

Introduction

The study of Angels is a very important topic in the Bible.

I don't usually preach topical messages. However in order to get a full picture from the Bible about Angels which has been especially requested, we need to cover lots of passages.

As we have already discovered in the book of Acts, Angels were important in the establishment of the early Church.

They were also important in the Christmas story, involving Mary, Joseph and the Shepherds.

In order to understand all about Angels that I can teach you in 40 minutes, I am going to divide my message into three sections.

These are:

1. What the Bible teaches about Angels.
2. Documented stories about Angel activity in recent history.
3. Practical application for our lives today.

1. What the Bible teaches about Angels.

a) The existence of Angels.

It is important that we first understand that Angels do exist today and that both Jesus and the Apostles taught about them.

Matthew 18: v.10 in the N.L.T.

¹⁰ "Beware that you don't look down on any of these little ones. For I tell you that in heaven their angels are always in the presence of my heavenly Father.

Mark 13: v. 32 in the N.L.T.

³² "However, no one knows the day or hour when these things will happen, not even the angels in heaven or the Son himself. Only the Father knows.

Jesus believed and taught about the reality of the existence of Angels.

Also the Apostles taught about their existence and many of them experienced Angel activity.

The main reason for Paul writing a letter to the Colossians was to correct the Gnostic theory of the worshipping of Angels.

People in the Church were worshipping Angels and this was wrong.

It was likely that if these Angels received worship that they would have been fallen Angels, and therefore demonic.

(Colossians 2: v.18 in N.L.T.)

¹⁸ Don't let anyone condemn you by insisting on pious self-denial or the worship of angels, saying they have had visions about these things. Their sinful minds have made them proud,

Naturally Peter taught about the existence of Angels because he had experienced an Angel delivering him from prison and the custody of 16 Roman Soldiers.

(1 Peter 3: v.22 in N.L.T.)

²² Now Christ has gone to heaven. He is seated in the place of honor next to God, and all the angels and authorities and powers accept his authority.

The Apostle John also taught about the existence of Angels, quoting Jesus in John 1: v.51 and also teaching in Revelation chapter 12: v.7.

John also records an incident in Revelation 22: v.9 which we need to read.

(Revelation 22: v.8-9)

⁸ I, John, am the one who heard and saw all these things. And when I heard and saw them, I fell down to worship at the feet of the angel who showed them to me. ⁹ But he said, “No, don’t worship me. I am a servant of God, just like you and your brothers the prophets, as well as all who obey what is written in this book. Worship only God!”

This verse not only declares the existence of Angels **but prohibits the worship of them.** Of course there is a very large amount of teaching in the Old Testament scriptures about the existence of Angels, but we will come to some of these passages later as we see and learn about other aspects concerning Angels.

- b) **Description of Angels** - Q. What exactly are Angels? Well the Bible teaches us that Angels are “**created beings**”.

(Col.1: v.15- 16 in N.L.T.)

¹⁵ Christ is the visible image of the invisible God.

He existed before anything was created and is supreme over all creation,

¹⁶ for through him God created everything
in the heavenly realms and on earth.

He made the things we can see

and the things we can’t see—

such as thrones, kingdoms, rulers, and authorities in the unseen world.

Everything was created through him and for him.

Although Angels are created beings, they are **NOT created like us.**

They are “**spiritual beings**”. They are different.

However they do appear in a visible form and even in a human form and look like ordinary men.

All appearances in the Bible of Angels have been **men.**

So if you are rescued by an Angel and you are Japanese, expect that Angel to **look Japanese or definitely Asian.**

(Slide of an Angel with wings next to a Japanese man, and put a red cross over the Angel with wings)

Don’t expect Angels to have long white robes and wings!

Angels always appear to people in a way that the person can understand and relate to.

(Gen. 19: v.1-3 in the N.L.T.)

That evening the two angels came to the entrance of the city of Sodom. Lot was sitting there, and when he saw them, he stood up to meet them. Then he welcomed them and bowed with his face to the ground. ² “My lords,” he said, “come to my home to wash your feet, and be my guests for the night. You may then get up early in the morning and be on your way again.”

“Oh no,” they replied. “We’ll just spend the night out here in the city square.”

³ But Lot insisted, so at last they went home with him. Lot prepared a feast for them, complete with fresh bread made without yeast, and they ate.

Angels are created beings and spiritual beings, but also beings of “**great might and power**”.

2 Peter 2: v.11 in N.L.T.

¹¹ But the angels, who are far greater in power and strength, do not dare to bring from the Lord a charge of blasphemy against those supernatural beings.

Psalm 103: v.20 in N.L.T.

Praise the LORD, you angels,

you mighty ones who carry out his plans,

listening for each of his commands.

One Angel was able to destroy the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah, and one Angel killed the first born sons and animals in Egypt.

(Isaiah 37: v.36. in N.K.J.)

³⁶Then the angel of the LORD went out, and killed in the camp of the Assyrians one hundred and eighty-five thousand; and when *people* arose early in the morning, there were the corpses—all dead.

Yes Angels are very strong, but God is almighty and much stronger.
Angels are delegated to do God's work.

(2 Thess. 1: v. 7)

⁷and to *give* you who are troubled rest with us when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven with His mighty angels,

There are also various "ranks and orders of Angels".

It appears from the Bible that the Angels are run like an army with Jesus as the commander in chief.

(1 Peter 3: v.22 in N.L.T.)

²²Now Christ has gone to heaven. He is seated in the place of honor next to God, and all the angels and authorities and powers accept his authority.

Q. How many Angels are there?

The Bible teaches that there are so many that you can't even count them.

(Hebrews 12:v. 22 in N.L.T.)

²²No, you have come to Mount Zion, to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to countless thousands of angels in a joyful gathering.

- c) The Disobedience of some Angels. - We know that originally angels were created good.
However some of them sinned.

(2 Peter 2: v.4 in N.L.T.)

⁴For God did not spare even the angels who sinned. He threw them into hell, in gloomy pits of darkness, where they are being held until the day of judgment.

We are not certain about the sin that caused their judgement but we do know that Satan's downfall, described in Ezekiel Chapter 28 marks pride as Satan's sin.

The Bible speaks of another group of angels who are associated with Satan. These Angels are free to carry out Satan's purposes.

(Matt. 25: v.41 in N.L.T.)

⁴¹"Then the King will turn to those on the left and say, 'Away with you, you cursed ones, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his demons.

(Rev. 12: v.7-9 in N.L.T.)

⁷Then there was war in heaven. Michael and his angels fought against the dragon and his angels. ⁸And the dragon lost the battle, and he and his angels were forced out of heaven. ⁹This great dragon—the ancient serpent called the devil, or Satan, the one deceiving the whole world—was thrown down to the earth with all his angels.

These fallen angels are believed to be identical with demons mentioned throughout the New Testament.

These fallen angels **oppose God's purposes** (Daniel 10: v. 10-14)
They **afflict God's people**. (Luke 13: v.16, Matt. 17: v.15-18)
They **hinder the spiritual life of God's people**. (Eph. 6: v.12)
They **try to deceive God's people**. (1 Samuel 28: v.7-20)
There is no hope of the forgiveness of the sins of these fallen angels.
In fact the Bible teaches that we ourselves as believers will be involved in their judgement.

(1 Corinthians 6: v. 3 in N.L.T.)

³ Don't you realize that we will judge angels? So you should surely be able to resolve ordinary disputes in this life.

d) **The work of Angels**

What exactly do Angels do?

Angels have both a "Heavenly Ministry" and an "Earthly ministry".

In Heaven the Angels have a sort of Priestly service which involves worship.

We are not exactly sure of the details, but the following verses give us some indication.

Isaiah 6: v. 1-3 in N.L.T.

It was in the year King Uzziah died that I saw the Lord. He was sitting on a lofty throne, and the train of his robe filled the Temple. ² Attending him were mighty seraphim, each having six wings. With two wings they covered their faces, with two they covered their feet, and with two they flew. ³ They were calling out to each other,
"Holy, holy, holy is the LORD of Heaven's Armies!
The whole earth is filled with his glory!"

Revelation 5: v. 11-12 in N.L.T.

¹¹ Then I looked again, and I heard the voices of thousands and millions of angels around the throne and of the living beings and the elders. ¹² And they sang in a mighty chorus:
"Worthy is the Lamb who was slaughtered—
to receive power and riches
and wisdom and strength
and honor and glory and blessing."

The earthly ministry of Angels is very wide and extensive.

They are related to winds, fires, storms, and pestilence.

Some of their activity is described in the following verses.

Psalms 103: v.20 in the N.K.J.

²⁰ Bless the LORD, you His angels,
Who excel in strength, who do His word,
Heeding the voice of His word.

Psalms 104: v.4 in the N.K.J.

⁴ Who makes His angels spirits,
His ministers a flame of fire.

1 Chronicles 21: v. 15,16, 27 in the N.K.J.

¹⁵ And God sent an angel to Jerusalem to destroy it. As he was destroying, the LORD looked and relented of the disaster, and said to the angel who was destroying, "It is enough; now restrain your hand." And the angel of the LORD stood by the threshing floor of Ornan the Jebusite. ¹⁶ Then David lifted his eyes and saw the angel of the LORD standing between earth and heaven, having in his hand a drawn sword stretched out over Jerusalem. So David and the elders, clothed in sackcloth, fell on their faces. ²⁷ So the LORD commanded the angel, and he returned his sword to its sheath.

The nation of Israel has a special relationship to angels in the sense of an angelic guardianship.

Dan.12: v. 1 in N.K.J.

“At that time Michael shall stand up,
The great prince who stands *watch* over the sons of your people;
And there shall be a time of trouble,
Such as never was since there was a nation,
Even to that time.
And at that time your people shall be delivered,
Every one who is found written in the book.

Ezekiel 9: v. 1 in N.K.J.

Then He called out in my hearing with a loud voice, saying, “Let those who have charge over the city draw near, each *with* a deadly weapon in his hand.”

Dan. 11: v.1. in N.K.J.

Also in the first year of Darius the Mede, I, *even* I, stood up to confirm and strengthen him.)

In the main angels “**Do service for God’s people.**”

Hebrews Chapter 1: v. 14 calls them “**ministering servants**”

There are many examples of this in the Bible.

Angels **helped Abraham in Genesis chapter 19,**

Gideon in Judges chapter 6, **Mary** in Luke chapter 1,

the **Shepherds** in Luke chapter 2, **Peter** in Acts 12, and **Paul** in Acts 27.

Typically we can say that Angels **will do the following;**

They guide the believer. – They guide the worker to the sinner.(Acts 8: v.28) and the sinner to the worker.(Acts 10: v.3)

Angels cheer and strengthen God’s people.

(1 Kings 19 : v. 5-8 in N.L.T.)

⁵Then he lay down and slept under the broom tree. But as he was sleeping, an angel touched him and told him, “Get up and eat!” ⁶He looked around and there beside his head was some bread baked on hot stones and a jar of water! So he ate and drank and lay down again.

⁷Then the angel of the LORD came again and touched him and said, “Get up and eat some more, or the journey ahead will be too much for you.”

⁸So he got up and ate and drank, and the food gave him enough strength to travel forty days and forty nights to Mount Sinai, the mountain of God.

Angels defend, protect, and deliver God’s servants.

(Daniel 6: v.21-23 in N.L.T.)

²¹Daniel answered, “Long live the king! ²²My God sent his angel to shut the lions’ mouths so that they would not hurt me, for I have been found innocent in his sight. And I have not wronged you, Your Majesty.”

²³The king was overjoyed and ordered that Daniel be lifted from the den. Not a scratch was found on him, for he had trusted in his God.

Angels are eye witnesses of the Church, this means they notice the things that we do.

(1 Corinthians 11: v. 7-10 in the N.L.T.)

⁷A man should not wear anything on his head when worshiping, for man is made in God’s image and reflects God’s glory. And woman reflects man’s glory. ⁸For the first man didn’t come from woman, but the first woman came from man. ⁹And man was not made for woman, but woman was made for man. ¹⁰For this reason, and because the angels are watching, a woman should wear a covering on her head to show she is under authority.

Angels guard and care for the dead believers.

Luke 16: v.19-22. In N.L.T.

¹⁹ Jesus said, "There was a certain rich man who was splendidly clothed in purple and fine linen and who lived each day in luxury. ²⁰ At his gate lay a poor man named Lazarus who was covered with sores. ²¹ As Lazarus lay there longing for scraps from the rich man's table, the dogs would come and lick his open sores.

²² "Finally, the poor man died and was carried by the angels to sit beside Abraham at the heavenly banquet. The rich man also died and was buried,

This is **encouraging for believers when they die.**

I have never thought about this before, but it is clear from the Luke passage I quoted you and from Matt. 24: v. 31.

Angels accompany Jesus Christ at His second coming.

They will separate the righteous from the wicked and execute God's wrath upon the wicked. (Matt. 25: v.31, 32: 2 Thess.17,8.)

So this is not all that the Bible says but it is certainly **the main points of doctrine.**

It is enough information to at least get a Biblical perspective on Angels.

2. Documented stories about Angel activity in recent history.

a) **Angels in the 2nd World War** – The first thing that I need to say is that God does not take sides in war. He has his own purposes and plans.

If people go against these then His angels do his work by his command.

What we do know from history is that if God's people cry out to Him then God moves in answer to prayer and that sometimes involves Angelic activity.

Of course it has to be God's will and plan for His purposes.

During the Second World War in Europe the King of England called for a National Day of Prayer. It was because of this call to pray that every Church in England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland was filled with people praying.

God answered their prayers by sending Angels to help England in the war.

I am only going to record **one incident**, but there were many, because many people say **that it was this incident that actually made the difference in England defending their country and liberating Europe from Nazi Germany and Adolf Hitler's dictatorship.**

Many historians say it was the Battle of Britain in the air that won the war.

True Story

One Sunday morning in September 1940 a very large number of German aircraft attacked the English coastline.

The first batch was 180 planes from different directions.

Then they sent another 180 planes. Then there were more and more German planes.

The British planes were **completely out-numbered** and success for Germany was **almost certain.**

The Germans were now going to win the war and the English would have to surrender.

After some time it was reported that **185 German aircraft were shot down** and in flames.

The rest of the German planes retreated back to Germany.

Miraculously, against all logistical probability, the British Royal Air Force won the Battle for Britain.

This is why the event was called "**the Battle of Britain**".

Three German airmen who were captured asked the British officers where they got so many planes from. The intelligence of the German army knew exactly how many planes we had.

They said that they were completely out-numbered in the air.

Humanly speaking this was not the case. – but for God and His Angels.

It was reported by British pilots that on occasion pilots were flying aircraft who were **not British pilots** and their planes although they looked like British planes but were not part of a registered British squadron.

The air chief marshal believed that these planes were **piloted by Angels.**

Later a German intelligence officer said this;

“ With the striking of your Big Ben Clock each evening at 9 p.m. you used a secret weapon which we did not understand.”

It was very powerful and we could find no counter-measure against it.”

Clearly God answered prayer and used **Angels** to help defend Britain during the Second World War.

b) **Angels protect a whole village in Vietnam.**

In 1968 an entire village in South Vietnam is said to have experienced Angelic protection.

A whole village where **many Christians lived** was warned in advance that they were going to be attacked and killed by **Viet Cong soldiers** from the north.

The villagers had **no weapons or ammunition** and there were only a few people who lived in the village who could fight.

It was an impossible situation. What could they do?

Instead of trying to escape into the jungle **they decided to cry to God for help.**

They prayed fervently and sang songs of praise.

They experienced a strong sense of peace and courage.

The next day the first shots were fired and it seemed that they were all going to be killed.

Then suddenly the firing stopped.

There was **nothing but silence** for the rest of the day and night and the following few days.

Later some Viet Cong soldiers were captured by the South Vietnamese soldiers and were brought into the same village.

The villagers said to the captured soldiers.

“ Why did you stop your attack on our village a few days ago?”

This was their reply.

“ As we opened fire to attack your village, suddenly all around your village men appeared. We fired at them, but they wouldn’t fall.

Then they shone brighter than the sun, and we couldn’t aim at them.

We were terrified with fear and ran away back into the jungle.”

It appears that Angels protected that village in answer to prayer.

There are many more stories that make it clear that God will send Angels to protect His people if it is His will to do so.

However in **each documented case, prayer was the key to the release of God’s Angels into action.**

c) **An Angel spoke to one of my Church members in England.**

In a Church in England, where I was the Pastor, we had an old lady whom I will call Mrs. X to protect her identity.

She was actually the Grand-daughter of one of the most famous missionaries in British History. I didn’t realise this until I conducted her funeral service.

Anyway she came to our home for a Pastoral visit and told me a story about a visit she had received from an **Angel.**

The details are not important, but after the visit she had complete peace about the death of a member of her family who she was not sure had become a Christian.

She was once the head of a very famous institution in London.

I did not doubt her experience or sincerity.

Today she is in Heaven being cared for by an Angel.

So not all Angelic experiences are dramatic. Some stories, like this lady’s are simple but nevertheless, God in his mercy sent an Angel to this lady for a purpose. He will do this in our lives if God deems it part of His will and purpose.

Application

Q. How can we apply the teaching from the Bible today about Angels to our lives here in Japan?

It is important to have a Biblical knowledge about **Good Angels.**

This is important for two reasons.

Some people claim Angelic experiences that are not from God's good Angels but from Satan's agents, fallen Angels.

We need to be careful about supernatural experiences. They are not always from God and His Angels.

The second reason for a Biblical knowledge about Angels is that we might be encouraged in our Christian life.

God's purposes will always be fulfilled.

God will use His Angels in whatever way and purpose He chooses.

It is also important to know that PRAYER is always the key to any given situation.

That prayer must be sincere and earnest. God will release His Angels in answer to the prayers of His people if it is His will to do so.

Angels care for us between our death and our personal resurrection.

I have never thought about the story that Jesus told about the Rich man and Lazarus as being an encouragement for our after death experience before our resurrection.

However it is nice to know that Angels will care for us now and in the future when we die.

Praise God for His Angels.