

Ole Miss FCA Weekly Devotional: 4/5/10

The Power and Passion of the Master Coach, Elliot Johnson



Thought of the Week:

God's Glory is Declared in His Name, Yahweh-Sabaoth, "Lord of Hosts"

Verse of the Week:

Holy, holy, holy is the Lord Almighty [Lord of hosts]; the whole earth is full of His glory. Isaiah 6:3

There have been great leaders throughout the history of the world. They have exercised command over millions of people. Yet, all of man's leadership is by permission of those under authority, and the glory of a human conqueror is temporary. In the movie *Patton*, George C. Scott refers to the transitory nature of victory after the fury of the battle was concluded:

"For over a thousand years, Roman conquerors returning from the wars enjoyed the honor of the triumph, the tumultuous parade. In the procession came trumpeters and musicians and strange animals from the conquered territory with carts laden with treasure and captured armaments. The conqueror rode in a triumphal chariot with the day's prisoners walking in chains before him. Sometimes his children robed in white stood with him in the chariot or rode the trace horses. A slave stood behind the conqueror holding a golden crown and whispering in his ear the warning—that all glory is fleeting."

The name Yahweh-Sabaoth is associated with the failure of the Jewish nation to follow the path of their Lord. Translated "Lord Almighty" or "Lord of hosts" in the King James Version, this name reveals the Lord as captain of the armies (hosts) of heaven who is mighty to save His disobedient, wayward people and to fulfill His purpose in the world. The glory of our heavenly commander is not fleeting! The name was often used by prophets (eighty times by Jeremiah, fifty times by Zechariah) in foretelling God's judgment on His disobedient people. Yet, it was also the name they turned to for comfort and deliverance when Israel was helpless before powerful enemies. Psalm 46:7, 11 says, "The Lord of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge." It was against Yahweh-Sabaoth that Israel sinned in Isaiah 9:13: "But the people have not returned to Him who struck them, nor have they sought the Lord Almighty [Lord of hosts]," Therefore, "By the wrath of the Lord Almighty [Lord of hosts] the land will be scorched and the people will be fuel for the fire" (v. 19).

Yet, it is the same Lord of hosts who protects His people. Yahweh-Sabaoth is the commander of heaven's hosts of angels. We are told that the angel of the Lord encamps around those who fear Him, and He delivers them (Psalm 34:7). Angels guard us in all our ways (Psalm 91:11). In one night, just one angel from heaven's host killed 185,000 Assyrians who had attacked Israel (2 Kings 19:35)! Two angels rescued Lot and his family from Sodom's destruction (Genesis 19). Angels met Jacob as he walked with God (Genesis 32:1). An invisible army of angels defended Israel from the Arameans, covering the hills with horses and chariots of fire around Elisha (2 Kings 6:15-17).

Angels from heaven's armies constantly appear in the New Testament also. They appeared to Joseph (Matthew 1:20), to Mary (Luke 1:26,30), to Zechariah (Luke 1:13, 19), and to shepherds (Luke 2). Angels are ministering spirits, sent by God to help those who are saved (Hebrews 1:12)! Angels of heaven ministered to Jesus after His temptation (Matthew 4:11) and in Gethsemane (Luke 22:43). At His grave, an angel rolled away the stone to reveal His resurrection (Matthew 28:2, 6). Jesus could have asked for more than twelve legions of angels (72,000) to

annihilate a world which rejected Him (Matthew 26:53). Angels helped Peter in prison (Acts 12:6-10), Philip in the desert (Acts 8:26), Paul in a storm (Acts 27:23), and John on the island of Patmos (Revelation 1:1). The Revelation tells of angels at the "four corners of the earth" (Revelation 7:1 and of angels blowing trumpets to alert of judgment (Revelation 8). Angels are constantly carrying out the purpose of their captain, the Lord of hosts, in this world.

The Lord God Almighty is a Great Leader. He commands a vast army for His glory and our good. How thankful we should be to serve such a wonderful Commander-in-chief!

Time Out:

- (1) Have you ever seen an angel?
- (2) How do you know angels exist?
- (3) What do you suppose an angel looks like?
- (4) What do these verses tell us about angels?
 - Their appearance (Matthew 28:3)
 - Their number (Hebrews 12:22 and Daniel 7:10)