

Russell Kelfer

What Do Angels Do All Day?

(Part 1)

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Series: Angels

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(Part 1)

We know who angels are, and we know that they are not all alike. Some are guardians, some are choir directors, some are judges, and some are generals. Some, apparently, are just plain angels, but all of them have a calling to be humble messengers of the Most High God. They were created with that calling. It was all wrapped up in how they were made and why they were made.

They were created beings, created in eternity past to be “sent ones” who worship and praise the One who created them. Then, in total obedience, they go forth as missionaries to wherever and to whoever He sends them. Does that sound familiar to you? Is it possible that they are heavenly mirrors, designed before the foundation of the world, to reflect our calling and our ministry?

We learned in our last study that angels are not all alike, even as Christians are not all alike. Just as believers have different gifts and callings, so the angels are divided into at least five different categories, probably more. We learned that the *cherubim* are the guardians of the way to the throne of God. Satan was probably a cherubim before his fall. They are His secret service escorts, who not only guard the way, but make the way, as He moves as it were like the wind, Scripture says, on the wings of cherubim. In like manner, we who are God’s children are guardians of the way, as well. It is our task to be trumpeters or watchmen who let people know that though the way is narrow, and few there be that travel thereon, it is a way that is open to whosoever will.

We also learned that there is a second group called the *seraphim*. These are the heavenly worship leaders who stand above the throne of God and lead the angelic host in adoration and praise. Their job is to see that the hosts of heaven keep their focus on who God is, rather than on the blessings of the eternal home itself. That, too, is a mirror, reflecting the work of those who minister the Word of God. It is our task, not only to communicate information, but also to keep the focus of that information on who God is. In like manner, those who lead in the worship of God, are to do so with

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an eye to focusing on the One who is worthy of worship, not on the act of worship itself, or on what that worship can do for us. It is not for us, but for Him.

There is a third group, a group we know little about. Those are simply referred to in Scripture as *the living creatures*. They tend to be more like the prophets of old, who will be called again into the fray in the last days to be the ambassadors of God's judgment, even as the evangelists of our day whose job it is, though not popular, to call men and women to repentance and salvation.

The fourth group are *the archangels*. We list them in the plural sense, though only one is named in Scripture, because it is of such common conviction that Gabriel and others fall into that category. Michael, however, is the only one specifically called an archangel. He is *one of the generals of God's spiritual army*, one called to lead the troops into battle, both physically and spiritually, and to walk alongside God in the strategic planning of the kingdom's warfare. He might be likened unto those who are sent ones, missionaries who lead the armies of God into foreign fields where no one has gone before.

The fifth group are simply referred to as *angels*. They are the regular guys. Apparently there are millions of them who labor and who worship transparently in the vineyards of the King. Their tasks are usually invisible and often menial and difficult, but their goal is not to be recognized, but rather to call attention to the spiritual work of the King of kings. The less they are noticed, the more joy they have, for their joy comes when men and women recognize who God is, not who they are. They are symbolic of God's desire for us, the "regular" believers, who simply are called to adore Him and serve Him in such a transparent way that only Jesus is seen, and only Jesus is to be praised.

The Hebrew word translated "angel" (mal'ak) means "to dispatch as a deputy, a messenger, an ambassador". The Greek word (aggelos) means "to bring tidings; a messenger". So an angel is a messenger of the good news, dispatched or sent by God as an ambassador to another kingdom. They are carefully created creatures designed in eternity past to reflect the likeness of God to man and to meet the needs of man on earth, even as believers would one day in Christ be called to do. We must keep that reality in mind; otherwise, we will see them in some kind of a distant, spiritualized manner, and miss the great application that comes

when we make the “spiritual switch”.

We studied in our last lesson who they are and what they look like and what sets one group apart from the others. Now, let’s look at just what these winged wonders do all day. We looked at their fallen counterparts for several weeks and saw what they do: they harass us, tempt us, attack us, and, in general, try to make our lives miserable. Welcome to the other side of the valley, Beloved. Now, let’s look at these wonderful spirit beings whose duties include making our lives fruitful, joyful, and productive. Let’s look at the heavenly host and ask, “*Just what do the good angels do all day?*”

We will take it in three phases. We will first ask ourselves what role angels played in the Old Testament, then what the angelic host did in the life of Christ, and finally, what they are doing in this age and will do at the end of this age. It will, I trust, be a journey worth taking, for these special called ones have played a major role in the work of God’s kingdom since their creation, and that role will only intensify as the day of the Lord’s return draws near.

Even more important, as we see the kinds of things God has had them doing, we will begin to see the place they play as examples to us of how men and women, totally controlled by God, live and behave. So, climb aboard the “angel express” with us, and let’s depart for “Heavenly Host Boulevard”. Let’s call on God, through His Word, to show us just what these angels do all day.

GOD’S ANGELS IN OLD TESTAMENT TIMES

Early in Genesis, we begin reading about the character and work of angels. Some are references to the “Angel of the Lord”, who is the Lord Jesus, Himself. Others are simply references to angels in general. We will, in our final lesson on what angels do, take a look at the “Angel of the Lord” and why God appeared as He did before He came to earth to die for our sins. For the sake of walking through what angels do, however, we will first examine the angelic calling by looking at both what angels do and what the Angel of the Lord did, because the purposes and the work of both blend together when you make the “spiritual switch”.

God’s Angelic Road Signs

The first appearance of angelic significance takes place in Genesis, chapter 16. God’s man and God’s woman had exhibited a lack of faith. They had determined that God might have meant

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what He said, but He needed a little help. He had promised them a son, and years had gone by. He must have not made Himself clear, they thought. So Sarai said to Abram,

...Behold now, the LORD hath restrained me from bearing; I pray thee, go in unto my maid; it may be that I may obtain children by her. And Abram hearkened to the voice of Sarai.

(Genesis 16:2)

A two-fold sin: Sarai didn't believe God. Abram listened to Sarai. Sounds a little like an episode a few generations before in a garden, doesn't it? At any rate, Abram went in to Hagar, Sarai's maid, and when she conceived, Sarai was filled with hatred. Abram said, "Do what you want to her, it's your choice." (Another bad move.) Sarai did, and Hagar fled. Scene two: Hagar, now expecting a child, has run away and is sitting by a fountain of water in the wilderness. She is all alone. Or is she?

And the angel of the LORD found her by a fountain of water in the wilderness, by the fountain in the way to Shur.

And the angel of the LORD said unto her, Return to thy mistress, and submit thyself under her hands.

And the angel of the LORD said unto her, I will multiply thy seed exceedingly, that it shall not be numbered for multitude.

And the angel of the LORD said unto her, Behold, thou *art* with child, and shalt bear a son, and shalt call his name Ishmael; because the LORD hath heard thy affliction.

(Genesis 16:7,9-11)

Notice how God used His Son, disguised as an angel, to handle this situation:

1- He found her.

She thought she was all alone. Psalm 139 reminds us though:

Whither shall I go from thy spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence?

If I ascend up into heaven, thou *art* there: if I make my bed in hell, behold, thou *art there* .

If I take the wings of the morning, *and* dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea;

Even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me.

(Psalm 139:7-10)

Mark that down. You are never alone. An omnipresent God will never leave you or forsake you. The angels were sent to remind us

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of that. They are His messengers of love, sent to remind us of His nature. He is everywhere, because He is God. You may feel very much alone right now. You may have convinced yourself that God is in the heavens, but that doesn't do you much good because you are down here. Bad conclusion. You are now the temple of the Holy Spirit, and God dwells within you. Where you go, He goes. That ought to make a decided difference in where we go, but somehow we seem to overlook it. The Angel of the Lord found her. She was never lost. She just thought she was.

2- He said to her, "Return".

The greatest single danger many of us face when decision-making time comes around is the danger of running from our circumstances or from people, thinking we are doing God a favor, when all we are doing is making God hit a moving target. The Angel of the Lord said to Hagar, "Go back home and face the music. I'll take care of you and the child; you go home and give me a chance to show Myself strong on your behalf. Not only will I look after you, this whole thing is going to work out for My glory." So Hagar went back home, and indeed, did face the music. The truth is: when God asks us to face the music, there is a hidden harmony in the score that sweeps into the fibers of our souls and literally changes who we are. Angels are God's agents to keep us on track. They will often throw up signal lights on the highway of life that say: "You turn: Go back where you were...to that job, to that family, to that husband. God will be your Rock, your Fortress, and your Deliverer...if you return."

3- Finally, the angel said, "The Lord hath heard (about) or seen your affliction."

He said, in other words, "God's not in the dark about what's happening. That's why He sent an angel to confront you. He loves you too much to see you flee the very oven He has heated to soften your spirit just enough to reshape you into His likeness."

So incident number one involving angels is a portrait of how God uses these winged messengers to intercept us when we are running in the wrong direction. How He uses them today, we do not know for sure. But many times we can recall how we were about to make a major decision that would have had serious repercussions on our family or our testimony and, suddenly, out of nowhere, a phone call or a letter or a stranger came into our lives, and that person's presence seemed to redirect our course.

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Then it seems that person disappeared as fast they came. Were they Spirit-sent angels? There's a good chance they were. One of the angelic job descriptions seems to be that of putting up road signs for Christians on the highway out of town that say, "Whoa, Believer...return."

God's Angelic Delivery Men

The next incident in Scripture where angels appeared is found in Genesis, chapter 19.

And there came two angels to Sodom at even; and Lot sat in the gate of Sodom: and Lot seeing *them* rose up to meet them; and he bowed himself with his face toward the ground;
(Genesis 19:1)

You possibly remember this very sad story. It demonstrates both the depth that encircles a man of God who has become apostate without his realizing how far society has gone, and it demonstrates a society in which homosexuality is allowed to be considered a normal lifestyle. At any rate, once the gravity of the degradation became apparent, the angels had no choice but to become God's delivery men, sent to capture God's man up out of the midst of the mire of sin and place him back in the safety of God's arms.

And the men said unto Lot, Hast thou here any besides? son in law, and thy sons, and thy daughters, and whatsoever thou hast in the city, bring them out of this place:

For we will destroy this place, because the cry of them is waxen great before the face of the LORD; and the LORD hath sent us to destroy it.

And Lot went out, and spake unto his sons in law, which married his daughters, and said, Up, get you out of this place; for the LORD will destroy this city. But he seemed as one that mocked unto his sons in law.

And when the morning arose, then the angels hastened Lot, saying, Arise, take thy wife, and thy two daughters, which are here; lest thou be consumed in the iniquity of the city.

And while he lingered, the men laid hold upon his hand, and upon the hand of his wife, and upon the hand of his two daughters; the LORD being merciful unto him: and they brought him forth, and set him without the city.

(Genesis 19:12-16)

This passage for certain speaks of the role the angelic host will play in the rapture of the church, just before the devastation of

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the tribulation reaches down and precedes the very fires that will ultimately destroy planet earth. God's angelic host will appear, the voice of the archangel will be heard along with the trumpet of God, and the church will be "caught up" or "lifted out" of the world into the safety of the arms of Jesus, just in the nick of time.

It also demonstrates a picture of how the angelic host responds to the Holy Spirit's call when a believer is in trouble and needs help and may not even realize how bad the situation is. You may have been there. You were slipping deeply into the sin that surrounded you or were caught up in a seemingly uncontrollable situation in which the consequences would be devastating both to you and to the kingdom.

Suddenly, out of nowhere (or so it seemed), God apparently created a scenario in which you were all but picked up and placed on a Rock, out of the reach of the enemy for a season. You couldn't even explain it, except that later you often found *that someone was praying for you at that very moment*. You may not have seen it, and probably never thought about it, but there is a good chance that God sent an angel to deliver you, to lift you out of the fire just before the heat passed the level your thermostat could handle.

Memorize Psalm 34:7. It will stand you in good stead. It says:

The angel of the LORD encampeth round about them that
fear him, and delivereth them. (Psalm 34:7)

God often sends angels to deliver us out of the fire into His arms. That's one of the things angels do all day.

God's Angelic Marriage Service

Our next angelic visitor to planet earth came on a mission of love, to be sure. The story is found in Genesis 24:

And Abraham was old, *and* well stricken in age: and the LORD had blessed Abraham in all things.

And Abraham said unto his eldest servant of his house, that ruled over all that he had, Put, I pray thee, thy hand under my thigh:

And I will make thee swear by the LORD, the God of heaven, and the God of the earth, that thou shalt not take a wife unto my son of the daughters of the Canaanites, among whom I dwell:

But thou shalt go unto my country, and to my kindred, and take a wife unto my son Isaac.

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And the servant said unto him, Peradventure the woman will not be willing to follow me unto this land: must I needs bring thy son again unto the land from whence thou camest?

And Abraham said unto him, Beware thou that thou bring not my son thither again.

The LORD God of heaven, which took me from my father's house, and from the land of my kindred, and which spake unto me, and that sware unto me, saying, Unto thy seed will I give this land; he shall send his angel before thee, and thou shalt take a wife unto my son from thence.

And if the woman will not be willing to follow thee, then thou shalt be clear from this my oath: only bring not my son thither again.

And the servant put his hand under the thigh of Abraham his master, and sware to him concerning that matter.

And the servant took ten camels of the camels of his master, and departed; for all the goods of his master *were* in his hand: and he arose, and went to Mesopotamia, unto the city of Nahor.

And he made his camels to kneel down without the city by a well of water at the time of the evening, *even* the time that women go out to draw *water*.

And he said, O LORD God of my master Abraham, I pray thee, send me good speed this day, and shew kindness unto my master Abraham.

Behold, I stand *here* by the well of water; and the daughters of the men of the city come out to draw water:

And let it come to pass, that the damsel to whom I shall say, Let down thy pitcher, I pray thee, that I may drink; and she shall say, Drink, and I will give thy camels drink also: *let the same be she that* thou hast appointed for thy servant Isaac; and thereby shall I know that thou hast shewed kindness unto my master.

And it came to pass, before he had done speaking, that, behold, Rebekah came out, who was born to Bethuel, son of Milcah, the wife of Nahor, Abraham's brother, with her pitcher upon her shoulder.

And the damsel *was* very fair to look upon, a virgin, neither had any man known her: and she went down to the well, and filled her pitcher, and came up.

And the servant ran to meet her, and said, Let me, I pray thee, drink a little water of thy pitcher. (Genesis 24:1-17)

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And you know *the rest of the story*. Now, singles, pay attention. God has a very special concern about *whom* you marry and *if* you are to marry and *when* you are to marry. This son was the promised seed. He was the long-awaited one. He is the one Abraham had to offer to slay in order to demonstrate his great faith in God.

Now as Abraham saw the end of his journey ahead, he longed for his son to have a wife, but not just any wife. He wanted Isaac to have a wife who was handpicked by God just for him. He wanted a wife created for Isaac just as surely as Eve was created for Adam, a helpmate chosen by God in eternity past to fully complement and perfectly complete His man. And so he asked God. There is the key. Then, having asked, he acted in faith. He sent his servant out to find that woman, and Scripture says that God sent an angel before him to make the way.

When he arrived, God's woman was waiting. Fancy that. He prayed believing and went expecting. Now don't draw the conclusion from this that if you aren't married, you don't have faith. It takes a lot more faith in some cases to trust God for the grace of singleness than it does for a husband or wife. Scripture teaches that there is a special grace given to special people that sets them apart to have only God as their partner. There is also a special grace for widows and widowers that does the same. God actually becomes a husband to the widow; a father to the fatherless.

But Abraham had a promise. His seed was to be the seed of Messiah, and through Him all the nations of the world would be blessed. It was, therefore, God's will for Isaac to have a wife, *and not just any wife*. And so, Abraham, having learned the hard way to wait, waited until life was ebbing away, and then petitioned God for whoever this special woman was, who was to carry on the lineage of the King. Where was his confidence?

The LORD God of heaven, which took me from my Father's house, ...and that sware unto me, saying, Unto thy seed will I give this land; He shall send His angel before thee, and thou shalt take a wife unto my son from thence.

(Genesis 24:7)

Abe had a promise from God and, based on that promise, he expected an angel of God to be dispatched from heaven to see that this matchmaking program was of God, and not of man.

The key to this angelic visit, I believe, is that God is vitally concerned with relationships, particularly the marriage relationship.

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He doesn't take them lightly. Who our children cultivate for close friendships is of vital interest to God. Who they date is critical. Who they marry will affect every single area of their life. And God doesn't just want them to marry *any believer*. God wants them to marry the believer He chose in eternity past to be the other half of who they are. If you are divorced or are in a troubled marriage, this is not a condemnation of you. God will give you extra grace and use that grace to grow you into His likeness.

The key is that both we and our children ought to pray daily for God's control of our relationships: who mentors us, who we spend time with, who we share our hearts with. Scripture teaches we will become like them, and if they are not like God, we're headed for danger. We reach out to everyone, but we build close fellowship with those God has designed for us. And God cares. He cares enough, when needed, to send His angels ahead of you to bring into your life or into your children's lives a particular person to help complete your life.

It is no coincidence that God so clearly mentioned that the girl was a virgin, that she had not known a man. Somehow, today's youth have forgotten that this is a godly requirement for holiness, and if we are to expect God to provide His mate for us, He has a right to expect us to remain pure so that we might be qualified as a gift from the Holy One. This applies as much to young men as it does to young women. God's whole picture book of marriage is one that demands purity; it demands that a man or woman enter into that relationship as holy as the body of Christ will be at the marriage supper of the Lamb, having been washed in the blood of Christ and made totally as pure as a virgin, whole and holy.

Pray for your children that God will send His angel and bring into their lives *the exact person He designed in eternity past for them*. Then, open your eyes and expect Him to do so. I believe He still delights to use His angelic messenger service to send brides-to-be or husbands-to-be in answer to prayer. So, what do angels do all day? Some of them are heavenly escort services, bringing into your life and mine, *the exact people God wants to use to impact us and be impacted by us. Expect it. You won't be disappointed.*

God's Angelic Army

In Exodus 23, we read these words:

Behold, I send an Angel before thee, to keep thee in the way,

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and to bring thee into the place which I have prepared.

Beware of him, and obey his voice, provoke him not; for he will not pardon your transgressions: for my name *is* in him.

But if thou shalt indeed obey his voice, and do all that I speak; then I will be an enemy unto thine enemies, and an adversary unto thine adversaries.

For mine Angel shall go before thee, and bring thee in unto the Amorites, and the Hittites, and the Perizzites, and the Canaanites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites: and I will cut them off.

Thou shalt not bow down to their gods, nor serve them, nor do after their works: but thou shalt utterly overthrow them, and quite break down their images. (Exodus 23:20-24)

The children of Israel were receiving their marching orders. Moses was taking God's Word and breaking it down into practical, working areas of application. He was giving them laws and sharing the principles from which those laws came. In the process, if you read carefully, you will see that *every absolute came from some aspect of the nature of God*. Now God was warning His people that warfare would be a natural part of His supernatural plan. To possess the land, they would encounter the enemy. Only by doing so would they see and experience the power of God. For God to remove the enemy with a wave of the hand would be fun, but it wouldn't teach them anything.

So God told them that the Amorites and the Hittites, and Perizzites, and Canaanites, and the Hivites and the Jebusites (and maybe even the parasites) would bring pressure to bear upon them not to possess what was rightfully theirs. In other words, warfare was inevitable. The key to victory, however, was not in how strong *they* were; God was able to defeat their enemies. The key was twofold: their obedience to the Commander-in-Chief, and their level of involvement with the enemy. If they were careful in those two areas, victory would always be theirs.

God was saying that He had an angelic S.W.A.T. team that He would send in when the warfare got heavy, and they would confuse or defeat the enemy. All the Israelites would have to do was two things. They would have to obey the commandments they knew to obey, and under no conditions give the enemy a stronghold by building relationships with them or their gods. Instead, He was saying, the moment they invite you to join with them, you overthrow them and tear down their idols. You cannot serve God and Satan

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at the same time, and you cannot allow them to coexist as though they were not spiritually harmful. The minute you do, the angels depart, and you are left to fight the enemy in your strength, rather than God's. That's known as spiritual suicide.

Watch the history of Israel's battles. God meant what He said. Whenever His people were obedient to the known laws of God, and whenever they refused to stand for the idolatry of the enemy's troops, God moved in and fought for them. However, whenever they chose to compromise with God's Word or get entangled with the enemy, or leave their idols in the land, as though there wasn't a war going on, God stepped back and let little Israel do its own thing. Its own thing was to get crunched and taken into captivity.

In the spirit realm, today, the same truths apply. The angelic host, as we have studied in previous lessons, are poised to take their place on the battlefield of the heavenlies whenever Satan begins to make inroads into the lives of God's children. As long as we treat His Word as what it is, the Word of God, and as long as we stay as far as we can from anything that entangles us with the evil spirit world, God will send in the angels, Beloved, and they will fight for us, even as Michael fought over the body of Moses in the book of Jude.

They are assigned to protect us and deliver us and warn us when the fires of hell begin to burn our way. But, Beloved, if we choose to invite Satan into the living rooms of our hearts, the angels will not come. They will watch for unexpected intrusions and rush to your side. They are not, however, assigned the job of bailing you out of self-inflicted contests with the enemy. You ask Satan for a fight, and the angels will let you fight. You cry out to God in repentance and humility, and God will fight for you. It's that simple. It's one of the things that angels do all day!

So we know at least four things that the angels do all day. There are four ways they come to our rescue.

1- They erect angelic road signs along the highway of life that say: "You turn: danger ahead. Return and submit to God's plan."

They are a heavenly road crew, and they watch the freeways of life for saints who are running the wrong way because the traffic is lighter in that direction. They will find you, urge you to return, and demonstrate God's love to you, just as they did to Hagar in Genesis 16. That's what angels do all day.

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2- They offer a helicopter service that swoops down and delivers us from the near catastrophes that besiege us when we least expect it.

You can see the pattern in Genesis 19, where they delivered Lot and his foot-dragging family from Sodom. They had lived there so long, they no longer saw sin for what it was. They had anesthetized themselves by tiny injections of compromise until they no longer felt the effects of its sting. We will see God's grace again when the heavenly host calls to us out of heaven and lifts us into His arms at the rapture of the church. Delivering believers: it's something angels do all day.

3- They guard our relationships when we ask God to do so, and send us the right kind of mentors, the right kind of friendships, and the specific husband or wife God has prepared for us in eternity past.

Oh, that our young people would keep themselves pure and keep themselves open to God's plan, rather than trying to manipulate His will on their own. What a blessing they are missing. Read Genesis 24 again and see what these angels are willing to do when we do it God's way. That's what angels do all day.

4- They have an elite team of warriors who delight to swoop in when the enemy comes unexpectedly, and they fight for us, even as they promised Israel in Exodus 23.

They can fight the demonic wrecking crew; we can't. So God releases them on secret missions in our lives; and when it's over, we don't even realize what's happened. What's happened is that God has fought for us. He and His angels have moved in silently and run the enemy out of town. That's another thing angels do all day.

But please don't be confused. They do not do the work of the Holy Spirit. They are assigned tasks by God, but they are not a part of the Godhead. It is the Holy Spirit who indwells you, not angels. It is the Holy Spirit who convicts you of sin, not angels. It is the Holy Spirit who takes the Word of God and applies it to your heart, not angels. The Holy Spirit is the executive director of God's Kingdom. He it is who works in you so God can work through you. He changes your character. Angels can't do that. He reveals the nature of God in your heart. Angels can't do that. He takes every word from Scripture and uses it to exalt the name of Christ. Angels can't do that.

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Angels can do a lot of things. We will look at more of them in the lessons to come. They can warn you, deliver you, bring people to you, and fight for you. And they will. You may never know they've done it. That's okay. *Like the Holy Spirit, they do not call attention to themselves.* Their goal is to be silent ambassadors of God, secretly infiltrating the devil's army and powerfully upsetting the devil's plans.

Let's be careful, though. Angels are invisible for a reason. We are not supposed to deify them or even applaud them, and certainly never worship them (Colossians 2:18). We learn about them for only one reason: to bring more glory to God. By learning the lengths He has gone to in order to protect us and provide for us, we ought to fall on our knees in utter adoration and praise for who He is.

But remember, Beloved, should God so choose, He could do anything that angels do without so much as one single winged warrior. He could speak and turn you around on that freeway of escape so fast your head would spin. He could deliver you from the vilest of temptations without so much as a chorus of praise from a cherubim, seraphim, or any other kind of angel. He could send you a wife or husband gift wrapped with a hand-signed card from Jehovah God, if He chose. And He could defeat the enemy in the midst of spiritual warfare the same way He's going to defeat them at Armageddon: with one Word from His Awesome Voice.

No, God doesn't need the angels. Then why did He create them? I believe He created them to demonstrate what the life of a believer is supposed to be all about. It is to be all about obedience. This Psalm says it all:

Bless the LORD, ye his angels, that excel in strength, that do his commandments, hearkening unto the voice of his word.

(Psalm 103:20)

The angels are a picture book, drawn in heaven, projected in God's Word into our hearts of the relationship you and I were meant to have with Him. It was to be one of obedience and faith. We were given a free will, but that free will was to give us the freedom to do God's will. Satan intervened, and man has decided that he can be "like God", knowing good and evil, and choosing what good is, based on what seems right to him or her.

Dear God, forgive us. We were given a free will so we would not be puppets, but servants by choice, of the God who made us. We were designed in eternity past to do His bidding. That means

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total obedience even in the smallest detail of life. Satan has sold us the same lies he sold Eve in the garden.

Satan has undermined the authority of the Word of God. Today, the church is redefining Scripture based on cultural and generational interpretation. It is preaching a gospel that is supposed to be “relevant” according to the mores of the society in which we live. Moral purity is no longer an absolute because so many in the church today have fallen prey to compromise. Homosexuality is an “alternate lifestyle” instead of a sin. Lying and stealing are “relative” terms, and God is expected to look the other way.

Even such simple things as baptism and the Lord’s Supper are considered optional behavioral patterns for believers to consider if they feel comfortable with them, rather than clear commandments from the Word of God. Such simple instructions as “forsake not the assembling of yourselves together” have become godly suggestions rather than heaven-sent orders from a Holy God. So we see people feel really good about themselves if they so much as make it to church two out of four Sundays. “God understands,” they muse, “I’m free in Christ.” Yes, Beloved, you are free in Christ. You are free to obey His Word implicitly, without compromise, and without redefining truth to suit either the culture you live in or the interpretations you have created in your own mind. You are free, Beloved, to obey. And it’s about time we repented, asked God to forgive us, and began to take obedience seriously again. After all, *it is what angels do all day.*

FREE TO OBEY

Oh, that we in this modern age
Who live in this evil day,
Would once again like the angels,
Learn what it means to obey.

When our God gives a simple command
Such as, "Child, thou shalt not lie".
He doesn't mean, "Dear, if you can,
I only want you to try."

He means, never, ever in any way,
As an adult or as a youth,
Do you have the freedom
To depart one inch from the truth.

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You were created and so was I
In the image of our Lord,
And the image obeys, always obeys
And we're to obey Your word.

Oh, that we afresh could learn
Yes, we're free that's true,
We're free to obey His every word
Just like the angels do.

Let's pray.

Our Father and our God,

Thank You for painting on the canvas of Scripture a picture of these obedient servants who worship at Your throne and who make themselves available to do Your bidding transparently.

May we in the days to come recognize the portrait. May we recognize that the indwelling Holy Spirit can allow us the same privilege of being obedient slaves of the most High God. May we glory in doing the most menial, transparent things transparently, quietly, in order to bring glory to our Lord.

Teach us, Father, in the days to come, what it means to simply obey the way the angels do all day.

In Jesus' name we pray,

Amen.

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For Focus and Application

1- Read Genesis 18:1-11. Why was Hagar running? Would you have run under those conditions? Why didn't God just let her go? How did the Angel of the Lord know she was with child? Why does God so often tell us to "return" to the very circumstances we fled? Why are we so hesitant to do so?

2- Does Psalm 139:7-10 encourage you? Does it cause you to be more sensitive to your sin? Or both? Why is verse 10 so important to the passage?

3- Read Genesis 19:1-16. Does this help you see how society can actually become so insensitive to sin that a believer could live in a place like Sodom and not grasp the magnitude of it? What does the son-in-laws' response tell you about their spiritual understanding? How does the work of the angels in that passage encourage you? What picture does it paint for you of the rapture of the church?

4- Read the story of Abraham finding a bride for Isaac in Genesis 24:1-17. Why would God send an angel before the servant to find a bride? What does it say about God's concern for right marriages? How old do you think Isaac was by now? How do you feel about his father initiating finding a bride? What picture does this paint about God's calling out a bride for His Son? Why do you think God made a point about the moral purity of the woman? How important do you think that is to God?

5- What was God saying in Exodus, chapter 23, about the work of the angelic host in warfare? What two prerequisites did God make in order for the war to be won? Why do you think God used angels as soldiers?

6- Using these four illustrations as a backdrop, what incidents in your life have caused you to wonder if perhaps an angel had not intervened for you? Why doesn't God let us see them?

7- Memorize Psalm 103:20 this week. It tells us the most important fact we know about angels. What is it? Make a list of the three absolutes you think are being violated in our society today. What lies has Satan told to bring this to pass? How have those lies affected your life personally? What are you going to do about it?

dtm DISCIPLESHIP TAPE MINISTRIES, INC.

10602 Mossbank, San Antonio, TX 78230-3422
210-226-0000 or 1-800-375-7778
www.dtm.org • dtm@dtm.org • © Russell Kelfer

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