

Angels and Their Function

Introduction:

1. A study of angels can be a fascinating study; yet it is one which leaves us wanting more information. The Bible often mentions angels; yet we generally wish we knew more than is revealed. Deut. 29:29.
2. The subject of angels has certainly aroused the imaginations and creativity of various people. Angels are often depicted as carrying a harp or a bow and arrow (which shoots people and causes them to fall in love); they decorate books and paintings, worn as pendants around people's necks, are portrayed in movies and television shows.
3. In this study we shall approach a study of angels; doing so, I realize that I may raise as many questions as I will attempt to answer.
 - a. There is a lot we would like to know that is not fully revealed. Deut. 29:29.
 - b. However, angels are great in number, Luke 2:11-12; Matt. 26:52-53; Heb. 12:22.
 - c. And they are often mentioned in both the Old and New Testaments.

Discussion:

I. What Are Angels?

- A. They are Messengers.
 1. From the Greek (*angelos*) meaning "messenger."
 2. From the Hebrew (*malak*) meaning "messenger."
- B. As messengers, they were sent to different ones.
 1. Three angels, in the form of men, visited Abraham and informed him of the coming destruction of Sodom. Gen. 18:1-2,20.
 - a. Both Abraham and Lot "*entertained angels unawares*," Heb. 13:1-2.
 2. Two angels (called "*angels*"), in the form of men, visited Lot, and insisted that they leave Sodom because of its impending destruction, Gen. 19:1,12-13.
 - a. **Note:** In former times God spoke in different ways, Heb. 1:1-2.
 3. Angels gave the law to Moses on Mt. Sinai, Acts 7:53; Gal. 3:19.
 4. Angels led Israel to the land of promise, Ex. 23:22-23.
 5. An angel informed Zacharias of the birth of John the Baptist, Luke 1:11-13.
 6. An angel informed Mary that she would bear a Son, Luke 1:26-31.
 7. An angel informed the shepherds of the birth of Jesus, Luke 2:8-12.
 8. Angels announced the resurrection of Jesus, Matt. 28:1-7; Luke 24:4-7; John 20:11-13.
 9. Angels informed the apostles that Jesus would return, Acts 1:9-11.
 10. An angel assured Paul that he and others on the ship would survive, Acts 27:22-25.
 11. An angel told Philip to "*go toward the south...*," Acts 8:26.
 12. An angel told Cornelius to send for Peter, Acts 10:3-5.

II. More information about angels.

- A. They are created beings.
 1. Psalm 148:2,5; Col. 1:16-17
 - a. Unlike God, Who has always existed, Ps. 90:2, there was a time when angels did not exist.
- B. Angels are innumerable.
 1. Heb. 12:22.
 2. Rev. 5:11-13.
 3. Matt. 26:53.
- C. Angels were created as a higher order than man.
 1. Man was made a "*little lower*" than angels, Psalm 8:4-5.
 2. Angels "*excel in strength*," Ps. 103:20-21; 2 Kings 19:35.
 - a. But they are not omnipotent, 2 Sam. 24:16.
- D. Angels do not marry.
 1. Matt. 22:29-30.
- E. Angels are wise, but not omniscient.
 1. Matt. 24:36.
 2. They desired to know things pertaining to the gospel age, I Peter 1:12.
- F. Angels are not to be worshipped.

1. Rev. 19:10; 22:9.
- G Angels are subject to Christ.
 1. I Peter 3:22.
- H. There are different levels among the angels.
 1. This fact is probably implied in Col. 1:16.
 2. Michael was called "*the archangel*," Jude 9.
 3. "*Michael*" (Jude 9; Dan. 12:1), and "*Gabriel*" (Luke 1:19,26) are the only two whose names we know.
- I. Some angels are fallen angels!
 1. 2 Peter 2:4.
 2. Hell is prepared for the devil and his angels, Matt. 25:41.

III. Of Great Significance – angels are "*ministering spirits*," Heb. 1:14.

Note: They are "*sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation*," Heb. 1:14.

- A. They delivered Lot and his daughters.
 1. Gen. 19:15-16.
- B. In response to Hezekiah's prayer, they delivered Jerusalem from Assyria's attack.
 1. 2 Kings 19:35.
- C. They delivered Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego from the fiery furnace.
 1. Dan. 3:13-28.
- D. They delivered Daniel from the lion's den.
 1. Dan. 6:22.
- E. Angels ministered to Christ, Matt. 4:11; Luke 22:43
- F. They set the apostles free from prison.
 1. Acts 5:18-20; Acts 12:6-7.
- G. They rejoice when one sinner repents.
 1. Luke 18:10.
- H. Angels witness the activities of the church.
 1. I Tim. 5:21; Eph. 3:10.
- I. They transport the spirits of the redeemed to Abraham's bosom.
 1. Luke 16:22.
- J. They will separate between the good and evil in that last day.
 1. Matt. 13:41-43.

Conclusion:

1. We have not discussed every question that could be raised. For example, does each person have his own "guardian angel."
 - a. There is no scripture which states it in those words. Some have so concluded by reading Acts 12:15 and Matt. 18:10.
 - b. But one should be careful lest he reads more into these verses than is actually stated.
2. The "bottom line" is this: though angels are now invisible to our eyes; they are "*ministering spirits*," and they are concerned about **our salvation!** They function in **our best interests** according to the will of God.
3. Angels, though greater than man, were subject to the will of God; surely if they are subject to God's will, then so are we! 2 Cor. 5:10.

--Bobby Witherington, Oct. 18, 2015