

# The Traveling Pulpit

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## The Ministry of Angels

### Part II

### Heb. 1:4-2:9

### The Nature of the Angels (continued)

**“And of the angels he saith, Who maketh his angels spirits, and his ministers a flame of fire. But unto the Son he saith, Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever: a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of thy kingdom. Thou hast loved righteousness and hated iniquity; therefore God, even thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows. And, Thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth; and the heavens are the works of thine hands: They shall perish; but thou remainest; and they all shall wax old as doth a garment; And as a vesture shalt thou fold them up, and they shall be changed; but thou art the same, and thy years shall not fail” (Heb. 1:7-12).**

A major thing that Christ and the angels have in common is that both are supernatural beings. However, angels are supernatural only because “God ... maketh” them that way. God came from nowhere and has always existed, but the angels were made by God to be spirits. They were made with intelligence (II Sam. 14:20) to possess superhuman knowledge, yet restricted by the sovereign control of God (Ps. 103:20, Matt. 24:36). Angels are great in number and always ready to do God’s bidding (Ps. 68:17, Heb. 12:22). They are strong and powerful, so much so that it only took one angel to destroy 185,000 Assyrian troops in a single night (Isa. 37:36), only one angel

to roll the stone away from Christ's tomb (Matt. 28:2), and only one angel to bind Satan in the bottomless pit (Rev. 20:1-2).

Their overall purpose is merely to serve God as his ministers in whatever capacity He desires. The descriptive term, "flame of fire" (Ps. 104:4) seems to indicate how angels are often used in judgment upon the ungodly (Ex. 14:19, II Sam. 24:16, II Kings 19:35, I Chron. 21:15, Acts 12:23, Rev. 8:6-9:21, 16:1-17). God calls mortal men to be his ministers of the Gospel (Matt. 28:19-20), but angels have never been commissioned to preach (Acts 10:3-8). They serve God in other ways behind the scenes of the natural eye and have been known to deliver special messages at appointed times, but not the Gospel (Lk. 1:3-20, 26-39, Acts 8:26, 11:13).

The concept of every person being assigned a private guardian angel is not specifically addressed in the Bible. The idea that every Christian has a guardian angel is rooted mainly in ancient Jewish beliefs. However, Scripture does indicate the possibility of such protection over little children and the saints (Matt 18:10, Acts 12:7-15). Angels protect and guard over people as God assigns them to do so (Ps. 34:7, 91:11, Dan. 6:22, Acts 5:19, 27:23-24). As thankful as we ought to be for angels, we should be more thankful to the One Whose "throne" is "for ever and ever" and Who "laid the foundation of the earth." Creation will be "changed" at various times and some creatures may even perish (Ps. 102:25-27). But, the Creator stays "the same yesterday, and today, and for ever" (Heb. 13:8).

### The Work of the Angels

**"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? Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip. For if the word spoken by angels was steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward; How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him; God also bearing them witness, both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to his own will? For unto the angels hath he not put in subjection the world to come, whereof we speak. But one in a certain place testified, saying, What is man, that thou art mindful of him? Or the son of man, that thou visitest him? Thou madest him a little lower than the angels; thou crownedst him with glory and honour, and didst set him over the**

**works of thy hands: Thou hast put all things in subjection under his feet. For in that he put all in subjection under him, he left nothing that is not put under him, But now we see not yet all things put under him. But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man. (Heb. 1:13-2:9)**

Christ alone is sovereign over all things, even over the angels whom He created to serve His unique purposes. He stands supreme over all His creation including the angels and only He is worthy of our worship (Col. 2:18). His authority over the angels was evidenced in what He said in the garden before His crucifixion (Matt. 26:53). The word angel in both the Hebrew and Greek means "messenger." Their primary purpose is to carry out the divine orders of God Almighty. They are "ministering spirits" who serve on behalf of God's Kingdom (Gen. 24:7, I Kings 19:5-8). They are not rulers in charge of either their destiny or ours. They do not intercede to God for us, because it is only Christ Who is seated at the right hand of the Father Who can do that (Rom. 8:34, I Pet. 3:22).

"If the word spoken by angels was stedfast," how much more stedfast is the word of God's Son Who made possible "so great salvation." Mankind was made "a little lower than the angels" in power, but yet we have been given "dominion" (Gen. 1:28) over the "works of" God's "hands." Christ Himself is described as being "made a little lower than the angels" when He subjected Himself to His incarnation. He took a body of flesh in order to die for our sin and in this respect He limited Himself to the natural laws of the universe. The humility of Christ never diminished His superiority over the angels or any other aspect of His creation. "A little lower" literally means for a short time or for a little while, Christ subjected Himself to a body of flesh in order to "taste death for every man."

Angels are always inferior to God, not receiving but giving praise, honor, and glory to Him (Job 38:7, Ps. 103:20, 148:2, Rev. 5:11-12). They "ministered" (Matt. 4:4) to Jesus following His temptations in the wilderness and "appeared ... strengthening him" while He prayed in the "mount of Olives" (Lk. 22:43). They apparently are aware of when a "sinner ... repenteth" and rejoice (Lk. 15:10). They will accompany Christ when He returns to this earth the second time (Matt. 13:39-42, 24:31, 25:31, Mk. 8:38, II Thess. 1:7). It's even possible that they play a part in ushering a saint from their deathbed into the eternal bliss of Paradise (Lk. 16:22 Jh. 20:12).

### **Closing**

In no way whatsoever have I intended for this study to be an exhaustive one on the subject of angels nor a detailed exposition on the first two chapters of Hebrews.

However, I hope that we have a better concept of angels and what angels do as a result of this brief two-part glimpse into the realm of the supernatural. Christians should never give angels the respect and reverence due only to God. God's angels are always subordinate to Him and are His divine messengers that are designed to carry out His will. Scripture doesn't give us all that much detail about angels, but they are mentioned numerous times and are always presented as created beings that are inferior to Christ. Therefore, they do not deserve worship because worship belongs only to Jesus Christ.

Chuck Swindoll sums up the subject of angels by saying that "God's angelic servants impress us and intrigue us, but only God's Word can enlighten us. God's angelic servants minister to us, but only God's Spirit can minister in us. God's angelic servants protect us physically, but only God's Son can save us spiritually."

In trying to find an alternative for one's basic spiritual need people often prefer lesser "spirits" to the Creator of all "spirits." However, no angelic spirit or organized form of religion can meet man's need of "salvation." Only Jesus Christ through the power of the Holy Spirit (Jh. 14:26-27) can bring peace to a troubled heart and wash it clean by the "blood of the Lamb" (Rev. 12:11).

### **A Word From The Ministry**

Due to the drastic increase in cost of broadcasting over WTRU in the Triad, March 9<sup>th</sup> was our last over that station. Unfortunately, we have been unable to find another local station at a reasonable rate. However, as of March 2<sup>nd</sup>, we began broadcasting over WDZY in Richmond, VA, at 12:45 PM on Sunday. This is a strong 25,000-watt station that will also be live streaming over the Internet. This means that anyone with Internet service anywhere in the world will be able to listen at that time by going to [www.wilkinsradio.com](http://www.wilkinsradio.com) and click on listen live, scroll down and find the Richmond station. Currently, this is a new station for the Wilkins Radio Network and the live streaming is supposed to be up and running in March.

For our regular listeners who will be unable to study with us on WTRU as well as anyone else, we will be glad to make a copy of our Bible Studies on CD's just for the asking. As with all that we do, there will be no charge. Let us know if you are interested and we'll be in contact with you as to the Bible Study that you would like to pursue.

I've almost depleted my supply of books on Marriage, Divorce, and Remarriage and hopefully, I'll be able to print a second edition sometime this year. It's amazing how God has used this book to help so many people that have been hurt and ostracized by the church. As always, "thank each and every one of you" that make this little ministry possible by becoming a partner with us in prayer and financial support. May the Lord bless you richly.

Because of His Sovereign Grace.....BWM