Question:
How can we be certain that the angel who came down and stirred the waters was truly an angel of God, and not a demonic spirit? After all, Scripture warns that Satan can disguise himself as an angel of light (2 Corinthians 11:14).

Answer:
Let us carefully examine the biblical text and theological principles:

John 5:1-4 (ESV):

> *“After this there was a feast of the Jews, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem.*
> *Now there is in Jerusalem by the Sheep Gate a pool, in Aramaic called Bethesda, which has five roofed colonnades.*
> *In these lay a multitude of invalids blind, lame, and paralyzed.*
> *They waited for the moving of the water. For an angel of the Lord went down at certain seasons into the pool and stirred up the water. Whoever stepped in first after the stirring of the*

> *water was healed of whatever disease he had.”*

Theological Analysis:

1. The Nature of Angels and Demons:
   Scripture clearly distinguishes angels of God from demonic spirits. Angels sent by God are ministering spirits (Hebrews 1:14), carrying out God’s will, often for protection, guidance, or healing. Demons, on the other hand, are fallen angels who rebelled against God and seek to deceive and destroy (Revelation 12:7-9).
2. Satan’s Deception vs. Genuine Light:
   While Satan can masquerade as an angel of light (2 Corinthians 11:14), this is a counterfeit appearance meant to deceive. He cannot produce true spiritual healing or restoration. His works are ultimately destructive (John 10:10).The Principle of Internal Division:
   Jesus teaches that a kingdom divided against itself cannot stand (Matthew 12:25-26 ESV):
   “But Jesus knew their thoughts and said to them, ‘Every kingdom divided against itself is laid waste, and no city or house divided against itself will stand.
   And if Satan casts out Satan, he is divided against himself. How then will his kingdom stand?’”

This means that a dark power would not expel its own agents. The healing at the pool could not have been done by a demonic spirit working against his own agenda.

4. Healing as Evidence of Divine Intervention:
   The healing that occurred when the water was stirred was immediate and genuine restoration of health. Such miracles are consistent with the ministry of God’s angels or the power of God’s Spirit (Psalm 103:3; Acts 5:15-16).
5. Demons and Disease:

> Many diseases and infirmities mentioned in Scripture are linked to demonic oppression or influence (Matthew 9:32-33; 12:22). The people lying by the pool likely suffered from chronic conditions, some possibly caused or worsened by spiritual forces. A demonic spirit healing them would be contrary to its nature.

Practical Application:

Some people seek help from traditional healers or witch doctors and may think they are healed after rituals like divination or incantations. However, biblical teaching warns that such practices do not expel evil spirits permanently. Instead, these spirits may be displaced or exchanged, resulting in further bondage (Deuteronomy 18:10-12; Galatians 5:19-21).

The principle “Satan cannot cast out Satan” applies here: demonic powers do not overthrow their own kingdom but work to maintain deception and control.

True healing and deliverance come only through Jesus Christ, the Prince of Peace (Isaiah 9:6), who has authority over all spiritual powers (Colossians 2:15).

May the Lord richly bless you and grant you discernment in all spiritual matters.

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