatican and harlot church; and at a moment not very distant the whole world will be startled by the shout of a mighty angel: "Babylon is fallen, is fallen;" and that "great Rome" will be a heap of ghastly ruins; the jeer of devils, and the contempt of the righteous, while hallelujahs lofty, and vast, filling earth and responsive heaven, will signalize the overthrow, the judgment and final and eternal annihilation of that adulterous and murderous institution, sometimes called, amid the merriment of demons, "The holy mother church." As persecuting Rome was originated and has been guided and fostered by fallen angels, it is fitting that a loyal angel should be allowed to proclaim its judgment and destruction. And a great day will it be in heaven and on earth

when Babylon the great, "the hold of every foul beast," shall be consigned to consuming flames. And the holy martyrs, whose blood she drunk, in her filthy and blasphemous orgies, shall arise from their crimson shrouds and lift their white hands in exultation over her grim ruins.

"And the third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice, if any man worship the beast and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand, the same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the *holy angels*, and in the presence of the Lamb."

Fitting close of abominations so flagrant, of atrocities so cruel, of hypocrisies so transparent, of blasphemies so appalling, of corruptions so universal, of demonism so boastful, of falsehood so brazen, of all wickedness so hideous.

#### ANGELS ALL THROUGH THE BOOK.

The wonderful succession of views which the angel revealed to John covers the entire period of earthly history from that time to the end of human scenes; including even the opening events of the world to come. And as the scenes thicken and become imposing, the number and activity of the commissioned angels increase. More and more they throng the fields of prophecy, and the events of history. As the grand culmination of earthly affairs becomes imminent multitudes of these heav-

only beings are seen, directing alike the career of the saints, and the administration of the judgments of God on the wicked. They are specially entrusted with the management of the final scenes ; and they are everywhere present amidst the overthrow of principalities and powers, and the dissolution of human society, preparatory to the new order of things.

Seven angels, true and strong, are sent forth to execute the seven last plagues, each being supplied with a golden vial, filled with the "wrath of God." One angel pours out his vial on the earth ; another angel pours his vial on the sea ; another opens his vial on the rivers and fountains ; another broke his vial on the sun, and men were scorched with great heat ; and still another angel discharged his vial on the "seat of the beast ;" and "his kingdom was full of darkness ;" and "they gnawed their tongues for pain ;" then another angel opened his vial on the "great river Euphrates ; and the waters thereof were dried up ;" and the last of the seven poured his vial into the air ; and there came a great voice out of the temple of heaven, from the throne, saying, "It is done." And unearthly voices were heard ; and unwonted thunders shook land and sea ; and fearful lightnings flashed along the trembling skies, omens of a swiftly following earthquake, shock on shock, such as earth had never felt before ; and the cities of the nations fell ; and great Babylon—blasphemous Rome—came in remembrance before God, to give unto her the "cup of wine of the fierceness of his wrath." "And a mighty angel took up a stone like a great millstone,

and cast it into the sea, saying, "Thus with violence shall the great city Babylon be thrown down, and shall be found no more at all."

*"Rome shall perish. Write that word  
In the blood that she hath split,  
Perish hopeless and abhorred,  
Deep in ruin as in guilt."*

Then followed an enchanting scene of outbursting gladness and irrepressible joy, among the living creatures above, and all the host of the redeemed. "Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honor to him; for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready." Enraptured with delight, and thrilled with gratitude, St. John fell at the angel's feet to worship him; but this well-meant act was instantly repudiated by the angel. "See thou do it not," he said, "I am thy fellow-servant,"—employed in the same work as thyself—"worship God;" thus showing that these heavenly messengers, endowed as they are with vast intellectual and physical power, and honored as the plenipotentiaries of the court of heaven, are very jealous of the majesty and glory of Jehovah, before whose presence they wait to execute the divine behest, in our world. They, like John, and all saints, are the servants of Christ, entitled no more to reverence than the weakest Christian who is wholly devoted to his Lord. Angel worship, and image worship, and all worship of any but God, is idolatry. John did not intend an act of worship, but only of reverence; and even that the holy angel would not receive.

After this an angel came down from heaven holding the key of the bottomless pit, and a great chain in his hand. And he laid hold of the devil and bound him for a thousand years. The "*key*" and the "*chain*" show this angel to be an executor of the divine justice, commissioned to take Satan into custody, and shut him up. If the angels may not exercise judicial authority, they do use executive force. If they do not judge, they do punish, and sometimes destroy demons and bad men.

And whatever may be, in detail, the meaning of all these symbolic representations with which, throughout the Revelation, the angels are so constantly and intimately connected, the whole certainly can prove nothing less than that the pure and loyal seraphs are employed by the Father and the Son in all departments of the divine administration; and that social, ecclesiastical, commercial and national affairs are under their direct cognizance, and subject to their control according to the will of him who sends them forth.

#### AN ANGEL UNVEILS THE NEW JERUSALEM.

Milton called the Apocalypse "The majestic image of a high and stately tragedy, shutting up and intermingling her solemn scenes and acts with a sevenfold chorus of hallelujahs and harping symphonies." Inspiration calls it, "The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him to show his servants the things which must shortly come to pass; and he sent and signified them by his *angel* to his servant John."



The vast and imposing succession of events which the *angel* was commissioned to reveal to St. John, was nearing its completion. He had seen at the beginning one like unto the Son of man,—an impersonation of the glorious Christ, as he will appear in regal splendor when he shall assume the undisputed throne of God set in heaven. He had looked, enraptured, on the sea of glass mingled with fire. With great joy he witnessed the breaking of the seals of the mystic book by the Lion of the tribe of Judah, and heard the number of them who were sealed by the angel, as the servants of the living God. Awe-stricken he had listened to the sounding of the seven trumpets, and witnessed the terrific effect upon man and nature. He had heard the angel, standing on the sea and on the earth swear by him that liveth for ever and ever that time should be no longer. He had heard the announcement of the fall of Babylon, and great rejoicing in heaven and earth at her downfall. The call to the marriage supper of the Lamb had been proclaimed in his hearing. He had seen the dead, small and great, stand before God, and had witnessed the awful judgment scene. Before his eyes, the heavens, igniting, had dissolved and passed away; and the earth, with all things therein, had become a molten mass of ruins; and out of the smoking chaos he had seen new heavens and new earth arise, clad with the beauty of the primal Eden. He had heard a voice out of heaven saying, “Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people; and there shall be no

more death neither sorrow nor crying ; neither shall there be any more pain ; for the former things are passed away."

And now the holy angel once more lifts the veil and shows the banished apostle the grandest, most resplendent, most inspiring view of the entire series. It is "one of the seven angels" that now approaches John and talks with him, inviting him to come and see the wonderful glory. "And he carried me away in the Spirit to a great and high mountain, and showed me that great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God, having the glory of God." Rev. 21 : 10.

The architectural beauty of the city, and its ornamental splendor excels all human conception. How almost infinite must be the intelligence and skill of the angel who could cause to stand, in its heavenly grandeur, before the apostle's vision, the New Jerusalem—glorious metropolis of Christ's universal kingdom—as it will be in the time when the earth is made new. Perhaps this same angel is the honored architect of the "*holy city*" which hath foundations, "whose builder and maker is God ;" for it is said of him, "And he that talked with me had a golden reed to measure the city, and the gates thereof, and the walls thereof." And he—the angel—measured the city, the walls and the foundations and the gates, and gave the apostle the length and breadth and height. We may believe that under this chief seraph's superintendence angelic hands reared the wonderful superstructure, and polished and set the "All manner of precious

stones" which garnished the foundations and walls; and lifted to their places the twelve gates of pearl.

That magnificent city of God had twelve gates, each gate a solid pearl; and at each grand pearl-arched entrance stood *an angel*; this showing that the holy sons of heaven do not cease their royal ministry to the redeemed even when they are safely sheltered under the pearly dome of the New Jerusalem. It is not too much to believe that holy angels, having been God's chosen agents in the redemption of the "innumerable company," whom they served, protected, and delivered on earth, will maintain intimate relations with the saved hosts forever.

Not only did this particular angel—one of the seven—unveil to John's enraptured sight the resplendent metropolis of the new world in its architectural and ornamental glory, but he called the apostle's special notice to the broad and gracefully flowing *river* which crowned the beauty of the one city of the restored universe; not forgetting to add to the charming picture the "tree of life," standing in the midst of the crystal waters, and spreading its branches to either shore, whose perennial foliage lends healing balm to the ransomed nations.

We may believe that the angel was as delighted in revealing to John these coming splendors and ravishing beauties as was John in beholding them. What an exquisite artist that angel must have been! And how familiar with the mind of Jehovah, in Christ Jesus, concerning the world to come! And need we wonder? He was present when the worlds

were made; and led, perhaps, the seraphic choir which voiced high anthems of joy, in chorus with the morning stars, over the magnificence of the finished creation.

And now come the angel's last words to the banished but honored disciple. He had swiftly carried him through the vast and changing scenes of all the mortal centuries. He had unmasked to his keen vision the final events of earthly history. He had opened to his amazed view the dawns of the endless ages. He had painted, in its real colors, the flashing resplendence of the eternal city. He had caused his charmed ears to hear the new song of the redeemed, as they throng the hills of God. And now he closes his lofty revelations with a most solemn assurance, and a divinely ordered injunction.

“And *he*—the same angel—said to me, These sayings are faithful and true; the Lord, the God of the spirits of the prophets, hath sent his angel to shew his servants, the things which must be done shortly come to pass.” Rev. 22: 6. *R. V.*

Who shall question that this holy messenger from Christ spake audibly to John in Patmos? Is not the declaration simple and positive? “And *he said to me.*” To doubt that so the angel did *speak* to the servant of Christ is to equally doubt that the slumber of the shepherds was broken by real voices in midnight melody at the Saviour's birth; or that Peter, in his dark prison, was startled from a deep sleep by the audible command: “Gird thyself, and bind on thy sandals.” We see no more reason to

receive John's emphatic assertion: "And it was I John who heard and saw these things," with suspicion, than to question any explicit statement of the inspired Volume. That an angel was in Patmos as truly and literally as was the apostle; and that they stood face to face while the angel really spake in articulate words, there is no reason to dispute.

Having formally and with solemn emphasis assured St. John that all he had revealed to him was strictly true and would surely come to pass; and that the long line of events described would at once begin to occur, the apostle, overwhelmed by solemn wonder and admiration prostrated himself at the *angel's* feet in adoring gladness. But even a seeming act of worship the holy angel again rebuked, saying, "See thou do it not; I am thy fellow servant, and of thy brethren the prophets, and of them who keep the sayings of this book, worship God." Rev. 22: 10. And having remanded John to his feet, he enjoined him not to conceal the revelations he had received, but to make them known to the churches for whose information and comfort, through all time, their unfolding fulfillment was intended. "And he said to me, Seal not the sayings of the prophecy of this book; the time is nigh."

And these were the last recorded words of that holy angel of God, who was specially commissioned by the Saviour to reveal to his servant John the things which Father had revealed to him. And that such an angel did make the recorded unveiling to God's servant, in his exile on the isle called Pat-

mos, is proved by its fulfillment already, in large part, and its still occurring accomplishment before the eyes of all men.

And this angelic revelation was made under the new covenant, in the Christian dispensation; showing impressively that angelic ministries are among God's chosen agencies in the economy of grace.

“Not wholly lost, O Father!  
Is this evil world of ours;  
Upward, through its blood and ashes  
Spring afresh its Eden flowers;  
From its smoking fields of battle  
Love and pity send their prayer,  
And still thy white-winged *angels*  
Hover dimly in our air.”

## CHAPTER XIII.

### **The Work of the Angels—The Work of the Spirit.**

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God governs our world by no single force. Divine Sovereignty works not by simple fiat, but through chosen and directed agencies, adapted to the various realms of thought and motion, of mind and matter. The governing influence of the Holy Oracles is that of revelation, precept, law. These alone are authority in questions of moral conduct, and spiritual truth.

The Holy Spirit, having direct access to mind, is the revealer; the inspirer; the dictator of prophecy; the teacher of truth. The Spirit's realm of power is heart and mind—the mental and spiritual susceptibilities and faculties. Its special operations are with thought, will, affections, conscience. It illumines, convinces, convicts, warns, regenerates, comforts, sanctifies, guides. It is the executive force of the divine government; especially in the realm of intellect and moral sensibility. It is an uncreated power, and can operate in the physical as well as in the spiritual domain; but its peculiar

province, in the work of redemption, is over the spiritual and intellectual nature of men.

But the *angels*, being created and personal beings, although far excelling man in rank of mind, cannot discern the thoughts and intents of the heart, at least not with unerring accuracy. But they *excel* in strength. The Scriptures call them "*mighty angels*." Vast power over material forces is ascribed to them by divine inspiration. In the plan of redemption their work is, mostly, with demons, the bodies and lives of men, and the elements of nature. While the Spirit pervades the universe of thought and emotion, the angels sweep the empires of personal, social and national forces.

An example in point is the defence of Jerusalem by the hand of a single angel. "And it came to pass that night, that the angel of the Lord went out, and smote in the camp of the Assyrians a hundred fourscore and five thousand; and when they arose early on the morning, behold they were all dead corpses." 2 Kings 19: 35. If one angel could slay an army of men what could not twelve legions do?

Another striking instance of angelic power over men is their protection of Lot and his household against the violence of the Sodomites. "And the angels put forth their hands and pulled Lot into the house with them, and shut to the door. And they smote the men that were at the door with blindness, both small and great." Gen. 19: 12.

From these, and many more similar cases recorded in the Scriptures, it is plain that the angels



“excel in strength” ; and that one can chase a thousand, and two put ten thousand to flight.

Such unlimited mastery of men, even to striking dead thousands in an hour ; and instantly smiting whom they will with blindness must include control of the diseases which afflict us. If an angel could suffuse Bethesda’s waters with healing efficacy, they can by other means cure diseases. If *men*, by prayer and the laying on of hands are sometimes the instruments of healing power, why should we doubt that the stronger, and wiser holy angels can, under the Lord’s direction, cure the sick. Does not the inspired statement : “The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them,” include *deliverance* from all kinds of peril ? The angel of the Lord smote Herod so that he was eaten of worms and gave up the ghost. Acts. 12 : 23. Would it be harder for an angel to check disease ? And if evil angels can afflict mortals with loathsome maladies, as in the case of Job ? and if demons can take control of human bodies, casting some “into the fire,” and others into the water, and making others wild maniacs ; cannot the holy angels control such maladies and painful infliction to, at least, an equal extent ?

In a sermon upon good and evil angels John Wesley says : “There is little reason to doubt, but many diseases likewise, both of acute and chronical kind are either occasioned or increased, by diabolical agencies ; particularly those that begin in an instant, without any discernible cause, as well as those that continue, and perhaps greatly increase,

in spite of all the power of medicine. Many years ago I was asking an experienced physician, who was particularly eminent for curing lunacy, if he had seen reason to believe that some lunatics are really demoniacs? He answered that 'he had been often inclined to think, that *most* lunatics were demoniacs.' Who can tell how many of those diseases which we impute to natural causes may be really preternatural? What disorder is there in the human frame which an evil angel may not indict? Can he not smite us as he did Job, and that in a moment with boils from the crown of our heads to the soles of our feet? Can he not, with equal ease, cause any other external or internal malady? Could not he in a moment, by divine permission, cast the strongest man down to the ground, and make him 'wallow foaming,' with all the symptoms either of epilepsy, or apoplexy? In like manner it is easy for him to smite any one man, or every one in a city or nation, with a malignant fever, or with the plague itself, so that vain would be the help of man.

" 'I believe,' said that excellent man, the Marquis de Renty, when the bench on which he sat snapped in sunder without any visible cause, 'that Satan had a hand in it?' I know not whether he may not have had a hand in the accountable horror with which many have been seized in the dead of night, even to such a degree that all their bones have shook. Perhaps he has a hand also in those terrifying dreams which many have, even while they are in perfect health."

And of the power of the good angels over our daily lives Mr. Wesley held views equally interesting and instructive. He says: "May they not minister also to us, with respect to our bodies, in a thousand ways which we do not now understand. They may prevent our falling into many dangers which we are not sensible of; and may deliver us out of many others, though we know not whence our deliverance comes. How many times have we been strangely and unaccountably preserved, in sudden and dangerous falls! And it is well if we did not impute that deliverance to chance, or to our own wisdom or strength. Not so: it was God who gave his *angels* charge over us, and in their hands they bore us up. Indeed, men of the world will always impute such deliverances to accident or second causes. To these, possibly, some of them might have imputed Daniel's deliverance from the lion's den. But Daniel himself ascribed it to the true cause: 'My God hath sent his *angels* and shut the mouths of the lions.'

"When a violent disease, supposed incurable, is suddenly and totally removed it is by no means improbable that it was effected by the ministry of an angel. And perhaps it is by the same cause that a remedy is unaccountably suggested, either by the sick person or some one attendant upon him, by which he is entirely cured.

"And what are usually called divine dreams may be ascribed to angels. We have a remarkable instance of this kind, related by one who will hardly be thought an enthusiast; I mean Marcus Antoni-

nus. In his '*meditations*' he heartily thanks God for revealing to him, when he was at Cajeta, in a dream, what totally cured the bloody flux, which none of his physicians were able to heal. And why may we not suppose that God gave him this notice by the ministry of an angel?

“And how often does God deliver us from evil men by the ministry of his angels? Overturning whatever their rage or malice had plotted against us. The angels are about their bed and about their path, and privy to all their dark designs; and many of them, undoubtedly, they brought to nought, by means that we think not of. Sometimes they blast their favorite schemes in the beginning; sometimes on the eve of execution. And this they can do by a thousand means that we are not aware of. They can check them in their mid-career by bereaving them of courage or strength; by striking faintness through their loins, turning their wisdom into foolishness. Sometimes they bring to light the hidden things of darkness and show us the traps that are laid for our feet. In these and many other ways hew the snares of the ungodly in pieces.

“We may make one general observation; whatever assistance God gives to men by men, the same, and in a higher degree, he gives by angels. They shut the mouths of lions—human lions—so that they have no power to hurt us. Sometimes they join our human friends, though neither they nor we are sensible of it, giving them courage, wisdom and strength, without which all their efforts would be unsuccessful. Thus do they secretly minister to the

heirs of salvation, while we hear only the voices of men, and see only human forms around us.

“It is for this reason that God is pleased to give his angels charge over us, namely, that he may endear us and them to each other; that by the increase of our love and gratitude to them we may find an increase of happiness when we meet in our Father’s kingdom. Meantime, while we may not worship angels, we may ‘esteem them very highly for their work’s sake.’”

God has always wrought by such instrumentalities as he pleases, and always will; but still it is God himself who doeth the work. Whatever help we have from angels or men is as really the help of God as though he were to put forth his almighty arm and work without any means at all. But in all ages he has used the ministry both of angels and men. And we may safely imitate the good angels in all holiness; and, as our Lord himself prayed, seek to do his will on earth as angels do it in heaven.

## CHAPTER XIV.

### Angelic Manifestations in Recent Times.

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“And may ye not unseen around us hover,  
With gentle promptings and sweet influence yet,  
Though the fresh glory of those days be over,  
When 'midst the palm trees man your footsteps met?”

“Are ye not near when sorrow unrepining,  
Yields up life's treasures unto him who gave?  
When martyrs, all things for his sake resigning,  
Lead on the march of death, serenely brave?”

But as to angelic ministries in later Christian times many are incredulous. Unable to offer any reason why these holy messengers of God, whose presence and offices were so abundant in ancient and early Christian times, should have ceased to serve the good of earth, and withdrawn from our world, not a few are unwilling to allow that they are among us still, and bless and guide us as of yore.

But the continuation of their ministries, even to our own times, is strongly inferable from the thrilling fact that the present dispensation opened with a profusion of seraphic interposition which continued without abatement through the apostolic era, and is recorded with prominent solemnity till the last page of the Inspired Record is closed. All

through the gospels, from beginning to ending of the Acts, in each and all of the Epistles, and to the final sentence of the Apocalypse, the wonderful services of the holy angels, in the work of redemption, are noted in the most explicit and imposing way. And no intimation is anywhere given that their work was to be transient. But of all that is said of them the implication is very decisive and convincing that they are prominent agents in all this age of grace.

Take for example: "Are they not all ministering spirits, sent for to do service for the sake of them that shall inherit salvation?" Heb. 1: 14. *R. V.*

These pregnant words occur in Paul's letter to the Hebrews, which was written some sixty years after Christ's ascension. Can any think that this broad and unlimited statement of the apostle was true only of the Hebrews of that time? Must not the expression: "*Them that shall inherit salvation,*" include *all*, of every time and place, who shall be heirs of salvation? Surely there is as good reason to limit this entire Epistle to the apostolic period as to thus limit this particular statement. The church in these "ends of the world"—"these perilous times"—needs the aid of angels as keenly as in the times when St. Paul comforted his believing kinsmen with the assurance that they, and all saints, are the subjects of angelic guardianship. There is no scriptural reason, or even ground of inference, for the misgiving of Christian confidence in the doctrine of continuous angelic ministrations, running to the close of time.

No, they have not left us, in these dark and evil days, the sport and easy spoil of devils. No less do they guard our steps through these dim and treacherous times, than when they took voyage with Paul, and clipped the wild wings of the midnight storm, bringing all the company safe to land. They, who did not disdain to visit Peter in his dark, loathsome prison cell, working a whole cluster of miracles for his deliverance, do not look on the perplexities, and pains, and exposures of the friends of Christ, in these later but not less dangerous hours, with cold unconcern. Tenderly they wait and watch, and spread their unseen shields over the weakest follower of the Lamb; nor will their sleepless vigilance fail, day nor night, till the latest born of all who "shall inherit salvation" is safely escorted to the hills of God beyond the reach of demon, death and tears.

BUT WHY ARE THEY NOT SEEN OF MEN NOW?

"Yet sweet is the rapture of music  
Far over the homes of men,  
Who are all too busy to listen,  
Or too heavy with sleep to ken;  
For only the ears can hear it  
That have waited late and long  
To catch through the clamor and discord,  
The thrill of the angel's song.

And only the eyes can see them,  
In their bending beauty fair,  
That have long been used to gazing  
Through the calms of the upper air,—  
The eyes perhaps of a watcher  
Near to the rest above,  
Or the innocent eyes of children  
Dear to the Lord of love."



In the olden times they were not always seen. Sometimes they were seen and not heard; sometimes they were heard and not seen. The history of these holy ones, running through all the Scriptures, makes it plain that they have power to execute their ministries on earth visibly or invisibly, at will. Who has not been startled by sudden prescience of events and dangers, entirely remote from their thoughts, as if some one had actually made an announcement to them?—so impressively, sometimes, that we look about us, half expecting to see some human form. These experiences are so common that they come to be recognized, in poetry and personal memoirs.

We remember the case of a distinguished minister of the gospel who was at the station, waiting to take the train for a neighboring city. His mind was entirely tranquil; no sense or thought of danger disturbed him: the train approached, he stepped forward to board it, when he became suddenly fastened to the spot, feeling as if held by some irresistible force. Unable to stir he saw the train depart. Ten minutes later, two miles from where he stood, occurred the terrible Revere disaster, in which nearly a score of persons were instantly killed, and many others painfully injured. This clergyman is still living—the pastor of a church not far from where we are writing. He saw no form, heard no voice, but he was solemnly conscious of some mighty presence controlling his action. Why should we doubt it was a holy angel

of God sent to interpose between a useful life and instant destruction!

Moreover, there is much reason to believe that angels personally appear to us, now and then, in present times. How else shall we account for the many authenticated instances in which persons fully awake, in mid-day, and under no abnormal excitement, have seen the forms of friends or acquaintances, or of unknown persons, when it was certain that no human being was near? The best and most intelligent people have recorded such appearances, often followed by unlooked-for providences. We believe it to be neither unscientific nor superstitious to regard such phenomena as explainable only by admitting that the angels of God do still show themselves to men.

#### MORE STRIKING INSTANCES OF ANGELIC INTERPOSITION.

"There are, who like the Seer of old,  
Can see the helpers God has sent,  
And how life's rugged mountain side  
Is white with many 'an angel tent.'"

There is no doubt that most cases of sudden and inexplicable deliverances of good people from diseases and accidents are the result of angelic intervention. Of the hundreds of cases within the limits of certain authentication we select a few.

"In the fall of 1858, while visiting Indiana, I was at an annual conference where Bishop Janes presided. We received a telegram that Bishop Simpson was dying. Said Bishop Janes, 'Let us spend a few moments in earnest prayer for the recovery of Bishop Simpson.' We kneeled to pray.

William Taylor, the great California street preacher, was called to pray and such a prayer I have never heard since. The *impression* seized upon me *irresistibly*. *Bishop Simpson will not die*. I rose from my knees perfectly quiet. Said I, 'Bishop Simpson will not die.' 'Why do you think so?' 'Because I have had an irresistible impression made upon my mind during this prayer.' Another said, 'I have the same impression.' We passed along from bench to bench, until we found that a very large proportion of the conference had the same impression. I made a minute of the time of day, and when I next saw Simpson he was attending to his daily labor. I inquired of the Bishop, 'How did you recover from your sickness?' He replied, '*I cannot tell*.' 'What did your physician say?' 'He said it was a *miracle*.' I then said to the Bishop, 'Give me the time and circumstances under which the change occurred.' He fixed upon the day, and the very hour, making allowance for being a thousand miles away, that the preachers were engaged in prayer. The physician left his room and said to his wife, 'It is useless to do anything further, the Bishop *must die*.' In about an hour he returned and started back, inquiring, '*What have you done?*' 'Nothing,' was the reply. 'He is recovering rapidly,' said the physician; 'a change has occurred in the last hour beyond anything I have ever seen, the crisis is past, and the Bishop will recover.' And he did."

The above narrative was given by Bishop Bow-

man ; and is now published by Fleming H. Revell, in a book entitled, *The Wonders of Prayer*.

We believe that God answered those prayers ; and that the Spirit made the impression on the minds of those preachers ; and that God's holy *angel*—perhaps the very one that stirred the waters of Bethesda—arrested the Bishop's disease and restored him to health, and service for the church.

The following case is reported in the same book.

“A sea captain relates to the editor of the *Christian*, a remarkable incident whereby in one of his voyages his ship was unaccountably held still, and thereby saved from sailing directly into the midst of a terrible hurricane : We sailed from the Kennebec on the first of October, 1876. There had been several severe gales, and some of my friends thought it was not right to undertake the voyage, but after considerable prayer I concluded it was right. On the 19th of October we were about one hundred and fifty miles west of the Bahamas, when we encountered very disagreeable weather. For five or six days we seemed held by shifting currents, or some *unknown power*, in about the same place. We would think we had sailed thirty or forty miles, when on taking our observations, we would find we were within three or four miles of our position the day before. This circumstance occurring repeatedly proved a trial to my faith, and I said in my heart, ‘Lord, why are we so hindered, and kept in this position?’ Day after day we were held as by an unseen force, until at length a change took place and we went on our way. Reaching our port they

inquired, 'Where have you been through the gale?' 'What gale?' we asked, 'We have seen no gale.' We then learned that a terrible hurricane had swept through that region and that all was desolation. We afterwards learned that this hurricane had swept around us, and had almost formed a circle round us during the storm. A hundred miles in one direction all was wreck and ruin; and fifty miles in the other direction, all was desolation; and while that storm was raging in all its fury, we were held in perfect safety in quiet waters, and in continual anxiety to change our course and pursue our voyage. One day of ordinary sailing would have brought us into the track of the storm, and sent us to the bottom of the sea. We were anxious to sail on, but some unseen power held us where we were, and we escaped."

Why should we hesitate to believe that as an *angel* controlled the storm and the ship and the sea, when St. Paul was in peril as he sailed for Rome, so an *angel* held the ship of that praying captain, and restrained him from sailing into danger and death? Had the volume of Inspiration still been open and in progress we believe these cases, and hundreds more like them, would have been recorded as instances of angelic control of the elements, for the safety of those who trust in the Lord. There is no intimation, in the Scriptures, of the Spirit controlling storms, and hurricanes, and ship at sea. But there *are* wonderful examples of *angels* working miracles with winds and waves for the deliverance of the righteous. And we have neither rea-

son nor right to suppose that God has changed his methods of governing our world since Paul's time. The holy angels are not yet retired from service.

DO ANGELS ORDER SOME DREAMS?

From the same source we copy the following *remarkable dream*: "The late Dr. Whitehead was accustomed to repeat with pleasure the following fact: In the year 1764 he was stationed as an itinerant preacher in Cornwall. He had to preach one evening in a little village where there was a small Methodist society. 'The friends,' said he, 'at whose house we preached had at that time a daughter who lived with one of our people about ten miles off. His wife was gone to attend their daughter, who was dangerously ill of fever; and her husband had that day received a message that his child's life was despaired of. He earnestly and in tears desired Mr. Whitehead to recommend his daughter to God in prayer, both before and after preaching. He did so in the most warm and affectionate manner. Late that evening, while the young woman's mother was sitting by her daughter's bedside (who had been in a strong delirium for several days), she opened her eyes and hastily addressed her mother thus: 'O mother! I have been dreaming that I saw a man lifting up his eyes and hands to heaven, and fervently praying to God for my recovery! The Lord has heard his prayers, and my fever is gone. And what is far better, the Lord has spoken peace to my soul, and sealed his pardoning love on my heart, I know it, I feel it.

my dear mother ; and his Spirit bears witness with my spirit that I am a child of God, and an heir of glory.' Her mother, thinking she was still in delirium, desired her to compose herself and be quiet. The daughter replied, 'Dear mother, I am in no delirium now ; I am perfectly in my senses ; do help me to rise, that upon my bended knees I may praise God.' Her mother did so, and they both praised God with joyful hearts, and from that hour the young woman recovered so fast that she was soon able to attend to the affairs of the family, where she lived. She had never seen Dr. Whitehead previous to this remarkable event ; but some weeks after she saw him ; and the moment she beheld his face she fainted. As soon as she came to herself she said, 'Sir, you are the person I saw in my dream, when I was ill in a violent fever ; and I beheld you lift up your hands and eyes to heaven, and most fervently pray for my recovery and conversion to God. The Lord in mercy heard your prayers, and answered them to the healing of my wounded spirit, and to the restoration of my body.'"

Now that the young lady should have had a dream, and even have dreamed that some one was praying for her recovery and that she should get well, would have been no miracle. But how could she have seen Dr. Whitehead, at the very moment he was at prayer, and in his exact posture, with his eyes and hands lifted to heaven ; and heard the very words he spake, *ten miles* away ? That the whole thing was no delusion is proved by her immediate recovery and her conversion to God. But

why should we wonder? Did not an angel give King Nebuchadnezzar a wonderful dream, and afterward interpret it to the Prophet Daniel? Did not an angel visit Paul in the hold of the ship, in the midst of the storm and speak to him face to face? Why should not an angel have personified Dr. Whitehead in the dream of that sick and suffering girl; appearing to her exactly as the Dr. would have appeared had she been awake and standing by his side while he was in that act of supplication?

We believe Mr. Wesley stands on scriptural ground in ascribing "pious dreams" to the presence and inspiration of the angels. If they encamp about us to protect and warn us in our waking hours, why may they not communicate with us in our slumbers in the silent night? We do believe that while Dr. Whitehead prayed an angel was present at the bedside of that suffering object of his travail of faith, representing to her, in a dream, what was transpiring miles away, and what the result would be.



## CHAPTER XV.

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### Instances of the Visible Appearance of Angels.

“How oft may be seen what to Jacob was shown,  
When reposing at night on his pillow of stone ;  
The angels descending and returning again,  
In intercourse sweet with the children of men.”

The ancient times were luminous with angelic presence. Across the olden years flashed the brightness of their faces. Through the dashing centuries rang the melody of their voices. And when the veil shall be lifted it will appear that our own changing eras are not less visited and swayed by the wisdom and power of the sons of light. Not only do they watch us from amid the shadows, guiding our dangerous ways by unseen, and oft unrecognized influences ; but sometimes, and oftener than we are wont to think, they stand disclosed in visible forms, and bare their arms of strength in deliverances which baffle the solutions of the most incredulous philosophy. They rescue precious and important lives, and protect whom heaven has ordained to great achievements for the right.

Of Samuel Rutherford, one of the chief lights of the Reformation period, and who was Professor at

St. Andrew's, in Scotland, in 1643, it is related that in his childhood he fell, one morning, into a deep well. No person was in sight, or in hearing of cries. Instinctively he clutched the mossy rocks. But his childish strength was ebbing fast, when a man, robed in white glided down to him, and folding his strong arms around his little form, bore him safely out, then instantly disappeared. His dripping and bruised condition, when found, verified his narrow escape. The person who had rescued him could never be found. And his belief was, specially in his after years, that God sent an *angel* to preserve his life that he might be a preacher of the gospel, and a flaming witness against the wicked Papacy. Need it be thought incredible that the holy angel who dug a *well* in the wilderness of Beer-sheba to save Hagar's boy from dying of thirst, should, in these later times, glide down to the bottom of a *well* and rescue a young lad, selected of God for heroic defense of this Word of truth, when grown to manhood?

Three hundred years ago when the soil of France was red with the blood of her martyrs, the murderous Inquisition sought a fresh victim in the person of the head of a family of Christians; but the wife and children secreted the father, and would not reveal his hiding place. Enraged at being cheated of their prey, the heartless tools of Rome seized one of the children, a frail boy in his teens, and put him to torture to force from him by the power of pain, a confession of his father's covert. The thumb-screws were cruelly applied—those instru-

ments of exquisite suffering ;—but the lad was firm. Then followed the lighted matches, placed between the fingers,—a keener torture still. The heroic boy gave no sign of pain, save the swift movement of his pale lips in prayer. The tormentors, hardened as they were, were awe-struck by the child's miraculous fortitude, and released him. His friends, who had stood by in helpless agony, took him to their bosoms, and said, "Was it not terrible to bear?" "It was indeed hard to bear," he said, "but at the worst of it a tall *angel* came and stood beside me, and pointed his finger up towards heaven, and all the pain left me."

Might it not have been the same angel who visited Luther at midnight, in his chamber, at the Diet of Worms, that, a little later, stood beside the pale-browed boy in France, giving him courage and power of endurance which struck his persecutors with strange fear and forced them to release their innocent young victim?

Quite many years ago the author of this little volume was pastor of the F. Baptist church at Milton Mills, N. H. At an extreme quarter of the parish stood the Farnham homestead. The dwelling, a plain farm-house, was then occupied by John Farnham and his wife Fanny. They were most excellent Christian people, greatly beloved. Ralph Farnham, father of John, was a revolutionary soldier, and had spent most of his days on that homestead, an excellent citizen, a devoted Christian. He was converted to God by witnessing the phenomenon called the "*dark day*" which occurred on

the 19th of May 1780, and which, to his latest hour, he was accustomed to describe in very glowing and impressive language. He lived to a remarkably old age. On his *one hundred and fourth birthday* he was carried to Boston, Mass., where he was received, and for some days entertained, with much eclat, as the oldest living soldier of the Revolution.

He was a mild, quiet, calm, serene, Christian man, never given to anything fanatical or visionary. He spent his last years at the quiet Farnham homestead, tenderly cared for by his son John, who, with wife, was affectionately devoted to the beautiful patriarch.

One morning, a few years before his death, Mrs. Farnham heard him calling with unusual animation: "Fanny, come quick, O, come quick, Fanny." She sprang to his room and found him sitting in his arm-chair with a heavenly radiance on his countenance, as if some new and great joy had burst upon him from the world of light. As she entered he exclaimed, "Don't you see them, Fanny! O the beautiful *angels!* Can't you see them? How sweetly they sing! O Fanny, you must see them! You must hear them sing!" After some minutes the heavenly visitants retired, leaving the grand old soldier, both of his country and his God, in a wonderfully happy frame of mind.

As, more than once, we stood in that silent room, beside that "*old arm-chair,*" and heard from "Fanny" the recital of that scene, we seemed to feel the sacred presence of the holy angels of heaven, and

feel the soft motion of the air, as when their white wings, seen by him alone, fanned his wrinkled brow till it shone majestic in the light of God.

There is every reason to believe that dying saints often see *angels* around them. How many have seen on the faces of their friends, just as they were touching the cold waters, expressions of unearthly light and beauty, as they lay speechless, gazing so earnestly, as if upon some shining form. The Spiritualists will say they see their dead friends, come to bear them to the spirit world. We say they see the holy angels, sent to suffuse the gathering shadows of the grave with the light and glory of promised resurrection.

We have known many cases of little children being very happy in pangs of a painful death, telling those around them that they saw beautiful angels. Many who read these words will recall death-bed scenes of touching interest, when they felt that the place was hallowed by the holy presence of attending angels. If, as the Bible declares, they "are all ministering spirits—*angels*—sent forth to minister to—or *serve*—them that shall be heirs of salvation," all through our years of strength and activity, they will not desert us when we are passing down into the dark valley. If they attend us through all our long and weary journey they surely will not leave us to struggle alone with the black-winged angel at the moment of supreme need of sympathy and aid, more than mortal friends can give. But when we shall come to that mysterious moment where earthly voices die on our ears, and

loving human faces fade from our sight, then *their* voices shall charm our closing moments with holy cheer; and their smiles shall tenderly light us to our silent and dreamless bed.

A distinguished French physician who undertook to account for the entire phenomena of Christian experience by natural causes, frankly confessed that the "*dying fancies*" of many religious persons baffled all solution. "In the most severe sufferings, even in the agonies of death," he said, "they were often very joyful, and resigned, declaring in their latest breath their rooms were full of angels; and that they heard them sing."

A very impressive instance of angelic protection occurred in the experience of William Miller. In 1843 he was lecturing in New York. At one of his meetings a violent mob assembled around the place, with threatening demonstrations. At the close of the service as Mr. Miller went into the street the roughs set on him with the cry, "That is old Miller. Take him!" At that instant two persons appeared in front of him, singularly attired, and, facing the mob, walked backwards for nearly a mile to Mr. M's lodgings, the furious multitude following them all the way with demonstrations of violence. His strange escort uttered no word during their walk, but when the rabble became furious, they waved their hands, which seemed to have great influence over them. When Mr. Miller reached his destination his deliverers suddenly disappeared and the angry crowd quietly retired. The singular event awakened a deep interest among the people, but

the closest inquiry failed to reveal the mysterious defenders of God's servant. And Mr. M. expressed his solemn belief that they were angels of God. And the Christian people who were best acquainted with the circumstances fully concurred in that conclusion.

Cases similar in character, and well authenticated, are too common, even in recent times, to make further recital necessary. But most people, unwilling to recognize the superhuman aspects of the divine government of our world, attempt to discredit all evidences of the ministry of heavenly beings in our midst. There is much more inclination to accept the vagaries of modern Spiritualism than to believe the plain and inspired teachings of God's Word. But to those who are willing to see, the vast fields of Revelation are luminously dotted with foot-prints of celestial intelligences, to whose tender but mighty guardianship we are indebted, under God, for protection and safety.

ANGELS MORE PROMINENT AS WE APPROACH THE END  
OF TIME.

If, as we have seen, the holy seraphs have held high ministerial place in the successive developments of the redemptive economy, we would certainly expect their offices to become still more abundant and interesting as the final scenes of human destiny draw nigh. Having served as the flaming messengers of the Lord Jesus from the manger to the throne, and onward through the gospel era, they, surely, will not fail to participate in

the grand and awful events connected with his return in judgment of his enemies and for the crowning of his own. If they watched the cradle of his infancy they will not be silent when the anthems of his kingship shall be sung. If they have signalized themselves as champions of their Master's long conflict with the powers of darkness they will not miss being the jubilant witnesses of his final magnificent triumph. Having fought the evil angels, throughout the fierce struggle of the centuries, they will be sure to be present in full numbers when the demons receive their doom. The divinely appointed helpers of the saints in all the ages, they will be foremost in delighted acclaim when the laurels of endless joys are bestowed by the hand of their Lord and King. The friends alike of the Bridegroom and the bride, they will crowd all the galleries of heaven at the nuptials.



## CHAPTER XVI.

### An Angel Announces the Coming of the King.

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“Behold! with awful pomp,  
The Judge prepares to come;  
The *archangel* sounds the dreadful trump  
And wakes the general doom.” *Wesley.*

A twain of *angels* astonished the sad and perplexed disciples as, at Bethany, they watched their ascending Lord, with the wonderful announcement: “This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven.” For the fulfillment of these majestic words the hope of the church has travailed through the weary and sanguine ages. Should this wonderful revelation fail, the crown and kingdom for which the martyrs died and all saints have looked and prayed, must be forever a mocking phantom. For if their Lord and our Lord returns not there can be neither resurrection nor eternal life. How fitting, therefore, that those heavenly messengers should be allowed to vindicate their own grand prophecy by proclaiming, in a voice that shall shake the earth and skies, and penetrate the Hadean valley to its remotest borders, “Behold!

he cometh with clouds, and every eye shall see him."

And thus a strong angel opens the great judgment scenes: "For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the *voice* of the *archangel*, and with the trump of God; and the dead in Christ shall rise first." 1 Thess. 4: 16.

This entire transaction will be as literal and visible as the scene of the ascension. "*The Lord himself shall descend from heaven.*" To spiritualize these words would be to annul the very foundations of Christian hope. And if the coming of the Saviour is to be literal, the appearing of the archangel, and the sound of his tremendous voice must be real.

Of this scripture Dr. Adam Clark says: "Jesus Christ shall descend from heaven in like manner as he was seen by his disciples to *ascend*, that is in human form. '*With a shout*' or *order*; and probably in these words, *Arise, ye dead and come to judgment!* Which *order* will be repeated by the *archangel*, who will accompany it with the sound of the trump of God, whose great and terrible blasts, like those on Mount Sinai, sounding louder and louder, shall shake both the heavens and the earth."

Grand! Awful! Glorious! Suddenly as flash of vivid lightning, on the dancing, rushing, giddy, unconscious, teeming millions will break the mighty "*shout*," shaking the pillars of creation; stopping the pulses of the universe. Then instantly, the *chief angel*, the head of the loyal legions, the tallest and mightiest son of heaven, he who unveiled

to the Prophet Daniel the rise and career of the great monarchies, filling all time ; and changed desolate Patmos to a lucid panorama whose flashing glory revealed the coming events of two thousand years, will lift up his voice, responsive to the "shout" of the descending Christ ; and, putting the "trump of God" to his lips, will blow the long, loud, solemn judgment blast, calling the living and the dead to the great assize.

"That day, the golden trump,  
Whose voice, from center to circumference  
Of all created things, was heard distinct,  
God had bid Michael sound, to summon all  
The hosts of earth to presence of the King."

#### THE SERAPHIC RETINUE.

"Lift your heads, ye friends of Jesus,  
Partners in his patience here,  
Christ to all believers precious,  
Lord of lords will soon appear,  
Mark the tokens  
Of his heavenly kingdom near.

Sun and moon are both confounded,  
Darkened into endless night,  
When with *angel* hosts surrounded,  
In his Father's glory bright,  
Beams the Saviour,  
Shines the everlasting light."

Angelic display is always commensurate with the importance of the occasion. *One* angel announced to Zacharias the birth of John, the forerunner of Christ. Only one angel revealed to Mary that she should be honored by the motherhood of Emanuel. And to Paul, in that terrible night of storm and danger, appeared a solitary messenger from heaven,

assuring him of protection and deliverance. And, although Peter was bound with double manacles and guarded by four times the usual number of soldiers, a single angel entered his well-protected cell, smote off his chains and set him free. But the opening of the Saviour's grave on the predicted third day was an event which, in importance and grandeur, rose to a loftier plane; yet but *two* holy ones were commissioned to roll away the stone and escort the triumphant Christ out of the dominions of death. Even at the ascension, when the immortal Prince of Life made his royal return to his Father's throne, only a twain of seraphs graced the magnificent scene.

But the *birth* of Jesus, which was the crowning of the expectation of the prophetic ages, and the incarnation of the hope of the world, was signalized by the presence of a great host of visitants from the throne whose anthem of royal recognition filled all the arch of heaven and shook the Judean hills with a chorus new and vast; reminding nature, too little used to angel voices since the dark night of evil set in, of that jubilant hour when the morning stars sang together and the sons of God shouted for joy.

But there is coming an occasion and a scene whose majesty and glory will tower above all grandeur and power ever witnessed by men or angels; whose flashing resplendence will dim the beauty of the stars; whose vast significance will be the wonder of the universe; whose attractions will empty the heaven of heavens of all its worshipers; whose

august pageantry will appall the boldest demons, and amaze the sons of men beyond compare. When the long absent Nobleman shall return; when the royal Son of David shall come to resume the long vacant throne; when the Bridegroom shall appear for the marriage of his chosen from the foundation of the world; when the conqueror of death, of hell, shall gird himself for final victory; when the King of kings shall come in with scepter and throne, every angel of heaven, every seraph of God will join his train.

“Lo! his triumphant chariot waits,  
And angels chant the solemn lay,  
Lift up your heads, ye heavenly gates,  
Ye everlasting doors, give way.

Who is the King of glory, who?  
The Lord, of glorious power possessed,  
The King of saints and angels too,  
God over all forever blest.”

In the far-back ages the captive prophet foresaw that day and filled with holy rapture, exclaimed: “I beheld till the thrones were cast down, and the Ancient of days did sit, whose garment was white as snow, and the hair of his head like pure wool; his throne was like the fiery flame, and his wheels as burning fire. A fiery stream issued and came forth from before him; *thousand thousands ministered unto him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him*; the judgment was set and the books were opened.” Daniel 7: 10.

And in this later age, our Lord himself, predicting his own return, said: “When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and *all the holy angels with*

*him.*" Matt. 25 : 31. And, also, "For whosoever shall be ashamed of me and of my words, of him shall the Son of man be ashamed when he shall come in *his own* glory, and in his Father's, and of the *holy angels.*" Luke 9 : 26.

The Son of man coming with ALL his holy angels! Glorious retinue! Magnificent display of the royalty of heaven! Concourse vast of seraphs and archseraphs! A shining train witnessed ne'er before and never again in God's endless years! Heaven's high ovation to Jehovah's only Son on his triumphal entry into kingship of his purchased possession! Resplendent celebration of redemption completed, demons and their dark work abolished, peace, universal and eternal, established. Mighty angelic acclaim as the Lion of Judah leads "captivity captive," and chains death and hades to his chariot wheels.

"The glory! the glory! around him are poured  
Mighty hosts of the *angels* that wait on the Lord!"

"*All his holy angels.*" Ten thousand times ten thousand, thousands of thousands! "Twelve legions" strong! Myriads of myriads! For the first time and for the last there will be silence in heaven. On that great day all the harpers of the skies will have gone down to earth with the conqueror of the nations. "*All.*" More than Isaiah could count or John could number. Filling all the highway of the heavens, a mighty thronging host; before, behind, around the advancing King, onward they come. The glory of their flashing wings obscures the

brightness of the firmament. The dancing clouds reflect the effulgent splendor of their majestic movement; and the long groaning earth claps its hands as when some great jubilee draws near.

*As escort* most appropriate they come. The swift and tireless ministers of Christ through all his long conflict with sin, his willing and faithful messengers of grace and deliverance to his followers in every age; true witnesses of the travail of his soul in sacrificial offering and intercession, how fit that they—*his* holy angels—should escort him now to his greatest conflict, his grandest victory. Brushing asunder the blue drapery of the skies they swiftly clear the way for the mighty conqueror's chariot wheels. Down to mid-heavens they guide their victor King. Straight to the open field where devils and death can elude his matchless arm no longer they proudly lead him on.

"The judgment; the judgment! the thrones are all set,  
Where the Lamb and the white-vested elders are met;  
There all flesh is at once in the sight of the Lord,  
And the doom of eternity hangs on his word."

*As aid-de-camps* they come. Not as clouds of silent witnesses will "all his holy angels" come with our returning Lord. Not skirting the field in numbers vast will they watch a single-handed fight between Christ and Belial. From the inception of the rebellion in heaven, till the closing act of the earthly drama, the loyal angels withstand the whole army of fiends. And when the final struggle comes on that is to settle the issue of eternal peace, the heavenly ones will bear a willing and effective part. "And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great

prince which standeth for the children of thy people." Dan. 12: 1. "Michæl and his angels fought against the dragon, and the dragon fought and his angels." Rev. 12: 7.

As executors of Christ's orders of judgment and extermination the "twelve legions," whom he might have called to his aid in his earliest conflicts, will be the swift avengers of their insulted Lord, and of his slain followers.

The parable of the tares assigns to the angels an important part in the divine administration of justice at the world's great harvest day.

"The field is the world; the good seed are the children of the kingdom; but the tares are the children of the wicked one; the enemy that sowed them is the devil; the harvest is the end of the world; and the reapers are the *angels*. As therefore the tares are gathered and burned in the fire, so shall it be in the end of this world. The Son of man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity; and shall cast them into a furnace of fire." Matt. 13: 38-42.

This very strong descriptive language must be intended to teach that the *angels* will be employed by Christ, in his judgment work, to separate the "vile from the good," and to destroy the "tares"—the children of the wicked one.

In the great Armageddon battle the loyal sons of heaven will not bear the sword in vain. Nor will they stay their hand till the last black fiend is slain, and all the enemies of God are blotted from his sight.



## CHAPTER XVII.

### Angels Will Hail the Rising Dead.

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“The great *archangel's* trump shall sound,  
While twice ten thousand thunders roar ;  
Tear up the graves, and cleave the ground  
And make the greedy sea restore.”

No angel or archangel can *raise* the dead. Michael and Gabriel have voices of vast power and majestic tone, but neither of them, nor the united voices of all the celestial myriads, can break the sleep of death. The slumber of the tomb is too profound to yield to aught but infinite command. The grim enemy's hand is too firmly set upon its precious treasure to relax at less than touch of uncreated power. The gloomy gates of the great charnel house have sullenly resisted the pleading pathos of robbed affection through all the mortal ages, and they will vibrate only at the voice which called the worlds into being. Hades owns but one victor. When he, who stood amid the shadows of the bereaved Bethany hearthstone and cried, “Lazarus, come forth,” shall call, the grave will answer.

The angels could not awaken the sleeping Saviour ; but they could watch his tomb, and roll away the stone when the hour for his revival came. And

so their tender ministries toward their divine Master were not broken by his transient detention in death. Their relations to his resurrection were intimate and sacred. And with the quickening of all the saints also the Scriptures most closely and interestingly connect the angels of God.

That remarkable text in 1 Thess. 4: 16, "For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the *voice* of the archangel, and with the trump of God, and the dead in Christ shall rise first," implies that the archangel is somehow officially related to the awakening and arising of the dead.

"*I am the resurrection,*" said Jesus. The essential life-restoring energy must proceed from him. His descending "*shout*" must vibrate through every particle of saintly dust. Yet the apostle so closely associates the "*voice* of the archangel" with the "*shout*" of the Saviour as to create the belief that the angels, at least the chief angel, are semi-officially concerned in the resurrection itself. It may be that the "*voice*" of the angel and the "*trump*" of God serve as the grand announcement that the august moment has come for the Life-giver to annul the power of death and call the silent nations to life, and to judgment; the voice and the trump being the solemn prelude to the omnipotent summons by him who alone can set the prisoners free.

The *shout*, the *voice*, the *trump*! Grand blending into the mighty mandate that shall dissolve the vast empire whose speechless subjects outnumber the living of all the cities of the world! Welcome sound

to the saintly myriads of the dark valley! Note of doom to him who hath the power of death, and to death itself! Sound of illimitable joy to the army of martyrs! Accents of despair to their accusers.

Spurgeon says: "What has our risen Lord left behind him? Our faith has learned to gather up memorials sweet from the couch of the Saviour's tranquil slumber. Well, beloved, he left *angels* behind him, and made the grave,

'A cell where *angels* use  
To come and go with heavenly news.'

Angels were not in the tomb before, but, at his resurrection, they descended; one rolled away the stone; others sat where the body of Jesus was lain. They were the personal attendants and body-guard of the great Prince, and therefore they attended him at his rising, keeping the doorway and answering the inquiries of his friends. Angels are full of life and vigor, but they did not hesitate to assemble at the grave, gracing the resurrection as flowers adorn the spring. I read not that our Master has ever withdrawn his angels from the sepulchres of his saints. Angels are both the servitors of living saints and the custodians of their dust. The angels from heaven rolled away the stone from our Lord's sepulchre and let in the fresh air, and he stepped out more than conqueror. Death had fled. The grave had capitulated."

How joyfully will the blessed angels greet the rising saints! At every cemetery on earth a shining convoy will attend. At every lone grave, unmarked by monument or slab, some angel will

stand, waiting with radiant face, to hear the order, "Awake, ye dead, and come forth." No bed so lowly, of orphan poor, or pauper long disowned, but over it shall bend, that hour, a seraph tall and glorious as ever graced the presence of the King of kings. No long forgotten mound of little child, under the weeping willow, planted by hands tremulous with poverty and grief, but shall be sought and found and tenderly watched by some vigilant angel from out the vast, shining ranks. No solitary grain of holy martyr's scattered dust but shall be looked for by seraphic eyes, and gathered to its fellow particles secure.

With what high acclaim of sacred gladness will the rising hosts be hailed by the holy legions! Quickly and certainly as a mother's love they will recognize the forms they guarded in the hard life-struggles of the long gone years. How they will smile, and wave their snow-white hands, and shout in irrespressible delight as the subjects of their faithful guardianship come trooping from the vales of death! How loud, and long, and grandly will they shout when the fifty million martyrs rise! In what sweet, soft notes will they sing a new-born anthem, lovingly improvised, a tender refrain of the cradle songs of earth, when all the little children, myriads of myriads, shall come to their caressing arms! And O, in what transcendent tones of majestic triumph will they tauntingly exclaim, "O grave, where is thy victory now? and where thy sting, O death!"

“What place more strange could men have found  
 Wherein to plant the cross than where  
 The flowers in clusters hid the ground  
 And filled with fragrance all the air?”

Did ever drearier shadows fall  
 Athwart the crimson and the gold,  
 Than when in its gaunt arms the tall,  
 Grim cross the dying Christ did hold?

A garden near the cross, and there  
 A sepulchre! Light barred with gloom;  
 Amid the glory rare and fair  
 Of bloom and beauty, there a tomb!

But never yet had weary feet  
 Of sorrow come, with muffled tread,  
 Thither, to crush the blossoms sweet,  
 As they brought in their loved and dead.

Nor would they, till they came to bring,  
 With tear and moan and smothered wail,  
 The body of the murdered King  
 Beneath the paschal moonlight pale.

’Twas meet that in a garden bright  
 With blooms the Champion’s tomb should be,  
 To sleep away the short, still night,  
 And wake in immortality.

And meet for Him to wake ’mid flowers,  
 When *angels* rolled the stone away,  
 Where dew-drops, fallen in lavish showers,  
 Like lustrous jewels paved His way.

’Tis well for weary head to sleep  
 On the same pillow where He lay,  
 While heaven its vigil sure doth keep,  
 And ere long is the break of day.

And love may make a garden round  
 The place where sleep its own and His;  
*Angels* patrol the holy ground,  
 And Christ the Resurrection is.”

—*Sunday School Times.*

## CHAPTER XVIII.

### Angels Will Marshal the Risen Dead.

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“And now the trump, of wondrous melody,  
By man or angel never heard before,  
Sounded with mighty tones, and the march began;  
Not swift as cavalcade, or battle bent,  
But as became procession of a King.”

Wondrous resurrection day! Great climax of the pregnant ages! Emancipation day for death-imprisoned saints! Glorious translation day for the living church! Grand field-day of the holy angels! Commotion vast, awful, glorious! None will be indifferent, none silent, none mere observers of the imposing scenes. Heaven and earth will pulsate with the grandeur of the hour—grandeur never seen before; to be repeated never. The living aglow with expectation of the promised change from dull mortality to life, abundant, eternal, in the twinkling of an eye, at the sounding of the trump. The resurrected dead in rapt amazement stand; and every *angel*, in full panoply of heaven, is alert for duty—waiting the orders of the King.

“And he shall send his *angels* with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.” Matt. 24: 31.

The august scene will be marred by no confusion. Order will reign supreme. The quickened dead and changed living will throng all shores and vales and mountain-sides; a multitude vast, innumerable; standing in serried ranks among their empty graves, when, lo! a trumpet blast, great and strong, yet not as battle summons, but melodious and tender-toned, presaging joy and bliss, will roll its numbers forth, heard to creation's farthest bounds; and swifter than speed of lightning, the *angels* will go forth to *marshal* the elect. The *angels*, or perhaps a selected number of them, will be the field-m Marshals of the day. Into willing custody they will take the vast, numberless throng; and, obedient to their far-reaching voices, the immense world-scattered mass will be "*gathered together*" preparatory to their triumphal ascension to "meet the Lord in the air." The kingdom not being set up, and the metropolis not having descended, the immortal hosts will be escorted to the chambers of omnipotence for safety "till the indignation be overpast."

"For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the *voice* of the *archangel*, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air." 1 Thess. 4: 16-17.

The angels will marshal the immense company, putting them in order,—“every man in his own order,” *troop*, *band*, company. With unerring skill they will find and gather all the risen ones. None, however small or obscure, will be missed. Not

only from the great centers of martyrdom, where the battle fiercest raged, and where the slain witnesses will rise in vast numbers, but from the remotest corner where fought and fell a single soldier of the Lamb, will the vigilant marshals bring in the heirs of bliss. The divine order runs for "*his elect, from the four winds of heaven.*" "The reapers are the *angels.*" And they will bring every sheaf. None so humble in birth or station, none so lonely and unknown of men that the reapers of the Lord will fail to gather them in. Were a single saint, whose name is on the scroll of life, missing from the "numberless hosts," the angelic reapers would glean the earth and seas till they should find the missing jewel, and bear it in their bosoms with shout and song to the royal place purchased for it by the Saviour's blood. Many a child will come without its parents; and many a "*waif,*" who buffeted the cold world alone, and died without a friend on earth; but not one will be left behind. Should the seraphic harvesters overlook the weakest child of God that ever lived and wept and died, they would be remanded to the search, from pole to pole; nor would the grand translation order be given till the shining ranks were full. Should an infant of days be deemed not worth the gathering, the recreant angel would be deposed from the royal staff, and a special convoy would be despatched to bring the tiny immortal in.

The holy angels will gather the ransomed from the four winds, from one end of the heavens to the other; but they cannot *translate* them. The voice of



him whose descending shout raised them from the dead must proclaim their *rapture*. But we may believe that the entire "*twelve legions*" will form a grand *escort* to the ascending saints.

O magnificent sight! Resplendent pageant! Admiration of Christ the Ransomer and King, and of God the Father who sent him to conquer and redeem! The loyal sons of glory proudly leading up the rejoicing heavens the trophies of their Master's blood and victory! Honored to present the all-glorious bride to her waiting Lord! They had oft unsheathed their invincible swords in her defence, turning the victory on Zion's side, in many a hard-fought field. And now, to right and left they stand, with lifted helmets, chanting triumphant strains, as the Prince of life welcomes the sharers of his glory.

This done, and the last sweet offices, of love and power, in the *ministry* of the holy angels, are finished. Here their glowing *foot-prints*, so grandly visible through the earthly sojourn of the faithful bride, melt radiantly away into the glories and bliss which follow.

The numberless subjects of their guardian skill and prowess safely sheltered beneath the shield of their Lord and King, what part the angels shall bear through the immortal years, will be as sharers in the honor of the common Lord, participants in the songs, and joys, and adorations which shall delight the saved nation, and gladden the *Throne*; content, as they shall witness the bliss of the crowned millions, to know how tenderly and faithfully they *ministered* to them in their tearful and perilous pil-

grimage through the wilderness of earth ; adding by way of dear remembrance, some lofty refrains to their anthems of unceasing gladness.

“But *now* at the outermost gate  
Of the City Celestial they wait,  
    With their feet on the ladder of light,  
That, crowded with angels unnumbered  
By Jacob was seen, as he slumbered  
    Alone in the desert at night.

And from spirits on earth that adore,  
From the souls that entreat and implore  
    In the fervor and passion of prayer ;  
From the hearts that are broken with losses,  
And weary with dragging the crosses  
    Too heavy for mortals to bear ;—

They gather the prayers as they stand,  
And they change into flowers in their hands,  
    Into garlands of purple and red ;  
And beneath the great arch of the portal,  
Through the streets of the city immortal  
    Is wafted the fragrance they shed.”

on Angelic ministry-  
see New Watchword. Oct. 93.

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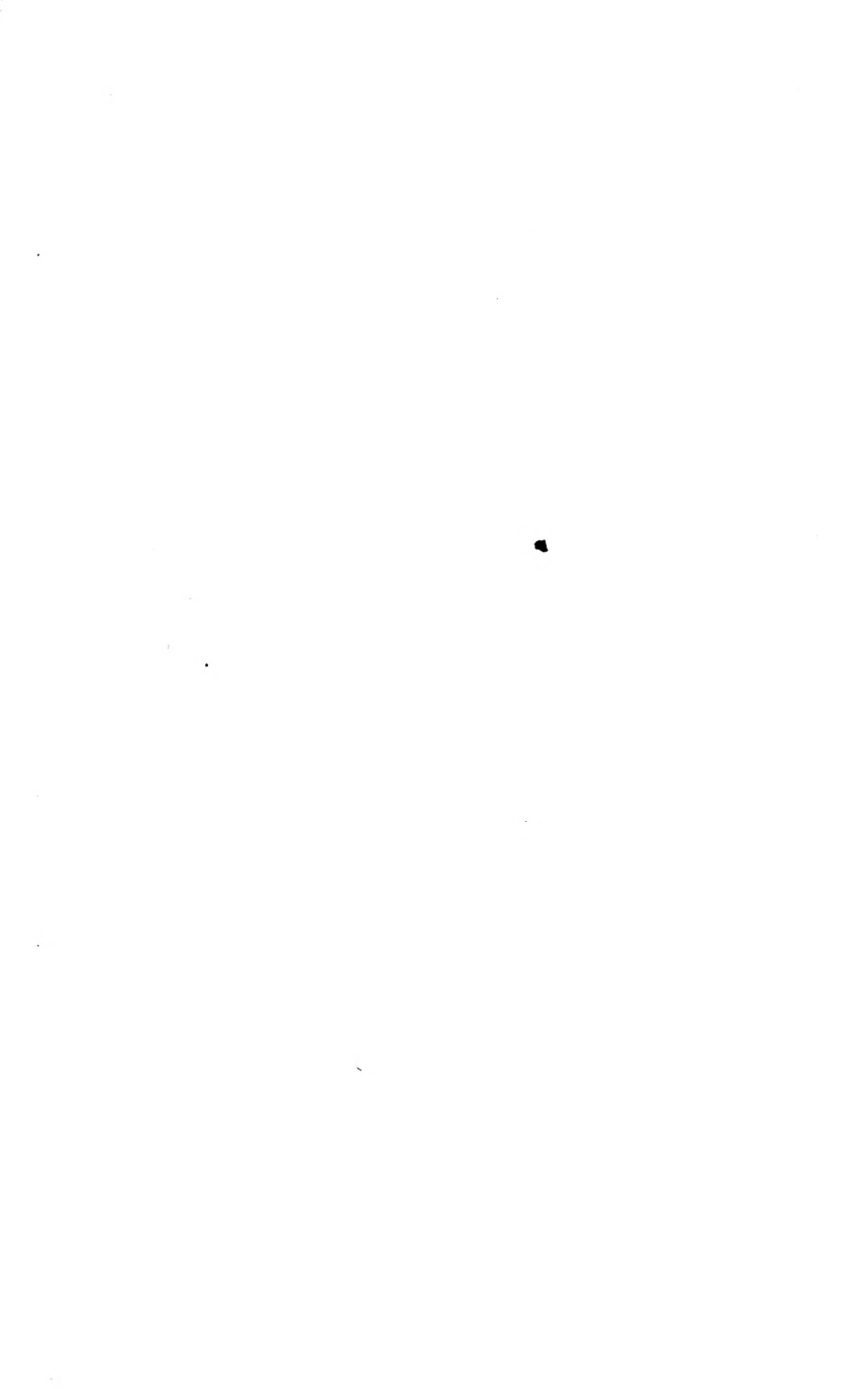
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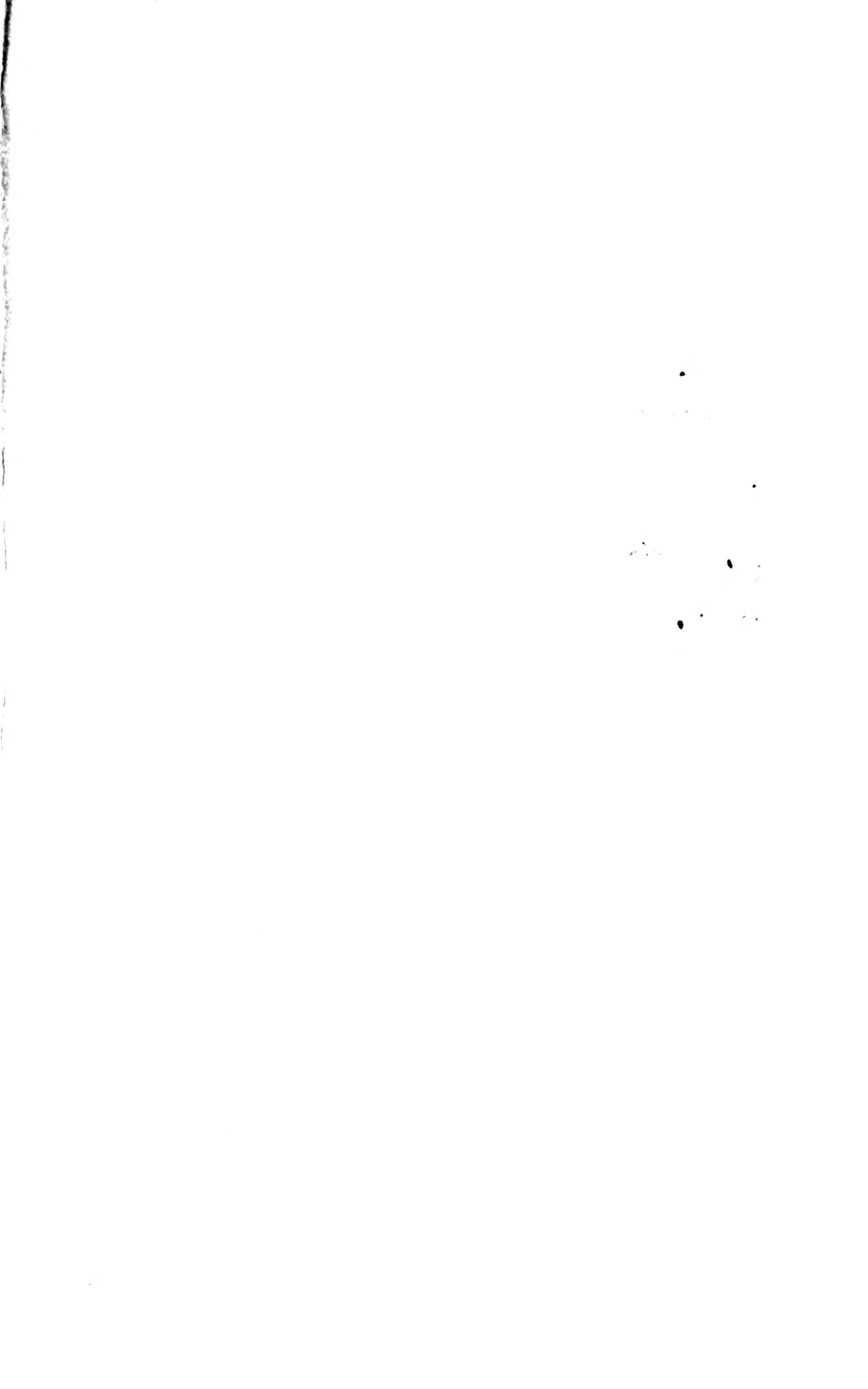
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