

Chapter 3

Appearances of Angels with Jesus

At specific times and places, the ministry of angels is open to certain individuals. Their appearances occurred as God intervened in the affairs of the world. Their service to God can be either ordinary or extraordinary. The principal ministry of good angels is worshipping and offering unceasing praise to God Almighty, (Job 38:7; Isaiah 6; Psalms 103:20-21; Psalms 148:2; Hebrews 1:6; Isaiah 6:3; Revelation 5:11-12). After man sinned in the Garden of Eden they are sent to minister to the heirs of salvation, (Hebrews 1:14). Their extraordinary service became imperative after sin entered the world and is intricately involved in the revelation of God to humanity. This area of ministry involves special revelations, blessings and care over God's people, and the execution of judgment upon the ungodly and enemies of God. During the times of God's judgments, angels are dispatched to execute His purposes, (Acts 12:22-23; 2 Kings 19:35; Matthew 13:30, 39, 49-50; 2 Thessalonians 1:7-8). Their activity is witnessed around fifty-seven (57) times during the judgements of the Book of Revelation. Special revelations of angels are noticed during major events and times of transition. Most of the obvious and open ministry of angels has been directed toward the heirs of salvation. Beyond those extraordinary appearances of angels, their ministry is secret or behind the scenes. There are two areas of angelic activity that are overwhelmingly obvious in the Bible. Both of these happen around the coming of the Lord Jesus.

Angels and Jesus' earthly ministry

Since Jesus, the Son of God, is the LORD of hosts, it is obvious that they are interested in everything He is, says, and does. When the incarnation of the Son of God occurred, 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 have demonstrated great interest in the person and ministry of Jesus Christ in every phase of His life, work on earth, and eternal glory. They were greatly interested in God's redemption and salvation that was afforded by the suffering and resurrection of Christ, (1 Peter 1:10-12)

and marveled at the grace and mercy that God showed 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.

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 have had first-hand experience and knowledge of the holy presence of God and the depth of God's holiness and hatred for sin.

The ministry and appearance of angels is mentioned fifteen times in connection with Jesus Christ.

Angels' ministry in relation to Jesus' birth

- Zechariah was going to burn incense in the temple of the LORD, and when he saw the angel of the LORD, he was startled and was gripped with fear, (Luke 1:5-25). The angel of the Lord announced the birth of John the Baptist, the forerunner of Jesus Christ. When Zechariah questioned and doubted the word of the angel Gabriel, he was made mute and was unable to speak until John was born.
- Six month later, Gabriel was sent to Nazareth, to a virgin named Mary and told her she was highly favored and would give birth to a son, and He would be the Savior, (Luke 1:26-38). Mary was greatly troubled at his word and wondered what kind of greeting this might be. The angel told her the Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So the holy one to be born will be called the Son of God. When Mary consented, the angel left her.
- After Mary was found to be with child through the Holy Spirit, an angel of the LORD appeared to Joseph in a dream, (Matthew 1:18-25). Joseph was informed that the child that was conceived in Mary was by the Holy Spirit and she would have a Son, and His name would be Jesus, for he would save people from their sins.
- After the birth of Jesus in Bethlehem, an angel announced His birth to shepherds who were watching their flocks at night, (Luke 2:10-12). When the angel of the LORD appeared to them, the glory of the LORD shone around them, and they were terrified. The angel said, "Do not be afraid. I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people." The angel told them they would find the baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger.
- Immediately after the angel announced Christ's birth, a multitude of the

heavenly host of angels appeared with the angel, praising God and saying, “Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, goodwill toward men!” (Luke 2:13-15)

Angels’ ministry in relation to Jesus’ Early Life

- Joseph was warned by an angel of the LORD to “escape 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, to the town of Nazareth, (Matthew 2:19-20).

Angels’ ministry during Jesus’ ministry

- After Jesus was led into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil for forty days, angels came and attended to Christ, (Matthew 4:11). The word “attended” means to serve food and drink, to wait upon, to pay attention to. Their ministry renewed and strengthened Him.
- After Nathaniel confessed that Jesus was the Son of God, he was told that he would see angels ascending and descending upon Christ, (John 1:51). The New Living Translation adds, “*the One Who is the stairway between heaven and earth.*” This appears to be similar to what happened when Jacob saw a ladder that ascended into heaven and the angels of God ascending and descending at Bethel. Jesus is the gateway and access to heaven and through Him angels will go up and down.
- When Jesus was praying in the garden of Gethsemane and the anguish of His soul was so great that His sweat became like great drops of blood falling to the ground, an angel attended Christ and strengthened Him, (Luke 22:42-43).

During Christ’s betrayal, arrest, and crucifixion angels were noticeably absent, as Jesus bore the full penalty and agony for our sin alone.

This must have been in stark contrast to the LORD’s constant contact with the Father and the host of angels. This was a notable departure from Christ’s eternal position and glory in heaven. As the Son of God, He always has had full command over the angels. In all eternity, He is the Lord of hosts of angels. As the son of man, He humbled Himself to the death of the cross and became a little lower than the angels and took on the weakness of the flesh. In His humility, Jesus divested Himself of the exercise of His divinity and fully bore the weight and

penalty of sin. 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. He told Simon Peter to put away his sword. Then He said, "Do you think that I cannot now pray to My Father, and He will provide Me with more than twelve legions of angels?" (Matthew 26:53).

Angels were very active around the resurrection of Christ.

- On the first day of the week, there was a great earthquake for an angel of the Lord descended from heaven, 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).

Acts 1:11 NKJV Behold, two men in white apparel stood by them, who also said, "*Men of Galilee, why do you stand gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will so come in like manner as you saw Him go into heaven.*"

Now in heaven, Jesus is the Lord of hosts and angels give Him their worship.

1 Peter 3:22 NKJV who has gone into heaven and is at the right hand of God, angels and authorities and powers having been made subject to Him.

Hebrews 1:6 says, "Let all God's angels worship Him."

When Christ returns, He will come with His angels in the glory of the Father.

At that time, Jesus will appear with all the holy angels with Him.

Matthew 25:31 NKJV "When the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him, then He will sit on the throne of His glory.

Matthew 16:27 says, He will come with His angels in the glory of His

Father and will judge all people according to their deeds.

This will be an amazing sight when all of the holy angels step into the world of visibility and appear with the Son of Man, the glorified Lord Jesus Christ.

Angels are very active during the end time events.

Angels have been actively involved in the affairs of heaven and earth throughout time, but in the last days, the activity of angels is clearly seen. The disclosure of their activity becomes more open and obvious during the last days. Throughout end time prophecies, the Lord God Almighty is seen dispatching His holy angels to accomplish judgment on the earth. The books of prophecy disclose their activities. They are also highly involved in activities and functions 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 will be involved in many activities in heaven and on earth in the last days.

Throughout the end times, 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).

- Angels shall exalt the Lamb of God, (Revelation 5:11-12)
- When the multitude of all nations, tribes, people and tongues stand before the throne and the Lamb, all the Holy angels stand around the throne of God with the redeemed and fall on their faces and worship God, (Revelation 7:9-14). *That will be a sight like none we have ever witnessed when the redeemed of all ages and the holy angels worship God together around the throne.*
- Seven angels who are in the presence of God are given seven trumpets and execute God's judgment, (Revelation 8:2).
- An angel is seen flying in the midst of heaven, proclaiming the everlasting Gospel to all who dwell on the earth, (Revelation 14:6-7).
- Michael and his angels will fight the Devil and his angels, (Revelation 12:7-12).
- In Revelation 15:58, seven angels are given vials of God's wrath to be poured out on the earth.
- When Christ returns to this earth, they accompany Him and take

vengeance on those who do not know Him, (2 Thessalonians 1:6–7).

- An angel comes down from heaven with a great chain and the key to the bottomless pit and he lays hold of Satan, binds him, sets a seal on him, and casts him into the bottomless pit for 1,000 years, (Revelation 20:1-3).

One of the seven angels told John, “Come, and I will show you the bride, the Lamb’s wife.” (Revelation 21:9-27).

He carried John away in the Spirit to the holy new Jerusalem that was descending out of heaven from God. He measured the city and described its glory. Her light was like a most precious stone, like a jasper stone, clear as crystal. Twelve angels attend the twelve gates of that city.

Revelation 22:1-5, that same angel revealed 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.