

Zahakiel: Let's begin. I'll ask Pastor to open the study with a prayer.

Barbara: PC: Dear Father in Heaven. Thank you for this opportunity to meet together before your throne. Though we are physically great distances apart, we are closer together as we draw closer to you. We thank you for this blessing as well as the Sabbath blessing. Bless us in this meeting and may each of us receive the blessing you have for us. In the name of Yahshua, your dear Son, we pray. Amen

Barbara: Amen

Guerline: Amen.

Freedom Walker: Amen

Zahakiel: Amen.

Adriel: Amen

Lucan: Amen

Naraiel: Amen. Amen, Amen

Gloria: Amen.

Zahakiel: Happy Sabbath to everyone. Tonight's study has the (I think) interesting name of "We Become Angels."

daphna: Amen

Zahakiel: The inspired writings tell us that Satan, like all fallen angels, is quite cunning and very intelligent. However, there is something missing from the way his mind works, which might be termed "innovation." The demonic mindset is very effective at twisting the Almighty's creation into perverse and warped versions of the original; however, it is not that effective at making anything truly new. This is the primary reason why, as we examine the various false doctrines of other Churches, we have noted a number of times that they are not entirely wrong, just misconceptions and misunderstandings of the truth.

In a sense, Satan's inability to create his own concepts actually works to his advantage. It makes the deception all the more dangerous since it is very close to the truth. The nominal and apostate Churches have a version of the victory message. They say, "We will not fail nor be discouraged... because every time we DO fail, Jesus picks us back up." The Bible tells us that this is almost exactly true; we shall not fail, and we shall not be discouraged, because every time we WOULD fail, Yahshua preserves us and keeps us from falling. When Satan approaches with a temptation, the mind in union with Christ rejects that temptation, and overcomes it, so that the fall does not take place, and we show that not all of humanity follows the error of Adam, but rather some follow in the footsteps of the Savior.

The nominal and apostate Churches have a version of the punishment for sin. They say, "Those who are not redeemed are punished eternally in the lake of fire, where they burn forever and ever." The Bible says something so similar that it requires both discernment and a familiarity with the character of the Father and Son to appreciate. It tells us that the un-redeemed are punished eternally by being cast into a lake of fire rather than receiving everlasting life, where the "smoke" of their burning ascends forever and ever. The Lake of Fire is called the "second death" because

that is exactly what it is, a death that follows the first, and that reduces the lost to ashes, (Mal 4:3) so that they "perish." (John 3:16) This is clearly not a description of continuous burning.

We could go on with additional examples, but it is rare that a false doctrine will be in clear contrast with the true. They may be opposite in principle, but seldom in manifestation or perception.

There is one doctrine that is held by many Churches that is very similar, and it is the idea that human beings become angels upon death. This has its roots in the idea that the soul of mankind is naturally immortal, and goes to Heaven to serve God when the body is destroyed.

Now, the specifics of this are clearly contradicted by the Scriptures at every point. Angels are said to be "created" by Yah as a different kind of being, for we read the author of Hebrews quoting a Psalm, "Thou madest him a little lower than the angels; thou crownedst him with glory and honour, and didst set him over the works of thy hands." (Heb. 2:7, cf. Psalms 8:5)

Angels are therefore separate from humans in both nature and purpose. Mankind's destiny is to be the collective regent of Yahweh, to rule the physical creation according to the earliest record of our origins. "And Elohim blessed [mankind], and God said unto them, 'Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it; and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth.'" (Genesis 1:28)

Paul writes, "Know ye not that we shall judge angels?" (1Cor 6:3) In the resurrection, the saints will judge angels, who are referred to as entirely spiritual beings, and by contrast we are they who are not only spiritual in nature, but also of the physical universe. The angels are created with more power, but humans were intended to – and will in the regeneration – have greater authority. As Adventists, we have a clear understanding of this, so we need not take too much time to refute this particular belief... but the question might be asked, legitimately, "Why did this false doctrine survive?" Why didn't the first theologian to suggest it recognize his error, or have it pointed out by others who were also studying the Word? It is because... as with so many other mistakes of Biblical understanding, it is true in a certain sense.

Upon death, human beings become angels – I speak in the Spirit on this matter, and of spiritual things. Just as a man can be "born again" without returning to the womb, just as we must die in order to live, and be humbled so that we shall be exalted, so the idea that humans become angels is false in the flesh, but true in the spirit.

In the Gospels, we read, "And [Yahweh] 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." (Matthew 24:31) This describes the harvest of the earth, and while it is certainly true that angels direct the process, and are the messengers of inspiration between Heaven and earth, we know that human beings are those who are purposed with gathering the elect. Human beings are the ones who bear "the Three Angel's Message" to gather the 144,000. Human beings are members of the "little flock" that – in the very last days – go forth with the "loud cry" of the fourth angel, that "great sound of a trumpet" that speaks to judgment and victory, the two uses of trumpets in the symbolism of the Word.

In the sense, then, that human beings become the visible messengers of the Gospel to the world, thus gathering the elect from all places, we do indeed become angels, and that after "death." Until we are dead to sin and self, until we are born again as "new creatures" that partake in the divine nature of the Father and Son, we are the "flesh and blood" that cannot inherit the Kingdom. (1Cor 15:50) After that, we are actuated by the Holy Spirit, and have access to the spiritual realm.

In the doctrines of the world, the dramatic transformation takes place at physical death, and spiritual death and rebirth is of secondary importance. The spiritual death, they say, may not even change much about the life; but when we die, if we are "saved" we go to Heaven, otherwise to hell. The reality is quite different. Physical death is not nearly as significant to those who are born again. It is a brief pause in their experience, and they are raised in new bodies... but the real change, the real determining factor of destiny, that takes place at the spiritual death. The born again understand that "all things" are made new, and we become inheritors of the Kingdom even before the return of Christ.

So, what does it mean to be an angel? We know what the Scriptures say about them, and with our new understanding, it might benefit us greatly to read these verses, and to consider, "This is what I am, in the spirit. This is what I am in relation to the Gospel in these last days." Here are a few examples:

"And Elohim sent an angel unto Jerusalem to destroy it; and as he was destroying, Yahweh beheld, and He repented Him of the evil, and said to the angel that destroyed, 'It is enough, stay now thine hand.' And the angel of Yahweh stood by the threshingfloor of Ornan the Jebusite.'" (1Ch 21:15)

From this and similar verses, we see confirmation that angels possess great power. Again, whatever is true of them is also true of us in the spirit. This is a truly important aspect to emphasize, for Satan will say to and of Yah's people that they are weak, that they are helpless, that they are dependent. The fact of the matter is, there are none with any real power but Yahweh. Nothing, no angel, no human, no demon, exists independently of the Creator, and they all endure only according to His direct will. Relative levels of strength have no practical meaning compared to Him. In other words, compared to the infinite power of Yah, angels (fallen or un-fallen) and humans are equally insignificant.

It is in the acknowledgement of our weakness, and our dependency, that we become able to do Yah's will, and since our dependency is on Him, then we work with His power and authority in His service. It is in our acceptance of and obedience to Yah's will that we become more powerful than any effort of the Enemy of souls, but to do this, we must reject all his temptations that are designed to get us to avoid taking upon ourselves the authority and power that Yah has intended for us to bear. This is of great practical use for us to understand. Never, for a moment, should we accept the idea that we are not equal to the task that Yah sets before us. We may wonder how the flesh can keep up. We may be tempted to think the cost is too high, the sacrifice too great...but the angels do not entertain such thoughts, for they see the might of Yah who sits upon the Throne of the Universe. They succeed because they, just like Yahshua in the flesh, do not entertain the thought that they might fail. This confidence is a reflection of their trust in Yah, and so His strength

becomes theirs, and their work excels. The saints must apply this principle, this expectation of excellence, in every task to which they set their hands.

Here is another example of what it means to be an angel of Yah: "Then the angel that talked with me went forth, and said unto me, 'Lift up now thine eyes, and see what is this that goeth forth.'" (Zech. 5:5)

This is but one of many examples of angels doing what their name actually signifies – delivering a message. The saints of Yah, who are the angels of the Gospel, are tasked with revealing the truth to mankind, the truth of salvation, of judgment, of prophecy.

In speaking those things we have received from our Father, we must do so with conviction, and with confidence. Much ground has been lost because Christians have not been confident in the Word of Yahweh, with regard to the creation, to the ministry of Christ, and to the judgment. These things ought to be the primary message of the Church, for it is a misunderstanding of these things that has led to society's problems. And yet, many modern Churches have become havens of social activism, trying to "fix" society by tackling individual issues.

As John the Baptist said, "And now also the axe is laid unto the root of the trees: therefore every tree which bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire." (Mat 3:10) Those who try to approach sin by dealing with behavior and public opinion are trying to kill a tree by pulling off its leaves, or cutting off its fruit. These things will grow back. The only way to deal with sin is to convert the human heart, the point at which sin takes root in the world. Only the Gospel, only the message of Righteousness by Faith, only the Victory over sin, can lay the axe to the root of the world's problems, and angels speak of these things, of the true solution to evil.

Here are two last examples, taken together, of what it means to be an angel of Yah: "Bless Yahweh, ye His angels that excel in strength, that do His commandments, hearkening unto the voice of His word." (Psa. 103:20)

"And all the angels stood round about the Throne, and about the elders and the four beasts, and fell before the Throne on their faces, and worshipped Yahweh." (Rev 7:11)

The angels of Yah are always praising Him. They stand around His Throne, as we do in the spirit, and they delight to hear His Word and to do His commandments. There is truly little difference, with regard to joys and sorrows, with regard to duty and pleasure, between a saint and an angel. The redeemed become Yah's messengers, and while less glory is associated with our outward appearance until the resurrection, we have all that we need for all practical purposes, just as they do.

Upon death, human beings become angels. When we die to self, we become alive to Yah, and we take on the role of His messengers, His ambassadors, excelling in might and power, able to overcome any temptation or demonic attack, and destined to stand before Him in eternity, giving forth His praises.

Are there any comments or questions about tonight's study?

Adriel: Amen!

Guerline: Amen.

Zahakiel: All right, if there aren't, then I will ask Bro. Luke to close the study with a prayer.

Lucan: Dear heavenly Father. We thank you for the work that you have given us, and the opportunity to labor alongside angels for the salvation of others. As we continue to go forth into the world, we thank you for the knowledge that we are kept from falling as surely the angels, and as Yahshua Himself. May we continue to show forth the blessings and glory of Yahshua in our interactions, as any good messenger. In Yahshua's name we pray, amen.

Freedom Walker: Amen.

Guerline: Amen.

peter: Amen

Barbara: Amen

Zahakiel: Amen.

Adriel: Amen

daphna: Amen

Naraiel: Amen