

Chapter 3

Appearances of Angels with Jesus

As we have seen, angels ministered openly to certain individuals at specific times. These appearances occurred when God was intervening in the affairs of the world. Most of the obvious ministry of angels has been directed toward the heirs of salvation. Beyond those appearances of angels, their ministry is secret or behind the scenes. There are two areas of angel's activity that are overwhelmingly obvious in the Bible. Both of these happen around the coming of the Lord Jesus.

Angels and Jesus' earthly ministry

Angels have always shown a great interests in Jesus Christ. When Jesus, the Son of God condescended to become a man, the attention of holy angels was upon Him.

His earthly life was seen by angels.

1 Timothy 3:16 NIV84 Beyond all question, the mystery of godliness is great: He appeared in a body, was vindicated by the Spirit, was seen by angels, was preached among the nations, was believed on in the world, was taken up in glory.

Angels are watchful over Christ in every phase of His life, work on earth, and eternal glory. They showed great interest in God's redemption and salvation that was afforded by the suffering and resurrection of Christ, (1 Peter 1:10-12) and marveled at God's great grace and mercy that was shown to man.

Luke 15:10 NKJV Likewise, I say to you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents.

Angels rejoice and are amazed at the depth of God's grace that provides man's salvation. In Revelation 5, when the redeemed sing the new song of the redeemed, God's holy angels join with all of the hosts of heaven and rejoice at what God has done. Everything about God's redemptive plan caused the angels to marvel and worship God. They dwell in the holy presence of God and know the depth of God's holiness and hatred for sin.

Angels' ministry in relation to Jesus' birth

- An angel of the Lord announced the birth of John the Baptist, the forerunner of Jesus Christ, (Luke 1:11-13).
- Gabriel announced His birth to Mary and told her He would be the Savior, (Luke 1:26-38).
- Joseph was informed that the child that was conceived in Mary was by the Holy Spirit, (Matthew 1:20).
- He was told that she would have a Son, and His name would be Jesus, for he

would save people from their sins, (Matthew 1:21).

- Angels announced His birth to shepherds in the fields of Bethlehem, (Luke 2:10-15).
- Immediately after the angel announced Christ's birth, the heavens were filled with a multitude of angels praising God and saying, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, goodwill toward men!"

Angels' ministry in relation to Jesus' Early Life

- Joseph was warned by an angel to "flee to Egypt and stay there until I bring you word, for Herod will seek to destroy the child," (Matthew 2:13).
- After Herod's death, the angel told Joseph to return to Israel, (Matthew 2:19-20).

Angels' ministry during Jesus' ministry

- Angels attended Christ after His temptation in the wilderness, (Matthew 4:11). Their ministry to Christ renewed and strengthened Him.
- Nathaniel was told that he would see angels ascending and descending upon Christ, (John 1:51).
- In the garden of Gethsemane, an angel attended Christ and strengthened Him, (Luke 22:42-43).

Angels are not seen at His betrayal, arrest, and crucifixion.

This must have been a stark contrast to Christ's constant contact with the Father and the host of angels. Jesus bore the full penalty and agony for our sin alone. This was a notable departure from Christ's position in His divine state. As the Son of God, He has always had full command over the angels. In eternity, He is the Lord of Hosts of angels. As the son of man, He humbled Himself to the death of the cross. He became a little lower than the angels and took on the weakness of the flesh. In His humility, Jesus had divested Himself of the exercise of His divinity. It is obvious that although angels did not attend to Jesus during His trial, suffering, and death, they observed everything that happened. No wonder angels marvel at the depth of God's love, mercy, and grace that brings us salvation. At His betrayal and arrest, Jesus illustrated that He was standing before them alone when He said He could call on His Father and have at his disposal more than twelve legions of angels, (Matthew 26:53).

Angels ministry at Christ's resurrection

- On the first day of the week, an angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and there was a great earthquake, and he rolled back the stone from the door of the tomb where Jesus lay, Matthew 28:2-7).
- An angel told the women who came to the tomb, "He is not here, for He has risen, just as He said," (Matthew 28:5-6). Then he showed them the place where Jesus had been laid.

- Mary Magdalene looked inside the tomb and saw two angels in white, one at the head and the other at the feet, where the body of Jesus had been, (John 20:11-13).

After the events of Christ's resurrection, angels are not seen until the time of His ascension.

Angels ministry at Christ's ascension

- When Jesus ascended back into heaven, two angels stood by those who were gathered and announced His return (Acts 1:10-11). When Jesus returns He will come with His angels in the glory of the Father.
- Now in heaven, Jesus is the Lord of hosts and angels give Him their worship, (1 Peter 3:22). Angels, authorities and powers have been made subject to Him.
- When Christ shall return, He will come with His angels in the glory of His Father, (Matthew 16:27).

Angels and the End Time

In the last days, the activity of angels is clearly addressed. Angels have been actively involved in the affairs of heaven and earth throughout time. The disclosure of their activity becomes more open during the last days. Throughout end time prophecies, the Lord God Almighty is seen dispatching His holy angels frequently. They will be assigned many varied tasks and are seen around the throne of God doing what they have been doing for ages. As is the case throughout time, they carry out the prerogatives of the Sovereign God. They protect, cover, pour out judgments, execute declarations of God's purposes, and many other varied ministries.

- Angels shall exalt the Lamb of God, (Revelation 5:11-12)
- They accompany Christ at His coming, (2 Thessalonians 1:6-7)
- Seven Angels who are in the presence of God are given seven trumpet judgments, (Revelation 8:2)
- In Revelation 15:58, the seven angels are given vials of God's wrath to be poured out on the earth.
- Michael and his angels fight the Devil and his angels, (Revelation 12:7-12).
- An angel proclaims the eternal Gospel, (Revelation 14:6-7).
- Holy angels worship God around the throne, (Revelation 7:11-12).

Angels will be involved in many activities in heaven and on earth in the last days. Throughout the Revelation, angels are active around the throne and are sent out with messages and power from God. Much of the activity of the tribulation and final battle with Satan involves angels, (Revelation 12:7-9; Revelation 14-20). It is an angel that comes from heaven with a great chain and the key to the

bottomless pit and binds Satan and casts him into the bottomless pit for 1,000 years.

- Revelation 21:9-27, An angel shows John the Bride of Christ.
- Revelation 22:1-5, An angel reveals the river of life, the throne of God, the City of God, and the Lamb.

Holy angels will be active in heaven and in the eternal perfect age. From the time of their creation, holy angels have ministered as God has directed them. They have faithfully served God and stand in His presence.