

The Angel of God – Acts 27:21-25

I. INTRODUCTION:

- A. Wednesday, in talking about short-sighted faith, I mentioned the presence of angels among us.
 - 1. My point was that we often don't see things because our vision is limited.
 - 2. No one raised an eyebrow at my statement about angels being with us.
 - 3. But as I thought about it later, I had to ask myself, *"Did every one really believe that?"*
 - 4. *"Preacher, when was the last time you said anything about angels?"*
 - 5. To be honest I have no idea, but I've decided to correct that oversight today.
 - 6. We need to know what the Bible says. We all need to be grounded in every kind of basic Biblical theology.

- B. Most of us don't often think about God's angelic servants, even though there could very well be more of them in this room than human beings.
 - 1. We don't often consider that there could be a spiritual warfare going on around us, involving God's angels and those who serve Satan.
 - 2. Just because Fox News or CNN aren't covering the battles between angelic armies, it doesn't mean that there isn't a battle going on.

- C. What are some of the reasons that Christians don't often think about the creatures of the spirit world?
 - 1. One reason parallels why we don't meditate on the blessing of electricity in their homes.
 - a. We take them for granted.
 - 2. Secondly, we don't often think about them, because we are more carnal than we ought to be.
 - a. We have too many more practical things to consider, like sports and politics than to think about angels.
 - 3. Then there is the fact that you have with me. I don't encouraged to think about them.
 - 4. How easy would it be for me to talk about the storm in this chapter, or the divine deliverance, while hardly giving a second thought to **verse 23** – *"There stood by me this night the angel of God..."*
 - 5. Are you aware that angels are mentioned about 300 times in the **Bible** and about two dozen times in **Acts**?
 - 6. We don't contemplate angels, because we are not taught or encouraged to contemplate angels.

- D. At the very least this morning, let's begin to think about the ministry of angels.

II. There has been a lot of human **SPECULATION** about angels.

- A. Unfortunately this is a sad and dangerous practice.
 - 1. The word *"speculation"* refers to contemplation on a subject about which we don't know very much.
 - a. And it also means to engage ourselves in some sort of risky business.
 - b. Some people speculate in the stock market, because they have no idea what they are doing.
 - 2. Speculating on angels is not only a waste of time, it can be quite risky.
 - 3. But please note: there is a difference in speculating on them and studying what the Bible says about them.

- B. Throughout much of history, angels have been exaggerated into the realm of the ridiculous.
 - 1. If preachers today handled Bible doctrine the way that many of them did in the Middle Ages, we'd still call these *"the Dark Ages."*
 - 2. How many angels can stand on the head of a pin? People used to argue over such silly questions.
 - a. Can two angels occupy the same space at the same time? Do they eat Heavenly manna?
 - b. What do angels look like when they aren't residing in human form?
 - 3. How much time elapsed between the creation of the angels and the fall of Lucifer?
 - a. That question really *is* interesting, but the answer is not vitally important to our faith.
 - 4. *"Though I speak with the tongues of men & of angels, & have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal."* Does this mean that angels have a particular language beside Hebrew or English?
 - 5. What are other differences between angels and Satan's demons?

- C. Most of these kinds of questions are not only better *left unanswered*, they are better left *unconsidered*.
1. Because history has proven that in contemplation of angels sinful people approach the worship of angels.
 2. In days gone by some people have given them the admiration that was due only to the Lord.
 3. And even in modern days of human enlightenment, millions of books in hundreds of titles encourage the adoration of angels.
 4. *“Angels”* are a key ingredient in Spiritism and the New Age Movement, and even though that no longer gets the headlines that it once did, the New Age Movement is not dead.
 5. Scripture teaches that holy angels want to have, and should have, a low profile.
 6. But at the same time, Christians need to know enough about them to recognize and respect them as important servants of God.
 7. *“There stood by me this night the angel of God, whose I am, and whom I serve.”*
 8. And whether you have thought about it or recognized it, there have been angels of God standing by you.

III. To Bible-believers the **EXISTENCE** and **IMPORTANCE** of angels is beyond dispute.

- A. How do you know that there is such a creature as an angel?
1. Have you ever seen any flitting through the air?
 2. Have you ever spoken to any and have any of them been forced to confess that they are angels?
 3. How do we know that there are angels?
- B. There is the **argument** of **REASON** – as poor as it is. For example: God is a spirit – **John 4:24**.
1. And people are creatures with spiritual natures enwrapped in physical bodies.
 2. If God is a spirit, and we are spirits, it is likely that there are other kinds of spirits as well.
 3. These are possibilities, but I’m glad that this is not our only argument.
- C. Then there is the argument of the **MASSES**: there is nearly universal acceptance of the existence of angels.
1. Almost all religious systems teach some sort of angelic creatures.
 2. They are called *“Aeons”* by the Gnostics, demons, demigods, Genii, and so on.
 3. I am told that Socrates claimed to have a spirit helper and so did Plato.
 4. Just because nearly all religions teach the existence of angels, that doesn’t mean that everyone in those religions believe in angels, as we see with Jewish Sadducees, who denied just about everything spiritual.
- D. But we aren’t Sadducees, Greeks or Barbarians; we are Christians.
1. We know that there are angels because *“the Bible tells us so.”*
 2. There are **273 references** to angels in the Bible.
 - a. That’s **one** reference in **every 114 verses** and an average of **one** in every **four chapters**.
 3. They are found in **34 different books** of the Bible.
- E. Who is your **favorite New Testament writer**? Is **Paul** your favorite writer?
1. He said, *“For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor **ANGELS**, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.”*
 - a. *“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.”*
 2. Did **Paul** write **Hebrews**? That book is densely populated with angels.
 - a. Christ, *“Being made so much better than the **ANGELS**, as he hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they.*
 - b. *For unto which of the angels said he at any time, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee? And again, I will be to him a Father, and he shall be to me a Son?*

- c. *Again, when he bringeth in the firstbegotten into the world, he saith, let all the **ANGELS** of God worship him. And of the **ANGELS** he saith, Who maketh his angels spirits, & his ministers a flame of fire.”*
3. Perhaps **Peter** is your favorite Bible penman.
- a. *“Of which salvation the prophets have enquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you... but unto us they did minister the things, which are now reported unto you by them that have preached the gospel unto you with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven; which things the **ANGELS** desire to look into.”*
- b. *“God spared not the **ANGELS** that sinned, but cast them down to hell, and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment.”*
4. Do you like to read **Jude**? *“The **ANGELS** which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, he hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day.”*
5. Joseph, Mary, Elizabeth, Zachariah, Peter, John, Mary Magdalene and many others all spoke to angels.
6. And in the Old Testament the list is at the very least doubled.
- F. But it is the **Lord Jesus** who leads the way in revealing the angels to us.
1. Not only did Christ teach us about the angels, but it was nearly impossible for the angels and demons to keep quiet in His presence.
2. Christ made such statements as:
- a. *“The Son of man shall send forth his **ANGELS**, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity.”*
- b. *“For the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father with his **ANGELS**; and then he shall reward every man according to his works.”*
- c. *“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.”*
- d. *“When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy **ANGELS** with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory.”*
- e. *“Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his **ANGELS**.”*
- f. *“Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to my Father, and he shall presently give me more than twelve legions of **ANGELS**?”*
- G. For someone to deny the existence of angels, that person must call our Saviour a liar.
1. The integrity of Christ rises or falls on the reality of angels – among many other criteria.
2. He was not restating Jewish fables about spirit creatures, just to gain friends among the Jews.
3. Christ wasn’t accommodating Himself to the foolishness of man.
4. And Jesus didn’t speak without thinking, using words that He didn’t understand or really mean.
5. Yes, Jesus often spoke in allegories, but as far as I could see, He **NEVER** spoke of angels in His allegories.

IV. Paul said,

- A. *“There stood by me this night the **ANGEL** of God, whose I am, and whom I serve, Saying, Fear not, Paul; thou must be brought before Caesar: and, lo, God hath given thee all them that sail with thee. Wherefore, sirs, be of good cheer: for I believe God, that it shall be even as it was told me.”*
- B. The ministry of angels permeates the **Book of Acts**.
1. In **chapter 5** several of the apostles were arrested and jailed.
- a. *“Then the high priest rose up, and all they that were with him, (which is the sect of the Sadducees,) and were filled with indignation, And laid their hands on the apostles, and put them in the common prison.*
- b. *But the **ANGEL** of the Lord by night opened the prison doors, and brought them forth, and said,*

- c. *Go, stand and speak in the temple to the people all the words of this life.*
- d. *And when they heard that, they entered into the temple early in the morning, and taught.”*
- 2. **Stephen’s** message to the Sanhedrin has several references to angels, even though he knew that many of those counselors didn’t believe that they existed.
- 3. In **Acts 8**, *“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.”*
- 4. In **chapter 10** an angel of God visited Cornelius and told him how to find the gospel.
- 5. Then in **Acts 12** Peter was arrested and jailed once again, but...
 - a. *“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.*
 - b. *And the **ANGEL** said unto him, Gird thyself, and bind on thy sandals. And so he did. And he saith unto him, Cast thy garment about thee, and follow me. And he went out, and followed him; and wist not that it was true which was done by the **ANGEL**; but thought he saw a vision.*
 - c. *When they were past the first and the second ward, they came unto the iron gate that leadeth unto the city; which opened to them of his own accord: and they went out, and passed on through one street; and forthwith the **ANGEL** departed from him.*
 - d. *When Peter was come to himself, he said, Now I know of a surety, that the Lord hath sent his **ANGEL**, and hath delivered me out of the hand of Herod, and from all the expectation of the people of the Jews.”*

V. It seems to be, based upon the testimony of the scriptures that....

- A. Not only do angels exist, but they serve the Lord in three basic ways:
 - 1. In the Old Testament we see that they are constantly in the business of praising and worshiping the Lord.
 - 2. Although we don’t see them as active today, they are still there.
- B. In the New Testament we sometimes have references to angels carrying out the judgment of God, as it was with Herod Agrippa. *“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.”*
- C. But in contrast to a ministry of judgment, one of their primary services to God is through serving God’s people.
 - 1. Paul was praising the Saviour in making this comparison.
 - a. *“But to which of the angels said he at any time, Sit on my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool? Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?”*
 - 2. God the Father has never said to any angel, *“Sit here at my right hand.”*
 - 3. Rather, those angels are all ministering spirits, sent forth to care for the needs of heirs of His salvation.
- D. Paul, Luke, Aristarchus & the others on board that sinking vessel in the Mediterranean were in desperate need.
 - 1. If the truth be known, it is likely that one of the demons of Satan was whispering into the hearts of some of the soldiers that the prisoners should all be killed lest Paul escape to preach the gospel in Rome.
 - 2. But one of the angels of the Lord was sent to off-set that attack and to encourage the saints of God.
- E. One of these days, when the dust settles, and we, in glorified bodies are enjoying the blessings of Heaven...
 - 1. One of these days, we may learn exactly how important angels will have been in our personal lives.
 - 2. Then you and I, along with those same ministering spirits, will lift up our voices in praise to the Lord for not only saving our souls, but saving us out of countless storms.
 - 3. Perhaps we need to be praising him about these things even before that day.