

ANGELS
Text: Acts 23:8

INTRO: We shall study a most neglected subject. The basic meaning of the word is “messenger.” We must approach our subject with caution. Usually the word is used to describe a heavenly being, tho there are passages where the word is used to describe human messengers such as prophets or priests. The word is also used in several O.T. passages to refer to One called The Angel of the Lord, a manifestation of Deity in human form. (We will look at that subject in a later lesson). In this study, we shall seek to learn what we can about those heavenly beings usually referred to as angels. One more word of caution--all we really know about angels is what we read in the Bible. All else is human conjecture.

I. ANGELS ARE “SONS OF GOD” BY CREATION.

Job 1:6, Now there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the LORD, and Satan also came among them.

Job 2:1, Again there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the LORD, and Satan came also among them to present himself before the LORD.

II. THEY WERE CREATED BEFORE THE MATERIAL UNIVERSE.

Job 38:4-7, "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, & all the sons of God shouted for joy?

III. THEY ARE SPIRIT BEINGS.

Heb 1:7, And of the angels He says: "Who makes His angels spirits & His ministers a flame of fire."

Heb 1:13-14, But to which of the angels has He ever said:

"Sit at My right hand, Till I make Your enemies Your foot-stool"? Are they not all ministering spirits sent forth to minister for those who will inherit salvation?

A. Not always visible to human eyes.

2 Kings 6:15-18, And when the servant of the man of God arose early & went out, there was an army, surrounding the city with horses & 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 & chariots of fire all around Elisha. So when the Syrians came down to him, Elisha prayed to the LORD, & said, "Strike this people, I pray, with blindness." And He struck them with blindness according to the word of Elisha.

B. Not subject to death, Luke 20:36.

C. Do not marry or reproduce, Luke 20:35.

D. Constitute an innumerable company, Heb 12:22.

E. Are of a higher order than man, Psalm 8:4-5.

F. Mighty in power.

Psa. 103:20, Bless the Lord, you His angels, who excel in strength, who do His word.

2 Pet. 2:11, Whereas angels who are greater in power & might, do not bring a reviling accusation against them before the Lord.

G. Differ from one another in rank or office.

1. Archangel, I Thess. 4:16

2. Cherubim, Gen. 3:24.

3. Seraphim, Isa. 6:2

4. Perhaps various other ranks:

Eph. 1:21, [Jesus] is far above all principality & power & might & dominion & every name that is named, not only in this age but also in

that which is to come. (Eph. 1:21). See Col. 1:16; Rom 8:38.

H. They have individual personalities. Two are named in Scripture—Michael, Gabriel, Rev 12:7; LK 1:19

IV. FUNCTIONS OR DUTIES ACCOMPLISHED BY ANGELS.

A. In heaven they worship & adore God continually. Rev 5:11-12; Heb. 1:6.

B. They had a direct part in delivering the Law of Moses.
Heb 2:2, spoken thru angels
Acts 7:53, received the law by the direction of angels

C. In some sense, they minister in behalf of saints. Heb 1:7, 14

D. They help to execute Gods judgments & influence the affairs of nations.

Gen 19:10-13, But the men reached out their hands and pulled Lot into the house with them, and shut the door. And they struck the men who were at the doorway of the house with blindness, both small and great, so that they became weary trying to find the door. Then the men said to Lot, "Have you anyone else here? Son-in-law, your sons, your daughters, & whomever you have in the city--take them out of this place! For we will destroy this place, because the outcry against them has grown great before the face of the LORD, and the LORD has sent us to destroy it."

See also Daniel, chapter 10.

Acts 12:20-23, Now Herod had been very angry with the people of Tyre & Sidon; but they came to him with one accord, and having made Blastus the king's personal aide their friend, they asked for peace, because their country was supplied with food by the king's country. So on a set day Herod, arrayed in royal apparel, sat on his throne and gave an oration to them. And the people kept shouting, "The voice of a god & not of a man!" Then immediately an angel of the Lord struck

him, because he did not give glory to God. And he was eaten by worms and died.

E. They were especially active in regard to the ministry of Jesus.

1. Announced his birth to Mary, LK 1:26; to Joseph, MT 1:20; to the shepherds, LK 2:9.

2. At His temptation, MT 4:11, ministered to Him

3. In Gethsemane, LK 23:43

4. Rolled the stone away from His tomb, MT 28:2

5. Attended His ascension, Acts 1:11 ("men").

6. Will attend His 2nd coming, 2 Thess. 1:7.

F. They were active in directing the growth of the church in its infant state.

1. Released Peter & John, Acts 5:19-20

2. Directed Philip to the eunuch, Acts 8:26

3. Told Cornelius to send for Peter. Acts 10:3-5

4. Effected Peter's escape, Acts 12.

5. Told Paul the lives of those on board with him would all be spared, Acts 27.

G. Some watch over Christ's lithe ones, MT 18:10 (guardian?)
Peter's angel, Acts 12:15, ghost

H. They rejoice over penitent sinners, LK 15:10.

I. We enjoy their fellowship when we come into Christ's church, Heb. 12:22.

Rev 22:9, Then he said to me, "See that you do not do that. For I am your fellow servant, and of your brethren the prophets, and of those who keep the words of this book. Worship God."

J. Accompany the souls of the redeemed to Paradise, Lk 16:22

K. Some have entertained them without knowing it.

Heb. 13:2, Do not forget to entertain strangers, for by so doing some have unwittingly entertained angels.
[Abraham, Lot]

V. SOME WORDS OF CAUTION.

A. Our knowledge of angels cannot be increased by claims of human speculators or their so-called “experiences”

B. Even if an angel were to appear to someone today, he would not tell that person what to do to be saved. Eunuch, Acts 8; Cornelius, Acts 10, etc.

C. If an angel were to appear to one of us he could not add anything to the gospel preached by Christ’s apostles & Prophets in the 1st century, Gal. 1:6-9.

D. Angels are not to be worshipped. Rev. 22:8-9.

E. There is no authority in the Scriptures to pray to angels or to departed saints. We are to pray to God in the name of Jesus. John 15:16; 16:23.

CONCLUSION: God’s angels may do many things of which we are not fully aware. They minister on behalf of those who will have eternal life. They may be active in the realm we call providence. It is probably counter-productive to speculate. If we obey the word of God, we will be in full cooperation with God, and with whatever His angels do to help us. If we do not obey, we will eventually be lost forever, 1 Thess. 1:6-10.

La Porte, TX, February 22 1976

Exton, PA, November 23, 1986

Shiloh, Mexia, TX, January 5, 1992

Shiloh, Mexia, TX, January 7, 1996

Susquehanna, Marietta, PA, January 4, 2004