

He Will Command His Angels Concerning You

Psa. 91:11-12

Introduction:

1. "He will command His angels concerning you, to guard you in all your ways. They will bear you up in their hands, that you do not strike your foot against a stone."
2. This was the passage used by Satan when he tempted Jesus. He had taken Him to the pinnacle of the temple and said, "If you are the Son of God throw yourself down because it is written, 'He will command His angels concerning you.'"
3. The activity of God's angels has always intrigued me. Sometimes people speak of Guardian Angels. This passage certainly lends support to this idea. And the whole context of Psa. 91 speaks of God's deliverance, and protection for those who love Him.
4. Who are these angels? What is their role in God's creation? How does God use them for our benefit? What does the Bible say?
5. Time limitations will not permit us to consider all the Bible has to say about angels. If you are looking for a broad encyclopedic study I would recommend the seven-page article by G. B. Funderburk in Zondervan Pictorial Encyclopedia of the Bible ("Angel," vol. 1, pp. 160—166).

Discussion:

- I. Psalm 91 defines God as the one in whom we can trust.
 - A. He is described as follows.
 1. A shelter.
 2. A refuge and fortress.
 3. He delivers.
 4. He covers with his wings and provides refuge.
 5. With Him fear is unnecessary. Terrors of the night, arrows during the day, pestilence, destruction, plague have no effect on those who have made the Lord their refuge. Even though ten thousand fall at our right hand, God protects those that are His.
- B. There is only one condition to such deliverance. Love for the Lord (14).
- C. It is in this context of God's faithful loyalty to those who love Him that the Psalmist says, "He will give His angels charge to guard you in all your ways."
- II. The origin and identity of angels.
 - A. This Psalm identifies the angels as God's (v. 11). That they do what He charges them to, and He charges them to guard us.
 1. Thus they are servants of God.
 2. Who work for our benefit.
 - B. This identification dovetails with what is said in Heb. 1:14 of angels. "Are they not ministering spirits, sent out to render service for the sake of those who will inherit salvation?"
 - C. Psa. 148:1-5 identifies angels as created by God, same as the sun and moon and stars, etc. Everything that God has created is for our benefit.

- D. The word “angel” comes from the Greek word *anggelos*, meaning “messenger.” The Hebrew word *malakh*, also means “messenger.”
1. Sometimes this word is used to designate human messengers: a prophet (Hag. 1:13) or a priest (Mal. 2:7).
 2. Sometimes to designate special spiritual beings “between” God and men. Gabriel spoke to Daniel and referred to Michael helping him (Dan. 9, 10). Gabriel spoke to Mary announcing the coming birth of Jesus (Lk. 1:26) and to Zacharias about the coming of John (Lk. 1:19). Jude says, “Michael, the archangel argued with the devil about the body of Moses” (v. 9).
 3. The context determines whether the author is referring to these special spiritual beings or to human messengers. Heb. 1 and 2 may use the term both ways. The writer distinguishes the angels from the Son of God in chapter 1. I take this to be a reference to the special spiritual beings. But in chapter 2 he refers to the word spoken through angels. In chapter 1 he had referred to this word as spoken through the prophets. But note also Acts 7:38, 53 where Stephen refers to an angel speaking to Moses on Sinai with oracles for the people.
 4. We are primarily concerned in this study with the work of the special spiritual beings whose nature is between that of God and man.

III. How does God use these special spiritual beings for our benefit? What I would like to do is survey some of the biblical passages that give us insight into their activity. There are 5 areas of activity that I would note.

- A. They announce and forewarn.
 1. An angel announced the birth of Isaac (Gen. 18:9ff).
 2. An angel announced the birth of Samson (Judges 13:2-24).
 3. Gabriel announced the birth of John and Jesus (Lk. 1:13, 30) and to the shepherds (Lk. 2:8-15).
 4. They warned of the coming destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah (Gen. 18:16-19:20).
 5. Gabriel revealed the coming judgment of God to Daniel (Dan. 8:19).
 6. Joseph was warned to take Jesus to Egypt (Matt. 2:13).
 7. John was warned about the coming judgment of evil and the victory of God’s people (Rev. 1-22).
- B. They guide and instruct.
 1. When Moses led the Israelites out of Egypt, “the angel of God went before them” (Ex. 14:29). This angel was in evidence by the pillar of cloud by day and the pillar of fire by night.
 2. God said, “I am going to send an angel before you to guard you along the way and

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bring you into the place which I have prepared. Be on your guard before him and obey his voice; do not be rebellious toward him, for he will not pardon your transgression, since My name is in him. . . My angel will go before you and bring you into the land” (Ex. 23:20-23).

3. In Acts 7:38, 53 Stephen said that an angel spoke to Moses on Mount Sinai and gave him living oracles to pass on to the people. The work of angels not only

involves physical guidance, but spiritual instruction as well. Cf. Heb. 2:2.

4. An angel appeared to Cornelius instructing him to send to Joppa and find Peter (Acts 10:3-5). The angel said, "He will speak words to you by which you will be saved" (11:14).

C. They guard and defend.

1. Already we have talked about the concept of guardian angels. And Scripture gives powerful evidence of this function. This concept carries a very personal element. Jesus said of "these little ones," (probably referring to children) that "their angels in heaven continually see the face of My Father" (Matt. 18:10).
2. When Sennacherib's army threatened Hezekiah 2 Kings 19:35 says, "that night the angel of the Lord went forth, and slew a hundred and eighty-five thousand in the camp of the Assyrians."
3. In Acts 5:19 an angel opened the gates of the prison and released the apostles

who

had been preaching Jesus. They returned to their work in the temple preaching Jesus crucified by leaders of the Jews but raised from the dead by God.

4. In Acts 12 an angel let Peter out of prison. In verse 15 when he had come to the house of Mary and knocked at the door, Rhoda reported that Peter was at the gate. The people said, "It is his angel." Notice the personal perception that they have.

D. These and other passages indicate that angels minister to people in times of need.

1. After Jesus' temptation in the wilderness Matt. 4:11 says, "Angels came and ministered to Him."
2. In Gethsemane before His crucifixion He prayed in agony. Luke says, "An angel from heaven appeared to Him, strengthening Him" (22:43).

E. Angels assist in judgment.

1. In an incredible story in Acts 12:22-23 Herod received praise from the people who cried out, "The voice of a god and not of a man!" "An angel of the Lord struck him because he did not give God the glory, and he was eaten by worms and died."
2. Matt 25:31 describes the judgment. "When the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the angels with Him, then He will sit on His glorious throne," and separate the sheep from the goats.

IV. What conclusions can we draw from our study about angels? There are many things, I am sure we do not know about the work of angels. Were it not for what we are told in Scripture we would know nothing of their activity.

- A. They are created beings.
- B. They exist in the spiritual dimension between God and man.
- C. They are ministering spirits sent out by God for service for the sake of those who will inherit salvation.
- D. They are concerned about me personally and it would appear that one in particular may be assigned to me. I hope that he always sees the face of my Father in heaven.
- E. I hope that he finds me listening to his guidance and submitting to his instruction. I pray that he guard and defend me and care for me in special times of need. I pray that when he assists in judgment that he can experience the joy of seeing me numbered among the sheep.

Conclusion:

1. How does a greater awareness of the work of angels affect you?
2. Does it make you listen more carefully to the instruction? Does it motivate you to greater loyalty to God?
3. Remember the Psalm that we read at the beginning? It is all about our trust in the Lord. When you recognize that He has given His angels charge concerning you, to guard you in all your ways, are you motivated to trust and obey Him?