The word 'strength' is the Hebrew word "chayil." This is a powerful word that means "the force, strength and might of an army; a force of men, means, and resources; efficiency, ability, and wealth." Our God is Jehovah Chayil…the Lord our Strength! He has everything we need for victory upon our high places (battlefields) and enables us to make progress in our assignments or in the fulfillment of His promises to us. Whatever you need to overcome the obstacles you face is found in Him.

Jane Hamon

REVELATION CHAPTER FIFTEEN

Handout Twenty-one

Prayer Study # 420

First Love Ministries, Inc., of Perry, Georgia

Revelation 15

15 Then I saw another wonder (sign, token, symbol) in heaven, great and marvelous [warning of events of ominous significance]: There were seven angels bringing seven plagues (afflictions, calamities), which are the last, for with them God's wrath (indignation) is completely expressed [reaches its climax and is ended].

2 Then I saw what seemed to be a glassy sea blended with fire, and those who had come off victorious from the beast and from his statue and from the number corresponding to his name were standing beside the glassy sea, with harps of God in their hands.

3 And they sang the song of Moses the servant of God and the song of the Lamb, saying, Mighty and marvelous are Your works, O Lord God the Omnipotent! Righteous (just) and true are Your ways, O Sovereign of the ages (King of the **[a]***nations*)!

4 Who shall not reverence and glorify Your name, O Lord [giving You honor and praise in worship]? For You only are holy. All the nations shall come and pay homage *and* adoration to You, for Your just judgments (Your righteous sentences and deeds) have been made known *and* displayed.

5 After this I looked and the sanctuary of the tent of the testimony in heaven was thrown open,

6 And there came out of the temple sanctuary the seven angels bringing the seven plagues (afflictions, calamities). They were arrayed in pure gleaming linen, and around their breasts they wore golden girdles.

7 And one of the four living creatures [then] gave the seven angels seven golden bowls full of the wrath *and* indignation of God, Who lives forever and ever (in the eternities of the eternities).

8 And the sanctuary was filled with smoke from the glory (the radiance, the splendor) of God and from His might *and* power, and no one was able to go into the sanctuary until the seven plagues (afflictions, calamities) of the seven angels were ended.

Chapters 15 and 16 of Revelation are the chapters of the seven angels. Now would be a good point to look briefly at the Biblical information about these wonderful creations of God. Angels are strong and powerful and indestructible. Scripture mentions only one archangel: 1st Thessalonians 4:16-*For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first,* and Jude 9-*Yet Michael the archangel, in contenting with the devil, when he disputed about the body of Moses, dared not bring against him a reviling accusation, but said, "The Lord rebuke you!"* I believe that the only other holy angel mentioned by name in scripture is Gabriel, the messenger angel, who appeared twice to Daniel (Daniel 8:16 and Daniel 9:21), who announced that Zacharias and Elizabeth would have a child who would turn the hearts of the fathers to the children (Luke 1:11-20), and who announced Christ's birth (Luke 1:26-38).

Angels are active through the Bible as special messengers of God (Hebrews 1:14: *Are they not all ministering spirits sent forth to minister for those who will inherit salvation?* And Psalm 91:11: *For He shall give His angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways.)*

<u>Some Biblical Functions of Angels</u>

1. Adam and Eve were kept out of Eden after the Fall by an angel (Genesis 3:24).
2. Abraham entertains angels (Hebrews 13:2) and was restrained by the angel (Genesis 22:11-18) when offering up Isaac.
3. Hagar was consoled by an angel (Genesis 16:8) when she fled from Sarah's presence.
4. Eliezer, Abraham's oldest servant, was guided by an angel (Genesis 24:7), when he was sent to find a wife for Isaac.
5. Lot was delivered by angels (Genesis 19:15-16), when God destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah.
6. Jacob was directed by angels (Genesis 31:11, 32:1), when fleeing his father-in-law Laban.
7. Moses was given the law by angels (Acts 7:35 & Galatians 3:19),
8. Balaam was reproved by an angel (Numbers 22:22-23).
9. Joshua was encouraged by an angel (Joshua 5:13-14) at Jericho.
10. Gideon was commissioned by an angel (Judges 6:11-16).
11. Manoah, father of Samson, was instructed by an angel (Judges 13:13-14), before Samson's birth.
12. Israel was chastened by angels (2nd Samuel 24:15-18) when David sinned by ordering a census to be taken.
13. Elijah was comforted and translated by Angels (1st Kings 19:4-7).
14. Elisha was defended by angels (2nd Kings 6:16-17) after revealing by prophecy the war plans of the King of Syria. This is the famous passage where the Lord

opens the eyes of Elisha's servant to show him that the Lord's forces were more than those who were against them.

15. The Assyrians were destroyed by an angel (2nd Kings 19:15, 35).
16. Daniel was ministered to by angels (Daniel 6:21-22) when he was in the Lion's Den.
17. Zechariah was enlightened by angels (Zechariah 1:14-16).
18. An angel delivers the apostles from prison (Acts 5:19).
19. An angel instructs Philip where to go (Acts 8:26), thus putting him in the path of the Ethiopian eunuch.
20. An angel sustains Paul in the storm (Acts 27:23).

Can we order angels to help us? I personally believe that we have no power to command them to help us in our need but must go through the Father. It is the Father who hears our cry for help, who commands His waiting angels to minister to us and meet our needs, and there are times when we need to ask the Father to send them. He is the one, however, who hears our prayer or cry for help and commands His angels to come to us. They are His messengers, His servants, not ours unless He commands. We read in the Old Testament of Hagar's little son Ishmael crying, as he was dying of thirst in the parched desert. *God heard the boy crying and the angel of God called to Hagar from Heaven and said to her, "...Do not be afraid..." Then God opened her eyes, and she saw a well of water..."* Genesis 21:17-19. Note that she did not ask an angel to help her. God heard her cry for help, and He sent an angel.

Does the Bible teach the existence of guardian angels? I believe it does, although it does not use that specific term (see Psalm 91:11 and Matthew 18:10).

What do angels look like? You can find descriptions in Job 38:4-6, Daniel 10:1-8, and Matthew 18:10.

These angels in this particular chapter are angels who are bringing God's judgment and wrath. We have already seen the opening of the seven seals and the sounding of the seven trumpets. Now we see the beginning of the final horrors. In these first verses we see those who died a martyr's dead of the most savage kind because they refused to deny their faith. Yet John tells us that they emerged victorious, and not only are victorious but sing with joy both the Song of the Lamb, which only they could learn (14:3) and the Song of Moses, which Moses sang after escaping Egypt and crossing the Red Sea (Exodus 15:2-18). The Song of the Lamb is almost entirely composed of verses from the Old Testament:

- *Great and wonderful are your works* (Psalm 92:5, 111:3, 98:1, & 139:14).
- *Just and true are your ways* (Psalm 145:17).
- *Who shall not fear and glorify your name, O Lord?* (Psalm 86:9).
- *You alone are holy* (1st Samuel 2:2, Psalm 99:3, Psalm 111:9).

- *All the nations will come and worship before you* (Psalm 86:9).
- *Your righteous judgments are made manifest* (Psalm 98:2).

Barclay notes: “There is not one single word in it about their own achievements; from beginning to end, the song is a lyrical outburst on the greatness of God.”

In verses 5-7, we see the 7 angels coming out of the tent of witness or tent of testimony. This was the Mosiac tabernacle or the tabernacle in the wilderness (Numbers 9:15, 17:7, and 18:2). They come from the place where the ark of the covenant lay. This contained the tablets of the ten commandments or the law. No individual or nation can defy the laws of God without having to suffer the consequences.

These angels are clothed in a shining white robe and have golden girdles around their chest. These clothes are what the high priest, the representative of God among the people, would have worn. They are also garments kings would have worn.

The angels receive the bowls from one of the four living creatures. One of these creatures was like a lion, another like an ox, a third like a man, and the fourth like an eagle. These symbolize what is strongest, bravest, wisest, and swiftest in nature. The seven bowls will use nature to bring great and terrible judgment to the earth.

The Jews of the Old Testament believed that smoke symbolized the glory of God. No one could enter the tabernacle when the cloud of smoke settled over it. The idea in verse eight according to Barclay is, “There is the idea that, to human beings, the purposes of God will often be clouded, for no one can see into the mind of God; and there is the idea that the holiness and the glory of God are such that human beings in their own right can never approach God.”