

# ST. MICHAEL AND ALL ANGELS

**September 30 2018**

Daniel 10:10-14, 12:1-3

Revelation 12:7-12

Luke 10:17-20

## ***Standing...***

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and from our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Amen.

The hymn we just sang (522) was written by Phillip Melanchthon,  
specifically for the Feast of St. Michael and all angels,  
when we learn about and give thanks for God's holy angels.

Let us pray. May the words of my mouth and the meditation of all of our hearts be acceptable in your sight, O Lord—our strength and our redeemer. Amen.

## ***Sitting***

There is a lot we know, as well as a lot we don't know  
about this distinct order of spiritual beings who inhabit the hidden world around us.

For example, we don't know when angels were created.

They must have been created sometime within the six days of creation—since before the beginning nothing existed but God (Jn 1:1-3), and after the sixth day, no new creature was made (Gen 2:1-2).

Moreover, angels must have been created simultaneously—  
having no need to be fruitful and multiply like human beings—  
but how and when they were created,  
we don't know.

Second, we don't know how many angels actually exist.

The word often used to describe their number is “myriads”—  
the largest number the ancients used (Heb 2:22; Rev 5:11).

Nor do we know of what substance angelic beings consist.

Our souls are housed in physical bodies—flesh and blood.  
Angels have no bodies, allowing them to operate differently,  
although they may be seen at times in bodies and appear as men.

What we do know is, angels are not soft,

they are not effeminate,  
nor are they chubby cherubs with rosy cheeks.

Those who think these things get their theology from Hallmark  
or Wal-Mart—  
buying angel figurines or Christmas ornaments made in China.

Human beings do not become angelic beings when they die,  
nor do all angels have wings.

When one interacts with a human being, angels typically say, “Do not be afraid.”  
Why? Because angels are awesome—in the truest sense of the word.  
Angels are powerful spirits having both intellect and will (2 Sam 14:20),  
and excelling in strength (Ps 103:20).  
—created to serve God by ministering to Mankind.

They do this within a hierarchy.

The first angel we read of guards Adam and Eve from eating from the Tree of Life. The Bible calls this angel a Cherubim (Gen 3:24)—a fearsome warrior—a protector of sorts.

Speaking of protector Christ says angels protect little children from the devil’s snares. He said—

**Take heed that you do not despise one of these little ones,  
for I say to you that in heaven their angels always see the face of My Father  
who is in heaven.**

They protect adult believers as well, as David said in Psalm 34,  
**The angel of the LORD encamps all around those who fear  
Him, and delivers them.**

And as was chanted in the Gradual,  
**For He shall give His angels charge over you,  
To keep you in all your ways.**

This is why Luther rightly teaches in his morning and evening prayer,  
that God would continue to what?

“Let Your holy angel be with me,  
that the evil foe may have no power over me.”

A wonderful request,

because angels are employed to promote the work of the Church,  
and protect its servants (Dan 6:22; Acts 5:18-20; 12:7-9)

Still within that angelic hierarchy,

other angels are called Seraphim (Ish 6:2)—the burning ones,  
who cover their eyes,

cover their feet and fly around the throne of the Lamb singing:

*“Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God of Sabaoth,  
heaven and earth are full of Thy glory.”*

The seraphim are especially concerned with the holiness of God,  
and we’ll join in with them in a few moments.

These angels are worshippers...

Remember how on Christmas night,  
after the shepherds find out about the birth of the Messiah,

an angelic host—a word that means army—light up the sky saying:  
 “Glory be to God on high, and on earth peace, goodwill toward men.”  
 This is yet another song echoed in our liturgy.

Other angels though are known for preaching,  
 delivering messages to the Lord’s people—  
 like when the angel appeared to Abram and Sarai,  
 telling them that they’d have a child in their old age.  
 Angels were present when the Law was given to Moses,  
 announced the conception of the Christ-Child to Mary,  
 and the resurrection of Christ to the women, saying,  
 “He is not here. He is risen, just as He said.”  
 Forty days later, at Jesus’ ascension,  
 they ask the disciples:  
 “Why do you stand staring up into the heavens?”

At critical moments in God’s dealings with Mankind  
 you find angels coming to deliver a message,  
 explaining the moment to the persons who witness it.

A few angels are named.  
 Gabriel—*the hero of God*—is a name you know.  
 Gabriel tells Zechariah that Elizabeth would bear a son and to name him John.  
 Gabriel tells Mary that she’d bear a Son as well,  
 even though she’s never known a man,  
 and he tells Joseph not to divorce Mary, but that all this is from God.

The Old Testament apocryphal book Tobit names the angel Raphael—  
 one of the main characters in that book.

And of course, there’s Michael—whose name means, “one like God.”  
 Michael is called a “chief” angel / an “archangel”—superior to all the others,  
 which is why this day in the Church year bears his name.

My point is, all of these angels within this hierarchy—named and unnamed—  
 are given places of authority in the heavenly realms.

They were all created holy, righteous and good, like God.  
 But...sometime after their creation, as St. Jude tells us,  
 some did not keep their proper domain, but left their own abode.  
 Led by Lucifer, originally a holy angel,  
 a certain number—a third (Rev. 12)—defected.  
 They rebelled against God,  
 becoming sinful in their nature and work.  
 As a result, they will never return

to communion with God,  
and “everlasting fire” was kindled just for them  
(Matt 25:41).

These fallen angels are divided into two classes...

Those who are free and those who are bound—  
reserved in everlasting chains under darkness  
for the judgment of the great Day (Jude 6).

Beloved, I am not the sharpest knife in the drawer, but it’s those demons that are not bound—the ones that are free—they are the ones I’m most concerned about.

They are the ones the NT constantly references.

They are cunning and deceitful, even when quoting Scripture.  
(Matt 4:6; 2 Cor 11:14)

They are liars and murders (John 8:44)  
utterly depraved, perverted, wicked and unclean (Mk 1:23; Eph 6:12).  
And until the Day of Judgement God permits them to roam the  
earth (Job 1:7; 1 Peter 5:8; Matt 8:29-31).

Regarding the State,

they’re the driving force behind the wickedness of the world (Eph. 6:12),  
seeking to snuff out the light of the Gospel,  
holding the heathen in abject idolatry and superstition  
(1 Cor 10:20; Acts 26:18)

These evil angels are partially to blame for the wickedness that invades the home...  
as pornography and sexual sins,  
drugs and drunkenness take hold of more and more.

Some people are so foolish as to invite these demons into  
their homes and lives by practicing witchcraft and other dark arts.

Moreover, these devils plot to disturb and destroy the Church (Matt 16:18),

by scattering heresies (1 Tim 4:1),  
hindering the work of faithful pastors (1 Thess 2:18),  
sowing discord and strife,  
tempting believers to turn away from the truth and against one another.

The truth is, we are surrounded by these evil creatures

who seek to separate us from Christ and ultimately gobble us up...  
like a snake gobbles an egg.

And guess what?

Against them, we don’t stand a chance. (Selah)

To this end, the Father has given His angels charge over you—

looking after every baptized child of God each and every day.  
Ears do not hear them.

Eyes do not see them.  
This can only be believed and received in faith.

But this is how God works—

God always hides Himself under weak and unimpressive things.

For instance,

God hides the majestic warfare of His holy angels  
under invisibility and silence.

He hides His assault on the Devil's kingdom  
under a little water, Word, wine and unleavened bread.

This is why so many do not believe...

Because to the eyes and ears of men, it's foolishness.

Which is exactly what the Scriptures say...

For God has chosen the foolish things of the world to put to shame the wise and God has chosen the weak things of the world to put to shame the mighty.

God hides Himself under

the foolishness of preaching...  
the weakness of baptism,  
the foolishness of His Supper,  
in the weakness of human flesh,  
and the foolishness of the cross.

Sure—we desire to look into angels...

but angels desire to look into the Gospel of Christ and Him crucified for you.

For you see, it wasn't for the angels that Jesus left the right hand of God the Father Almighty and came into the 'visible realm.'

It wasn't for the angels that Jesus went to the cross with His physical body and was crucified, died and was buried and rose on the third day.

And it is not the angels that Jesus gives His body and blood to eat and drink.

All of this is for you...

And though our eyes cannot see nor our ears hear—let us believe!

For the day is coming when faith itself will come to an end.

And with our eyes we will see,  
And with our ears we will hear...

angels and archangels and all the company of heaven,  
singing—blessing, honor, glory and power be to Him, who sits on  
the throne and unto the Lamb forever and ever. Amen.

***Standing...***

And now may the peace of God which passes all understanding, guard your hearts and minds through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.