

(1) "Spectators in the Heavenly Grandstand".

Introd:- (1). "It came upon the midnight clear, that glorious song of old, from angels bending near the earth, to touch their harps of gold. Peace on the earth, good-will to men, from heaven's all-gracious King; The world in solemn stillness lay, to hear the angels sing. Still through the cloven skies they come, with peaceful wings unfurled, and still their heavenly music floats, O'er all the weary world; above its sad and lowly plains, they bend on hovering wing; and ever o'er its Babel sounds, the blessed angels sing".

(2). One of most wonderful scenes in the unfolding Christ-mas story is this one out on the lonely fields near Bethlehem. A quiet night: a solitary group of men, dozing..with one on guard: lonely howl of a wolf: the flock of patient sheep...and THEN! Luke 2:9-14. In one sudden blaze of light the story takes us beyond the ken of mortal minds... off into another realm of glory..the land of the angels. AND TEACHES US A VITAL AND INTRIGUING LESSON...THIS:- The incarnation of God the Son was of utmost importance to angels. Why? What did it matter to them? Why concerned?

I. In order to begin grasp signif. in our feeble way..read...

(a). Only faintly understand..but enough to grasp something of tremendous significance. FIRST:- What are angels? Certainly they are created beings..Col.1:16. They are called, in Heb. 1:13-14 "Ministering spirits sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation". They belong to the unseen spirit world about us..invisible unless they appear in some special manifestation..as to shepherds.

(b). How many kinds of angels? Prob. many diff. ranks and orders..but angelic host is divided into two great companies. Heb. 12:22 speaks of "an innumerable company of angels... Unseen spirit world is teeming with uncounted myriads..angel MIGHTY BEINGS..great power..Numbers 22:32 tells of an angel with sword ready to kill Balaam. 2 angels destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah..An angel shut lions mouths for Daniel..And in II Peter 2:9-11. Mightier than men..c/f Heb. 2:9. They are superhuman beings..doing God's work..c/f Gen.28:12 Communic Story of Bethlehem's fields opens door...see..BUT WHY INTERES

II. Tho. we oft. are ignorant of this..immense issues at stake in the angelic realms about us.

(a). You see...the angelic host has divided..into two utterly opposing camps. There was once..eons ago..rebellion in Heaven. One of heaven's highest angels..the anointed cherub that covereth..Lucifer, son of the morning..thru his pride..rebelled..and gathered a following. War in heaven!

And Lucifer..ruler of this primeval earth..cast out..to hell.
 Read it:- Isa, 14:12-15. Heaven's hosts divided...and angels fell
 Again:- Lk.10:18 Jesus saw it! Long bef. man created..and this:
 II Peter 2:4. Angels have sinned..So now Holy Angels..Sinner ang
 Angels in heaven..in hell. Led by God's Spirit..led by Lucifer S
 God's side evidently victorious..always will..Rev.12:7-9.

(b). Then, is infinitely wise plans of God He remade the earth.
 Reformed..made it habitable again after judgment on Satan
 had reduced to the chaos of Gen 1:2. Stage reset...and THIS TIME
MAN ON THAT STAGE! God's angels in galleries..hell's in the pit.
 And like great theatre presentation..the drama of ages began...
 "All the world's a stage"..Wiser than Shakesp. knew.

(c). First two to play parts..Adam, Eve..And as tale unfolded..
 and they fell into SIN..all heaven's hosts groaned..and hell's
 hosts yelled with glee. And then down the years..the struggle
 ebbed and flowed..back and forth. Wicked men, women walked life'
 brief stage..joined hosts in pit. Godly people turned to righteo
 usness..left stage to sit in gallery..watch their descendants..
 Babies died..were killed..to swell hosts of heaven by millions.
 Millions for Africa, India, China, Japan..dying in infancy..MORE.

In sight of those angelic hosts..men like Abr..walked..Moses..
 Joseph..David...Daniel..Isaiah...Ezra...Nehemiah...Esther Queen..
 (d). Then it seemed..one earth-night..a hush fell over the great

~~Theatre of the Universe~~ Others..turning to God..and Lk. 15/10

(d). Then it seemed..one earth-night..a hush fell over the great
 Theatre of the Universe...Something new and wonderful was happen-
 ing! God the Son...made momentous choice..Heb. 2:14-16. Did not
 choose to die for angels..Many righteous compared to those who
 foll'd Satan..BUT HUMAN RACE WHOLLY IN SIN..EVERY ONE NEEDING
 REDEMPTION..And so one quiet night He stepped down from heaven..
 to take form of man..human body..sinless, pure..that He might
 some day take it to Calvary..shed His blood..as ransom price
 for whole human race. THEN WE READ THIS..I Tim. 3:16 "Seen of
 angels"..Not by, in casual manner.."OF ANGELS"..as spectacle
 for all to see..AND THEN THE ANGELS OF HEAVEN BURST FORTH..JOY!
 The Great Victor had arrived!.....There is closing scare, as
 most vital hour of all history arrived..33 yrs later...As angels
 beheld...stage set as garden..Gethsemane...All men had left
 Saviour alone...Angels seemed far away...Then, no chorus of
 angelic beings...but silent, waiting host..to see outcome...
 Read this:- Lk.22:43 One lone ^{angel} came on lonely wing..
 to comfort the Lonely MAN. And He went to the Cross..and won.
 And died..and rose...and the angels were there! "He is risen".
 after preaching to spirits in prison..fallen ones.."proclaiming"

Conclus:- 1. One other word. The angels are still watching. And
 today we are on the stage..c/fHeb. 12:1. Again this:-I Cor 4:9
 "Spectacle" means "A Theatre"! Angels in Gallery...men in stalls
 devils in pit....WATCHING US. Whatd o they see..God see? This
 Xmas Day? On what side? - Lost? - Saved? - Living for Him? - God's