

**Theme:** Angels Watching Over Me

**Object:** Angel

**Scripture:** “Now when they had gone, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and said, ‘Get up! Take the Child and His mother and flee to Egypt, and remain there until I tell you; for Herod is going to search for the Child to destroy Him.’” (Matthew 2:13 NASB)

**SLIDE** Have you ever heard the song, "Angels Watching Over Me?" It is a beautiful “Spiritual” which tells about how God sends his angels to watch over us. No one knows who wrote the song. The song goes like this.

**SLIDE** All night, all day,  
Angels watching over me, my Lord.  
All night, all day,  
Angels watching over me.

**SLIDE** Sun is a-setting in the west;  
Angels watching over me, my Lord.  
Sleep my child, take your rest;  
Angels watching over me.

**Blank** When Jesus was born, Herod was King. When King Herod heard about the birth of Jesus, he thought that Jesus had come to set up a kingdom here on earth and he was not at all happy about that. The king tried to find out where Jesus was so that he could kill him. An angel appeared to Joseph in a dream and warned him

of the danger. "Get up! Flee to Egypt with the child and his mother," the angel said. "Stay there until I tell you to return, because Herod is going to search for the child to kill him." That night Joseph left for Egypt with Jesus and Mary. They stayed there until Herod died.

When Herod died, God's angel spoke to Joseph in a dream again. "Get up, take the child and his mother and return to Israel. All who were out to kill the child are dead."

Isn't it wonderful that God sent angels to watch over his infant son and protect him from harm? Well, God loves all of his children. He loves you and me and he sends angels to watch over us. In Psalm 91, the Bible says, **SLIDE** "For He (God) will give His angels charge concerning you, to guard you in all your ways. They will bear (lift) you up in their hands. (Psalm 91:11-12a NASB)

I'm glad that we have God's angels watching over us as we walk - even in dangerous places. Be thankful that God's angels are watching over you today! **SLIDE** "All night, all day, angels watching over me, my Lord. All night, all day, angels watching over me, my Lord."

Father, we thank you for your love and protection. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

**Slide I Am the Bread of Life**

The New Testament is built upon the Old. As we prepare to continue our study of John - I want to go back to the writing in the Old Testament of Prophet Amos and lay a foundation. **Slide** “Behold, days are coming,” declares the Lord GOD, ‘When I will send a famine on the land, not a famine for bread or a thirst for water, but rather for hearing the words of the LORD. People will stagger from sea to sea and from the north even to the east; they will go to and fro to seek the word of the LORD, but they will not find it.’” (Amos 8:11-12 NASB) This is a terrible prophecy – people needing the Lord and wanting the Lord, but not finding His word. To know whom the Lord is and what He is based on what is found in His holy Word, **but they will not find it**. Amos is speaking of the written Word, the Scriptures, but this morning John will be writing both of the written Word and the Living Word.

As horrible as Amos’ prophecy was it is even more tragic to have the Messiah or the Christ, which is the Bread of Life, present as He was at the time He was addressing this crowd and as He is today and people refuse to come to Him. People then and people today have great hunger – hunger for truth, peace, joy, purpose and meaningful relationships – Jesus is the answer to people’s hunger. Tragically, people look everywhere to fill their hunger; they look everywhere but to Jesus.

Jude says in his introduction that believers are “those who are called” and because they are called they are “kept for Jesus Christ.” Listen to the words of Jude, who is believed to be the brother of Jesus by the references in Acts and Mark, and prepare your hearts to hear the Word of God this morning.

**Slide** “To those who are the called, beloved in God the Father, and kept for Jesus Christ: may mercy and peace and love be multiplied to you. Beloved, while I was making every effort to write you about our common salvation, I felt the necessity to write to you appealing that you **Slide** contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all handed down to the saints.” (Jude 1-3 NASB)

Pray

We ended last week with verse 29 and we begin this morning with the same verse. Please open your bibles to the Gospel According to the Apostle John, chapter 6, verse 29, Jesus tells this crowd that if they desire to know God and have a relationship with Him, **Slide** “that you believe in Him whom He has sent.” Believe; believe in the Messiah, believe in the Christ, believe that Jesus is the Messiah and the Christ because of the powerful gospel He teaches, because of the miracles or signs that only God can perform – “believe in Him (Jesus) whom He (God) has sent.”

On the other side of the Sea of Galilee, just yesterday Jesus had multiplied 5 barley loaves and 2 fish into a feast that fed 10 to 12 thousand people and no one went away hungry. But, this was not enough to convince them that Jesus was the Messiah, they wanted the miracle repeated - they wanted more. How many miracles would have been enough to convince them? Always more. The rabbis had taught the Jewish people for many generations that the Messiah would duplicate the miracle of the giving of manna, which had been given by Moses. They were expecting the miracle to be repeated by the Messiah – feeding millions three times a day, six times a week for forty years. The crowd was challenging Jesus to prove He was the Messiah by providing them with an unending supply of food as Moses had.

In Judaism, the **Slide** *Midrash* is the body of homiletic stories written by Jewish rabbis to explain passages in the Tanakh (tə'nax). **Slide** The **Tanakh** תנ"ך (tə'nax) is the canon of the Hebrew Bible. The name *Tanakh* is an acronym of the first Hebrew letter of each of the three traditional subdivisions: **Slide** Torah or Teaching, also known as the Five Books of Moses), **Slide** Nevi'im or Prophets and **Slide** Ketuvim or Writings — hence the name **Slide** *TaNaKh* (tə'nax). In the Midrash it is written, “You shall not find manna in this age, but you shall find it in the age that is coming.” It also says concerning Manna, “For whom has the manna been prepared? For the righteous in the age that is coming.” Finally it says concerning Ecclesiastes 1:9, “What did the first redeemer do? He brought down the manna. The last redeemer will also bring down manna.” **Blank** The crowd was less interested in the coming of the Messiah than they were in trying to get another free meal. The attitude of the crowd was; it was nice that you fed us yesterday, but we need a real sign if you want us to believe in You as the Messiah. We want manna as Moses gave. The crowd said, “What then do You do for a sign, so that we may see, and believe You? What work do You perform?”<sup>31</sup> Our fathers ate the manna in the wilderness; as it is written, ‘HE GAVE THEM BREAD OUT OF HEAVEN TO EAT.’” They challenged Jesus’ statement in verse 29, that they should “believe in Him (Jesus) whom He (God) has sent.” The crowd’s selfish question proved true what Matthew recorded Jesus saying in 12:39, **Slide** “An evil and adulterous generation craves for a sign; and yet no sign will be given to it ...” First of all it was not Moses who gave the manna, it was not Moses’ sign – it was God’s. It was God’s miracle. Secondly, the manna that was given was not the true bread from heaven, for it only satisfied their physical need to eat and did nothing for their spiritual need. **Blank** Jesus’ answer turns the attention away from Moses and places the focus on Himself.<sup>32</sup> “Jesus then said to them, ‘Truly, truly, I say to you, it is not Moses who has given you the bread out of heaven, but it

is My Father who gives you the true bread out of heaven. <sup>33</sup> For the bread of God is that which comes down out of heaven, and gives life to the world.” Today, as at the time of Jesus, most people are more worried about their material comforts than they are about their eternal salvation – for one need is immediate and one is thought to be in the distant future. However, Jesus is the only bread that when fed upon satisfies the real hunger within people – the hunger of the soul. Jesus is the bread of God and it is Jesus that gives life to the world. The crowd says they want the miracles of Moses, but they are not really listening to Moses or the scriptures for if they had they would understand what Jesus is telling them and who He is. Jesus is recorded in Luke saying, **Slide** “If they do not listen to Moses and the Prophets, they will not be persuaded even if someone rises from the dead.” (Luke 16:31 NASB) How many signs are enough? For those who do not believe there will never be enough signs, not even the fact that Jesus rose from the dead and is living – the living God will not be enough. **Blank**

The people respond to Jesus saying, “Lord, always give us this bread.” The crowd completely misses Jesus’ point of verses 32 and 33 that it is spiritual food that brings salvation and is far more important than physical food that satisfies for only a short time. Some things do not change, today some people come to church looking for their needs and desires to be met – it is what Jesus needs to do for them, it is what the church can do for them and they do not see and submit to Jesus as their Lord and Savior. Here in verse 34 the Greek word translated as “Lord” would be better translated as “Sir” for the crowd has given every indication that they do not believe in Jesus as the Messiah. Their minds are on this world as Paul wrote to the Corinthians, **Slide** “A natural man (person) does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually appraised.” (1 Corinthians 2:14 NASB) These people were physically

alive and hungry, but they were spiritually dead. **Blank** To shock them out of their stupor Jesus declares in clear terms, “I am the bread of life; he who comes to Me will not hunger, and he who believes in Me will never thirst.” Everyone understood this imagery. What is the **bread of life**? What is important about bread? **Slide** First, bread is necessary for life. In Christ’s day bread was even more essential than in our time, for it was the only staple in most people’s diets. Without bread to eat, people died. So Jesus is claiming to be essential for people to live. Are you trying to live without Jesus? When people have an abundance of material wealth and comfort they often see little need for Jesus. This is the problem in America in which even the poor are rich by the world’s standards. If everything goes well for you in this world; career, money, marriage and family, but you lose your soul, is this a good bargain? Is this the result you truly desire in your heart? One cannot live, truly live without Jesus. Jesus made the choice clear **Slide** “I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but through Me.” (John 14:6 NASB) No one, absolutely no one is reconciled back to God by any other means than believing in and having faith in Jesus as the Christ. **Blank** People must do two things – come and believe - “he who comes to Me will not hunger, and he who believes in Me will never thirst.” For those being saved we are like **Slide** “the deer (who) pants for the water brooks, so my soul pants for You, O God. My soul thirsts for God, for the living God ...” (Psalm 42:1-2 NASB)

**Slide** The second thing I was thinking about concerning bread is that it is for everyone. Not everyone can eat everything – not everyone can afford the best steak, or shellfish and some people cannot eat sweets, but bread is a staple for almost everyone. In the same way Jesus Christ is perfectly suited to satisfy the hunger of everyone’s soul. Yet, I have often heard that Jesus is a need for the

common person to answer what man is unable to answer. For people of intelligence they are not duped into this fairy tale about God and Jesus. And yet, when highly educated and intelligent people come to Jesus they cannot exhaust the knowledge and depth of who Jesus is and what He means in ones life.

**Slide** The third thing I was thinking about is that bread is to be eaten daily. We have to trust in Christ as our Savior initially. But this is only the beginning. As we begin a relationship with the living God we grow spiritually by feeding upon Jesus day by day. This brings us to the Lord's Prayer, **Slide** "Give us this day our daily bread." (Matthew 6:11 NASB) The emphasis is on **this day** and on **daily**. When something is repeated twice it is showing importance. When we put together **Slide** "Give us this day our daily bread" and "I am the bread of life" there are truths that emerge. First God cares for our bodies, the Lord's Prayer certainly is speaking of this. Christianity is a religion that sees the body and soul as intertwined, it is the redemption of our body that God has given us as well as the soul He has given; the body is the temple that houses the soul and God possesses the soul of a believer. Therefore, it is right to pray for the needs of the world, for many need food, shelter and clothing. If Jesus had not been concerned about people's physical needs He would not have fed the 5000. Our spiritual needs is far more important, but for fallen people they are not aware of their spiritual needs for they are spiritually dead. It is when God awakens our souls that we then begin to understand our deep spiritual need for eternal life. Even for those who come to know Jesus as their Savior but if they do not know Him as their Lord also, they continue to desire the things of this world more than Him. A good example of this is found in Psalm 106 concerning the people's attitude while they wondered in the wilderness. **Slide** "They quickly forgot His (God) works; they did not wait for His counsel, but craved intensely in the wilderness, and tempted God in the desert. So He gave them their request, but sent a wasting disease among



them.” (Psalm 106:13-15 NASB) God allows us the free will to pursue both the holy and unholy, but the result is vastly different. **Blank** This is why praying is so important, not to tell God what you want, but to listen to God and let Him speak into your soul and give you “the bread of God is that which comes down out of heaven.” Time, time with God, studying His Word and talking with and listening to Him in prayer, it is these things that feeds our souls.

**Slide** The fourth thing I thought of concerning bread is that bread produces growth. The church today, in general, is weak and that is because the people who make up the church are weak spiritually. There are a few, the remnant churches, the faithful who seek God only. Many churches teach morality and in some churches morality is not important, but for the remnant church living for Christ and His glory and living out the Word of God is far more than morality and is everything. For us to be a remnant people of God we must spend time, time feeding upon Christ daily - “Give us this day our daily bread” for Jesus is the bread of life – “I am the bread of life; he who comes to Me will not hunger, and he who believes in Me will never thirst.” We must **not** look to this world for nourishment, but to the Lord only. We need to get our minds off of our needs and ourselves and we need to focus on the Lord Jesus and His glory. When we do that - we will see the great glory of Christ who is the great “I AM”.

“I am the bread of life” is the first of seven great “I AMs” that give a full and precious picture of Jesus as our Lord and Savior.

**Slide** “I am the bread of life” (John 6:35)

**Slide** “I am the Light of the world” (John 8:12 and 9:5)

**Slide** “I am the door” (John 10:7 and 9)

**Slide** “I am the good shepherd” (John 10:11 and 14)

**Slide** “I am the resurrection and the life” (John 11:25)

**Slide** “I am the way, and the truth, and the life” (John 14:6)

**Slide** “I am the true vine” (John 15:1 and 5)

I hope this morning by taking the first “I AM” we have begun to see what these “I AMs” teach about Jesus and our condition without Him and with Him. **Blank**

In closing, have you ever thought about all that grain must go through before it becomes bread? It must first be planted and then grow to maturity. When it is ripe it must be cut down, separated from the chaff and then the wheat seed is ground under a heavy weight and rough surface into flour. Then it is placed in a fiery heat to be baked into bread. It is only by this process that the wheat becomes bread and sustains life. This is what happened to the Lord Jesus Christ in order that He could become the **bread of life**. Jesus was planted by God the Holy Spirit into Mary, given birth and He grew to maturity. Men of this sinful world cut down Jesus in the prime of His life. He was bruised and the human life ground out of Him. He passed through the fires of God’s holy wrath and took our place in God’s judgment. This is the glory of Jesus, God the Son. He suffered for you. How can we then refuse to feed upon Him? Come to Christ, He is your **daily bread**, Jesus is the **bread of life** – fed upon Him and grow strong. As David wrote of his experience in the wilderness of Judah, **Slide** “O God, You are my God; I shall seek You earnestly; my soul thirsts for You, my flesh yearns for You, in a dry and weary land where there is no water.” (Psalm 63:1 NASB)

**Slide** O God, You are my God – Jesus, You are the **bread of life**!