

WORKING ANGELS

TEXT: Ps 103:20 Bless the LORD, ye his angels, that excel in strength, that do his commandments, hearkening unto the voice of his word.

INTRO.: A. Neither saints nor angels in heaven simply sit around on clouds playing harps! Angels are beings which **"excel in strength"** & with their might & power, work for the Lord (**"...do His commandments"**). Their ministry for the Lord includes working for Him & also working for men. They have specific duties, spelled out in the Scriptures. Perhaps some angels never leave the throne room & spend all their time praising the Lord & worshipping Him, but mostly these super intelligent, super swift, super powerful beings are **"WORKING ANGELS"**.

B. Apparently the Lord wants us to know about the work & ministry & nature of these beings since He has included this information in His Word. So today we will study something about these fascinating creatures called angels & what they do...

I. ANGELS SERVE GOD:

A. They Sing, Praise & Worship God:

1. Our text (**Ps.103:20,21**) is really a commandment to worship, beginning with the imperative, **"Bless the Lord, ye His angels..."**
2. A similar command is found in **Ps.148:2**, "Praise ye Him, all His angels: praise Him, all His hosts."
 - a. Angels are always obedient (unlike men) and carry out their orders.
 - b. Angels shouted for joy at the creation & worshipped at Christ's birth.
 - c. Angels also are seen obeying this command in Rev.5 around the Throne of God in heaven.

Rev.5:11-12 *And I beheld, and I heard the voice of many angels round about the throne and the beasts and the elders: and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands; Saying with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing.*

B. They Minister Before the Lord:

1. One of their jobs is to care for the **"vials full of odours, which are the prayers of the saints."**

Rev.8:3-5 *And another angel came and stood at the altar, having a golden censer; and there was given unto him much incense, that he should offer it with the prayers of all saints upon the golden altar which was before the throne. And the smoke of the incense, which came with the prayers of the saints, ascended up before God out of the angel's hand. And the angel took the censer, and filled it with fire of the altar, and cast it into the earth: and there were voices, and thunderings, and lightnings, and an earthquake.*

2. There are also angels associated w/ministry in the heavenly temple.

Rev.14:15-19 *And another angel came out of the temple, crying with a loud voice to him that sat on the cloud, Thrust in thy sickle, and reap: for the time is come for thee to reap; for the harvest of the earth is ripe. And he that sat on the cloud thrust in his sickle on the earth; and the earth was reaped. And another angel came out of the temple which is in heaven, he also having a sharp sickle. And another angel came out from the altar, which had power over fire; and cried with a loud cry to him that had the sharp sickle, saying, Thrust in thy sharp sickle, and gather the clusters of the vine of the earth; for her grapes are fully ripe. And the angel thrust in his sickle into the earth, and gathered the vine of the earth, and cast it into the great winepress of the wrath of God.*

ILLUS.: There is no indication that these heavenly beings have any emotion associated with their unpleasant assignment. They simply obey. Apparently they instinctively know that whatever the Lord assigns them is right! Wouldn't it be wonderful if we too just decided that whatever God asks of us is best for us & just do it?!

C. They Perform Guard Duty:

1. At the Tree of Life in Eden after the fall of Adam & Eve.
2. At the Abyss (Rev.9:1-3) where an angel has the key to keep or release hordes of demons, and also later will cast Satan & lock him up there for 1000 years, & then loose him again **"for a little season."**

D. They Drive Horses & Chariots:

1. Elijah's translation to heaven via a chariot & horses of fire & **2 Ki.2:12** speaks of **"the chariot of Israel & the horsemen thereof..."**
2. Elisha surrounded by the Syrian army was also surrounded by another supernatural army of horses & chariots of fire.

2 Kings 6:16-17 *And he answered, Fear not: for they that be with us are more than they that be with them. And Elisha prayed, and said, LORD, I pray thee, open his eyes, that he may see. And the LORD opened the eyes of the young man; and he saw: and, behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire round about Elisha.*

3. Zechariah's vision included horses & riders from heaven.

Zech.1:8-10 *I saw by night, and behold a man riding upon a red horse, and he stood among the myrtle trees that were in the bottom; and behind him were there red horses, speckled, and white. Then said I, O my lord, what are these? And the angel that talked with me said unto me, I will shew thee what these be. And the man that stood among the myrtle trees answered and said, These are they whom the LORD hath sent to walk to and fro through the earth.*

S.A. Zech.6:1-8

4. At the 2nd Coming of Christ.

Rev.19:11-14 *And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war. His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head were many crowns; and he had a name written, that no man knew, but he himself. And he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: and his name is called The Word of God. And the armies which were in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean.*

ILLUS.: The visible things on earth are similar to the invisible things in heaven. They are apparently alike in size, shape & external appearance...differing only in substance. For example we know that in heaven there are cities, streets, mansions, horses, trees, etc.

Rom.1:20 *For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse:*

E. They Do Scout Work for God:

1. In Sodom & Gomorrah God sent angels down to scout out the conditions.

Gen.18:20-21 *And the LORD said, Because the cry of Sodom and Gomorrah is great, and because their sin is very grievous; I will go down now, and see whether they have done altogether according to the cry of it, which is come unto me; and if not, I will know.*

2. In Zechariah's vision of the spirit horses driven by angels he asked the man in his first vision who the riders were & was answered as follows:

Zech.1:10-11 *And the man that stood among the myrtle trees answered and said, These are they whom the LORD hath sent to walk to and fro through the earth. And they answered the angel of the LORD that stood among the myrtle trees, and said, We have walked to and fro through the earth, and, behold, all the earth sitteth still, and is at rest.*

II. ANGELS SERVE MEN:

A. They Lead Sinners to Preachers:

1. Cornelius, a Roman centurion had an angel appear to him & he was told to **"send men to Joppa"** to find Simon Peter. (Acts 10)
2. This Gentile's heart was prepared for the Gospel & the angel made sure that he was led to a preacher who could preach the Gospel to him so he could get saved.

B. They Lead Preachers to Sinners:

1. Philip the evangelist was led by an angel to the Ethiopian eunuch in the desert, about 100 miles away, to preach to him.
2. Philip was conducting a successful evangelistic campaign in Samaria when the angel appeared to him; but because of his obedience the eunuch got saved.

ILLUS.: Two principles are taught here: 1) Never question God's clear leading & 2) Never underestimate the importance of leading just one soul to the Lord.

C. They Warn Men of Danger:

1. Not only do angels warn men of spiritual danger (Cornelius above), but also of physical danger.
2. An angel warned Joseph of the mortal danger to the Christ child & told him to take Him into Egypt.

Mt 2:13 *And when they were departed, behold, the angel of the Lord appeareth to Joseph in a dream, saying, Arise, and take the young child and his mother, and flee into Egypt, and be thou there until I bring thee word: for Herod will seek the young child to destroy him. When he arose, he took the young child and his mother by night, and departed into Egypt:*

D. They Protect Saints:

Ps.34:7 *The angel of the LORD encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them.*

Ps.91:11 *For he shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways.*

1. Daniel experienced this protection in the lion's den.

Dan.6:22 *My God hath sent his angel, and hath shut the lions' mouths, that they have not hurt me: forasmuch as before him innocency was found in me; and also before thee, O king, have I done no hurt.*

2. Peter also experienced this protection while languishing in prison. **Acts 12:7-10.**

Acts 12:11 *And when Peter was come to himself, he said, Now I know of a surety, that the Lord hath sent his angel, and hath delivered me out of the hand of Herod, and from all the expectation of the people of the Jews.*

E. They Strengthen Saints:

1. Angels don't always deliver men from trouble, but they sometimes strengthen them for the trial, e.g. Elijah running from Jezebel.

1 Kings 19:5-8 *And as he lay and slept under a juniper tree, behold, then an angel touched him, and said unto him, Arise and eat. And he looked, and, behold, there was a cake baked on the coals, and a cruse of water at his head. And he did eat and drink, and laid him down again. And the angel of the LORD came again the second time, and touched him, and said, Arise and eat; because the journey is too great for thee. And he arose, and did eat and drink, and went in the strength of that meat forty days and forty nights unto Horeb the mount of God.*

2. Jesus also experienced the ministry of strength provided by angels after fasting for 40 days & nights. **"...the angels came & ministered unto Him."** *Mt.4:11*

F. They Come in Answer to Prayer:

1. The Church prayed & an angel released Peter from prison.

Ac 12:5-7 *Peter therefore was kept in prison: but prayer was made without ceasing of the church unto God for him. And when Herod would have brought him forth, the same night Peter was sleeping between two soldiers, bound with two chains: and the keepers before the door kept the prison. And, behold, the angel of the Lord came upon him, and a light shined in the prison: and he smote Peter on the side, and raised him up, saying, Arise up quickly. And his chains fell off from his hands.*

G. When Jesus prayed in the Garden an angel came & ministered to Him.

Lk.22:43 *And there appeared an angel unto him from heaven, strengthening him.*

3. Abraham understood the ministry of angels when he sent a servant to look for a bride for his son Isaac.

Gen.24:40 *And he said unto me, The LORD, before whom I walk, will send his angel with thee, and prosper thy way; and thou shalt take a wife for my son of my kindred, and of my father's house:*

4. Daniel was reading Jeremiah about the desolations of Jerusalem which would take place in 70 years & began to pray a prayer of confession & while he prayed an angel came...

Dan.9:22-23 *And he informed me, and talked with me, and said, O Daniel, I am now come forth to give thee skill and understanding. At the beginning of thy supplications the commandment came forth, and I am come to shew thee; for thou art greatly beloved: therefore understand the matter, and consider the vision.*

5. Later Daniel prayed & fasted for 3 weeks and finally an angel broke thru w/the answer to his prayer.

Dan. 10:12 *Then said he unto me, Fear not, Daniel: for from the first day that thou didst set thine heart to understand, and to chasten thyself before thy God, thy words were heard, and I am come for thy words.*

G. They Receive Saints Souls:

Lk.16:22 *And it came to pass, that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom: the rich man also died, and was buried;*

1. While this is the only instance where the angels are said to escort a believer's soul into glory, it is nonetheless significant.
2. It is comforting to know that we will not have to walk thru the valley of the shadow of death alone...not only will the Lord Himself be w/us, but He may even dispatch a heavenly escort service for us!

CONCL.: Such are just some of the duties of **"WORKING ANGELS."** What is their pay for all this work? No doubt it is the pleasure they derive from obeying & thus pleasing God! Would to God we would learn a lesson from these **"WORKING ANGELS!"**

