

Peter and His Epistles

Lesson #9: Angels

I. Introduction: “Even angels long to look into these things.” (1 Pet. 1:12)

A. The word “angel”:

1. Mentioned in 34 books of the Bible (17 times in the Old Testament and 17 times in the New Testament)
2. Is a translation of the Hebrew word “Mal’āk” and the Greek word “Angellos” and means “messenger.”
3. Other designations which are also applied to angels:
 - a. “Men”: Gen. 18:2, Acts 1:10
 - b. “Sons of God”: Job 1:6; 2:1; 38:7
 - c. “Watcher” and “Holy Ones”: Dan 4:13, 17, 23
 - d. “Rulers in the Heavens” (both good and evil) Eph. 3:10, 6:12, Col. 1:16, 2:15
 - e. “Ministering Spirits”: Heb. 1:7, 14
 - 1) Before Israel – Ex. 14:19
 - 2) For Daniel – Dan. 6:22
 - 3) Rescued Peter – Acts 12:7
 - 4) Believers – Ps. 91:11

B. The Gospel accounts clearly indicate that Christ assumed and taught the existence of angels.

Mt. 13:39, 18:10, 25:31, 41; 26:53, Mk. 12:25; Lk. 15:10; 16:22, Jn. 1:51

II. Origin of Angels

- A. Biblical evidence for their creation (Neh. 9:6, Ps. 148:1-5; Jn. 1:3; Rom. 8:38-39; Col. 1:16).
- B. Relative time of their creation
 1. If “the sons of God” in Job 38:4-7 are angels, then it is evident that the creation of Angels preceded the creation of earth
 2. The very fact that angels are divinely created beings precludes their having existed from eternity.

C. Moral condition of their creation.

All angels were originally created in righteousness (Ez. 28:14-15)

Satan and his demons fell from grace (2 Pet. 2:4, Jude 6, Isa. 14:12-14)

D. Divine purpose for their creation

1. Created for Christ (Col. 1:16)

2. They glorify God in their worship and work (Rev. 4:11)

III. Nature of Angels

A. They may temporarily adopt the appearance or form of men (Gen. 18:2, 22; 19:1)

B. They have personality:

1. Intellect (1 Pet. 1:12)

2. Will (Heb. 1:6, Jude 6)

3. Emotion (Job 38:4-7, Luke 2:13; 15:10)

C. They are designated by masculine gender in the scripture. (Dan. 9:21, 10:10-21, Matt. 28:5; Mark 16:5, Luke 24:4, 23; Acts 10:3, 30-31.)

D. They do not reproduce (Mark 12:25)

E. They do not die (Luke 20:36)

F. They are distinct from human beings (1 Cor. 6:3, Heb. 2:6-7; Heb. 12:22-23)

1. In man's present earthly existence, he is made "a little (while) lower than angels"

2. However, believers in their future glorified state will attain to certain superiorities over angels

3. Rev. 22:9 – Both believers and angels are "fellow servants to God". But believers are also joint heirs (Rom. 8:16-7) and will be joint rulers (Rev. 1:6, 5:10) and joint judges (1 Cor. 6:3).

G. They are a company – not a race (Heb. 12:22-23, Rom. 5:12-21)

H. They are not all the same (Archangel – chief angel Jude 9; Seraphim Isa. 6:1-6; Cherubim Eze. 9:3, Ps. 80:1, Ex. 25:18)

I. They have great knowledge but are not omniscient (2 Sam. 14:17, 20; Ezek. 28:12; Matt. 24:36; 1 Pet. 1:12)

J. They have great power but are not omnipotent (Ps. 103:20; 2 Thes. 1:7; 2 Pet. 2:11)

Some biblical examples

1. 2 Kings 19:35; Isa. 37:36 – Power to destroy large multitudes of humans
 2. Dan. 10:13 Rev. 12:7-9 – Power to defeat Satan and his angels
 3. Matt. 24:30-31 – Power to gather the elect
 4. Matt. 26:53, Ps. 91:11-12 – Power to miraculously deliver people according to God's will
 5. Rev. 20:1-3 – Power to bind Satan and put him in the abyss
- K. They are swift in flight – may appear suddenly but they are not omnipresent – (Dan. 9:21; Luke 2:13, Acts 12:7)
- L. They are under the control of God's sovereign will (Gen. 19:12-17; 2 Sam. 24:15-17; Rev. 7:1-3)
- M. A word about children's guardian angels (Matt. 18:10)

IV. So what? Consider Heb. 13:1-2

To brotherly love (Heb. 13:1) add "hospitality" (literally, the "love of strangers")
See 1 Tim. 5:10, Titus 1:8, 1 Pet. 4:9

Heb. 13:2 "Do not forget to entertain strangers, for by so doing some people have entertained angels without knowing it."

Discussion Questions:

1. Before today's lesson, what was your perception about angels? In light of our study, what do you now know? Does anything surprise you?
2. Do we actually have guardian angels? What would be their purpose?
3. How can being aware of angels affect your life this week?

Acknowledgement: Notes from this study have come in part from classroom notes from Theology courses taken from Professor Holoman at Talbot Seminary.

Books to read: Angels by Billy Graham, Angels: Who They Are and How They Help What the Bible Reveals by David Jeremiah