

“The Ministry of Angels”  
(Hebrews 1:14)

I. Introduction.

A. Orientation.

1. We’ve seen the Lord has provided many spiritual blessings for you, if you are trusting Him.
2. The whole Godhead is involved in these blessings:
  - a. The Father has loved you, predestined you, called you, justified you, is sanctifying and preserving you, and will glorify you.
  - b. The Son became a man to obey and die for you, He was raised for you, ascended for you, rules over you, prays for you, keeps you in God’s grace.
  - c. The Spirit has quickened you, indwells you, has gifted you, strengthens you, teaches you, helps you to pray, gives you joy and comforts you.
  - d. But there is still more.

B. Preview.

1. Tonight, let’s consider another spiritual blessing – spiritual beings the Lord created and sends to help you – the ministry of the angels.
  - a. In Hebrews, the author compares the Old and New Covenants to show the superiority of the New, more specifically, how Jesus is superior to everything and everyone involved in the Old Covenant.
  - b. In our passage, he compares Jesus to the angels.
    - (i) The angels were involved in the giving of the Old Covenant.
    - (ii) Because of this, the Jews were actually tempted to worship them.
    - (iii) This might be one thing that would tempt these “believers” to abandon Jesus and go back to the Old Covenant.
  - c. But Jesus is not only superior to Moses and to the Old Covenant priests, He is greater than the angels.
    - (i) Jesus is God’s Son (v. 2), the exact representation of His nature (v. 3), who is worshipped by the angels (v. 6), the One whose kingdom will endure forever (v. 8), who made the world (v. 10), who will never change, whose years will never end (vv. 11-12), and who sits at God’s right hand until His enemies are subdued under His feet (v. 13) – He has a much more excellent name.
    - (ii) The angels, on the other hand, are ministering spirits, servants, sent by Jesus to minister to those who will inherit salvation (v. 14).
2. This evening, we’ll want to see what a blessing it is to have angels ministering to us. What we’ll see is,
  - a. That angels are very holy and powerful spiritual beings.
  - b. That they were created to serve God in the work of redemption.
  - c. And that they still serve Him today by ministering to you.

## II. Sermon.

- A. First, let's consider that angels are very holy and powerful spiritual beings.
1. The first thing to see about angels is that they're created.
    - a. They haven't existed forever – only God has.
    - b. They were very likely created early during the Creation week.
      - (i) Scripture says they rejoiced at the founding of the world. The Lord said to Job, “Where were you when I laid the foundation of the earth? Tell *Me*, if you have understanding, who set its measurements? Since you know. Or who stretched the line on it? On what were its bases sunk? Or who laid its cornerstone, when the morning stars sang together and all the sons of God shouted for joy?” (Job 38:4-7).
      - (ii) Which means they were probably created as part of that heaven that Moses said was created on the first day, “In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth” (Gen. 1:1).
      - (iii) They were all created at the same time.
  2. The second thing to note about angels is they are spirits.
    - a. They don't have physical bodies as we do.
      - (i) Sometimes they appeared as men, but this was in appearance only.
      - (ii) One debate that went on during the Middle Ages was how many angels could dance on the head of a pin.
      - (iii) The answer was an infinite number, because being spirits, they don't take up any space.
    - b. They don't have a body, but they do have a soul – that's what they are: spirits made in the image of God.
      - (i) The image of God in angels doesn't have to do with bodies or appearance, any more than it does with us.
      - (ii) But it has to do with their characteristics – personality, intelligence, will, self-awareness, power, immortality, and morality.
      - (iii) It particularly has to do with their being moral like God – they are holy, they love God, they love what is right and good.
  3. Thirdly, angels are greater than man in several ways.
    - a. They are more intelligence (e.g., Lucifer).
    - b. And they are greater in strength – one angel killed 185,000 Assyrians at one time.
    - c. One area where they don't excel man may be in their love for God – perhaps not as we are now, but as we will be in our glorified state – we may love God more then because of what He saved us from and because we are now united to Christ.
  4. Lastly, not all of the angels remained holy – some fell.
    - a. There was an occasion early on in heaven, when some of the angels, led by Lucifer, rebelled and were cast out. Edwards believed it was when God

revealed to them what He intended to do with them, namely, make them the servants of elect men.

- b. Like man, they were put on trial; unlike man, they were all put on trial at once.
- c. Some of them chose to stand and some not – as some were elected to stand and some not (those elected to stand are called the “elect/chosen angels” [1 Tim. 5:21]).
  - (i) The angels that fell, became the devil and his demons.
  - (ii) Those that stood by God’s grace, became confirmed in their holiness – they can never fall.
  - (iii) It’s these angels we want to consider now.

B. Second, these angels were created to serve God in the work of redemption.

- 1. He created them for the same reason He created everything else.
  - a. For His glory.
  - b. To be His servants, mainly in the work of Redemption.
    - (i) Everything God creates must serve Him in some way.
    - (ii) He didn’t create anything to be served or to serve itself.
    - (iii) He made you to serve Him as well.
- 2. Angels serve the Lord in several ways, many of which have to do with us.
  - a. They guard the holiness of God.
    - (i) When Adam and Eve were cast out of God’s sanctuary for their sin, Cherubim were placed at the entrance to keep them from returning (Gen. 3:24).
    - (ii) In heaven, they surround the throne of God to guard against intruders (Isa. 37:16) – such as the devil when he comes to accuse (not that God needs this, but He wills it).
  - b. The Lord used angels to bring messages to His people. (Note, the angel of the Lord is not created, but is a preincarnate appearance of Jesus. He stands as the captain and head of this heavenly army; Josh. 5:14-15).
    - (i) He sent His angel to stay Abraham’s hand from killing his son Isaac (Gen. 22).
    - (ii) To call Moses to deliver His people from Egypt (Ex. 3).
    - (iii) The Ten Commandments were delivered by angels on Mount Sinai (Acts 7:53).
    - (iv) The Lord sent His angel to Samson’s parents with the announcement of his birth (Jud. 13).
    - (v) He sent an angel to Daniel with the answer to his prayer (Dan. 8).
    - (vi) And to Joseph to assure him of Mary’s fidelity and to reveal to him how the child was conceived (Matt. 1).
  - c. The Lord uses angels to carry out His judgments.
    - (i) He sent an angel to kill the first-born in Egypt (Ex. 12).
    - (ii) He sent the angel of the Lord to destroy the Assyrian army (2 Kings 19).

- (iii) He sent an angel to strike Herod with worms (Acts 12).
  - (iv) He sent angels against Jerusalem in 70 AD (Revelation).
- d. The Lord uses angels to free His prisoners.
- (i) He sent an angel to free Peter (Acts 12).
  - (ii) Very likely, it was an angel the Lord used to bring the earthquake and open the jail doors for Paul and Silas in Philippi (Acts 16).
- e. He sends angels to protect His people.
- (i) The Lord sent two angels to Lot to bring him and his family out of Sodom before judgment (Gen. 19).
  - (ii) To protect Jacob on his journey back to Canaan from Paddan-aram (Gen. 32).
  - (iii) The angel of the Lord protected the children of Israel from Pharaoh's army as they crossed the Red Sea (Ex. 14).
  - (iv) He guarded them from the time they left Egypt until they arrived at the Promised Land (Ex. 23).
  - (v) He protected Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego from the fiery furnace (Dan. 3).
- f. Sometimes He sends them to refresh His people, such as when He sent the angels to minister to our Lord Jesus Christ after His battle with the devil (Matt. 4:11).
- g. Sometimes He sends His angel to guide His people, such as when He sent His angel to guide Abraham's servant to find a wife for Isaac (Gen. 24).
- h. The Lord made the angels for these purposes – realizing that He made them before Adam and Eve fell, it's becomes even plainer that the Fall was in His plan from the beginning.
- C. Finally, know that angels still serve Him today by ministering to you.
1. Scripture:
- a. That's what our passage says, "Are they not all ministering spirits, sent out to render service for the sake of those who will inherit salvation?" (Heb. 1:14).
  - b. Jesus said in our meditation, "See that you do not despise one of these little ones, for I say to you that their angels in heaven continually see the face of My Father who is in heaven" (Matt. 18:10).
    - (i) Jesus here is speaking not merely of children, but children that believe (v. 6).
    - (ii) They have angels that watch over them – perhaps not specific angels, but angels in general.
    - (iii) The Lord has appointed His angels to minister to you.
2. What exactly do they do?
- a. Much the same as they did then, with one exception: They no longer bring messages to you, since Special Revelation has ended.
  - b. They still guide you.

- (i) When you pray for guidance, they may bring the answer.
  - (ii) It's possible they introduce ideas that guide, change your inclinations.
  - (iii) They may help you to avoid accidents.
- c. They still guard and protect you.
- (i) Apparently, there are enough to keep watch over you and all the saints at all times, otherwise their ministry wouldn't be effective.
  - (ii) They are an invisible army, sent from heaven to protect you.
    - (a) When the Assyrians surrounded Elisha, he wasn't the least bit afraid because he knew the armies of the Lord were surrounding them.
    - (b) The psalmist writes, "The angel of the LORD encamps around those who fear Him, and rescues them" (Ps. 34:7).
    - (c) Satan and his demons would destroy you, but for the army of the Lord.
    - (d) Why someone else's house was broken into, or someone else got into an accident, or someone else was killed, may have been that the Lord used His angels to steer your enemies elsewhere.
    - (e) The Lord doesn't protect everyone, but He does His own.
- d. They refresh you.
- (i) When Daniel was weakened because of the vision the Lord gave him, He had an angel touch him and strengthen him (Dan. 10:18-19).
  - (ii) When you pray for strength or courage or endurance, it may be that the Lord answers that prayer through His angels.
- e. And one day they will bring you to glory.
- (i) The Lord also uses angels to convey the souls of His saints to heaven.
  - (ii) "Now the poor man died and was carried away by the angels to Abraham's bosom; and the rich man also died and was buried" (Luke 16:22).
  - (iii) When you die, they won't let the demons drag you down into hell; they will safely bring you to glory.
- f. Don't forget why they will do this.
- (i) The Father will never allow even one soul He has given His Son to perish.
  - (ii) Jesus will never forsake one for whom He laid down His life.
  - (iii) The Spirit will make sure all the elect reach heaven.
  - (iv) Let's thank the Lord that He made the angels and sends them for our help, and that He Himself stands as the captain of those armies. Amen.