

Saint Michael and All Angels

September 29

Sermon Road Map
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Genesis 28:10-17
September 27, 2020

Wow! Look, the LORD God of angels. Totally Awesome!

Teaching this story to children is so much fun. Let me show you. **Jacob had a brother Esau. They were twins, born on the same day, but they were very different. Esau liked to go out on his own, explore, hunt, take adventures. Jacob preferred staying at home and being with family, people he knew. Jacob agreed to do something foolish and bad. Jacob stole a gift Esau was supposed to receive. This made Esau so mad he planned to kill Jacob. Jacob had to leave home. He liked to be with the people he knew, but he had to run away all by himself and go to live with his Uncle Laban, whom he had never met before. On his third day of hiking, as it was getting dark, he found a place outdoors to go to sleep. In his sleep, God gave him a dream. *Wow! Look, a stairway into heaven. Hey, look, God's angels fill the stairway. Some going up. Others coming down to Jacob. Wow! Look, the LORD God standing in heaven, looking down at Jacob.***

Wow! Look, the LORD God of angels. Totally Awesome!

- ❖ Look what the awesome angels are doing!
 - Kids of all ages are fascinated with pictures of this stairway full of angels.
 - ◆ They are awesome spirit beings - normally invisible to us.
 - ◆ When seen, like at Jesus' Open Tomb, people fall down in awe & terror
 - ◆ The Apostle John, filled with awe, bowed down to worship an angel. *Rev 22:9*
 - ***Do not do it! I am a fellow servant with you and your brothers the prophets, and also with those who hold on to the words of this book. Worship God!***
 - Behold the awesome wonder of angels, then praise their Creator, our God.
 - As awesome as the angels are, and their numbers - even better: their work.
 - ◆ ***Are not all angels ministering spirits sent out to serve for the benefit of those who are going to inherit salvation?*** *Heb 1:14*
 - ◆ This confirms the purpose of the ascending and descending angels Jacob saw.
 - Those God sent out, return with reports, concern, success
 - Those coming down are headed out to serve for Jacob's benefit.
 - Jacob felt alone. He wasn't! Yahweh sent angels to accompany and protect
 - *Angel* means *messenger*. Sometimes delivering nonverbal messages - shows of power against any that would harm God's people.
 - ◆ What a comfort to Jacob - alone - experiencing a strange new time in his life
 - What a comfort to all God's people, always - especially times like this
 - In the Nicene Creed we confess: *We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty, maker ...of all that is, seen and **unseen**.*
 - Here we confess the behind the scene reality of angels and evil angels.
 - What a comfort to know God's angels are on a mission protecting us from evil angels, dangers we are unaware of, even viruses. Awesome!
 - We are not navigating these strange new times without God's helpers.

- ❖ Look, the LORD God himself - standing and promising.
 - Angels didn't make us God's people. God did by his Spirit through his word.
 - Yahweh's message reveals how **truly awesome he is**.
 - ◆ Our God is awesome in power. He made all from nothing. He controls all.
 - ◆ He created angel servants, and employs the powers he gave them for us.
 - ◆ But to sinners Yahweh's most awesome message is, *I am still your God*.
 - Jacob was a son of the covenant. A child of God through faith.
 - His very name means *heal grabber*. He lived down to this as a deceiver.
 - Recognizing his wickedness, repentant, yet living with the consequences
 - He had to wonder: *Did I forfeit the blessing by the way I got it?*
 - *Will Yahweh forgive me or turn his back on me - like I did to him?*
 - Yahweh, with perfect timing, comforts his contrite servant.
 - This strange land, the ground you sleep on, will belong to your descendants.
 - Your descendants will be super abundant.
 - ***Now, I am with you and will watch over you wherever you go, and I will bring you back again into this land. Indeed, I will not leave you until I have done what I have promised to you.*** Genesis 22:15
 - Yahweh still claims him as his child, fully forgiven. What great news! He is still his God and will **never** abandon him. He is active in Jacob's life.
 - ◆ Yahweh was standing, ready to act! Not merely passively watching over Jacob.
 - Unlike the god many today think of - a god who is not involved in this world.
 - Our God is actively blessing, keeping, and yes **forgiving** us foolish children.
 - God's goal: Let nothing take us away from him, from worshiping him alone.
 - How blessed we are to serve such a caring, active God!
 - He calls us to love and serve him.
 - He has us serving him along with our impressive helpers, the holy angels.

Why observe St. Michael and All Angels? So we don't forget what we can't see other than through God's revelation. Today we looked at a story we may not have read or heard since we were in Sunday School. Its impact is great - maybe even greater today.

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