

What About Angels Today? Do We Need Them?

Introduction:

1. You read about angels all throughout the Bible. Angels are spirit-beings that God created to glorify Him, and to assist Him in His work. They are mentioned over 250 times in the Bible.
2. They are not white, fluffy creatures that float on clouds and strum harps, nor are they glorified human beings. Angels are powerful, seasoned warriors that are seen bringing total destruction to cities, making war, and wiping out entire armies in a single night.
3. The word “angel” literally means “one who brings tidings; a messenger.” So, angels are literally messengers of God. But, who are God's messengers today? The Bible teaches that believers (the church) are God's messengers. We are called the ambassadors of Christ.
4. So what part do angels play in God's program for the church age today? Do we need angels?
5. As we have learned before, the apostle Paul gave us a threefold timeline in Ephesians chapter 2 that helps us to place Scripture in its proper context, and to understand different subjects and how they have changed over the course of history.
 - **“Time Past” (vs. 11)** – This was when God dealt with the world through the nation of Israel, and on the basis of His prophetic program with Israel. There was a middle wall of partition between Israel and the Gentiles, with Israel enjoying a favored status.
 - **“But Now” (vs. 13)** - Today, Israel's prophetic program has been temporarily suspended and God is forming something altogether new - the church, the body of Christ. We are not living under Israel's prophetic program, but in the mystery program revealed through Paul. There is no distinction between Jew and Gentile.
 - **“Ages to Come” (vs. 7)** - This deals with the events that will happen after this present dispensation of grace ends and we are occupying the heavens. God will resume His prophetic program with Israel and bring it to its ultimate fulfillment.
6. Here are some interesting facts:
 - In “time past” portions of Scripture, there are almost 200 references to angels.
 - In the “but now” books that Paul wrote, there are only about 13 references.
 - In the “ages to come” books, there are almost 100 references.
7. In Paul's 13 references writing to the church, angels are never said to be ministering to church age believers. Why is this? Let's begin to look at some of the main functions of angels in time past, and compare that to what God is doing today.

In time past, angels are seen giving instruction and understanding.

1. An angel instructed Gideon to deliver Israel from the Midianites. Judges 6
2. An angel instructed Hagar to return to Abraham and Sarah. Genesis 16:7-9
3. An angel instructed Elijah to confront the king's messengers, and gave him understanding as to what to say. 2 Kings 1:3-4
4. The book of Zechariah is a perfect example of an angel giving instruction and understanding. Zechariah 1:8-11, 14, 18-19; 4:1-7; 6:1-5
5. In Daniel 10, Daniel sought for understanding, and an angel appeared to give him understanding. Daniel 10:12-14
6. In Matthew 1:18-25, Joseph was perplexed and didn't know what to do. An angel came and instructed Joseph, and gave him understanding concerning Mary.

Today, angels are never said to give believers instruction and understanding.

1. Do we need instruction today? Do we need spiritual understanding? Absolutely! The question is, "How do we get it?" Do I wait on an angel to come and instruct me and enlighten me? What did Paul teach the church of today?
2. We have something better than an angel!
3. We have God's very Spirit living inside of us to teach and instruct us.
 - The Holy Spirit intercedes for us in prayer. Romans 8:26
 - The Holy Spirit enlightens us with spiritual wisdom. 1 Corinthians 2:9-14
4. We are one with Christ and complete in Him. Colossians 1:27; 2:10
 - In Christ are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge, and we are in Christ! Therefore we can have a full assurance of understanding. Colossians 2:2
5. We have the completed Word of God. 2 Timothy 3:16-17
 - We have something they didn't have in time past. We have the final, complete, authoritative, Word of God. **And** we have God's Spirit within us to teach it to us. The One who wrote it lives inside of us!
 - Angels don't think up and create truth, they only deliver it. They are messenger boys, if you will. But we already have it all, right here, in God's Word.
6. This is why angels are not coming and giving us instruction today. We have everything we need in Christ and in God's Word. The way we got it is by simply placing our faith in what Christ did for us on the cross.
7. We simply don't need angelic instruction today. In fact Paul told the Galatians that if an angel were to come and preach to them any other gospel than what he had preached to them, "*let him be accursed.*" Galatians 1:8
 - If a person were to say, "An angel appeared to me and said..." - Not interested!
 - If a person were to say, "I was studying God's Word last night and the Holy Spirit revealed something to me I had never seen before..." - Now I'm interested!

8. I'm not interested in "Thus saith an angel," but I am interested in "Thus saith the Word of the Lord."

In Conclusion:

1. Many people today have gotten derailed by experience-based religion. This is very dangerous. Your experiences and feelings are not the test of truth. God's Word is.
2. It is so easy to be deceived when your faith is in mystical experiences. The Bible says that Satan transforms himself into an angel of light.
3. Remember, if you know Christ today as your Savior, you are indwelt by God's Spirit, you have been made one with Jesus Christ, and you have the complete revelation of God's Word in your hand. God has given you everything you need to obtain spiritual instruction and understanding. You are complete in Christ.
4. You don't need an angelic visitor to come and instruct you, but you do need to see the absolute sufficiency of who you are in Christ.
5. In fact, the Bible tells us that we, as believers, teach and instruct angels (Ephesians 3:9-10)! Do angels watch us? What do we teach them? Next week we will find out.