

"We Are Not Alone." A Study of Angels in the End Times- by Jon Ikin

F.B. Meyer once wrote, *"Wherever thou art, O child of God, God's angels have their eyes fixed lovingly on thee; and in a moment, if it were God's will to give thee eyes, thou wouldst behold them."*¹ The old preacher knew his stuff. There is an unseen world all around us which includes God's invisible army, angels. These winged warriors are spoken of throughout Scripture, but more than anywhere else they appear in passages dealing with the end times. It is the supreme era of angelic activity. No Christian can fail to be either interested or encouraged to see how they shall be involved. *We have an amazing army on our side.*

1. Angels will be Present at the Rapture.

The apostle Paul told us that when the Lord Jesus comes for His church it will be, *"with the voice of an archangel,"* (1 Thess.4:16). This reference reveals the presence of the angels at our split-second-snatch from this world. Think of it: in that flash of a moment we will not only be brought face to face with our Lord and reunited with our loved ones, but we will also be greeted by the heavenly hosts. What an event it is going to be! *But just why are the angels involved? What part do they play?* For one reason it could be for purposes of spiritual warfare. Remember, Satan is, *"the prince of the power of the air,"* (Eph.2:2) and this is his present realm. When the Lord Jesus comes He is going to take from under his nose the people he hates most. Archangels may be used to restrain him and his own heavenly army (Eph.6:12). Quite possibly, angels will also be present at that moment to contribute their songs of heavenly praise. Consider the following story. *"Back in January 1956, five young missionaries were speared to death in the jungles of Ecuador. The offenders have now become Christians and have told Steve Saint, the son of one of the missionaries, that they heard and saw what they now believe to be angels while the killings were taking place. A woman hiding at a distance also saw these beings above the trees and didn't know what kind of music it was until she heard a Christian choir on records!"*³ If angels are present worshiping God at the home-call of believers, will they not do so at the rapture too? Scripture says they will.

2. Angels will Protect God's People

The Bible describes the last days as being, *"perilous times"* (2 Tim.3:1). This description is true of both sides of the rapture, but especially the seven year Tribulation. During this time Satan himself will be on the earth (Rev.12:9) and many dark things will be taking place, the restraints having been removed (2 Thess.2:7). Believers will need protection as never before. Little wonder we read of angels sealing, *"the servants of our God on their foreheads,"* (Rev.7:1-3) along with other acts of protection. David Jeremiah writes: *"Most Christians agree demonic activity will increase as we near the last days. It's a viewpoint*

grounded not only in simple observation of what the world is coming to, but also in Scripture. 'The Spirit clearly says,' Paul reminds us in 1 Timothy 4:1, 'that in later times some will abandon the faith and follow deceiving spirits and things taught by demons.' Here in our own church's counselling ministry we've seen this a lot. After reviewing some of the powerful and mystifying disorders people are manifesting, we look at each other and say, 'Something's going on here that isn't human.' It's true for Christian ministry throughout the world too: We have seen and will probably continue to see greater attacks from the forces of spiritual evil. So I ask you: Isn't it reasonable to expect that as demonic activity increases while we near the day of the Lord's return, angelic activity will also increase? It makes sense."⁴

In light of this realisation we can find great comfort in the testimony of angelic protection for God's people. Here's a story I find particularly thrilling. It is the story of a missionary called Hazel Page who served God in the Philippines. "The people in Bayanan seemed concerned for Hazel's well being, especially since her house was off the path outside the village. Most nights they sent a couple of children from the village to stay with her and keep her company. On one of the nights when the children hadn't come, Hazel suddenly woke from a sound sleep. It was voices that woke her – men's voices, several of them. They sounded angry and brash...yes, as though they were drunk. She thought that all the men in the village had left to work on a government job, but she recognised the voice of one of them. What were they saying? As the men neared her house she could make out a few words. '...kill her...see if there's a God or not...' Hazel sat up on her mat, knowing there was no place to hide. She was vulnerable, alone, and without a weapon in her house. Too far from the village for a scream to be heard. The voices were closer now. She peered through the open wall into the black night. 'Lord, I'm in your hands,' she prayed. Suddenly the voices stopped – silence – then the sound of feet running away from her house towards the village. Hazel waited, straining for audible sounds of their return, but only familiar sounds filtered through the night – a dog barking, a small animal sweeping through the brush behind the house, the wind lightly flapping palm branches. With grateful prayer, she lay down on her mat and fell asleep. In the morning a woman from the village visited her. Hazel recognised her as the mother of one of the men whose voices she'd heard in the darkness. The woman seemed to know about Hazel's experience. 'Were you afraid last night?' 'Yes, I was,' Hazel answered, 'but I remembered that the Bible says, "When I am afraid I will trust in the Lord."' 'Do you know why the men didn't hurt you?' the woman asked. 'Because of those two large people dressed in white, standing on each side of the path to your house. The men were afraid to go past them.'"⁵ Praise the Lord! An angel guard was posted and his servant was kept safe. Although we know from Scripture that many Christians will suffer in the last days we are also encouraged to believe that many will enjoy angelic protection in their hour of need.

3. Angels will Preach the Gospel

The Greek word 'angelos' literally means 'messenger,' and throughout history angels have played a vital role in carrying communications from heaven. Moses received the law through the mediation of angels (Acts 7:53; Gal.3:19; Heb.2:2), Daniel received prophetic revelation from Gabriel (Dan.9-10), and the shepherds heard of the Saviour's birth this way (Luke 2), to mention just a few examples. And according to the book of Revelation, their preaching days are not over. In the second half of the Tribulation these heavenly heralds are going to broadcast the Word of God across the world. *"Then I saw another angel flying in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting Gospel to preach to those who dwell on the earth – to every nation, tribe, tongue, and people..."*(Rev.14:6) What an amazing thing this will be. When the world is in the grip of Antichrist and all possibilities of evangelism will seem to have ceased, suddenly the Lord will employ angelic preachers to keep the Gospel going out across the world. Let us never fear that the Saviour's words will be fulfilled, that, *"this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in all the world as a witness to all the nations, and then the end will come."* (Matt.24:14). Even then He will be watching over His Word to fulfil it (Jer.1:12).

4. Angels will Assist Israel

When the prophet Daniel was told about the horrors of the Tribulation, a needed word of comfort was given to him. *"At that time Michael shall stand up, the great prince who stands watch over the sons of your people..."* (Dan.12:1). Michael is one of four angels named in Scripture, the others being Gabriel, Lucifer and Abaddon – two good and two bad. It would seem that the special role of Michael is to protect Israel and engage in spiritual warfare on her behalf. This is something he has done in the past (Dan.10:13, 21) and something that he will do in the future too, and partly explains why the verse goes on to say, *"And at that time your people shall be saved..."* The 'Time of Jacob's Trouble' will be so severe that supernatural deliverance will be the only means of Israel's survival. Michael will be doing warfare in the heavenlies on Israel's behalf. But he may not be the only angel who will be helping Israel in those days. The book of Revelation tells us that the Jewish remnant will flee, *"into the wilderness, where she has a place prepared by God, that they should feed her there..."* (Rev.12:6). The question is sometimes asked, *who are "they"?* It seems unlikely to be her Arab neighbours or even Tribulation saints who will also come under attack from the Antichrist at the same time (v17). It may well turn out to be angels. This is not as far fetched as it seems. The Manna which fell during their first wilderness journey was called, *"angels' food"*(Ps.78:24-25) and it may be a repeat of that great miracle that is meant here. Certainly the Lord can feed people through angelic provision. Some of our readers may remember Barry Smith's testimony of how God fed him on one occasion. When unexpected guests came to the house they had no food to set before them. Nevertheless, Barry remembered the story of George Muller feeding the orphans and had his guests sit down at the table and say grace. Similar to the Muller story, there was a knock on the door. He ran

and opened it to find a box of food left on the doorstep and no one in sight. Was it an angel? Quite possibly. As it says in Hebrews, *“Are they not all ministering spirits sent forth to minister for those who will inherit salvation?”* (1:14). This will be part of their angelic assignment towards Israel in the Tribulation too.

5. Angels will Minister in Judgment.

Make no mistake about it, the Tribulation is the time of God’s wrath, which is why we believe the church will be removed beforehand. *“For God did not appoint us to suffer wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ,”* (1 Thess.5:9). Significantly, angels will play a leading role in bringing acts of judgment on the earth during this time. The seven Trumpet Judgments (Rev.8-11) and the seven Bowl Judgments (Rev.16) will all be administered by winged warriors on divine assignments. The forces of darkness serving the antichrist will find they are no match for the Lord of Hosts and His heavenly army in that day. How little we appreciate the great power that is on our side. We would do well to take Elisha’s words to heart: *“Do not fear, for those who are with us are more than those who are with them,”* (2 Kings 6:16). Let us be encouraged. We are not alone. *“For He shall give His angels charge over you, to keep you in all your ways,”* (Psalm 91:11).

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¹ Our Daily Homily

² Rev.4:1

³ “One Minute After You Die”, E Lutzer, p62

⁴ “Angels: The Strange and Mysterious Truth.”, David Jeremiah, p33-34

⁵ “The Spirits of Mindoro”, C.L. Davis, p74-75