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Jehovah-Sabaoth

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ARTICLE THIRTY-TWO:

SABAOTH, THE FOURTH COMPOUND NAME OF JEHOVAH

- Definition:

Sabaoth is derived from the Hebrew word *tsaba*, meaning “host.” Thus, the Lord of Hosts is a reference to the Captain of heaven’s armies. These armies are said to be composed of angels and led by Jesus Himself.

“As for our Redeemer, the LORD of hosts is His name, the Holy One of Israel” (Isa. 47:4, NKJV).

“Praise Him, all His angels; praise Him, all His hosts!” (Psa. 148:2, NKJV).

- The time involved: Prior to the creation of Earth—

“Where were you when I laid the foundations of the earth? Tell Me, if you have understanding. Who determined its measurements? Surely you know! Or who stretched the line upon it? To what were its foundations fastened? Or who laid its cornerstone, when the morning stars sang together” (Job 38:4-7, NKJV).

“Thus the heavens and the earth, and all the host of them, were finished” (Gen. 2:1, NKJV).

- The number involved: Countless!

“The chariots of God are twenty thousand, even thousands of thousands; the Lord is among them as in Sinai, in the Holy Place” (Psa. 68:17, NKJV).

“A fiery stream issued and came forth from before Him. A thousand thousands ministered to Him; ten thousand times ten thousand stood before Him. The court was seated, and the books were opened” (Dan. 7:10, NKJV).

“Then I looked, and I heard the voice of many angels around the throne, the living creatures, and the elders; and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands, saying with a loud voice: ‘Worthy is the Lamb who was slain to receive power and riches and wisdom, and strength and honor and glory and blessing!’” (Rev. 5:11, 12, NKJV).

“And he said: ‘The LORD came from Sinai, and dawned on them from Seir; He shone forth from Mount Paran, and He came with ten thousands of saints; from His right hand came a fiery law for them’” (Deut. 33:2, NKJV).

- The purpose involved: To worship their Captain, namely, the Lord Jesus Christ!

“But when He again brings the firstborn into the world, He says: ‘Let all the angels of God worship Him’” (Heb. 1:6, NKJV).

“Then I looked, and I heard the voice of many angels around the throne, the living creatures, and the elders; and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands” (Rev. 5:11, NKJV).

- The episodes involved: Various occasions when this divine Host and His armies are in view. The individuals seen on those occasions would include:

A. Jacob:

He saw them en route from Paddan-Aram to Bethel (Gen. 32:2, NKJV).

B. Joshua:

The month was April, the year, 1406 B.C., the place was outside the main gate of the city of Jericho. The man was Joshua. At first everything went exactly as planned. The swollen waters of the River Jordan had parted, just as God had promised, allowing the people of Israel to safely cross over into the Promised Land. The waters then resumed their natural course. Yes, Jericho's strong walls would have to be breached if the city were to be taken, but Joshua was not worried, that is, until he saw a Mighty Warrior armed with a huge sword standing beside the gate.

"Dear Lord," he thought, "if he is representative of a typical Jericho G.I. Joe, we've got a real problem! Well, whatever the case, I've got to find out." So, walking timidly toward the Powerful Solider, he said:

"You probably know that tomorrow World War III will take place right here!" (O.K., a little author's liberty). "So, my question is, which side are you on, ours or the enemy?"

Of course Joshua was totally unaware that this warrior was Jehovah Sabaoth, the Captain of heaven's armies. Actually, this was a Christophony, i.e. a pre-Bethlehem appearance of Jesus Christ. In essence, His response was,

"You asked me what side am I on. Joshua, I didn't come here to take sides; no, I came to take over!"

And the results? Theologically speaking, WOW!

"And the commander of the Lord's army said to Joshua, Take off your sandals from your feet, for the place where you are standing is holy. And Joshua did so... And the Lord said to Joshua, See, I have given Jericho into your hand, with its king and mighty men of valor. You shall march around the city, all the men of war going around the city once. Thus shall you do for six days. Seven priests shall bear seven trumpets of rams' horns before the ark. On the seventh day you shall march around the city seven times, and the priests shall blow the trumpets. And when they make a long blast with the ram's horn, when you hear the sound of the trumpet, then all the people will shout with a great shout, and the wall of the city will fall down flat, and the people shall go up, everyone straight before him... So the people shouted, and the trumpets were blown. As soon as the people heard the sound of the trumpet, the people shouted a great shout, and the wall fell down flat, so that the people went up into the city, every man straight before him, and they captured the city" (Joshua 5:15; 6:2-5, 20, NKJV).

C. Isaiah

"In the year that King Uzziah died, I saw the Lord sitting on a throne, high and lifted up, and the train of His robe filled the temple. Above it stood seraphim; each one had six wings: with two he

covered his face, with two he covered his feet, and with two he flew. And one cried to another and said: 'Holy, holy, holy is the LORD of hosts; the whole earth is full of His glory!' And the posts of the door were shaken by the voice of him who cried out, and the house was filled with smoke" (Isa. 6:1-4, NKJV).

It is interesting indeed to compare and contrast chapter five in Isaiah with chapter six. In chapter five the prophet is denouncing the sins of his people. No less than six times we read his words, *"Woe unto them"* that do certain things (5:8, 11, 18, 20, 21, 22). All well and proper, for this of course was the responsibility of the prophet, to rebuke the people and call for their repentance! But in chapter six he sees the glory of JEHOVAH SABAOTH, THE LORD OF HOSTS, sitting upon His majestic throne in dazzling splendor. And what is Isaiah's reaction? Suddenly it changes from *"Woe unto them,"* to:

"And I said: Woe is me! For I am lost; for I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips; for my eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts!" (Isa. 6:5, ESV).

Why the change? To see *His* holiness is to see *our* sinfulness!

D. Micaiah

This fearless Hebrew prophet, imprisoned for denouncing wicked King Ahab, was asked by the king if he would be victorious in an upcoming battle with Syria.

1. Here is what he saw:

"Then Micaiah said, 'Therefore hear the word of the LORD: I saw the LORD sitting on His throne, and all the host of heaven standing by, on His right hand and on His left'" (1 Kings 22:19, NKJV).

2. Here is what he said:

"Then he said, 'I saw all Israel scattered on the mountains, as sheep that have no shepherd. And the LORD said, 'These have no master. Let each return to his house in peace'" (1 Kings 22:17, NKJV).

3. Here is what happened:

"Now a certain man drew a bow at random, and struck the king of Israel between the joints of his armor. So he said to the driver of his chariot, 'Turn around and take me out of the battle, for I am wounded.' The battle increased that day; and the king was propped up in his chariot, facing the Syrians, and died at evening. The blood ran out from the wound onto the floor of the chariot" (1 Kings 22:34, 35, NKJV).

E. Elisha's servant

"And when the servant of the man of God arose early and went out, there was an army, surrounding the city with horses and chariots. And his servant said to him, 'Alas, my master! What shall we do?' So he answered, 'Do not fear, for those who are with us are more than those who are with them.' And Elisha prayed, and said, 'LORD, I pray, open his eyes that he may see.'"

Then the LORD opened the eyes of the young man, and he saw. And behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire all around Elisha" (2 Kings 6:15-17, NKJV).

F. Jesus Himself

In the New Testament Christ Himself is pictured as the leader of these angels. (See Matthew 26:53.) When Jesus was arrested, our Lord Himself (the Lord Sabaoth) made an interesting comment when Simon Peter pulled out his sword and did violence to one of the servants of the high priest by cutting off his ear:

"But Jesus said to him, 'Put your sword in its place, for all who take the sword will perish by the sword. Or do you think that I cannot now pray to My Father, and He will provide Me with more than twelve legions of angels?'" (Matt. 26:52, 53, NKJV).

*They bound the hands of Jesus in the garden when He prayed;
They led Him through the streets in shame,
They spat upon the Saviour so pure and free from sin;
They said "Crucify Him, He's to blame"*

*He could have called ten thousand angels,
To destroy the world and set Him free.
He could have called ten thousand angels,
But He died alone, for you and me.*

*Upon His precious head they placed a crown of thorns;
They laughed and said, "Behold the King"
They struck Him, they cursed Him and mocked His Holy Name,
All alone He suffered everything.*

*He could have called ten thousand angels,
To destroy the world and set Him free.
He could have called ten thousand angels,
But He died alone, for you and me.*

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