

## The Business of Angels

Harmony M.B.C., Jan. 27, 2013 (Morning)

Robert P. Myers

**Hebrews 1:7** And of the angels he saith, Who maketh his angels spirits, and his ministers a flame of fire.

The business of angels among men has always been an interesting subject to most people. A lot of speculation and superstition about what angels are doing down here has been amassed over the years and as is usual for humans, the theories and fantasies about them seems to be that which has sticks in their minds. We want to look at scriptural facts about the business of angels today and see what lessons the Lord has to teach us about them. I will try to limit myself to only angel activity as it relates to the things of earth, although some of that activity actually takes place in heaven. So, let's look into God's word for some facts about angels in the hope that thinking on these things will draw us closer to the Master of angels, the Lord Jesus Christ.

### I. Different ways of communicating with or revealing themselves to men

- By dream - Jacob, running from Esau on his way to Haran: **Gen. 28:12** And he dreamed, and behold a ladder set up on the earth, and the top of it reached to heaven: and **behold the angels of God ascending and descending on it.**
  - ▶ When it was time for Jacob to go back to his country after being in Haran for years (he spoke of his vision to his wives) - **Gen. 31:11** And the **angel of God spake unto me in a dream,** saying, Jacob: And I said, Here *am* I.
  - ▶ When Joseph was told about the conception of Jesus Christ: **Mat. 1:20** But while he thought on these things (the fact that Mary was expecting and that he and her were engaged), behold, **the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a dream,** saying, Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife: for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost.
  - ▶ When Joseph and Mary were told to flee into Egypt with young Jesus, and when they were told to come back after Herod's death - **Mat. 2:13** And when they were departed, **behold, the angel of the Lord appeareth to Joseph in a dream,** - **Mat. 2:19** But when Herod was dead, behold, an **angel of the Lord appeareth in a dream** to Joseph in Egypt,
- In a vision - **Acts 10:3** He (Cornelius) saw in a vision evidently about the ninth hour of the day **an angel of God coming in to him,** and saying unto him, Cornelius.
- As fire - **Exo. 3:2** And the angel of the LORD appeared unto him (Moses) **in a flame of fire** out of the midst of a bush: and he looked, and, behold, the bush burned with fire, and the bush *was* not consumed.
  - ▶ (That Moses did not see an actual angel is made certain by the fact that he was drawn to the bush by the fire that didn't consume the bush)
  - ▶ **2Kings 6:17** 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.

- As a voice out of heaven -
  - ▶ **Gen. 21:17** And God heard the voice of the lad; and the **angel of God called to Hagar out of heaven**, and said unto her, What aileth thee, Hagar? fear not; for God hath heard the voice of the lad where he *is*.
  - ▶ Calling to Abraham at the incident with Isaac on Mount Horeb - **Gen. 22:11** And the **angel of the LORD called unto him out of heaven**, and said, Abraham, Abraham: and he said, Here *am* I.
  - ▶ **Gen. 22:15** And the angel of the LORD called unto Abraham **out of heaven** the second time,
- Visibly as looking like men -
  - ▶ **Gen. 19:1** 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;
  - ▶ Jacob at Bethel - **Gen 32:24** And Jacob was left alone; and there **wrestled a man with him** until the breaking of the day.
    - ▶ (Hosea speaks of Jacob's encounter and confirms that it was an angel) - **Hos 12:4** Yea, **he had power over the angel**, and prevailed: he wept, and made supplication unto him: he found him *in* Bethel, and there he spake with us;
    - ▶ The account of Gideon (**Judges 6:11-22**) - **Jdg. 6:11** And **there came an angel** of the LORD, and sat under an oak which *was* in Ophrah, that *pertained* unto Joash the Abiezrite: and his son Gideon threshed wheat by the winepress, to hide *it* from the Midianites.
      - Gideon makes this statement after he learned it was an angel - **Jdg. 6:22** And when Gideon **perceived that he was an angel** of the LORD, Gideon said, Alas, O Lord GOD! for because I have seen an angel of the LORD face to face.
      - The account of Manoah and Hannah and God announcing the coming birth of Samuel (**Jdg. 13:2-21** - They only knew it was an angel after he went up in the flames of the offering fire and did not reappear)
      - **Jdg. 13:20** For it came to pass, when the flame went up toward heaven from off the altar, that **the angel of the LORD ascended in the flame** of the altar. And Manoah and his wife looked on *it*, and fell on their faces to the ground.
      - **Jdg. 13:21** But the **angel of the LORD did no more appear** to Manoah and to his wife. Then Manoah knew that he *was* an angel of the LORD.
- Appearing as men, angels may come to us, and pass on without being identified; or they may, at least, not be recognized as angels until after we have entertained them - **Heb. 13:2** Be not forgetful to entertain strangers: for thereby some have **entertained angels unawares**.

## II. Angels were instrumentally responsible for setting in order the law at Sinai

- First, we need to place a multitude of angels at the event at Sinai: **Psalms 68:17** The chariots of God *are* twenty thousand, *even* **thousands of angels: the Lord is among them, as in Sinai**, in the holy *place*.
- Then, document that they set the law in order for handing off to Moses (the mediator):

**Gal. 3:19** Wherefore then *serveth* the law? It was added because of transgressions, till the seed should come to whom the promise was made; *and it was* ordained by angels in the hand of a mediator.

▶ Stephen supports the fact of it: **Acts 7:53** Who have received the law by the disposition of angels, and have not kept *it*.

### III. Angels are agents of God's destruction and punishment on earth in some instances

- Hezekiah is king of Judah; Sennacherib, king of Assyria has conquered all the surrounding nations. He sends his general and army to Jerusalem with intent to overthrow the land of Judah. That general (Rabshakeh) brags about what they have done to other nations and what they will do to Jerusalem and Judah. Hezekiah goes before the Lord and lays the problem before Him. God tells Hezekiah that it's not going to happen. And so, **2Kings 19:35** And it came to pass that night, that the angel of the LORD went out, and smote in the camp of the Assyrians an hundred fourscore and five thousand: and when they arose early in the morning, behold, they *were* all dead corpses.
- The account of David's punishment for numbering Israel reveals it: (Gad, the prophet is sent to David with this message) - **1Chr. 21:12** Either three years' famine; or three months to be destroyed before thy foes, while that the sword of thine enemies overtaketh *thee*; or else three days the sword of the LORD, even the pestilence, in the land, and the angel of the LORD destroying throughout all the coasts of Israel. Now therefore advise thyself what word I shall bring again to him that sent me.
  - ▶ **1Chr. 21:15** And God sent an angel unto Jerusalem to destroy it: and as he was destroying, the LORD beheld, and he repented him of the evil, and said to the angel that destroyed, It is enough, stay now thine hand. And the angel of the LORD stood by the threshingfloor of Ornan the Jebusite.
  - ▶ **1Ch. 21:16** And David lifted up his eyes, and saw the angel of the LORD stand between the earth and the heaven, having a drawn sword in his hand stretched out over Jerusalem. Then David and the elders *of Israel, who were* clothed in sackcloth, fell upon their faces.
- The execution of Herod - **Acts 12:23** And immediately the angel of the Lord smote him, because he gave not God the glory: and he was eaten of worms, and gave up the ghost.
- On the day of Armageddon, so-called - **Rev. 9:15** And the four angels were loosed, which were prepared for an hour, and a day, and a month, and a year, for to slay the third part of men.

### IV. Angels warn believers

- **Gen. 19:15** 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.
- **Mat. 2:13** And when they (the wise men) were departed, behold, the angel of the

**Lord appeareth to Joseph in a dream, saying, Arise, and take the young child and his mother, and flee into Egypt,** and be thou there until I bring thee word: for Herod will seek the young child to destroy him.

**V. Angels of God go ahead of believers to get things in order, in preparation for changes in believer's lives** (conditions, location, new experience)

- **Gen. 24:7** 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.
- Jacob is met by God's host...a company of angels, as he begins his journey back to Bethel and to home - **Gen. 32:1-2** And Jacob went on his way, and **the angels of God met him.** 2 And when Jacob saw them, he said, This *is* God's host: and he called the name of that place Mahanaim.
- God's promise to the Israelites when they went forward into the wilderness: **Exo. 23:20** Behold, **I send an Angel before thee,** to keep thee in the way, and to bring thee into the place which I have prepared.
- God's promise to the Israelites in preparation for entry into the land of promise: **Exo. 33:2** And **I will send an angel before thee;** and I will drive out the Canaanite, the Amorite, and the Hittite, and the Perizzite, the Hivite, and the Jebusite:
- See **Acts 12:8-10** for Peter's escape from prison, and how the angel went before him to clear the way and open the gates.

**VI. Angels of God accompany and protect believers in their changes** (conditions, location, new experience)

- **Gen. 24:40** And he (the angel) said unto me, The LORD, before whom I walk, **will send his angel with thee,** and prosper thy way; and thou shalt take a wife for my son of my kindred, and of my father's house:
  - The first mention of the pillar of cloud when Israel was pinned between the army of Pharaoh and the Red Sea - **Exo.14:19-20** And the **angel of God, which went before the camp of Israel,** removed and went behind them; and the pillar of the cloud went from before their face, and stood behind them: 20 And it **came between the camp of the Egyptians and the camp of Israel;** and it was a cloud and darkness *to them,* but it gave light by night *to these:* so that the one came not near the other all the night.
  - **Psalms 34:7** The **angel of the LORD encampeth round about them that fear him,** and **delivereth them**
  - **Psalms 91:11** For he shall give his angels charge over thee, to **keep thee in all thy ways.**
  - **Dan. 6:22** My **God hath sent his angel, and hath shut the lions' mouths,** that they have not hurt me: forasmuch as before him innocency was found in me; and also before thee, O king, have I done no hurt.
- I want to remind us again of Peter's experience in prison, because it represents not

only angels going before the Lord's people preparing the way (as we saw earlier) but also angels protecting the Lord's people in direct intervention: **Acts 12:7** 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.

- If angels accompany believers in their life experiences, it follows then that they are the administrators of God's providence -
  - ▶ They have authority to use their power to provide food - **1Kings 19:5, 7** - And as he (Elijah) lay and slept under a juniper tree, behold, then an **angel touched him, and said unto him, Arise and eat**. <sup>7</sup> And the angel of the LORD came again the **second time, and touched him (Elijah), and said, Arise and eat; because the journey is too great for thee**.
  - ▶ They have a personal one-on-one perpetual meeting with God about our **welfare**-**Mat. 18:10** 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.
  - ▶ They can make war when called to it - Elisha and the army of angels of God - **1Kings:16:15-18**
    - **Mat. 26:53** Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to my Father, and he shall presently give me more than **twelve legions of angels**?

**VII. Angels are part of the irrefutable 6-part documentation concerning the incarnation of Christ** (remember that denying the physical incarnation of Christ as Messiah was to be one of the great heresies of the Christian age)

- **1Tim. 3:16** And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, **seen of angels**, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory.

**VIII. Angels are messengers from heaven with significant messages**

- The angel of the burning bush brings Moses the message that he was to deliver Israel from Egyptian bondage (**Exo. 3:7-10**).
- **Gen. 22:11-18** - An angel transmits the message of God's covenant to Abraham. The message that identified him as the father of the faithful and earthly lineage of Christ.
- The announcement of the coming birth of John the Baptist - **Luke 1:11** And there **appeared unto him an angel of the Lord** standing on the right side of the altar of incense.
  - ▶ **Luke 1:13** But the **angel said unto him**, Fear not, Zacharias: for thy prayer is heard; and thy wife Elisabeth shall bear thee a son, and thou shalt call his name John.
- The announcement to Mary of the coming birth of Christ - **Luke 1:26-31**
- The message of Christ's resurrection at the site of the tomb: **Mat. 28:2-7** And,

behold, there was a great earthquake: for **the angel of the Lord descended from heaven**, and came and rolled back the stone from the door, and sat upon it. 3 His countenance was like lightning, and his raiment white as snow: 4 And for fear of him the keepers did shake, and became as dead *men*. 5 And **the angel answered** and said unto the women, Fear not ye: for I know that ye seek Jesus, which was crucified. 6 He is not here: for he is risen, as he said. Come, see the place where the Lord lay. 7 And go quickly, and tell his disciples that he is risen from the dead; and, behold, he goeth before you into Galilee; there shall ye see him: lo, I have told you.

- **Acts 8:26** And **the angel of the Lord spake unto Philip**, saying, Arise, and go toward the south unto the way that goeth down from Jerusalem unto Gaza, which is desert.
- The message to Cornelius about how to hear the gospel - **Acts 10:3** He saw in a vision evidently about the ninth hour of the day **an angel of God coming in to him**, and saying unto him, Cornelius.
  - **Acts 10:4-6** And when he looked on him, he was afraid, and said, What is it, Lord? And he said unto him, Thy prayers and thine alms are come up for a memorial before God. 5 And now send men to Joppa, and call for *one* Simon, whose surname is Peter: 6 He lodgeth with one Simon a tanner, whose house is by the sea side: he shall tell thee what thou oughtest to do.
- Paul's impending shipwreck on his journey to Rome: **Acts 27:23-24** For **there stood by me this night the angel of God**, whose I am, and whom I serve, 24 Saying, Fear not, Paul; thou **must be brought before Caesar**: and, lo, God hath given thee all them that sail with thee.
- The vision and revelation experienced by John while on the Isle of Patmos: **Rev. 1:1** The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him, to shew unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass; and he **sent and signified it by his angel** unto his servant John:

#### **IX. Part of the accompanying multitude with Christ at His second coming**

- **1Thess. 4:16** For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the **voice of the archangel**, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first:
  - **2Thess. 1:7** And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven **with his mighty angels**,
  - As part of this heavenly group, they will gather Christ's elect from all over the earth: **Mark 13:27** And **then shall he send his angels**, and shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from the uttermost part of the earth to the uttermost part of heaven.

#### **X. Rev. 10:1-6 - An angel announces the end of time.**