

ANGELS TODAY

The Work of Angels Today



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WORK OF ANGELS TODAY

Introduction:

1. From a study of angels, we can clearly see that the Bible teaches that angels have existed, do exist, and will exist into eternity (see separate study on angels).
 - a. They were and are ministering servants of God.
 - b. They ministered to God's people in the Old Testament.
 - c. They ministered to God's people in the First Century.
 - d. They minister to God's people today (Hebrews 1:14).
2. We can judge the work of angels today in the Christian Age by the work of angels recorded in the New Testament in the first century, the beginning of the Christian Age.
 - a. In the Old Testament God communicated His will to man by angels, dreams and visions, the Urim and Thummim, and the inspired prophets (spoken and written word as given to those men by means of the Holy Spirit) (1 Sam. 28:6; Ex. 28:30; Daniel 8:1, 16; Acts 7:30; Heb. 1:1; 2 Peter 1:19-21).
 - b. In these "last days" (Christian Dispensation), however, He has spoken to us by His Son, but **how**? [Hebrews 1:1-3]

Mind of God to Jesus Christ to the Holy Spirit to the apostles and prophets:
John 15:15 John 16:14 John 14:26 John 14:26; 15:15, 20, 27
John 7:16 John 15:20 John 15:26
 John 16:14 John 16:8, 13

3. Angels were involved in the preparation for and of the New Testament Age.
 - a. **Preparation for the kingdom:**
 - (1). They were involved in announcements about the birth of Christ (Matt. 1:24; Luke 1:11)
 - (2). They were involved in ministering to Jesus in the wilderness (Matt. 4:11)
 - (3). An angel strengthened Jesus while he was praying in the Garden of Gethsemane (Luke 22:43).
 - (4). An angel rolled back the stone on the grave of Jesus (Matt. 28:2)
 - (5). They announced that Jesus had resurrected from the dead and was alive (Matt. 28:5-6).
 - (6). They announced at Jesus ascension he would return in the clouds (Acts 1:10-11).

b. Involvement in the kingdom in the first century:

- (1). They set Peter free from prison (Acts 5:19)
- (2). An angel told Phillip to teach the nobleman (Acts 8:26)
- (3). An angel told Cornelius to send for Peter so he could be taught words of salvation (Acts 10:3-7; 11:13).
- (4). An angel set Peter free from prison (Acts 12:7)
- (5). An angel took the life of Herod the king (Acts 23)
- (6). An angel described to Paul how he and others would be saved from the storm (Acts 27:23)
- (7). An angel appeared to John to give him the message of the Book of Revelation (Rev. 1:1).
- (8). All other references beyond the book of Acts are in reference to their coming again at Jesus revelation, the last day, His second and final appearance.
- (9). There are absolutely no references about angels communicating and delivering messages to the saints in God's church beyond the miraculous age of the first century.
 - (a) God's word has been completed.
 - (b) There are no additional messages from God through visions, dreams, or angels.
 - (c) They do help ("minister to") the saints in carrying out the providence of God (Heb. 1:14).
 - (d) God has given man the responsibility to carry God's message to the world (men are to communicate the message; angels are to minister) (Matthew 28:19-20; Acts 2; Acts 8:26; 11:13-14).

Discussion:

I. What Do Angels Do In The Christian Age?

- A. If God **uses angels differently** today than He did in the New Testament then the written document of the New Testament is an unreliable document of **how God deals with the world and His people** today.
1. If this were the case we would have to depend upon people's "experiences" to inform us of those additional ways.
 2. Since the ways of confirming these truths has ended (miracles) (1 Cor. 13:8-13); we would have no way of knowing if the message were from God, the person himself, or demons.
 - (a) The way of confirming messages from God was by miracles (Mark 16:15-20; Hebrews 2:3-4)

(b) Miracles ceased when the word of God was completed (1 Cor. 13:8-13).

3. After demonstrating that Christ is higher than the angels the writer of Hebrews tells us that parts of the word in the Old Testament were spoken through angels and they proved steadfast, but he asked those in the Christian Dispensation "...how shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation, which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed to us by those who heard Him, God also bearing witness both with signs and wonders, with various miracles, and gifts of the Holy Spirit, according to His own will," Heb. 2:2-4).
 4. When Jesus detailed the process under which the will of God would be delivered to all men, angels are not included (John 16).
- B. If God has changed His way of **informing** people of His will then the New Testament has become an unreliable source of how God **communicates** with His people today.
1. There is nowhere in the New Testament any verse that teaches or implies that the apostles told their readers to listen for messages from angels then or in the future of the Christian Age so they might know what to do in this life and thus prepare for the next life.
 2. The apostles and writers of the New Testament did tell their readers to read what they had written that they might know what the inspired will of God is for their lives (2 Peter. 1:19-21; Eph. 3:1-7)

II. What Does the Bible Say That Angels Do Based Upon What They Did As Revealed in the Word of God?

- A. They carry out the will of God because they are created servants of God (Rev. 22:8-9).
- B. They carry out the providence of God to ensure that His plan is fulfilled (The whole of the books of Daniel and Revelation).
- C. They are ministering spirits sent forth to do service for the sake of them that shall inherit salvation (Heb. 1:14).
 1. However, man cannot see angels carry out that service because a miracle has to occur, and we are no longer in the age of miracles (1 Cor. 13:8-13).
 2. In addition man cannot know what angels specifically do without supernatural revelation, and we no longer live in the age when God revealed His will directly into the minds of men (1 Cor. 13:8-13, Jude 1-4).

3. We are to believe through the written word, not messages from angels (John 20:30-31).
 4. Faith today is to come by hearing the word of God preached by men who preach from the written word of God (Romans 10:17).
- D. They carry the saved to Paradise (Luke 16:22).
- E. They will appear next at the final coming of Jesus before the Day of Judgment (2 Thess. 1:7-8).

CONCLUSION:

1. We must depend entirely on the written word of God for all things that pertain to life and godliness:

“...His divine power has given to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him who called us by glory and virtue by which have been given to us exceedingly great and precious promises, that through these you may be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust,” 2 Peter 1:3-4.

2. God’s plan is for men to preach to men, not angels to preach to men (Matthew 28:19-20).

“How then shall they call on Him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach unless they are sent...?” Romans 10:14-15a.

3. The people to whom angels spoke in the first century could confirm the truthfulness of their experience by working miracles.

- a. When anyone claims to have been spoken to by an angel, that person needs to be asked to work an undeniable miracle so there can be proof of that occurrence (Acts 4:14-16; Heb. 2:3-4).

- b. How do we know that angels were involved in the First Century?

- (1) We know because of the books and letters written by the apostles and prophets.

- (2) What they wrote were historical records of events in their lives and the early history of the church.

- c. How do we know the apostles and prophets wrote the truth about these events?

- (1) We know because of the miracles they worked to confirm that what they wrote about their experiences and the will of God is true.
 - (2) Without the confirmation of miracles there can be no acceptance of anyone's experiences, be it a still voice in the night, a vision, or an angel.
4. Today God speaks to us by His Son through the already written word of God which was confirmed in the first century by miracles by those who received gifts by the power of the Holy Spirit (Hebrews 1:1-2; 2:1-13; Ephesians 4:7-15; 1 Cor. 12:1-11; 13:8-13).
 5. The true and trusted messages from the unseen world must come from the written revelation of God which has once and for all been completed (1 Cor. 13:8-13) and delivered to the saints (Jude 1-4).