

Why Do We Recognize Demoniac Presence Before Angelic Presence?

When I drove my first car away to college, the experience reminded me of the freedom I felt when I rode my bike deep into the woods. But in those days, my definition of freedom was ill-formed. I soon learned that my finicky Ford had moments of bad behavior. I turned the steering wheel one direction, and the wheels of the Ford went another direction. The good news was that my friends soon stopped asking to borrow my car.

Christians also experience misalignment. Those who seek to live a transparent life of use to the Lord work to align their beliefs and behavior. But it seems challenging. The apostle Paul struggled with alignment.

“The good I desire to do, I do not do” (Rom. 7: 14a).

Those who live in misalignment often quote this verse as a rationale for bad behavior.

Sometimes our behaviors just don't match our beliefs. Do we have a belief problem or a behavior problem? I choose to believe that, as they mature, most Christians pursue better alignment between their beliefs and behaviors.

Do we all suffer from situational beliefs? Do we modify our beliefs to allow situational behavior? Testing and temptations seem to reveal the truth. But let's consider one example.

Do you believe angels visit us today?

Do you believe this verse from Hebrews 13? “Do not forget to entertain strangers, for thereby some have entertained angels unknowingly” (v. 2).

Our story in this issue about prophetic dreams and the role of angels in the Christmas story may challenge our belief system. Or did those angels disappear between the testaments? If they existed then, do they exist now? Is there an unseen realm that operates on earth?

It seems to me that Christians have an easier time “seeing” and noting the impact of demonic presence than angelic presence. I’m grateful we have writers such as Blake Healey (*The Veil*) who document their experiences with the angelic host. His book is a powerful story of how he sees the angels who dwell among us.

In 2 Kings 6, we learn about Elisha and his servant’s belief opportunity when surrounded by the army of Syria. The prophet’s servant responded as many of us might: “Alas, my master! What will we do?” (v. 15c). It was a time to check the wheels for alignment.

The servant believed his eyes. He saw “a force [that] surrounded the city both with horses and chariots” (v. 15b). The chariots must have looked like army tanks to the servant. That’s all he could see. Thankfully, Elisha also believed what his eyes revealed. But he saw through the eyes of faith. He perceived what his servant could not or would not. And he did what leaders do: He prayed for his servant: “Lord, open his eyes and let him see” (v. 17a).

It’s amazing what can happen when our eyes are opened. “The Lord opened the eyes of the young man, and he saw that the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire surrounding Elisha” (v. 17b).

Elisha’s defense team had always been there. The servant had limited faith and spiritual vision.

Jacob “dreamed and saw a ladder set up on the earth with its top reaching to heaven. The angels of God were ascending and descending on it” (Gen. 28:12).

How does this biblical presentation of the “stairway to heaven” gel with your beliefs? Can you see the angels as they descend to guard the saints on earth?

My thinking about the notion to “entertain angels” on earth has been enlarged from the baseline principle of hospitality. I choose to affirm the fact that angels are an important part of the kingdom of God on earth. If we believe in fiery darts, we must also be comforted by the brush of an angel’s wings. We must come to know a host of angels propels God’s work on earth.

Those whose behaviors match their beliefs about angels tend to know more about the goodness of God. Again, few Christians have trouble speaking about the power of demonic forces. We easily align our beliefs and actions on the side of evil.

Is the truth about spiritual warfare in balance? Do we fight to see the spiritual good that moves among us?

God gave us the Holy Spirit to comfort us. And the angelic host comes alongside us to do the work of the Father.

When angels are heard on high this Christmas season, may your spirit soar like a bike ride in the woods.

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