

Introduction:

1. Angels! We read about them in the Bible. But who and what are they? What do they do?
  - a. The number of questions that might be asked about angels is almost endless.
  - b. Some of the questions about angels are mere curiosity questions. But, some may be critical.
2. How much do you know about angels? The subject is large and expansive as angels are found throughout the Bible; they are seen as early as Genesis 16:7 and as late as Revelation 22:16.
  - a. Being that the topic is so large, in a limited forum we can't answer all questions about angels.
  - b. But we can answer those questions that most people have—what most people want to know.

The Lesson:**I. What are angels?**

- A. Don't assume that everyone knows the answer to this question. Some people think angels are mythical creatures like unicorns or fairies. They are real, but what is their nature?
  1. They are created beings, Psalms 148:2, 5; Colossians 1:16.
    - a. Angels are not divine; only deity is self-existent.
    - b. Being that they are created, they are inferior to Jesus, Hebrews 1:4-6.
  2. They are powerful beings, Psalms 103:20; 2 Peter 2:11; 2 Thessalonians 1:7.
    - a. Even though they are powerful, they have limitations. They are limited in knowledge, Matthew 24:36. They do not know the time of the Lord's second coming. Neither did they know the plan of God for our salvation until it was revealed, 1 Peter 1:12.
    - b. They are also limited with respect to procreation. They do not marry nor have children, Luke 20:34-36. This text also shows that they are not subject to mortality. They do not get old and die!
  3. They are spirit beings, Hebrews 1:13-14.
    - a. Their nature is perfectly suited to heaven; perhaps that is why they are called "heavenly," Luke 2:13. As such, they have no earthly substance as we do.
    - b. Yet, they often appear as men, Genesis 19:1, 5 (etc.). The text calls them "angels." Yet the men of the city called them men, because they appeared as men.
    - c. At the tomb of Jesus, following the Lord's resurrection, both Matthew and John speak of angels at the tomb who announced the resurrection to Mary Magdalene, Matthew 28:1-2; John 20:11-12. Yet, both Mark and Luke call these heavenly messengers "men," Mark 16:5; Luke 24:4. They are called "men," not because they are men, but because they appeared as men.
- B. These facts show us a great deal about the nature of angels, but there are more questions...

**II. What purposes do angels serve?**

- A. They serve many specific purposes, but their work can be summarized in one statement: they carry out God's will. They do that because they are special servants to God, Psalms 103:20.
  1. They were sometimes used by God to make announcements or give instructions to men.
    - a. God sent angels to announce the birth of Jesus, Luke 1:26-27; 2:8-13.
    - b. God sent an angel to Cornelius to tell him to send for the Apostle Peter, Acts 10:1-3.
  2. On rare occasions angels were used by God to reveal His will to man.
    - a. Angels revealed God's will at Sinai, Galatians 3:19 (Hebrews 2:2; Acts 7:53).
    - b. An angel revealed much of what is found in the book of Zechariah, Zechariah 1:9.
  3. On numerous occasions God has used angels to deliver His people.
    - a. God sent an angel to protect Daniel while in the lion's den, Daniel 6:22.
    - b. God sent an angel to free the Apostle Peter from prison, Acts 12:5-9.
  4. Angels are sometimes represented as bringing judgments on men and nations.
    - a. God sent plagues on Egypt by the hands of angels of destruction, Psalms 78:43, 49.
    - b. God defeated the Assyrian army by the hand of an angel, Isaiah 37:36.
- B. This is only a sampling of things that angels do in God's service. There are many, many more passages that could be offered. Yet, there is one more thing that must be addressed in connection with this point: Angels are free to disobey God if they so choose, 2 Peter 2:4; Jude 6. Just as with mankind, God has given to angels the power of free will.

### III. What do angels do for us?

- A. The number one question people have about angels is about how they relate to Christians. Do they do anything for us? Can we see angels? Do they help us in any way? Do we have guardian angels?
1. There are some questions that will remain unanswered. Remember Deuteronomy 29:29. God has not revealed everything that we might want to know about angels.
  2. But He has revealed enough that we can be sure that they are active and that they act in our best interests.
- B. Here are some things that we do know for certain about angels.
1. They serve God on our behalf, Hebrews 1:13-14.
    - a. Exactly what they may do may never be known to us on this side of eternity. They may do things for us of which we are completely unaware.
    - b. This text says they are “sent forth.” This indicates that they have some mission on earth. The precise elements and activities of that mission are not given. But they do minister for those who will inherit salvation. To “minister” is to serve. They serve God for our benefit.
    - c. Matthew 18:10 seems to further confirm this. Disciples have angels in the presence of God who are concerned about them. Some have suggested from this text that Christians have guardian angels. I don’t know how to prove that.
    - d. Have we ever seen such special servants of God? If we have, we wouldn’t know it, Hebrews 13:1-2. Perhaps angels are used by God in carrying out His providential activities. Remember that God is still in charge of this world. He can send His servants to accomplish whatever He will.
    - e. Exactly what angels might do to minister for us will remain in the realm of the unknown (Deuteronomy 29:29), but we can be certain that...
  2. They have an interest in our salvation, 1 Peter 1:10-12. Just as the prophets of old desired to know the plan of God for our redemption, so did the angels.
    - a. The angels will be present at our judgment—either to hear that Jesus confesses that we belong to Him—or that we do not belong to Him, Luke 12:8-9. I am convinced from this that the angels want us to be saved. They anxiously watch us and want us to join them in heaven.
    - b. They rejoice when even just one sinner comes to repentance, Luke 15:8-10. If we had as much interest in being saved as the angels do in seeing us saved, then every one of us would wind up in heaven. They seem to be more concerned about us being in heaven than we are!
  3. They liberate us from the earth.
    - a. First, note that the angels will come with Jesus at the end of the world—a time when a great separation takes place, Matthew 25:31-32.
    - b. Jesus will use the angels to separate the people of God from the wicked of this world, Matthew 13:36-43. Jesus says that the angels are the reapers; they are those who separate the good seed from the tares. Thus our liberation from this earth will be accomplished by the angels. That is why numerous passages about the second coming mention the presence of angels, 2 Thessalonians 1:7-9; 1 Thessalonians 4:16.
    - c. Furthermore, as the righteous die they are liberated from this earth by angels, Luke 16:22. When you die, your soul will leave your body. What happens to it, and where does it go, and how does it get there? Angels have the answer to those questions. It is ushered into Abraham’s bosom—paradise—by the angels of God. That’s why we need have no fear of death. Don’t think, “OK, now that I have died, what do I do next?” Don’t worry about it. God will see to it that angels take care of you.
- C. While there may be many more questions that we have about angels—some that we cannot fully answer—rest assured, that they do whatever God wants and needs them to do.

#### Conclusion:

1. Someone might worry that we still don’t know exactly how angels work. That’s God’s business, not ours. If it was important for us to know exactly how and what they do, God would have told us. Rest assured that all things in God’s plan are for our benefit, 1 Corinthians 3:21-23.
2. What is important for us is that we obey God. That is what makes the angels rejoice, Luke 15:10.