

Brentview Baptist Church
Is That You Angel?



Pastor Dave Spate

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When you were walking up the front walk this morning and saw that the sermon would be about Angels, what kind of pictures came to your mind? Maybe it was this group of Angels (Charlie's Angels). We see Angels at Christmas, at concerts, on Cards and hanging above manger scenes. Every Valentine's Day we see baby angles, stark naked and flabby, holding miniature bows in their hands. We find Angels on Baby dedication Certificates, on Nursery walls, on tomb stones and record covers. And for a while we saw them on TV with shows like "Touched by an Angel". Today in their place are shows about fallen angels, werewolves and demons.

But there are 2 instances where most people take Angels very seriously. The first is in the area of guardian Angels. It gives me great comfort to believe that my children have a guardian Angel, who is assigned by God to care for them.

During World War 2, a pilot named Eddie 'Rickenbauer' and his crew were shot down over the South Pacific and ended up in a life raft where they drifted for weeks at sea. As the search progressed the story made the news headlines across North America. New York's mayor even called the city to pray for these men. After they were rescued he was interviewed by the New York Times and he said, 'This is the part I would hesitate to tell (except that I had 6 witnesses) one day when we had given up and were laying there with no hope, a Seagull came out of nowhere and landed on my head, I reached up my hand, caught and killed it. We ate it, and used some of it for bait and it saved our lives.' Later he was interviewed by Billy Graham who had heard he had become a Christian because of this experience.

Rickenbauer said to Billy 'I have no explanation but to say that God sent one of his angles to rescue me'. Now maybe you might say come on, it was just a Seagull, there was no angel involved in that situation, but how do you explain some of the similar type's of experiences in your life or in the lives of those you know. How else but God's Angelic protection can I explain? How after a 37,000 lb. blast went wrong and came directly at me I found myself standing with flying rock all around me and not being touched at all. How else do I explain how, while working on road construction in Edmonton I pushed a steel pike into the main power cable that services all of a huge subdivision called Millwoods, shutting off the power for 2 hours, and blowing the transformer off the power pole not more than 20 feet away. And yet it didn't kill me or even burn my bear hands with which I held the steal pike. (*Hebrews 1:14*)

The second type of Angel that is taken very seriously by most people is the Death angel. Peter Marshall used to love to tell the story about the merchant whose servant came back from the market very agitated. The servant asked his master if he could borrow his horse and leave town. When his master asked him why, the servant responded 'I was in the market when I bumped into a strange women and when I looked at her I realized that she was the death angel, she looked at me threateningly. So I need to borrow your horse and ride to Samara so I will be safe.' So the merchant gave him the horse, however later that day the master was in the

market himself when he ran into the same lady. Realizing she was the death angel, he asked 'Why did you threaten my servant?' The Angel replied 'It wasn't a threatening jester, it was one of surprise, for I was amazed to see him here, for I have an appointment to meet him in Samara this afternoon' (*Isaiah 37:36*). God uses Angels to carry out his bidding, and when God sends an angel on a mission, that mission will be accomplished no matter what town we end up in.

1. How often are Angels mentioned in the Bible?

Here is an interesting thing, while most of us don't give angels a second thought; Angels are mentioned 250 times in the bible. Think back to the Old Testament, Angels were mentioned often, they are shown to be God's messengers or God's ministering spirits. As I said before, an Angel was sent to guard the Garden of Eden; three Angels came to meet Abraham to tell him about the upcoming miracle of Isaac's birth. Angels spoke to Jacob at the ladder that went up into heaven, they delivered food to the discouraged Elijah, and they were present with Daniel, shutting the mouths of the Lions. The Psalmist speaks often as in (*Psalm 34:7*) of how the angels of the Lord encamped around those that feared God and he delivered them. In the New Testament, Jesus' birth was announced by angels. Joseph was warned to flee to Israel by an Angel, they fed Jesus after his temptations, and they were with Jesus on the 'Mount of Olives' as he wrestled to decide if he would go to the cross (*Luke 22:43*). Angels were at the tomb after Jesus' resurrection to give the ladies directions about when they could meet the resurrected Jesus and the list could go on and on. Angels were seen as God's present, active ministers and for the Jewish believers they saw the potential of Angels entering into their life's situation as not only possible but something that they prayed for.

2. What do we need to know about Angels?

Where do Angels come from? (*Colossians 1:15-17*)

"He (Jesus) is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation. For by Him all things were created, both in the heavens and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities, all things have been created through Him and for Him." Angels were created by God, specifically Jesus.

What are angels like? (*Hebrews 1:7*)

Paul describes them as being like Wind, perhaps because the angels move swiftly. Then he calls them Flames of Fire, In other words, once they start moving they are like a forest fire. Not even a whole crew of men can stand against them. It is a picture of power and swiftness which no man can control or stand against. In (*Isaiah 37*) it talks of a time when the Angel of the Lord moved against the army of Assyria, and in one night 185,000 of the enemy died. Why did that happen? (*Hebrews 1:7*) says 'The Angels are the servants of God who did the Lord's bidding.' which in this case was to protect the people inside of Jerusalem from an overwhelming enemy force. Now look at (*Hebrews 1:14*) Again you will see that they are called to serve but they are described using the term 'Ministering spirits'. What is interesting is that

instead of using the normal term for 'a person who serves another', which is "deaconos" from which we get the word deacon. The term used here is a rather unusual term from which we get our word for Liturgy. In other words, these are "liturgical creatures", creatures that while doing a service on earth find their direction and focus coming from heaven. They are God's angelic ministers, they may be seen or unseen, yet they can travel with the swiftness of the wind and carry the power of a mighty forest fire. Angels are ministering and serving on earth while being directed from heaven.

What do they do?

Go back to (Hebrews 1:14) and look at the last part of the verse. It says they are sent to serve (minister to) those who will inherit salvation. Think about every time you hear Angels mentioned in the bible, what are they doing? They are being sent to intervene in the lives of those who are the followers of God.

Let me give you 2 examples from scripture: (Acts 5:17-21) is the great story of Peter, on the night before he was about to be beheaded, an Angel of the Lord enters his cell. Peter can't even believe what is happening but as he stands up, the cell door swings open (not even disturbing the guards who have been chained to his wrists) he passes the guards in the hallway and finally the main gate swings open. He is free, why? The angel of the Lord, who was sent from the Lord himself, had intervened in his personal situation and on behalf of the Lord bringing about a miracle in his life. One of the problems concerning angels is that we can't see Angels with our naked eye we fail to see how secure we are in their care, which is really the care of God. That is why God gave us (2 Kings 6:11-17). This is that great story of when the king of Syria finds out that every time he is about to attack Israel, it's as if some spy has told them his battle plan.

The problem he finds is that God is telling the prophet Elisha his plans through dreams and Elisha is passing it on to the king of Israel. So the Syrian king sends a huge army to get Elisha. So, the next morning when Elisha's servant goes to get the morning newspaper from the doorstep he almost loses his dentures when he sees this huge Syrian army on the hillsides. He panics, but when he tells Elisha about this his only reply is 'Don't worry, God has it covered'. The servant replies 'You don't get it, there are a lot of them and I don't see God anywhere on the horizon'. To which Elisha prays 'Lord, open my servant's eyes, that he may see'. Immediately it is like he had a pair of Maui Jim sunglasses on and he sees a new depth of color and reality. He sees there in the sky 1000's upon 1000's of angels ready to protect them. God placed that picture in scripture because He knew that at times we all need a higher view than what we can see with our naked eye that God and his angels have more under control than we will ever know.

(Psalm 91:1, 2) *If you say, 'The Lord is my refuge, and you make the Most High your dwelling, no harm will overtake you, no disaster will come near your tent. For he will command his angels concerning you to guard you in all your ways; they will lift you up in their hands, so that you will not strike your foot against a stone.'* God sends his angels to care for his people. Do you grasp what is being said? Angels are real, when Angels do their work; they have the

swiftness of the wind and the power of a mighty forest fire. Their task is to do work on earth on God's behalf that work has as its central focus on your lives and mine and our children's lives. So when we tuck our children in bed at night and in prayer ask that God's Angels watch over them, that is exactly what happens. Now, I know from living this long and sitting with people as bad things happen to good people that at times angels must be told to stand down and not intervene. But I do believe that more often than we know, that just beyond what our eyes can see stands the Angel of the Lord ready to do battle as God's ministers to those of us who love the Lord.

Amy Grant has a song in which she talks about how unbeknown to us a impaired driver is heading toward us in a car, we may have run out of gas just before he would have crashed into us, because we have Angels watching over us. I know that last Sunday morning as Kathy ran across a road a man ran a red light at about 50 km. drove right passed her, missing her my less than a foot. And I could have been that an angel of the Lord, who graciously spared her. Because of that, I think it is fair and scriptural to ask the Lord to place his guarding angels around us and our children, for it is one of the 'perks and privileges' of being a follower of Jesus.

3. Let me tell you about Jesus...

Can I take you back, just for a moment to (*Hebrews 1:1-4*) If you study (*Hebrews 1 and 2*) you will find that the author of Hebrews spends a lot of time explaining that as wonderful as Angels are, Jesus is greater than angels. Therefore they need to put angels back in their proper perspective in comparison to Jesus. Know that is still happening today. I know that my last Dr.'s wife had no time for Jesus, but loved to light candles and pray for the help of angels. What she was missing was there is no Angel who is as wonderful or powerful as Jesus, for He is the Son of God. (*Hebrews 1:1-6*) Have you ever thought what Heaven would be like (*Revelation 5:11-14*) As the Angels in heaven look around them, at all they have experienced, all they can do and then look at Jesus, they fold their wings, bow their heads and quietly (with all their energy) yell "worthy is the lamb of God" and eternity isn't long enough for them to express what they know about him.

Now look at (Verse 10) Notice the Father chose Jesus to create 2 things, first he laid the foundations of the earth, and then his hands sculpted the heavens. Two extremes are spoken of here. What are the foundations of the earth? It is the atoms, those particles so small that we are just now beginning to see them with greatest telescopes, yet powerful enough to split there molecular orbits which holds the powers to level cities. Then on a larger scale His hands created and hung the Universe which is so large that its grandeur is beyond our ability to grasp it. They say if we were to travel the speed of light (184,000 ft/sec) or if you fired a bullet around the world at the speed of light it would have passed through your body 7 times before you could move. If you could travel that fast it would still take you 1000 years to cross our galaxy and 2 miles. Years to reach the edge of our solar system and our Jesus formed the atom and created our Galaxies.

How much greater is Jesus than all the Angels put together if he can do all that. Then he finishes the thought, he talks about something we all know far too well from experience (3rd. Law of Thermodynamics, everything over time wears down). That as time passes our fancy suit and our prettiest dress will wear out. When we look in the mirror we know that our bodies also begin to show the mileage they have logged. But the same God who was with Adam in the Garden, Moses at the Red Sea, who dispatched the angels to close the lion's mouths and the army to fly above Elisha his servant, is still the same one who is with us today.

What the author has been trying to say is that as wonderful as Angels are look at Jesus, who holds the title of the Son of God, who is worshipped universally by Angels, who created this universe from the stars to the Atoms and will never wear down, who gave you your salvation. That is who you have as you friend and counselor, God.

In 1875 Sankie (the song leader and soloist who traveled with the great evangelist DL Moody) was on a steamer traveling home for Christmas on the Delaware River, he was in a bad mood because Moody had prolonged the meetings and it looked like this Christmas Eve he wouldn't make it home for Christmas. When a man and women (with the Captain in tow) came up to him and said 'You're Sanky, the singer, aren't you? Will you sing for us your song 'There were 99'? Well he was in no mood to sing but he was caught, He said 'OK', but he decided to sing 'Savoir like a Shepherd led me'. When he was finished a man came out of the shadows and said with a Southern Drawl, 'Were you in the army in 1860's? Were you ever on guard duty in Maryland at Sharpsberg?' Sanky said 'I was, why do you ask?,' 'I was a Confederate sharpshooter and you made a great target in the moonlight that night as you stood on guard duty, I was just about to pull the trigger when you began to sing that same song (it was a favourite of my mothers) obviously I didn't shoot you that night.' To which Sanky replied 'Obviously I am grateful'. 'I always wondered what happened to that soldier I didn't kill, I never thought you would turn out to be so famous, but I would have recognized that voice and song anywhere. That night I tried to shoot you, but something just kept moving my gun away. Can we talk? (I think you owe me that) since the war nothing has gone right in my life.' And Sanky put his arm around his old enemy, his impatience gone and that night he led that man to a saving faith in Jesus.

You see the point of this passage is, An Angel can move a Rifle away (which is amazing to consider) but that night the Angels folded their wings and sang in heaven praise to Jesus the only one who being God's only son, the creator of the world and Savior, could offer salvation to this man. That is who your Jesus is. So know that according to scripture, often Jesus places his angels right beside us as we travel through life but even more importantly Jesus is there with you us.

Study on Angels

The angels were created by God before the earth was made:

(Colossians 1:15-17) "He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation. For by Him all things were created, both in the heavens and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities all things have been created through Him and for Him."

They are innumerable:

(Revelation 5:11) "Then I looked, and I heard the voice of many angels around the throne and the living creatures and the elders; and the number of them was myriads of myriads, and thousands of thousands."

(Hebrews 12:22) "But ye are come unto mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels," (KJV)

They are a higher order than Man:

(Psalm 8:3-8) "When I consider Thy heavens, the work of Thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which Thou hast ordained; what is man, that Thou art mindful of him? And the son of man, that Thou visits him? For Thou hast made him a little lower than the angels, and hast crowned him with glory and honor."

They are eternal:

(Luke 20:35-36) "But those who are considered worthy to attain to that age and the resurrection from the dead, neither marry nor are given in marriage; for they cannot even die anymore, because they are like angels, and are sons of God, being sons of the resurrection. They are mighty in strength."

(2 Peter 2:11) "Whereas angels who are greater in might and power"

Holy angels (those loyal to God) are ministers of the Lord:

(Psalm 103:20-21) "Bless the LORD, you His angels, Mighty in strength, which perform His word, obeying the voice of His word! Bless the LORD, all you His hosts, you who serve Him, doing, His will."

They praise and worship God:

(Nehemiah 9:6) *"You alone are the LORD. You have made the heavens, the heaven of heavens with their entire host, the earth and all that are on it, the seas and all that is in them. You give life to all of them and the heavenly host bows down before you."*

They deliver divine Man:

(Revelation 1:1-2) *"The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave Him to show to His bond servants, the things which must soon take place; and He sent and communicated it by His angel to His bond servant John, who testified to the word of God and to the testimony of Jesus Christ, even to all that he saw."*

Execute judgments of God:

(Genesis 19:1, 12-13) *"Now the two angels came to Sodom in the evening as Lot was sitting in the gate of Sodom. When Lot saw them, he rose to meet them and bowed down with his face to the ground, and then the two men said to Lot, whom else have you here? A son-in-law, and your sons, and your daughters, and whomever you have in the city, bring them out of the place; for we are about to destroy this place, because their outcry has become so great before the LORD that the LORD has sent us to destroy it."*

(Acts 12:21-23) *"On an appointed day Herod, having put on his royal apparel, took his seat on the rostrum and began delivering an address to them. The people kept crying out, "The voice of a god and not of a man!" And immediately an angel of the Lord struck him because he did not give God the glory, and he was eaten by worms and died."*

Angels also minister to God's people:

(Hebrews 1:13-1) *"But to which of the angels has He ever said, "sit at my right hand, until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet"? Are they not all ministering spirits, sent out to render service for the sake of those who will inherit salvation?"*

They strengthen in the hour of trial:

(1 Kings 19:1-8) *"Now Ahab told Jezebel all that Elijah had done, and how he had killed all the prophets with the sword. Then Jezebel sent a messenger to Elijah, saying, "So may the gods do to me and even more, if I do not make your life as the life of one of them by tomorrow about this time."*

"And he was afraid and arose and ran for his life and came to Beersheba, which belongs to Judah, and left his servant there. But he himself went a day's journey into the wilderness, and came and sat down under a juniper tree; and he requested for himself that he might die, and said, "It is enough; now, O LORD, take my life, for I am not better than my fathers."

He lay down and slept under a juniper tree; and behold, there was an angel touching him, and he said to him, ""Arise, eat." Then he looked and behold, there was at his head a bread cake baked on hot stones, and a jar of water. So he ate and drank and lay down again.

The angel of the LORD came again a second time and touched him and said, "Arise, eat, because the journey is too great for you." So he arose and ate and drank, and went in the strength of that food forty days and forty nights to Horeb, the mountain of God."

(Matthew 4:1, 11) "Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. Then the devil left Him; and behold, angels came and began to minister to Him."

(Luke 22:41-43) "And He withdrew from them about a stone's throw, and He knelt down and began to pray, saying, "Father, if you are willing, remove this cup from me; yet not My will, but Yours be done." Now an angel from heaven appeared to Him, strengthening Him."

They guard and protect:

(Psalm 91:9-12) "For you have made the LORD, my refuge, Even the Most High, your dwelling place. No evil will befall you, nor will any plague come near your tent. For He will give His angels charge 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 Kings 6:11-17) Now the heart of the king of Aram was enraged over this thing; and he called his servants and said to them, "Will you tell me which of us is for the king of Israel?" One of his servants said, "No, my lord, O king; but Elisha, the prophet who is in Israel, tells the king of Israel the words that you speak in your bedroom." So he said, "Go and see where he is, that I may send and take him." And it was told him, saying, "Behold, he is in Dothan." He sent horses and chariots and a great army there, and they came by night and surrounded the city. Now when the attendant of the man of God had risen early and gone out, behold, an army with horses and chariots was circling the city. And his servant said to him, "Alas, my master! What shall we do?" So he answered, "Do not fear, for those who are with us are more than those who are with them." Then Elisha prayed and said, "O LORD, I pray, open his eyes that he may see." And the LORD opened the servant's eyes and he saw; and behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire all around Elisha."

Deliver God's chosen:

(Daniel 6:16-22) "Then the king gave orders, and Daniel was brought in and cast into the lions' den. The king spoke and said to Daniel, "Your God whom you constantly serve will Himself deliver you."

A stone was brought and laid over the mouth of the den; and the king sealed it with his own signet ring and with the signet rings of his nobles, so that nothing would be changed in regard to Daniel.

Then the king went off to his palace and spent the night fasting, and no entertainment was brought before him; and his sleep fled from him. Then the king arose at dawn, at the break of day, and went in haste to the lions' den. When he had come near the den to Daniel, he cried out with a troubled voice.

The king spoke and said to Daniel, "Daniel, servant of the living God, has your God, whom you constantly serve, been able to deliver you from the lions?" Then Daniel spoke to the king, "O king, and live forever!" My God sent His angel and shut the lions' mouths and they have not harmed me, inasmuch as I was found innocent before Him; and also toward you, O king, I have committed no crime."

(Acts 5:17-21) "But the high priest rose up, along with all his associates (that is the sect of the Sadducees), and they were filled with jealousy. They laid hands on the apostles and put them in a public jail. But during the night an angel of the Lord opened the gates of the prison, and taking them out he said, "Go, stand and speak to the people in the temple the whole message of this Life." Upon hearing this, they entered into the temple about daybreak and began to teach"

They rejoice when one sinner repents:

(Luke 15:7, 10) "I tell you that in the same way, there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous persons who need no repentance, I tell you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents."