



02_Angels' Relationship to Us

0:00:02.7 Speaker 1: Are you dissatisfied with your spiritual progress? Feeling stuck without knowing why even after deliverance prayers or years of therapy, recover your dignity, find your purpose, and discover the thrill of walking with God Once again, explore spiritual consultations with sonja@biblestudyevangelista.com. Click, go deeper on the home page, and then one-on-one, and find out how to cooperate more deeply with the Holy Spirit's action in your life with a spiritual consultation.

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0:00:51.6 Sonja Corbitt: It's our series on angels here on the Bible Study Evangelista Show. And I'm Sonja Corbitt, your Catholic evangelista. In the second show, we're going to talk about the relationship between angels and human beings. So this includes obviously our guardian angels, and I'm only including in this show the Good Angels. We're not talking about the demons and the fallen angels yet, they're gonna have their own show. But we left off talking last week about the fact that they're non-emotional and how the intensity of their experiences, because they're body-less, is undiluted by our bodily limitations as humans. So while they don't actually have emotions, they do experience what we might call something like emotions in their will, similarly to the satisfaction that we feel when we offer a truly detached act of charity or an offering of charity to God. It's just, it just feels really good.

0:01:48.7 SC: So they have something like that, but they're not exactly emotions because remember that emotions are physical for us. They occur in our brain and they affect our bodies and they don't have bodies. So their emotions are a little bit different. And we know from last week that their wills, an angel's will is how he communicates with another angel through mental telepathy. And this is very cool and we'll talk about this in great detail next week when we look at the hierarchy of the angels, but they communicate with one another vertically rather than horizontally. They send truth down the hierarchy rather than vertically because... I'm sorry, rather than horizontally the way we do, remember we spoke last week about how human beings relate to one another horizontally because we are brothers created in the likeness of God. So we relate to one another horizontally, whereas the angels exist and, well, I don't wanna say live 'cause, although they do live, but not in the way that we're thinking, right? Sometimes.

0:02:55.6 SC: So they communicate as well as act through a vertical hierarchy. So when they communicate with one another, they're sending down truth from the hierarchy. They receive it from above and they offer it down below. And remember that everything an angel knows, he knows and exhausts all immediately. He knows that the whole essence, the whole stint of the information that there is to know all at one time. So one of the angels then wills to think of a concept and the other

does think about it or it does not in the case of a devil. So there is a battle of wills between the good angels and the bad angels that is carried out intellectually and immediately actually. I don't know if you followed any of my sort of ruminations about quantum physics, but it's a little bit like quantum entanglement, the spooky action at a distance where no matter how much space and distance is between the two occurrences, they happen simultaneously.

0:04:04.5 SC: And that's a little bit like their communication between one another. There is no time or space. So it's immediate, no matter how much we might say, "distance there is," it is an immediate communication if the angels are willing to communicate with one another. And of course between a good angel and a bad angel, perhaps the bad angel would not want to communicate with the good one. And this was very cool. Now, this is something that I learned from Father Ripperger in his book *Dominion*. And I want to mention this briefly. I talked about how dense this book is. Everything he does is this way and it's very difficult to read. It is not an easy read at all. But what I love about Father Ripperger is that he really gets down to the minute explanations for everything. He's very, very precise in the way that philosophers are.

0:05:09.1 SC: And so that's what is so good about his book, is that he explains in great detail why things are the way they are through the philosophers, mainly Thomas Aquinas. So I'll be quoting quite a bit from him, especially when we get to the demon's part because he really picks apart why we are tempted, the way we're tempted and why it so often succeeds, which I can't wait to get to. But anyway, this is another thing that I learned from Father Ripperger's book, that the medieval philosophers call the "place" where angels "live" the aevum it has a name, the aevum. Now listen, this is very, very precise, but it's fascinating and I think it's very important because if you're thinking about, as we talked about last week, if you're thinking about Genesis chapter one and the angels were presented with a choice to serve and they chose not to serve, those that chose not to serve fail, that indicates a sequence of events in a "place" where there is no matter and no time since time measures change and sequence.

0:06:29.2 SC: If there is no time, how exactly could that happen? How could they make choices in a sequence of events? And so Thomas Aquinas talks about a place called the aevum. He says that angels can choose implies there is a sequence of events in their thinking or operations. But because they do not have bodies, they do not occupy time. Time is a measurement of change, a motion of a physical thing. And God never changes. Still they made a choice with what we think of as sequential thoughts. So tradition says they exist in the aevum which has a beginning but no end. It's not eternity, but an in between eternity and time where they're being angels. An angel's being, or spirit is always in the now, the present moment. Whereas physical bodies and actions are regulated by time. The aevum is a measurement of actions, but not of being according to Aquinas, which I know is kind of heavy there.

0:07:36.4 SC: But here's the gist. The gist is since there is no matter, there are no places for angels. And since there is no matter, there is no time for angels. So how then do they make decisions, especially that first one, right? Because before they were confirmed in their decision forever, they had to be able to make a choice. And choices from our point of view are a matter of sequence. So Thomas Aquinas calls this sort of in between place that angels occupy in their being or in their spirit. He calls that the aevum and the aevum is a measurement of action, not of being according to Thomas Aquinas. One of the other questions that people often have, and this came up in the angels group on the community this week, do the angels know my secret thoughts? And the answer is no, they do not.

0:08:40.1 SC: What they can do is place a thought or a suggestion in our minds. They can place a picture in our minds for us to then chase with our thoughts and our imagination. We can, they can do that. And then they sit back and they observe. And I'm talking about the fallen angels obviously. They sit back and they observe how we respond to that thought. And actually the good angels do this too. This is part of how they guide us is they'll place a thought or an image into our memories, in our minds and then watch how we respond. And that gives them an indication of what we're thinking, right? But they can't read our thoughts unless we open ourselves to that communication. They're not able to force themselves into our minds anymore than they can force our wills anymore than you can force your mind and your will into your neighbor or your spouse. [laughter]

0:09:46.5 SC: I have to battle this all the time in consults. We cannot force another human being and to try to do so is demonic. We can't, first of all, we're incapable of doing so and the fact that we cannot do it shows us why an angel can't do it either. We are body and spirit duality. An angel is purely spirit, but they can't push their way into our thoughts or into our wills any more than we can to someone else. Neither the good angels nor the evil spirits can do that. Spirits don't work by force. Matter works by force. Even God didn't force the universe to exist. He simply thought it and he spoke it into existence. So God has placed a limit around our thinking and our wills. So the angels can't force their way in and neither can other people into our thoughts and our minds and our wills.

0:10:47.3 SC: You can though reveal your thoughts and your secrets to your guardian angel by talking to him just as you would talk to a human saint in heaven or a friend on earth. So that's possible, but only if you're willing to, which is why it is so dangerous to do things like seances and things because you don't know... Well, in fact we do know with like a Ouija board or a seance. We know specifically that those are doorways to the demonic. And so you're specifically inviting the evil spirits into your mind and into your will when you do that. You've opened that door to them. As we affect one another freely by suggestion and not force, the angels also can affect us freely by suggestion but not force. So we have that in common because humans are a spirit body duality and angels are pure spirit.

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0:12:55.5 SC: Human beings can affect one another's minds and wills if you think about it, even though we can't force 'em, we can affect one another by teaching, by counseling, by praising, by encouraging, by blaming, by commanding. We can do all of that stuff. We do it in bodily ways unlike angels. But we also can suggest things to one another through the imagination. We can offer

pictures, we can offer metaphors, we can offer examples through the imagination because that's the inner sense that makes images and angels can also do that. They can also inspire our imaginations in a way that's actually not direct mental telepathy. They teach one another through that mental telepathy. But that's not the way they teach us. Instead they inspire us. They suggest things to our imaginations. And of course the evil spirits do the same thing. They tempt us in the same way that guardian angels help us.

0:13:52.6 SC: Tempting is not forcing. A spirit or a soul, it can't be forced. There's no such thing as spiritual forcing. There is spiritual power but it can't force another spirit because a spirit is free. Spirits have free will by their very essence. Even exorcists don't push demons out, they pray them out. Jesus appealed to that principle of the spirit being free when he criticized them for thinking that their souls were forcibly contaminated or made evil by spiritual dirt or physical dirt, sorry. He talks about how defilement and purity they come from within by free choice, not by what you're exposed to in food or drink or dirty cups or anything like that. So we can influence each other's choices and angels can influence our choices, but they can't put judgements in your mind or choices in your will even though they can put images in your imagination and even feelings in your heart, which is why we have to be so careful about those feelings because feelings don't force you either.

0:15:02.4 SC: Your will can choose whether to follow your feelings or not and the enemy uses your feelings against you. The will is always the engine of the train and the emotions are always the caboose. They're good, emotions are good. They give us lots of good information, lots of good information, and they help move us to proper action. If our wills are in control and our emotions are subordinate to the will. But angels can affect our feelings. They can put images in your imagination and feelings in your heart. And the reason that that is not force is because you still have a will that can choose to subordinate those emotions and to subordinate those thoughts and to subordinate those images. So can angels read our secret thoughts? No, they can't. But they certainly can watch our actions and that's mostly how they discern what we're thinking unless we speak to them directly and then of course we allow them to know.

0:16:15.4 SC: So then angels inspire us as we inspire one another by suggestion. Now, the next section in the Catholic encyclopedia is the Offices of Angels. And it says there that it is as messengers that they most often figure in the Bible, but as St. Augustine and after him St. Gregory express it, angel is the name of their office. So that is an office which indicates, okay, let me just talk about an office for just a second. An office stays the same while the person who inhabits the office or occupies the office changes. It's like the presidency, right? The presidency stays the same while the occupant of that office changes every four years. So an office of an angel is the same principle, which is why when the fallen angels fell, it is thought by the church fathers that God is replacing the fallen angels with human beings in the hierarchy.

0:17:21.6 SC: Oh, I cannot wait till we get to the hierarchy 'cause there's a lot of really good stuff in there. But it's important that we see that angel is the name of their office. They are messengers because that is their office. Angel is the office. And that also implies a certain authority because an office has with it a certain power and authority, which those two things are a little bit different according to Father Ripperger, which I, like I said, I love his precision. Power means that you have the ability to do it. Authority gives you the right to do it. Now in the Bible, power and authority are, they're interchangeable words, but I love the precision with which father Ripperger, he defines those two terms. So power is the ability and authority is the right. You have the right to do something. And so angels have the right to be messengers and to fulfill their tasks.

0:18:23.2 SC: And they have an office then that also has the power that goes with that authority. It says in the catechism, that office expresses neither their essential nature nor their essential function, that of attendance upon God's throne in that court of heaven, of which Daniel has left us a vivid picture. And then it quotes Daniel, I'm sorry, it was actually the encyclopedia, not the catechism that I just quoted. This passage in Daniel is really informative for sort of what's going on in heaven. It says, I beheld till thrones were placed and the ancient of days sat, his garment was white as snow and the hair of his head like clean wool, his throne like flames of fire, the wheels of it like a burning fire. A swift stream of fire issued forth from before him. Thousands of thousands ministered to him and 10,000 times 100,000 stood before him. The judgment sat and the books were open. That's Daniel 7:9-10. And you get this idea of the number of angels. And of course we talked last week about the fact that if every human being that ever did live is living now and ever will live, has a guardian angel, then just imagine the number of that.

0:19:47.0 SC: And then multiply that by another eight hierarchies of angels. And so when Padre Pio said that if we could see just the fallen angels that they would block out the sun, right, the numbers are staggering. Our minds can't even imagine that kind of multiplication. And each angel, remember, is its own species. But the point of the office of the angel is that the function of the angelic hosts is expressed by the word assistance, according to the Catholic Encyclopedia. Now, the angelic host, you've seen that throughout the scriptures everywhere, that word host means armies. So the angels are God's army. Jesus says in Matthew 18:10, that assistance is their perpetual occupation. They assist us. More than once, we're told of seven angels whose special function it is to stand before God's throne. We see that in Tobit 12 and Revelation 8. And then the same thought can be intended by the angel of his presence, spoken of in Isaiah 63:9 which says, in all their affliction, he was afflicted, and the angel of his presence saved them. So we see the scriptures speak of the angel of the Lord, or the angel of his presence, over and over. And as we discussed in the community a couple of weeks ago, is that angel of the Lord, is this angel of the presence, is it actually an angel, or is it some sort of pre-incarnation of Christ, or is it, what is it?

0:21:23.9 SC: And I find it interesting. This is an idea that as a Baptist, we wrestled with quite a bit. Say, for instance, the angel of the Lord that appeared to Joshua, when Joshua said, who are you for? Us or our enemies? And the angel said, no. And then at the River Jabbok, when Jacob wrestled with the angel of the Lord, right? So you see this idea of the angel of the presence, the angel of the Lord, and our question is, this cannot be just an ordinary, "an ordinary angel", because the angel of the Lord seems to have ascribed to him almost divine powers. He can work miracles, and does, in several places throughout the Old Testament. And because of that, we Baptist men, we could do some serious mental gymnastics around this idea. But it says plainly, the angel, the angel of the Lord, and it's in capital letters, because the Jewish people understood the power and the authority granted to the angels, depending on where they are in the hierarchy. And so they, of course, would look divine to us, and they would have powers that seem miraculous to us, because we are a duality of body and spirit, whereas they are completely spirit. So of course they would seem almost God-like to us. But if you'll notice throughout the scriptures, the angels always say, don't worship me.

0:22:56.4 SC: I mean, we're just like shocked when the people in the Bible see some sort of physical manifestation of an angel, they all face plant. And so when it says the angel of the Lord, or the angel of the presence, we need to just let the scriptures speak for themselves, and it says angel. So let's just assume that it is an angel, but one who is given great power and authority for a particular role or in a particular task, which would make them seem God-like and very terrible to us

in their physical manifestation and also in the powers that they wield in obeying God through the working out of their task on our behalf. So they are assistants. They assist human beings.

[music]

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[music]

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[music]

0:25:21.6 SC: So angels are assistants to God and to us, and they are messengers to human beings. They are messengers to mankind. This is from the Encyclopedia again. The angels of the Bible generally appear in the role of God's messengers to mankind. They are his instruments by whom he communicates his will to men, and in Jacob's vision, they are depicted as ascending and descending the ladder which stretches from earth to heaven while the Eternal Father gazes upon the wanderer below. Now all of that is obviously, it's metaphorical imagery. The point is that angels ascend and descend between heaven and between earth, and they exist somewhere in that aevum in there, right? It was an angel who found Hagar in the wilderness in Genesis 16. Angels drew Lot out of Sodom. An angel announced to Gideon that he's supposed to save the people. An angel foretold the birth of Samson in Judges 13. And the angel Gabriel instructed Daniel in Daniel 8:16, though he's not an angel... He's not actually called an angel in either of those passages, but he's called the man Gabriel in Daniel 9:21. The same heavenly spirit announced the birth of St. John the Baptist and the incarnation of Jesus, while tradition ascribes to him, Gabriel, both the message to the shepherds in Luke 2:9, and the most glorious mission of all, the Encyclopedia says, that of strengthening the king of angels in his agony in Luke 22:43.

0:26:53.7 SC: We also know through the scriptures that angels were created before the dawn of time. They sang at the creation of the world. Some rebelled against God and became demons or devils. And they set up hell's lowerarchy against heaven's hierarchy. One of them was the snake in the grass that tempted us to give up paradise in the garden. And angels are instrumental at every stage of God's plan to help get us back on the road to the paradise that we lost. And not just that paradise, but also to heaven, the eternal paradise, the beatitude. They surrounded the life of

Abraham, the first of God's chosen people. They announced to Sarah, his 100-year-old wife, that she would have a baby. They stopped Abraham from making a human sacrifice of Isaac. They saved Abraham and his nephew Lot from that destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah. They came to Jacob in the desert on a ladder back and forth. One picked up the prophet Habakkuk by the hair and whisked him 700 miles away. Angels came to old women and old men, to the blind, to the poor, to shepherds, to fleeing criminals, not to kings or politicians. I think that's interesting. An angel came to Mary and asked her permission, in God's name, to use her womb as his door into our world. And she said yes.

0:28:12.2 SC: And then as he became a shivering, hairless, wet little baby, they announced his birth to the shepherds. And then they were in the garden when he had that cross to bear in prayer, and he sweat blood. They were there to comfort him. And when he resurrected, they were present at the stone to announce that resurrection to the women, who then become their own messenger to the rest of the apostles. They relayed it to them. And then at the ascension, all of the disciples who watched Jesus ascend into heaven and leave their presence physically, the angels were there. And when he comes again, he will come with all of his angels, the Bible says. So they are present, and that's just the stuff that surrounds Jesus and his being with us here physically on earth as a divine human. That's not even counting how they're present at mass and around and with the Eucharist as we receive it. The point being, though, they are messengers to mankind, and they carry out God's will and his word to his people, and they guard the people, which I'll get to in a moment. So that spiritual nature of angels is clear throughout the scriptures. Now the Catholic Encyclopedia points out something really interesting that I had not seen before, and so I want to share it with you.

0:29:36.8 SC: It says that the prophet Zechariah depicts the angel as speaking in him. So the scripture seems to imply that Zechariah was conscious of an interior voice which was not that of God, but of his messenger or of his angel. Some translations translate it the angel that talked with me, but the better ones say he talked within me or he talked in me. And so that's a neat distinction found in the scriptures for the way the angels communicate to us, right? If they're not wearing the costume of a human body, then they're speaking into us rather than to us outside, right? I thought that was really cool. Okay, so guardian angels and angels themselves, they're personal guardians. In the Catechism in 336, we see that stipulated that angels are, each of us has a guardian angel. This is an idea that I think Catholics take for granted, but as Baptists, we didn't talk about this a whole lot. I mean, it was kind of assumed in some ways, but it was like a no-no thing that you don't really talk about 'cause you might fall into heresy or you might fall into angel worship or something like that. It's the same thing with saints and all that stuff.

0:30:58.0 SC: But the Catechism says in 334 through 336, it says in the meantime, the whole life of the church benefits from the mysterious and powerful help of angels. In her liturgy, the church joins with the angels to adore the thrice holy God. She invokes their assistance in funeral liturgies, particularly in the sentence, may the angels lead you into paradise. Moreover, in the cherubic hymn of the Byzantine liturgy, she celebrates the memory of certain angels, more particularly saints Michael, Gabriel, Raphael, and the guardian angels. From its beginning until death, human life is surrounded by their watchful care and intercession. And then it quotes the scriptures for that. Beside each believer stands an angel as protector and shepherd, leading him into life. That's a quote from Saint Basil. And then the last sentence in that section, already here on earth, the Christian life shares by faith in the blessed company of angels and men united in God. So that's the section in the Catechism on what is invisible. And of course, that would be why angels are in that section, because they don't have bodies. So where do we find the guardian angels in the scriptures? Specifically,

Abraham sent his steward to seek a wife for Isaac. And he said he will send his angel before you, Genesis 24:7.

0:32:21.4 SC: And then in Psalm 90, when the devil, that's the Psalm that the devil quoted to Jesus in Matthew 4:6 in the temptation in the desert. It says his angels are given charge over you. Judith, in the Old Testament, she attributes her strength in that national crisis to an angel. She says, as the Lord liveth, his angel has been my keeper. And then Jesus himself says, see that you despise not one of these little ones, for I say to you that their angels in heaven always see the face of my Father who is in heaven. And Saint Jerome, in his commentary on that passage, says that the dignity of a soul is so great that each has a guardian angel from its birth. The general doctrine, the Encyclopedia says, that the angels are our appointed guardians is considered to be a point of faith. But that each member of the human race has his own individual guardian angel that is not of faith. Now let me explain that. So whatever is of faith, what the church calls *dei fidei*, is part of the deposit of faith that we are required to believe to be Christian, to be Catholic specifically. But most Christians, we all share most of what is of faith, *dei fidei*.

0:33:41.0 SC: Whatever is not of faith, it can still be worthy of belief, but it's not a matter of heaven or hell, right? It's not a matter of salvation or the eternity of your soul necessarily, that you believe that you particularly and every human being also has a guardian angel assigned to them. But the view of having guardian angels has such strong support from the doctors of the church that it's silly to deny it, Saint Jerome says. And guardian angels take part in all of our good works, Thomas Aquinas says in his *Summa*. So the Bible presents angels not only as our guardians, but also as actually interceding for us, they pray for us. The angel Raphael said, I offered my prayer to the Lord in Tobit 12:12. Saint Ambrose said, we should pray to the angels who are given to us as guardians. So, I mean, it's all over the place. These are just a couple of places in which the church fathers talk about angels. And we saw John of Damascus last week and how sort of pervasive that view is among the church fathers, that each of us does have a guardian angel. Now, Saint Paul forbids the worship of angels. And of course, you know, we wouldn't do that, but it would be pretty easy if you saw one to mistake the angel for God himself.

0:35:07.8 SC: But he says, Paul says, let no one disqualify you insisting on self-abasement and worship of angels, taking his stand on visions puffed up without reason by his sensuous mind, he says in Colossians 2:18. And he says that specifically because that tendency of worshiping angels was pretty prevalent in Laodicea to whom that letter to Colossians was written in part. And his prohibition was actually made a canon of the church in 35 of the Synod of Laodicea, I'm sorry, Laodicea in the fourth century.

[music]

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[music]

0:36:28.5 SC: That Canon 35 says this, Christians must not forsake the Church of God and go away and invoke angels and gather assemblies, which things are forbidden. If therefore anyone shall be found engaged in this covert idolatry, let him be anathema for he has forsaken our Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, and has gone over to idolatry. Now, it's interesting that there is a caveat there with that canon. It says that it's not that we are not supposed to speak with our guardian angels. It means that we don't offer idolatrous sacrifices or rights. It says specifically, this would refer to doing these idolatrous rights in corners, hiddenly, secretly, occult-like as in the Latin. So I'm not sure exactly what as in the Latin means, but we can clearly see that the canon here is talking about worshiping angels and offering them rights, meaning ceremonies. All right, so we've established that we're not supposed to worship angels. Now, the next section that the Catholic Encyclopedia offers is guardians of nations. And remember in John Damascus, it says, they are guardians of the divisions of the earth. They are set over nations and regions allotted to them by their creator. They govern all of our affairs and bring us comfort. And the reason surely is because they are set over us by the divine will and command and are ever in the vicinity of God.

0:37:56.0 SC: And then remember also in that section, chapter four of St. John of Damascus concerning the devil and the demons, he says, he who from among these angelic powers was set over the earthly realm and into whose hands God committed the guardianship of the earth was not made wicked. So Satan then was given the guardianship of the earth, the dominion of the earth. And that we looked last week at the fact that that's why he fell to the earth when he fell from heaven, because this was his domain. But what is fascinating to me, I've been kind of noodling this all week. What's fascinating to me is what it says in Genesis that God created the man and the woman and he gave them dominion over the earth. Now they had dominion over the earth. God gave that to them after the angels fell. Man and woman had dominion over the earth. That tells me right there that that's part of why the fallen angels were jealous of the human race. Because if God gave the spiritual governance of the whole earth to Satan, that means that all of the angels that fell with him were in the hierarchy under him. So he was above all of them. So he's the highest of all of the fallen angels and to him was given the domain of the earth.

0:39:29.9 SC: But when God made man and woman and situated them in the garden, he gave them dominion of the earth. So they had dominion over the enemy until they accepted the suggestion of the enemy and the temptation and they followed that and they fell into sin. And then that dominion reverted back to the enemy. And so all of our salvation is a battle for every human being's rightful place in the dominion that God has given him. His sphere of influence, those who he has placed in authority under him or her. Whatever our dominion is, our salvation, the working out of our salvation is the process of reasserting our authority over our dominion. So God is giving it back to us a little at a time, person by person and in each person, line by line, precept upon precept, the Bible says. So our spiritual battle takes place in our flesh over our lifetime and what we're essentially doing is reasserting our authority over our own dominion, which first of all includes our own bodies, our own thoughts, our own will, our behavior and then those things that God has given us authority over.

0:41:02.2 SC: Now more on that later, but I just wanted to mention that because I've been thinking about it all week, that whole idea of how Satan was given the dominion, the spiritual dominion over the whole earth and then God gave it to the humans and then the humans gave it back to the enemy. And now God is giving it back to the humans through Jesus's sacrifice and the power and the authority that comes through the appropriation of that sacrifice through his blood and through baptism and through confirmation and the rest of the sacraments. And of course his word. All of the

ways that we know that we win those battles and the battles essentially are over our rightful dominion, which is why the Bible talks about it already being over. You've already won, you just have to do the work. The long laborious painful work training your thoughts and your emotions and your body to obey your will. That's the essence of our entire spiritual battle is to reassert the proper order of our will over our thoughts and our emotions and our bodies. And that is our rightful dominion within ourselves, each person in his body and we all have a guardian angel to help us with that and we have other angels around us that are constantly battling to protect us.

0:42:27.2 SC: So every possible grace has been given to us to reassert our power and authority in Christ over the dominion that God has given us, whatever that is, which means the kingdom of God. And each of us then advances the kingdom of God as he or she does that both for themselves and for those people over whom he or she has authority. Isn't that amazing? I think that is fascinating the way God has sort of given the enemy this middle finger at every turn because even his temptations against us work toward our good. They help us grow. In fact, one of the shocking things that I read in Father Ripperger's book *Dominion* that I have really been having to kind of just step back and really think about this and I know it's true, I know it is, it's just mind blowing. He says that temptation is good. When we talk about, we start trying to drive out the demons every time we get tempted. We wanna drive out the demons and we wanna pray deliverance prayers. And he says God allows it because it's good. It forces you to grow in virtue. Well, not forces, that's not a good word. But it challenges you to grow in virtue. And because we're human and we're limited, we have to grow in virtue a little bit at a time.

0:43:52.5 SC: And that requires temptation. And if it weren't a good thing, God would never allow it. And remember that that is thought to have been one of the primary tasks of Satan, the enemy, was to offer teaching to the human race. And now of course, rather than teaching us, he tries to tempt us. But the point that Father Ripperger makes is that temptation is a good thing. We're constantly trying to drive out the demons from every little temptation, not realizing that first of all, it comes from the world. It comes from the flesh and only one third of it comes from the enemy. But even when it comes from the enemy, the temptation itself is not bad. It's meant to help us grow and we need it or we would never grow in our virtue. And so as I've been kind of thinking about that, he actually said that in the context of why does God allow possession and obsession? And he said that temptation is a good thing in that context. And I was like, whoa, wait a minute. It could somehow be good for a person to be obsessed or oppressed or possessed by the enemy? And of course, you have to accept that if everything God does is good and everything he allows is for our good, then we have to accept too that somehow that could also be a good thing and that is why God allowed it, which has had me on my heels since I read it.

0:45:24.1 SC: I'm like, whoa, that is one very big thing to chew on. So I'll just leave that with you without any more comment. But John of Damascus then says that the angels have guardianship of the whole earth. And the Catholic Encyclopedia says that appearances of angels usually only last as long as the delivery of their message requires. But when their mission is prolonged, they're shown as the guardians of the nations at some particular crisis. I love that idea that we have angels that are steering us through the crises that we are experiencing in our world and in our country and in our church. I mean, it's not like I didn't already know that, but just having it pointed out again is so comforting that they are guarding us through these crises that we're experiencing. Then the Encyclopedia gives us the example of the Exodus. In Exodus 14:19, we see that there's an angel assigned to the people, also in Baruch 6:6. And so it says, similarly, it is the common view of the fathers that by the prince of the kingdom of the Persians, we are to understand the angel to whom

was entrusted the spiritual care of that kingdom. And we may perhaps see in the man of Macedonia who appeared to Saint Paul at Troas, the guardian angel of that country.

0:46:44.6 SC: That's in Acts 16:9. And then the prince of the kingdom of the Persians is mentioned in Daniel 10:13-21. Then the Encyclopedia goes on to say that the Septuagint in Deuteronomy 32:8 has preserved for us a fragment of information on this, though it is difficult to gauge its exact meaning. Quote, "When the Most High divided the nations, when he scattered the children of Adam, he established the bounds of the nations according to the number of the angels of God." Now, I don't know which part seems to be vague. If it's the dividing of the nations, that would be where the continents split in Genesis. If it's the scattering of the children of Adam, that would be at the Tower of Babel. And then it says he established the bounds of the nations according to the number of the angels of God. So I don't know what the question is on that point, but that's what the Encyclopedia says. Next week, we'll look at angels and the weather and angels and their hierarchy.

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0:47:52.0 Speaker 5: Thank you for listening to the Bible Study Evangelista show. Find out more at biblestudyevangelista.com.

