

## PERSONAL PROTECTION

There are many people in this world whom have personal protection. One of the best examples is the President of the United States. Everywhere the president goes he has a bodyguard. With the number of Secret Service agents on duty twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week, it would be very difficult for anyone to simply walk up to him shake his hand or even speak to him. Of course we all can understand why. How many Presidents have been the centers of some kind of deadly force? But to try and imagine the time and money spent on his personal protection is mystifying to say the least. Not to mention all the electronic surveillance equipment outside the White House. I know when I was a law enforcement officer. I wore personal protection, better known as a bulletproof vest. So there are things out there that can protect us physically. There are alarm systems for our homes and automobiles. What about protection of our souls in our spiritual life? But did you know as for Christians God Himself has sent us spiritual guards for our souls? Jesus also had a form of bodily protection as well. He had angels to guard Him. So let us look at this in,

Psalm 91:11-12      11 For he will command his angels concerning you to guard you in all your ways;  
12 they will lift you up in their hands, so that you will not strike your foot against a stone. (NIV)

Satan refers to this scripture when he tempts Jesus. Satan is no idiot. He will use anything against you that he can find. He will even twist scriptures around. He did it in the Garden of Eden. So why would you think that he would not do it to you and I? In fact it is used against Jesus in the form of a temptation. Look with me in:

Matthew 4:6-7

6 "If you are the Son of God," he said, "throw yourself down. For it is written: "He will command his angels concerning you, and they will lift you up in their hands, so that you will not strike your foot against a stone."

7 Jesus answered him, "It is also written: 'Do not put the Lord your God to the test.'" (NIV)

In the next three verses we read the last temptation. But let us skip down to:

Matt 4:11      11      Then the devil left Him; and behold, angels came and {began} to minister to Him. (NAS)

And angels came and attended to Him. Could you imagine the spiritual drain, not to mention the physical fatigue? But the spiritual drain after under going the greatest efforts the devil has or had ever done. Satan had to be at his best to go up against God. Because if he could have lured Jesus in. It would have been the greatest catch of all. But God again proves His power over the snares and empty promises that Satan hands out. After being in the desert for forty days. I am sure that I would need some kind of attending to as well. In the garden just before His death, an Angel appeared then as well.

Luke 22:43      43 And there appeared an angel unto him from heaven, strengthening him. (KJV)

Jesus makes it clear that He also could call upon Angels. Proving again that He is the King of heaven, that angels are under His command, that they do the will of God. That they are protectors of Heavens thrown and the One Who sits there.

Matthew 26:53-54

53 Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to my Father, and he shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels?

54 But how then shall the scriptures be fulfilled, that thus it must be?  
(KJV)

It was not the purpose for which He came to earth. But He will return one day with His angels. They then will come in full force and then showing how mighty they really are.

2 Thessalonians 1:7

7 And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, (KJV)

Angels have fought in a great battle as well. They were willing to fight to protect Heaven and it's Throne. They defended what they knew was right. They showed their strength from God by throwing out the evil that was in Heaven. Let us read this account:

Revelation 12:7-9

7 And there was war in heaven. Michael and his angels fought against the dragon, and the dragon and his angels fought back.

8 But he was not strong enough, and they lost their place in heaven.

9 The great dragon was hurled down -- that ancient serpent called the devil, or Satan, who leads the whole world astray. He was hurled to the earth, and his angels with him. (NIV)

As we have read here. Angels have had their moments and encounters with Satan as well. They had a great battle. I could not image the war in heaven. It is beyond my comprehension. We have some men and women here tonight that have fought in great wars and battles. We can some what understand what read in our own history books. Lives lost. Bodies with out limbs. The horror has no real words to describe it. But the war in heaven did happen. The angels were given a free choice to follow and worship God. Or face the same doom that we all face if we do not obey God. But God gives us that freedom to make our own minds as well.

But would we really know a angel if we saw one? All right now if want to call your spouse a angel while she is sitting next to you that is fine. But really

Lot knew that the two men that walked up to him were angels. He never questioned it.

Genesis 19:1

1 The two angels arrived at Sodom in the evening, and Lot was sitting in the gateway of the city. When he saw them, he got up to meet them and bowed down with his face to the ground. (NIV)

He walked up to them and bowed down before them. So Lot knew whom he was seeing. What about today? Would we really know one if we saw one?

Hebrews 13:2 2 Do not forget to entertain strangers, for by so doing some people have entertained angels without knowing it. (NIV)

Paul says here that some have seen but not known. Have you ever come across someone who needed help? But you hesitated so you drove around the block to check them out one more time. But when you got around the block they were gone? You hear of stories like these all the time. I heard a story about a retired couple in Florida. A stranger came up to them and asked for a bite to eat. So the couple being a little fearful of strangers decided to feed him. So they go to the picnic table in the back yard. They gave him some sandwiches and a cold drink. They describe this person to be average in every way, just someone who may have a little bad luck. So he asked them if he could have some money. They looked at each other and told the man they only had a few dollars in the house. But they gave it to him. As he

left them, he wished them well with these words. God bless you. Now what was interesting about the story was this. On that same day once a year this retired couple receives a large amount of money in the mail. They have tried to figure out where it comes from. But have had no luck. Did they entertain an angel? I really do not know. But you always have to wonder. Or it simply could have been a person who really was in need at that time. But somehow by the grace of God got back on his feet and got his life together. So this is his way of thanking a kind heart. But are we all asked by the Lord to love one another? Read with me in:

Matthew 25:42-45

42 For I was hungry and you gave me nothing to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me nothing to drink,

43 I was a stranger and you did not invite me in, I needed clothes and you did not clothe me, I was sick and in prison and you did not look after me.'

44 "They also will answer, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or needing clothes or sick or in prison, and did not help you?'

45 "He will reply, 'I tell you the truth, whatever you did not do for one of the least of these, you did not do for me.' (NIV)

This retired couple did this very thing for the stranger. I had a friend of mine talking to me about angels. He got me interested in doing this lesson. The one thing that He brought out about angels was this;

Luke 16:22 22 "The time came when the beggar died and the angels carried him to Abraham's side. The rich man also died and was buried. (NIV)

Now the thing that struck out in my friend's head was that. Angels come and protect your soul and they take you to heaven. I have to admit that I never looked at that way before. But it would stand to reason, that Satan will fight for your soul to the gates of heaven. He hates to be a looser. So let me ask you tonight. Are the angels going to carry you to heaven? Or are you going to be like the man in the next few verses? Read on with me:

Luke 16:23-24

23 In hell, where he was in torment, he looked up and saw Abraham far away, with Lazarus by his side. 24 So he called to him, 'Father Abraham, have pity on me and send Lazarus to dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue, because I am in agony in this fire.' (NIV)

Let us look at a verse in Jude. Jude 1:9 9 But even the archangel Michael, when he was disputing with the devil about the body of Moses, did not dare to bring a slanderous accusation against him, but said, "The Lord rebuke you!" (NIV)

This is interesting wording here for us. Did you notice the part about Michael the Archangel. He did not bring a slanderous accusation. Some of other versions say. That Michael did not pass a judgment against him. If Michael did not pass any form of judgment. Michael being the General of God's Army, more than likely knew what had happened being during this Great War in heaven. Still just followed the Lord commands. As we think about what is in Jude. Let us turn to: Matt 25:45-46 45 "Then He will answer them, saying, 'Truly I say to you, to the extent that you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to me.'

46 "And these will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life." (NAS) So let us ask ourselves tonight. What we will hear on judgment day. Will the Lord rebuking you? Or welcome home my faithful servant? The choice is ours freely. It is all up to you. We all have to make up our minds and our hearts. If you have never accepted the cleansing of baptism the time is now. Maybe

you have but you have not been faithful in your following. If you would only come forward while we stand and sing.

Joe Broz