

# **“The Angels”**

## **Hebrews 1:4**

Before we get further in our study of the book of Hebrews, it is important that we do a brief study of angels as found in the Bible (Angelology). This will not be a complete study of what the Bible teaches on angels but a study of angels as it applies to the book of Hebrews.

The word translated “angel[s]” in both the Old and New Testament simply means messenger and is applied to more than just the angelic heavenly being. As it relates to that angelic heavenly being, the word shows that angels are God’s servants and are messengers for Him, sent to do His will where and as needed.

Angels are mentioned in thirty-four books of the Bible for a total of 273 times (108 in the Old Testament and 165 in the New). The word translated “angels” (ἄγγελος – transliterated into English by the word “angel”) is used thirteen times in the book of Hebrews; eleven of them in the first two chapters. Some of the more critical verses in the Bible for the relationship of angels to the believer today are found in the book of Hebrews (we will mention them in this sermon and take a deeper look into those texts when we reach them in our study).

“The very names assigned to angels, by their Creator, convey to us ideas preeminently pleasing, fitted to captivate the heart and exalt the imagination; ideas which dispel gloom, banish despondency, enliven hope, and awaken sincere and unmingled joy. They are living ones; beings in whom life is inherent and instinctive; who sprang up under the quickening influence of the

Sun of Righteousness, beneath the morning of everlasting day; who rose expanded, and blossomed in the uncreated beam, on the banks of the river of life, and were nourished by the waters of immortality. They are spirits, winged with activity, and formed with power, which no labor wearies and no duration impairs; their faculties always fresh and young, their exertions unceasing and wonderful, and their destination noble and delightful, without example, and without end. They are burning ones, glowing with a pure and serene, with an intense and immortal flame of divine love; returning, without ceasing, the light and warmth which they have received from the great central Sun of the universe, reflecting with supreme beauty the image of that divine luminary; and universally glorious, although differing from each other in glory" (Timothy Dwight, Theology, pg. 298).

## **I. THE EXISTENCE OF ANGELS**

***A. They were created by God all at one time sometime in eternity past, prior to creation (Job 38:1, 4, 7). No one knows nor is any speculation adequate.***

[Nehemiah 9:6](#)

<sup>6</sup> Thou, even thou, art LORD alone; thou hast made heaven, the heaven of heavens, with all their host, the earth, and all things that are therein, the seas, and all that is therein, and thou preservest them all; and the host of heaven worshippeth thee.

[Psalm 148:2](#)

<sup>2</sup> Praise ye him, all his angels: praise ye him, all his hosts.

[Psalm 148:5](#)

<sup>5</sup> Let them praise the name of the LORD: for he commanded, and they were created.

***B. They were created to glorify Jesus Christ (Col. 1:16; Rev. 4:11).***

Hebrews 1:6

<sup>6</sup> And again, when he bringeth in the firstbegotten into the world, he saith, And let all the angels of God worship him.

***C. They were created as spirit beings, and as such have no physical form. That does not mean, however, that they cannot take form, for we know from Scripture they can and have (2 Sam. 14:20; 2 Tim. 2:26; Rev. 12:12; 22:8-9).***

***D. They cannot die – it is not God’s purpose nor plan for them to cease to exist.***

Luke 20:35–36

<sup>35</sup> But they which shall be accounted worthy to obtain that world, and the resurrection from the dead, neither marry, nor are given in marriage:

<sup>36</sup> Neither can they die any more: for they are equal unto the angels; and are the children of God, being the children of the resurrection.

## **II. THE NATURE OF ANGELS**

Remember the point earlier – our study in this sermon will be on angels and their relationship to the believer.

***A. They are servants of God accomplishing His purposes (more on this when we study Heb. 1:14).***

Psalm 104:4

<sup>4</sup> Who maketh his angels spirits; his ministers a

flaming fire:

Hebrews 1:14

<sup>14</sup> Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?

***B. They are innumerable and because of this we don't have to fear of being abandoned if they are needed and sent by the Lord.***

Revelation 5:11

<sup>11</sup> And I beheld, and I heard the voice of many angels round about the throne and the beasts and the elders: and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands;

Hebrews 12:22

<sup>22</sup> But ye are come unto mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels,

***C. They are above the laws of nature, and as such they are able to help us in ways a human being cannot.***

Man is unable to walk through walls or doors or appear and disappear without the laws of nature (such things as the law of force and the law of gravity, etc.). Angels, on the other hand, are able to circumvent the laws of nature as God decrees.

Acts 12:7

<sup>7</sup> And, behold, the angel of the Lord came upon him, and a light shined in the prison: and he smote Peter on the side, and raised him up, saying, Arise up quickly. And his chains fell off

from his hands.

***D. They are greater in intelligence than men.***

2 Samuel 14:20 [the woman of Tekoah speaking to David]

<sup>20</sup> To fetch about this form of speech hath thy servant Joab done this thing: and my lord is wise, according to the wisdom of an angel of God, to know all things that are in the earth.

Daniel 9:21–22

<sup>21</sup> Yea, whiles I was speaking in prayer, even the man Gabriel, whom I had seen in the vision at the beginning, being caused to fly swiftly, touched me about the time of the evening oblation. <sup>22</sup> And he informed me, and talked with me, and said, O Daniel, I am now come forth to give thee skill and understanding.

Daniel 10:14

<sup>14</sup> Now I am come to make thee understand what shall befall thy people in the latter days: for yet the vision is for many days.

***E. They are more powerful than mankind.***

“The power of angels is openly manifested in actual incidents relating to the world of men. So great is the power of a single angel that one’s imagination is staggered at the thought of a being who wields such power. A few illustrations will suffice to indicate that angels can perform mighty deeds for God.” (Lindsell and Woodbridge)

1. One angel slew 185,000 Assyrians in a single night – 2 Kings 19:35
2. One angel is involved in the death of

70,000 Israelites following David's sin of numbering the people.

### 2 Samuel 24:15-16

<sup>15</sup> So the LORD sent a pestilence upon Israel from the morning even to the time appointed: and there died of the people from Dan even to Beersheba seventy thousand men.

<sup>16</sup> And when the angel stretched out his hand upon Jerusalem to destroy it, the LORD repented him of the evil, and said to the angel that destroyed the people, It is enough: stay now thine hand. And the angel of the LORD was by the threshingplace of Araunah the Jebusite.

3. One angel rolled the stone away from the grave where Jesus was laid – Matt. 28:2, 4).
4. One angel will one day bind the devil and keep him bound for a thousand years.

### Revelation 20:1-3

<sup>1</sup> And I saw an angel come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. <sup>2</sup> And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan, and bound him a thousand years, <sup>3</sup> And cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal upon him, that he should deceive the nations no more, till the thousand years should be fulfilled: and after that he must be loosed a little season.

***F. They do not marry. The Bible doesn't state whether or not they have gender, but every reference is masculine, and***

**every occurrence where they appear in Scripture they appear as male. The simplest answer for this is that they were all created at one time, and they cannot reproduce. They were not "given to marriage" because they were not told to be fruitful, multiply, and replenish the earth like man was.**

Matthew 22:30

<sup>30</sup> For in the resurrection they neither marry, nor are given in marriage, but are as the angels of God in heaven.

### **III. THE MINISTRY OF ANGELS**

**A. They engage in direct worship of God (Ps. 89:7; 99:1-2; Is. 6:2-3; Matt. 18:10).**

**B. They rejoice in God's work (Job 38:4, 7).**

**C. They execute God's will (Psalm 103:20).**

**D. They guide the affairs of nations as God directs (Dan. 10:10-14, 20-21).**

**E. They guide and guard believers (Acts 8:26, 29, 13).**

Psalm 91:9-12

<sup>9</sup> Because thou hast made the LORD, which is my refuge, even the most High, thy habitation;

<sup>10</sup> There shall no evil befall thee, neither shall any plague come nigh thy dwelling.

<sup>11</sup> For he shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways.

<sup>12</sup> They shall bear thee up in their hands, lest thou dash thy foot against a stone.

**F. They minister to God's people (1 Kings 19:5-8; Matt. 4:11; Luke 22:43)**

Matthew 18:10

**10** Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones; for I say unto you, That in heaven their angels do always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven.

Hebrews 1:14

**14** Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?

**G. They defend and deliver God's servants (Gen. 19:11; Dan. 6:22; Acts 5:19-20; 12:7-11; 27:23-24).**

2 Kings 6:17

**17** And Elisha prayed, and said, LORD, I pray thee, open his eyes, that he may see. And the LORD opened the eyes of the young man; and he saw: and, behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire round about Elisha.

God still does this.

“The Reverend John G. Paton, a missionary in the New Hebrides Islands, tells a thrilling story involving the protective care of angels. Hostile natives surrounded his mission headquarters one night, intent on burning the Patons out and killing them. John Paton and his wife prayed all during that terror-filled night that God would deliver them. When daylight came they were amazed to see the attackers unaccountably leave. They thanked God for delivering them.

A year later, the chief of the tribe was converted to

Jesus Christ, and Mr. Paton, remembering what had happened, asked the chief what had kept him and his men from burning down the house and killing them. The chief replied in surprise, ‘Who were all those men you had with you there?’ The missionary answered, ‘There were no men there; just my wife and I.’ The chief argued that they had seen many men standing guard—hundreds of big men in shining garments with drawn swords in their hands. They seemed to circle the mission station so that the natives were afraid to attack. Only then did Mr. Paton realize that God had sent His angels to protect them. The chief agreed that there was no other explanation. Could it be that God had sent a legion of angels to protect His servants, whose lives were being endangered?” (Angels: God’s Special Agents, p. 3, by Billy Graham)

#### ***H. They bear God’s children to heaven***

Luke 16:22

**22** And it came to pass, that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham’s bosom: the rich man also died, and was buried;

#### ***I. They will accompany Christ at His return to set up His kingdom.***

Matthew 25:31

**31** When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory:

### **IV. THE ANGEL OF THE LORD (IN THE OLD TESTAMENT)**

The first occurrence of the term "angel" is when it is used in Gen. 16:7 for "the angel of the LORD." In most instances (of the fifty times that phrase is used), the phrase is a reference to God appearing in human form in the Old Testament. In theological terms, it is called a Christophany or Theophany. "This phrase is especially employed to denote the Lord himself in that form in which he condescends to make himself manifest to man..." (Barnes)

Conclusion: Much more can be found concerning angels in the Bible, and a further study would be good for any believer to make because they are a vital part of God's creation. The point in this sermon has been to see why the Holy Spirit inspired the writer of the book of Hebrews to compare our Saviour to angels, both being so much better than them in heaven before the incarnation and made a little lower than them while here on earth (Heb. 2:9). To understand this, it is important we know the basics of "angels."

Although we have only dealt with what are called "holy angels," or "good angels," there are those referred to as "fallen angels," those that "left their first estate" (Jude 1:6), a number considered to be a third of all created angels (Rev. 12:3-4). They are part of the spiritual battle that takes place in the unseen world spoken of throughout Scripture.