

Sermon to the Saints of God assembled at Topeka, KS: Sunday, February 23, 2020

Devils / Demons

Recently, my dad preached for two weeks about the never-ending, immersive deception of Satan (1/19 and 1/26/2020). Also, Charles gave us a sermon with some observations about the nature and work of angels (10/20/2019). Those instructive sermons provide an excellent foundation for today's topic: the nature and work of devils (or demons). As opposed to the faithful, elect angels of God, these fallen angels (devils) fly to do the bidding of their brother and leader Satan. These evil spirits are powerful, active, and coordinated enemies of the saints of God in this earth, and therefore we should know what the scriptures teach us about them, and how we are to combat their efforts.

- General observations about devils (demons)
- Lessons from the demoniac of Gadara
- What are we to do in the face of such fierce enemies?

General observations about devils

As a foundational statement to build on, this is what I believe the scriptures tell us: Satan is *the* Devil (**Revelation 20:2**). Satan is an angel (**Job 1:6, Ezekiel 28:14**). All other devils – like their leader Satan - are corrupt, fallen angels (**Revelation 12:3,4,9; Luke 11:18**). We're not talking about spooks or ghoulies; we're not talking about the souls of dead men; we're not talking about some entirely new race of creatures – all such things are designed to cause fear and confusion, while at the same time weaken the reality of what these creatures are, by morphing them into something that humans can hope to overcome with their own strength and wisdom (enter Hollywood). There is no scriptural basis for any of that nonsense - we're talking about angels! These devils belong to that same superior race as the angels of God (those elect angels that have remained sinless, and therefore continue in His holy service), and they have many of the same attributes. Charles elaborated some of those attributes when he preached about angels. The following excerpt from that sermon applies equally to the elect angels *and* to devils:

- *Angels are created beings: understanding this is critical to a proper appreciation of angels. The existence of the angels isn't just some fleeting and fanciful idea or some theoretical concept of creatures that are part of the Biblical "story". Angels are not metaphorical. They are not an allegory or way for Scripture to provide our minds ways to understand things. These are living beings that occupy this universe with us. They are their own creation, not the spirits of dead humans – please understand that. Angels operate and live in a realm or plane of existence which we cannot detect with*

the physical makeup of our bodies – they are natively invisible to all our senses. They are spiritual creatures, referred to as spirits several times, which basically seems to mean that they have no permanent bodily state or makeup, though they can and do take various forms at times when they are in the presence of men. This is differentiated from Man, who has solid mass, is clearly made up of matter and is bound by many different physical laws. The angels, like God, have no imprisoning body to limit their movement, their speed, their intellect, etc. They are like a breath of wind that cannot be seen on its own, but whose effects are readily and apparently present in the whole earth. This gives them abilities we can only imagine and can't comprehend the 'how' of their use and execution. There a multitude of angels, and each one is mighty, strong and swift; however, they are not omnipresent, omniscient, or omnipotent.

With that foundation, we will proceed to examine what the scriptures teach us about the specific attributes of devils. The primary way that the King James translation refers to these creatures is with the English word “devil”. There are other words or phrases that the scriptures use (“evil spirit”, “unclean spirit”, etc.), but for today, we will primarily focus on the 106 occurrences of the English word “devil”.

- In the Old Testament, there are only four occurrences of “devil”. All four verses are referencing the concept of sacrificing unto, or serving devils. There are two distinct Hebrew words that are translated as devil in these four verses.
 - **sa'iyar** (saw-er') – this word is where we get the English word “satyr”. It occurs 59 times, usually translated as “goat”, or “hairy” (mostly in reference to sacrificial goats, including the scapegoat). Only two times is that word translated devil, but that's all it takes for depraved men to create a cartoon image of Satan that looks like a half man / half goat that they can prop up and worship. So why would the word “goat” be translated as “devil”? I believe that these are instances where a goat was the particular sacrifice that was being made in an improper fashion, and with an improper spirit toward God, and therefore, it was a sacrifice made under the influence of, and in service to devils. The goat itself isn't the issue – **anything** that we put ahead of (or in place of) our service to God is an idol, and is worshipped in service of devils. Remember that the angels of God are not to be worshipped in any way, and the scriptures give us several examples of angels strongly declining to be worshipped, while pointing all glory to God. (**Revelation 22:8,9**) On the other hand, here we have a defining characteristic of devils: they desire to be worshipped and tempt men to follow and obey them through clever deception, by which they transform themselves into angels of light. (**2Corinthians 11:14**)

- **Leviticus 17:7** *“And they shall no more offer their sacrifices unto devils, after whom they have gone a whoring. This shall be a statute for ever unto them throughout their generations.”*
 - **2Chronicles 11:15** *“And he ordained him priests for the high places, and for the devils, and for the calves which he had made.”*
 - **shed** (shade) – This word is used two times; Strong’s definition is simply “demon”. What is more instructive is the root word **shuwd (shood)**, meaning waste, ruin, destroy, spoil, devastate. That is an inherent characteristic of devils: their desire is to destroy, and God will certainly destroy those that follow after them.
 - **Deuteronomy 32:17** *“They sacrificed unto devils, not to God; to gods whom they knew not, to new gods that came newly up, whom your fathers feared not.”*
 - **Psalms 106:37** *“Yea, they sacrificed their sons and their daughters unto devils”*
- In the New Testament, there are 102 occurrences of “devil”. There are five different Greek words translated as “devil”, but four of them are forms of the same word.
 - **daimon** (dah'-ee-mown) – 5 occurrences. Mostly these verses recount devils directly afflicting men. The following passage shows their direct efforts to oppose the work of God’s angels as they prepare the way for Christ’s Kingdom.
 - **Revelation 16:13,14** *“13 And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs come out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet. 14 For they are the spirits of devils, working miracles, which go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty.”*
 - **daimoniodes** (dahee-mon-ee-o'-dace) – 1 occurrence. Strong’s: “Resembling or proceeding from an evil spirit, demon-like.”
 - **James 3:15** *“This wisdom descendeth not from above, but is earthly, sensual, devilish.”*
 - We see from this verse that worldliness and demonic influence go hand in hand, and they are directly opposed to godliness.
 - **daimonizomai** (dahee-mon-id'-zom-ah-ee) – This word occurs 13 times and is always describing a person that is possessed with a devil, and who is therefore under that devil’s direct influence and power. The thing that separates humans from the rest of our created world is that we have a spirit. Our body of flesh is coupled with our spirit, whereas every other creature in our physical world is only comprised of flesh, rendering them merely a beast.

These bodies contain our own spirit, but they are also capable of containing other spirits at the same time. The Spirit of God (the Holy Spirit) dwells with, and influences the spirit of God's elect. This is the only place where you will find the Spirit of God dwelling with men. On the other hand, these devils seek for opportunity to inhabit the bodies of men, in order to inflict physical and mental damage upon them directly, and upon others that are impacted by them. As you will see in the following verses, a person can have affliction, stress, and sickness in their body and their mind that is *not* demon possession; but on the other hand, a demon dwelling within a person can manifest itself with severe sickness of the body and mind. This destructive behavior is another defining characteristic of devils.

- **Matthew 4:24** *“And his fame went throughout all Syria: and they brought unto him all sick people that were taken with divers diseases and torments, and those which were possessed with devils, and those which were lunatick, and those that had the palsy; and he healed them.”*
 - **Matthew 12:22** *“Then was brought unto him one possessed with a devil, blind, and dumb: and he healed him, insomuch that the blind and dumb both spake and saw.”*
- **daimonion** (dahee-mon'-ee-on) – 59 occurrences. Strong's: “Evil spirits, or the messengers and ministers of the devil; inferior to God but superior to men”. Many of these verses speak to specific instances of demons inhabiting and afflicting men, as well as the instances of Christ or His apostles casting those demons out. In addition to that, let's give specific consideration to the following noteworthy passages:
- **Revelation 9:20** *And the rest of the men which were not killed by these plagues yet repented not of the works of their hands, that they should not worship devils, and idols of gold, and silver, and brass, and stone, and of wood: which neither can see, nor hear, nor walk:”*
 - **1Corinthians 10:20,21** *“But I say, that the things which the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice to devils, and not to God: and I would not that ye should have fellowship with devils. Ye cannot drink the cup of the Lord, and the cup of devils: ye cannot be partakers of the Lord's table, and of the table of devils.”*
 - In these two verses, we see again how tightly idolatry is coupled with the service and worship of devils, and just how dangerous and serious that matter is. Beloved, we are constantly in danger of despising and departing from the Lord's table to partake of the table of devils. *“For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.” (Matthew 6:21)* Each of us must honestly answer this question **each day**: Where is my treasure? That is - where am I

investing the bulk of my time, my thought, and my resources? Inevitably, wherever I am investing my treasure, my heart will surely follow. Am I piling so much worldly activity on my plate that – little by little – my heart is departing from the Lord, and clinging to the world? My friends, we must be careful; this is the business of devils – to tempt you away from the Lord with the allurements of the world.

- **James 2:19** *“Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well: the devils also believe, and tremble.”*
 - Most assuredly these devils know the truth and power of the Almighty God. They once ministered in His heavenly court, but were cast out of that third heaven when they followed after the rebellion of Satan. “And the angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, he hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day.” (**Jude 1:6**) They are currently locked out of that third heaven; bound like a dog on a leash to this earth and her heavens. They are acutely aware of the punishment that is in store for them. This direct knowledge of God and His word, makes these devils particularly effective at twisting His word to the destruction of the hearer.
- **1Timothy 4:1-5** *“1 Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils; 2 Speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron; 3 Forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats, which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving of them which believe and know the truth. 4 For every creature of God is good, and nothing to be refused, if it be received with thanksgiving: 5 For it is sanctified by the word of God and prayer.”*
 - This is a fascinating passage, that speaks to the weaponized deception employed so effectively by Satan’s legion; this is the immersive illusion that my dad spoke about.
 - While there are a lot of false doctrines that Satan teaches, this passage specifically identifies two: 1) forbidding to marry, and 2) commanding to abstain from meats. I used to simply read those two items as 1) forced celibacy, and 2) ceremonial dietary laws, because those were particularly hot issues at the time that Paul was writing this. However, the passage starts with this unique phrase: *“Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times”*, which I take to mean that these two false doctrines are

particularly prevalent in the time directly leading up to the Lord's return. So, what might be a more relevant view of those false doctrines in our day?

- **Forbidding to marry:** My friends, marriage is rapidly becoming meaningless. This is an expansive topic that we have spoken about often from this pulpit, so I will boil it down like this: Scriptural marriage begins with *“he which made them at the beginning made them male and female ... for this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife”*. (**Matthew 19:4,5**) That standard is under assault like at no other time in the history of this world. Rampant fornication, adultery, divorce, abortion, sodomy, same-sex marriage, LGBTQIA+, and now transgenderism all violently strike at the heart of this most fundamental building block of God's creation.
- **Commanding to abstain from meats:** Think “veganism” and other “save the planet” efforts. All such plans are designed to thwart death and decay within man, beast, and the created world. Time would fail for me to describe the fevered efforts of our contemporaries to “save the planet” – there is an endless list of causes: global warming, industrial meat farms, over fishing, tainted water supplies, carbon emissions, clean energy, over population, mountains of plastic waste, etc. These political rallying points have become religious doctrines to people. Let's consider these matters from the scriptural lens: Directly after the sinful fall of Adam and Eve in the Garden, God delivered the curse upon man, and He also showed forth the path of salvation in Christ alone by slaughtering animals to provide skins that covered Adam and Eve. Prior to that time, there was no dying among man or beast. Death had now entered the world, and it must remain an integral part of the human experience until the day that Christ fully conquers it at His Kingdom. Veganism is the modern day works-righteousness of Cain – he was determined to have favor with God by the work of his own hands, proudly declaring that he had no need for blood to be spilt. Oh foolish man! Without the lamb being slain, you have no righteousness! We cannot scrub the blood from our sin-drenched hands by saving the cows and chickens,

or the polar ice caps, or the landfills; we must have the blood of Christ! In His Kingdom, this earth will be restored to its former glory, and we will have no need to kill, or to “arise and eat” meat. Until then, we should use but not abuse (by immoderate use) the things of this world with **great thanksgiving to God** for providing them. These save-the-planet, environmental movements are energized by the satanic hiss from the Garden: “thou shalt not surely die”. These people literally think that they can achieve immortality through their “science”. This is a doctrine of devils! Our hope is not wrapped up in this decaying, sin-cursed world; we look to the coming and Kingdom of our Lord.

- *Larkin: “Satan is very subtle in his methods, and if it were possible he would deceive the very elect. He knows all the great Scripture subjects that are of universal interest to humanity, and he is too wise to attack them openly, so he adulterates them with false doctrine. He has tried to rob the Church of her “Blessed Hope” of the Lord’s return by mixing it with a lot of false teaching ... Satan’s persecution of the church has changed tactics, he is now trying to seduce her into conformity to the world wherein they try to better an “Age” that God has doomed to destruction. His hope is that the “Gospel of Social Service” will take the place of the “Gospel of Grace”.*
- **diabolos** (dee-ab’-ol-os) – This word occurs 38 times, and is translated as “devil” in 35 of those instances. Virtually every instance of this word is referring to Satan himself, and is sometimes rendered as “Devil” (with a capital D). Strong’s: “Slanderer, false accuser, calumniator”. Here again we have a defining characteristic of the devil, and his legion: liars and false accusers. They continually deceive, and make false accusation about men to God, God to men, men to other men, and men to themselves. These devils are powerful, crafty, intensely active, and work in a coordinated fashion, so that you hear the same deceitful message from a lot of different angles.
 - Typical uses:
 - **John 8:44** *“Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it.”*
 - **1Peter 5:8** *“Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour”*

- Judas
 - **John 6:70** *“Jesus answered them, Have not I chosen you twelve, and one of you is a devil?”*
 - This is the only time in the scriptures that a human is labeled with the word “devil”, and so some people see this verse as a reason to believe that devils are humans, and therefore that devils are the spirits of dead humans. I don’t believe that’s the point of this verse. Rather, I believe that Satan himself possessed and was working in Judas, as a counterfeit of the Holy Spirit. Consider:
 - **John 13:2** *“And supper being ended, the devil having now put into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon’s son, to betray him;”*
 - **Luke 22:3** *“Then entered Satan into Judas surnamed Iscariot, being of the number of the twelve.”*
 - Remember that Satan is more subtle than any other creature. He would have had Judas believing all along that he was serving Christ, while slowly enflaming his pride, greed, and fear to create this ripe moment for betrayal. This is a terrifying concept that points to the **daily need** to exercise our faith, thereby making our calling and election sure.
- Other uses:
 - **Titus 2:3** *“The aged women likewise, that they be in behaviour as becometh holiness, not **false accusers**, not given to much wine, teachers of good things”*
 - **1Timothy 3:11** *“Even so must their wives be grave, not **slanderers**, sober, faithful in all things.”*
 - The scriptures are full of strong warnings that God hates lying, slandering, false accusation, sowing strife, contention, and discord. Such things are an abomination to God, and they are a defining characteristic of the devil and his legion. Beloved, we must put a watch over our mouths so that we are not foolishly accusing and slandering **anyone** – whether with malice, or simply with prideful, undisciplined words. It is devilish **by its very definition**, and it is an awful stench before God.

The demoniac of Gadara

Now that we have established what these devils are, and what they are about, let’s see what we can learn from perhaps the most detailed account of demon activity in the

scriptures: the demoniac of Gadara. We will utilize Luke's account for our analysis today, but Matthew and Mark also give detailed accounts: **Matthew 8:28-34; Mark 5:1-20.**

Luke 8:26-39 “26 And they arrived at the country of the Gadarenes, which is over against Galilee. 27 And when he went forth to land, there met him out of the city a certain man, which had devils long time, and ware no clothes, neither abode in any house, but in the tombs. 28 When he saw Jesus, he cried out, and fell down before him, and with a loud voice said, What have I to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of God most high? I beseech thee, torment me not. [Matthew says: “art thou come hither to torment us before the time?”] 29 (For he had commanded the unclean spirit to come out of the man. For oftentimes it had caught him: and he was kept bound with chains and in fetters; and he brake the bands, and was driven of the devil into the wilderness.) 30 And Jesus asked him, saying, What is thy name? And he said, Legion: because many devils were entered into him. 31 And they besought him that he would not command them to go out into the deep. 32 And there was there an herd of many swine feeding on the mountain: and they besought him that he would suffer them to enter into them. And he suffered them. 33 Then went the devils out of the man, and entered into the swine: and the herd ran violently down a steep place into the lake, and were choked. 34 When they that fed them saw what was done, they fled, and went and told it in the city and in the country. 35 Then they went out to see what was done; and came to Jesus, and found the man, out of whom the devils were departed, sitting at the feet of Jesus, clothed, and in his right mind: and they were afraid. 36 They also which saw it told them by what means he that was possessed of the devils was healed. 37 Then the whole multitude of the country of the Gadarenes round about besought him to depart from them; for they were taken with great fear: and he went up into the ship, and returned back again. 38 Now the man out of whom the devils were departed besought him that he might be with him: but Jesus sent him away, saying, 39 Return to thine own house, and shew how great things God hath done unto thee. And he went his way, and published throughout the whole city how great things Jesus had done unto him.”

- **Devils are powerful:** Not only can they take possession of a human body, but they can clearly impact the very fabric of that body and mind. In this instance, we see them break iron bands, and “drive” this man – naked - into the wilderness. Further, here we see how much they despise authority and government – it is their rebellion and devilish doctrine that emboldens the kings of the earth to rebel against the Lord saying: “let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us” (**Psalms 2:3**).
- **Devils are Legion:** This speaks to the fact that there is a great number of them; furthermore, they are formed up in military ranks under the command of Satan, and they fly to do his bidding, in their war against Christ. When Christ requires a

name from these devils, he is causing everyone witnessing this event to recognize the immense power present on this scene – LEGION - so that they could see the far greater power of God that is easily able to subdue what men cannot.

- **Devils despise humans, and seek to harm us – body and soul; temporally, and eternally:**

- From the beginning, Satan has despised mankind. He stood as the best and brightest of the angelic race – the “stars of heaven” – lusting after power and glory that was not his to have. He watched as God created man in His own image, and even though they were far inferior to the angelic race, God gave man dominion over this created earth. In response, Satan brought murder, sin, and death into this world through his deceit, hoping to overthrow man; instead of immediate judgment and destruction, God brought forth mercy in the person of Christ, for His beloved bride. God provided a sacrifice *of himself* to redeem some sinful humans, and yet He provided no such salvation for Satan and his fellow fallen angels. He gave Satan leave to spend out these intervening millennia ruling in this earth, and deceiving men, so that God’s judgment would be prepared, and His merciful plan for salvation would come to its fulness. Satan and his demonic legion have only a short while to deceive and destroy in this earth; they are working a vain plan to overthrow the purpose of God, with a hope that they can snatch just one of God’s precious sheep that He has promised to preserve. How does that hatred for man and desire to overthrow the purpose of God manifest itself in this passage?

- These devils cared nothing for the man that they were afflicting and possessing. They took away the soundness of his mind, and caused him to live like a beast, thereby becoming a living terror to himself, and any who encountered him.
- When the devils saw that the Lord intended to cast them out of that man, they desired to be allowed to enter a herd of swine. Why? Why enter into those pigs, just so that you can immediately kill them? Here we see how ruthless and clever these demons are. They know full well that only through hearing the gospel can souls be brought to repentance and belief on Christ. They wanted to find a way to keep Christ from preaching in that place, so they could rob those people (and their progeny) of hope. Those pigs would have been a major part of the sustainment and economy of the people of Gadara, so when they saw their “way of life” threatened, they ordered Jesus to leave town. Those devils got the people of that town to work against their own interest – the people tried to save their “lives”, but lost their souls. Thus is the sad condition of depraved men: here sat a man that had

been wondrously set at liberty by the power of Christ, and yet these people immediately cried out to be returned to bondage.

- **Devils are fully aware of Christ's authority, and the wrath that is appointed for them:**

- First, they acknowledge Him as "Jesus, thou son of God most high". Then these terrifyingly powerful creatures began to beg Christ not to torment them, knowing that they must obey any command that He made.
- Also, they show that they are acutely aware that their time is short, and that judgment is awaiting them. "Art thou come hither to torment us before the time?" They know that the Lord will "torment" them with "everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels" (**Matthew 25:41**). But, they also know that Christ didn't come to render judgment in His first advent, and they know that torment in the Lake of Fire is not the next step on the timeline, so they argue that it is "before the time". Furthermore, they know that they will be "cast into the bottomless pit" for 1000 years during Christ's millennial kingdom (**Revelation 20:3**). Afraid that He will begin that imprisonment, they plead with Him to not "command them to go out into the deep". This word "deep" is the same word as "bottomless pit" in Revelation 20. Indeed, the devils believe that there is one God, and they tremble.

What are we to do in the face of such a fierce enemy?

- **Put on the whole armor of God, and resist the Devil**
 - **Ephesians 6:11,12** “11 Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. 12 For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.” (Sermons: 9/23/2012; 4/5/2015; 7/21/2019)
 - **James 4:7-10** “7 Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. 8 Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you. Cleanse your hands, ye sinners; and purify your hearts, ye double minded. 9 Be afflicted, and mourn, and weep: let your laughter be turned to mourning, and your joy to heaviness. 10 Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he shall lift you up.” (Sermon: 12/2/2018)
 - We must always give consideration to the fact that these demons are real, powerful, coordinated, and interjecting themselves into our lives. How do we resist them? Turn away from the world, and turn toward God. Pray; read the Word; talk about the Word with your co-elect in ways that meaningfully apply to your current situation; invest yourself in the very real and exhausting work of **finding** and **filling** the needs of your co-elect; invest yourself in the work of the ministry of the Gospel of Jesus Christ (that work that the devils specifically want to thwart); when you find yourself feeling consumed by the world, then fast and thereby draw nigh to God in your heart; consciously step away from those things that tempt you, and therefore some of the immersive deceit of devils; guard your tongue, so that you limit the ammunition that devils have to use against you.
- **Consider that these devils are on a leash.** They are “chained”, and can do nothing outside of the will of that God who has promised that **all things** work together for the good of those that love Him. (**Romans 8:28**)
- **Consider the end of these devils.** Regardless of their power, their roaring, and the wounds that they inflict, these devils have an appointed end, and they know it is on the way.
 - **Revelation 20:2** “And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan, and bound him a thousand years,”
 - **Revelation 20:10** “And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever.”
- **Consider that our husband is the Captain of the Host:** Christ leads the heavenly host that is encamped around His people, and that fly to execute His command. The scriptures don’t tell us how many angels make up this host, but we are given this: “[the dragon’s] tail drew the third part of the stars of heaven” (**Revelation**

12:4). This indicates that 1/3 of the angels of heaven fell in sin, and are now the devils that we have been discussing today. Which means that there are two elect angels for every devil. Indeed, those that be with us are more than those that be with Satan.

- **2Kings 6:16,17** *“16 And he answered, Fear not: for they that be with us are more than they that be with them. 17 And Elisha prayed, and said, LORD, I pray thee, open his eyes, that he may see. And the LORD opened the eyes of the young man; and he saw: and, behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire round about Elisha.”*
- This host of angels isn't just for show! They are actively fighting the wars of the Lord. There are several places in the scriptures where we get a glimpse of the spirit world, and the direct impact that these angels have (ex: Jacob's ladder, Sennacherib's host). One example that may not be quite so obvious is Jericho. Joshua chapter 5 relays the events on the night before the battle of Jericho; Joshua encounters the Lord Jesus who commands him to take off his shoes, because he is standing on holy ground. Christ appears with sword in hand, and proclaims himself as the “captain of the Lord's host”. I preached an entire sermon on the doctrinal implication of this scene, i.e. that we have no power to save ourselves, but rest fully in Christ. (3/22/2015) But what is the direct message to Joshua? Christ is plainly declaring that Joshua is not going to lead, fight, or win this battle with his own strength, and that literally, Christ and his angelic host will fight and win this battle. I submit to you, that when the horns blew, The angels of God took down those walls – flat to the ground (save for Rahab's house). Friends, this active engagement of angels is happening **constantly**, we just don't realize it, or attribute it to them.
- **Consider the promises of God to usward:** None of those that belong to Christ will perish; nothing can separate us from the love of God.
 - **Romans 8:36-39** *“36 As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. 37 Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. 38 For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, **nor angels**, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, 39 Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, **shall be able to separate us from the love of God**, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.”*

I love you all. Amen.