

Angels

The Messengers of God

Introduction:

1. The word ‘angel’ is found almost 300 times in Scripture (299).
 2. It means, “Messenger.”
 3. Sometimes, it refers to men – human beings of flesh and blood – who speak for God.
 4. Other times it refers to spirit beings about whom we know less than we would like.
 5. What does the Bible teach about these spiritual messengers of God?
- I. The Nature of Angels
- A. Angels are created beings (Psalm 148:1-5; Colossians 1:16).
 - B. They are not God and do not possess the characteristics of deity.
 - C. Thus, angels are not omniscient (cf. Luke 15:4-10; 1 Peter 1:12; Ephesians 3:10).
 - D. Though they are superior to man, angels are still inferior to God (Heb. 2:6-7; Psa. 8:4).
 1. Angels are not to be worshipped by men (Rev. 19:10; 22:8).
 2. In fact, angels are to worship God (Heb. 1:6; Col. 1:18).
 - E. Angels are to be subject to God – to obey His will.
 1. They can choose to violate the will of God (cf. Rev. 12:7-9).
 2. However, for this they will be punished (2 Pet. 2:4; Jude 6; Matt. 25:41).
 - F. Angels comprise an innumerable army of God.
 1. No specific number of angels is given in Scripture.
 2. Instead, they are described as an innumerable host organized much like an army (Heb. 12:22; Deut. 33:2; Psa. 68:17; Dan. 7:9-10; Jude 14; Rev. 5:11-12).
 3. The Bible teaches that there are several classes of angels.
 - a. Archangel – called “chief prince” in the OT; Michael was one of these (Dan. 10:13, 21; 12:1; 1 Thes. 4:16; Jude 9; Rev. 12:7).
 - b. Cherubim – this word is plural, singular is ‘cherub.’
 - i. Protected the way to the Tree of Life (Gen. 3:24)
 - ii. Represented on the Mercy Seat (Exo. 25:18-20; etc.)
 - iii. Represented on the curtains of the Tabernacle (Exo. 26:1; etc.)
 - iv. Responsible for transporting the Throne of God in prophetic visions and poetic language (2 Sam. 22:11; Eze. 1:4ff; 10:1).
 - c. Seraphim – this word is plural, singular is ‘seraph.’
 - i. Described as having six wings (Isa. 6:2-7)
 - ii. Possibly the same as the beasts in Revelation 4
 - iii. Servants usually heard praising the name of God
 - d. The only other named angel in Scripture is Gabriel (“man of God”) who is always described as delivering messages from God (Dan. 8:16ff; 9:21-23; Luke 1:11-31).
 - G. Angels are servants of God.
- II. Angels in the Old Testament
- A. They communicated to men on behalf of God, even delivering the law from God (Gen. 18 – 19; Acts 7:30, 35, 38, 53; Gal. 3:19; Heb. 2:2).

- B. They were sometimes a protective force for God's people (2 Kings 6:15-18).
 - C. They were sometimes a force of God's judgment (Exo. 12:23; 2 Kings 19:35).
- III. Angels in the New Testament
- A. In the life of Jesus:
 - 1. Announced His birth (Matt. 1:20; Luke 1:25; 2:13-14)
 - 2. Ministered to Him (Matt. 4:11; Luke 22:43)
 - 3. Guarded His tomb and proclaimed His resurrection (Luke 24:1-6)
 - 4. Announced His return (Acts 1:9-11)
 - B. In the early church:
 - 1. Stood by Paul (Acts 27:23)
 - 2. Freed Peter from prison (Acts 12:5-10)
 - C. In spite of such actions, the role of angels diminished in the New Testament.
 - D. They were not revealers nor preachers of the Gospel (cf. Acts 8:26; 10:1-8).
- IV. Angels Today
- A. They continue to act as ministering spirits (Heb. 1:7, 14).
 - B. However, their work is not miraculous.
 - C. They rejoice over each sinner who repents (Luke 15:7; Eph. 3:10).
 - D. They carry souls of the departed to Paradise (Luke 16:22).
 - E. They will accompany Jesus at His return and assist Him in separating the righteous from the wicked (2 Thes. 1:7-11; Matt. 13:41-42).