

Angels in Our Lives

Ideas for Discussion

Have you been angry and felt the need to take revenge and then somehow, miraculously, you are able to receive a different perspective and change the course of your actions? There is a story in the Word about King David, ruler of all Israel, who had an experience just like this. You can read it in 1 Samuel 25:2-35. David sends his men to beg Nabal, a farmer he had been protecting (like a wall both during the day and at night) for food for his large army. Nabal refuses to help. David is so angry about this that he takes an army of 400 and goes to murder Nabal and his men. Meanwhile Abigail, Nabal's wife, hears what is going on and decides to intervene. She takes lots of food as a gift, and without telling her husband, goes to meet David and his men. When she meets him face to face, she bows to the ground, pleads for forgiveness and offers her gifts. She points out that if he proceeds as planned, the bloodshed may cause him grief later, and people will say that he shed blood without a cause and avenged himself. David's heart melts and he thanks the Lord for sending Abigail and saving him from committing mass murder. After receiving her message, he sends her away in peace.

The Heavenly Doctrine tells us that good and evil spirits are with us all the time, trying to lead our thoughts. These companions provide a mental communication with heaven and hell. By providing links to both heaven and hell our minds are free to choose between good and evil. In fact "Without the communication with heaven and hell a person could not go on living for even a moment" (*Arcana Coelestia* 5849). We would have no freedom, and so no life.

The angels who are with us "... are sent to people to watch over them and to lead them away from evil affections and consequent thoughts, and to inspire them with good affections so far as they will receive them in freedom. By means of these they also direct the deeds or works of people by removing as far as possible evil intentions" (*Heaven and Hell* 391).

In the story about David, we can see the forces of heaven and hell in action. But what saves David from making a bad choice is his *willingness* to listen to Abigail. David is willing to acknowledge the truth in what she says, to put it above his feelings of anger and to change his actions.

1. Might David's actions have been different if he had known that angels were trying to influence his choices? Why?
2. Can we be aware of the presence of angels in our lives?
3. How do we experience their presence?
4. Does knowledge of the presence of angels change our actions?
5. At times it seems as if the angels have left us. When David was enraged, as we sometimes are, he seemed to have no angels with him. What happens to the angels with us when we are in ugly moods?
6. Why do we need to have evil spirits with us as well as angels?
7. Are the angels and evil spirits aware that they are with us?
8. Are our spiritual companions always the same, or do they change?
9. Angels and evil spirits once lived on earth and are now in the spiritual world. Will we meet our spiritual companions after we die?