

“JESUS AND ANGELS”

"For there is born to you this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. And this will be the sign to you: You will find a Babe wrapped in swaddling cloths, lying in a manger." And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying: "Glory to God in the highest, And on earth peace, goodwill toward men!" (Luke 2:11-14 NKJV)

“Angel voices, ever singing Round Thy throne of light,
Angel harps forever ringing, Rest not day nor night;
Thousands only live to bless Thee, And confess Thee Lord of might.”

Francis Pott, 1861

“Angels, from the realms of glory, Wing your flight o’er all the earth;
Ye, who sang creation’s story Now proclaim Messiah’s birth.
Come and worship, Come and worship, Worship Christ the newborn King!”

James Montgomery, 1816, 1825

“Angels we have heard on high, Sweetly singing o’er the plains,
And the mountains in reply Echoing their joyous strains.
Gloria in excelsis Deo; Gloria in excelsis Deo.”

French Carol

“Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

An angel clad in white they see, Who sat and spake unto the three,

“Your Lord goes on to Galilee.” Alleluia! Alleluia!

Attributed to Jean Tisserand (died 1494)

These are a few of the hymns we sing at the times we celebrate the birth and resurrection of Jesus. These hymns recall the role that angels played in the life and ministry of Jesus.

Who can tell us more about angels than Jesus? He was present when they were created. He was there when they sang at Creation of the world and mankind. He was present when a third of them joined Satan in rebelling against God and with Satan they were cast out of heaven. Jesus dwelt in heaven with God as God’s Son where He was surrounded and served and worshiped by angels. They carried His Word to mankind. They fought against the spirit forces of evil. At His command they brought blessings and they brought curses upon both God’s people and unbelievers when God was pleased or offended.

1.) As in heaven, so on earth, angels served Jesus, Son of God. We know of their service especially in the narratives of His birth. Gabriel, an angel who stands in the very presence of the LORD, came to Zechariah to announce that he and Elizabeth would have a son who would be the forerunner of the Christ.

Months later Gabriel went to Mary and told her that she would be the mother of the Christ child. He then went to Joseph to tell him that Mary had conceived by the Holy Spirit and he was to name the baby Jesus. When Jesus was born, an angel announced His birth to shepherds and an angel chorus sang His praises.

Angels were probably responsible for the wondrous Star which led Wise Men to Jerusalem and then to Bethlehem. An angel came to Joseph and told him to flee to Egypt with Mary and the baby Jesus to escape Herod's murderous intent. An angel came to Joseph in Egypt to tell him when Herod was dead and it was safe to return to Judea.

It was the evil angel Satan who tempted Jesus in the Wilderness and afterward angels came to minister to Jesus. In one temptation Satan quoted Psalm 91 saying that if Jesus were the Son of God He could jump off the pinnacle of the Temple and angels would catch Him. Jesus resisted that temptation quoting another Scripture about not putting God to the test. When He was arrested by the gang led by Judas, He reassured His disciples –

"Or do you think that I cannot now pray to My Father, and He will provide Me with more than twelve legions of angels? How then could the Scriptures be fulfilled, that it must happen thus?" (Matthew 26:53-54 NKJV)

After the Resurrection, when the women came to the Tomb, they wondered who had rolled away the stone. They found two angels inside, guarding the tomb and with a message to carry to the disciples.

2.) Jesus came down to us from heaven. He knew and revealed more about angels than had ever been known before this.

He told us about the angels who watch over babies and children.

"Take heed that you do not despise one of these little ones, for I say to you that in heaven their angels always see the face of My Father who is in heaven. (Matthew 18:10 NKJV)

He told us of the joy of angels in heaven when a sinner repents and when a believer witnesses for Christ before worldly people.

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

"Also I say to you, whoever confesses Me before men, him the Son of Man also will confess before the angels of God. "But he who denies Me before men will be denied before the angels of God. (Luke 12:8-9 NKJV)

Jesus taught us that in the resurrection we will be like the angels. Angels have everlasting life. Since they do not die they do not need to produce children. We are now lower than the angels, but this may mean that in heaven we will be equal to them.

Jesus answered and said to them, "You are mistaken, not knowing the Scriptures nor the power of God. "For in the resurrection they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are like angels of God in heaven. (Matthew 22:29-30 NKJV)

In the parable of the rich man and Lazarus, Jesus revealed that when a saved person dies, they are carried to heaven by the angels.

"So it was that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels to Abraham's bosom. The rich man also died and was buried. (Luke 16:22 NKJV)

Jesus also shows us how the evil angel Satan works. In the Upper Room Jesus told His disciples, "for the ruler of this world is coming, and he has nothing in Me." We learn two things from this – Until Jesus comes again, Satan is the ruler of this world. Also, Satan tempts us by using the lusts and sinful desires he finds already in us. He tries to snatch the Word of God away before it takes root in the sinner's heart. In other cases, he sows his own seed among the good seed. In Church and among Christians there are also those who are serving Satan.

3.) There was much activity of angels at the first coming of Jesus to the world; there will be much activity at His second coming. Much that Jesus says about angels concerns His return in power and glory.

The second coming of Christ will begin with the defeat of Satan as ruler of the world:

"Father, glorify Your name." Then a voice came from heaven, saying, "I have both glorified it and will glorify it again."... Jesus answered and said,... "Now is the judgment of this world; now the ruler of this world will be cast out. (John 12:28,30a,31 NKJV)

Christ will be seated upon the throne of His glory:

"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. "All the nations will be gathered before Him, and He will separate them one from another, as a shepherd divides his sheep from the goats. "And He will set the sheep on His right hand, but the goats on the left. "Then the King will say to those on His right hand, 'Come, you blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: "Then He will also say to those on the left hand, 'Depart from Me, you cursed, into the everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels:'" (Matthew 25:31-34,41 NKJV)

He will not only judge all the nations, He will cleanse the earth of wickedness and unrighteousness. In His explanation of the parable of the wheat and the tares He said,

"The enemy who sowed them is the devil, the harvest is the end of the age, and the reapers are the angels. Therefore as the tares are gathered and burned in the fire, so it will be at the end of this age. The Son of Man will send out His angels, and they will gather out of His kingdom all things that offend, and those who practice lawlessness, and will cast them into the furnace of fire. There will be wailing and gnashing of teeth. Then the righteous will shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. He who has ears to hear, let him hear!" (Matthew 13:39-43 NKJV)

Jesus wants all His blood bought children to be with Him at the End of this Age. He doesn't want a single frightened child left behind:

"Then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in heaven, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. "And He will send His angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they will gather together His elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other. (Matthew 24:30-31 NKJV)

Watch and be ready. The Son of Man comes. We do not know the day.