

Meeker Christian Church ANGELS AND DEMONS

Just some food for thought as a footnote to last weeks sermon about evil deception: When asked why people watch and support movies that contain swear words and visualizations obviously against Biblical instruction they give this answer: “It is just reality.” The true reality is that watching and listening to unrighteous behavior has an affect on righteous conviction, actions and is an impediment to following the example and becoming more like Jesus..

Next it will be helpful to clarify a couple of definitions of terms related to last week and this weeks messages. The first is the word occult, *it is defined as “Involving or relating to supernatural, mystical, or magical powers or phenomena.”* i.e. A person purposefully participating in evil conduct. The second term cult is defined “as a relatively small group of people having religious beliefs or practices regarded by others as strange or sinister:”

The Spirit world is as much a reality as is the material world in which we live. However, advertising promotions, some books and games, along with television and movies have glamorized satan, demons and all the evil and diabolical occults that have risen around them. Their influences have caused some people to reject the existence of the spirit world as a mere product of their imagination. Other people have become enamored with the evil in the spirit sphere because it has been made to seem acceptable or even good and often very profitable in our society.

The Christmas season is a great reminder of the world of spirits from a Christian perspective. We are reminded of angels and their part in the proclamation of the conception of Mary by the Holy Spirit and of the Christ child to the world. But outside of professing Christians - few know or care that those angels and the Holy Spirit of the Christmas season often function in the same realm as satan and his demons.

There are several questions to be considered about the spirit world and the relationship of angels for Christians. The more we understand about God's messenger angels, the more we are prepared to combat the devil and his fiendish followers. Be aware that this world I am describing is the world around us that is mostly unseen except for the resultant activities of angels and demons.

Please be reminded satan and demons cannot MAKE a person do anything they are not willing in their own passion to do!!! "The devil made me do it" is in itself an outright lie. He/they may very well be the source of temptation, but they cannot make anyone do anything, the individual makes the choice!!!

1. How can we know there is a realm where spirits exist?

A. First we read that mankind was made in God's image. Genesis 1:26 *Then God said, "Let us make mankind in our image, in our likeness, so that they may rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky, over the livestock and all the wild animals, and over all the creatures that move along the ground."* And in the New Testament In John 4:24 *God is spirit, and his worshipers must worship in the Spirit and in truth.* In this realm of angels and demons around us, we have been given information about the eternal destination of the demons, it is a place called Tartarus and is the lowest place in the Lake Of Fire which is the eternal place of punishment for all who have rejected Jesus as Lord of their lives. 2 Peter 2:4. *For if God did not spare angels when they sinned, but sent them to hell, putting them in chains of darkness to be held for judgment;* In the Greek "hamartesan ton angelon = fallen angels and is a clear description given to differentiate from messenger angels of God.

Next look at Ephesians 6 verses 10 - 18 which is a concise discussion of this subject. **10** *Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power.* **11** *Put on the full armor of God, so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes.* **12**

*For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the **heavenly realms**. **13** Therefore put on the full armor of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground, and after you have done everything, to stand. **14** Stand firm then, with the belt of truth buckled around your waist, with the breastplate of righteousness in place, **15** and with your feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace. **16** In addition to all this, take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one. **17** Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. **18** And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the Lord's people.*

The material world in which we exist is the “dark world” with demon influence and possession manifested in everything unrighteous and evil, whereas the term heavenly realms is the description of the unseen spirit domain.

B. Another way of identifying that there is a spirit realm is from a study of secular history. In fact most of what we think we know about the spirit world has been developed by the so called "imagination" of writers and movie producers over the years. I have read and been told that some writers admit their inspiration for writing comes from direct contact with spirit beings through the occult of healings, seances, trances etc. Certainly satan wants only enough understanding to promote his evil schemes. As "prince of the earth" satan resists all attempts to make the message clear. God has already spoken through His revealed word, the Bible, and expects His followers to glean from it the truth for Christian living and earthly preparation for eternal life.

C. The Bible reveals a third way we may know of the presence of the spirit world - and that is personal contact. Note Hebrews Chapter 13:1-2: *Keep on loving one another as brothers and sisters. 2 Do not forget to show hospitality to strangers, for by so doing some people have shown hospitality to angels without knowing it.* So even without knowing it we may have encountered angels, and unfortunately it is even likely that we have encountered demons.

Here is some encouragement for Christians from the scriptures: Hebrews 1:14 **ARE NOT ALL ANGELS MINISTERING SPIRITS SENT TO SERVE THOSE WHO WILL INHERIT SALVATION?** This is one of the texts from which the idea of guardian angels has developed. In the Old testament Psalm 91:11 *For he will command his angels concerning you to guard you in all your ways:* Everyone who has accepted Christ as Lord - and by that acceptance will inherit salvation - has an angel or angels to serve them according to God's divine plan.

2. Another question may be - who are angels?

There is a great deal we know about angels from the scriptures, but there is a great deal more that tradition and superstition have added. Here are some scriptures for you to focus on from the Bible:

A. Angels are created beings John 1:3 speaking about Jesus *"Through Him all things were made; without Him nothing was made that has been made."*

B. There appear to be levels of authority or responsibility of angels. Michael is called an Archangel. Cherubim were placed outside of the Garden of Eden to guard the way to the tree of life according to Genesis 3:24 *After he drove the man out, he placed on the east side of the Garden of Eden cherubim and a flaming sword flashing back and forth to guard the way to the tree of life. after man had fallen.* Cherubim are mentioned by some of the prophets also. A third

group of angels are the Seraphim who are mentioned only two times in the complete Bible and both of those in Isaiah 6.

C. Satan and demons are fallen sinful angels who have no way for redemption that is revealed. Matthew 25:41 *"Then He will say to those on His left, depart from me, you who are cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels."*

It follows then - and this is the warning from today's message that those who have or continue to become enamored with the evil of the spirit world will have the same type of destination as their demonic counterparts. The very purpose for our existence is to rescue our friends, neighbors and acquaintances from the mouth of the burning fires of eternal condemnation. We do that by sharing the good news of the love of Jesus Christ with them.

D. Angels are also God's messenger entity through which punishment has and will be carried out against unrepentant mankind. Exodus 12:21ff records the event from which Passover comes in the marking of the top and sides of the doors of every household of Israel in Egypt. Some have translated that a death angel destroyed the firstborn of the Egyptians though it seems it may have been the Lord Himself note: Exodus 12:29 *At midnight the Lord struck down all the firstborn in Egypt, from the firstborn of Pharaoh, who sat on the throne, to the firstborn of the prisoner, who was in the dungeon, and the firstborn of all the livestock as well.*

But 2 Kings 19:35 makes it clear the angel involvement in other punishment: *That night the angel of the LORD went out and put to death a hundred and eighty-five thousand in the Assyrian camp. When the people got up the next morning—there were all the dead bodies!* And again in Psalm 78:49 *He unleashed against them his hot anger, his wrath, indignation and hostility—a band of destroying angels.* And yet again in the New Testament.

Matthew 13:49 *"This is how it will be at the end of the age. The angels will come*

and separate the wicked from the righteous." Add to all that, the book of Revelation is replete with examples of angels being God's means of punishment, many of the described creatures are angels already described by Old Testament prophets and in the context itself.

More references if you would like to check them out. Isaiah 14:1ff, Ezekiel 28:16-18, Revelation 12:7ff

E. We also know that Angels worship and praise God throughout creation. Revelation 7:11-12 *All the angels were standing around the throne and around the elders and the four living creatures. They fell down on their faces before the throne and worshiped God, 12 saying: "Amen! Praise and glory and wisdom and thanks and honor and power and strength be to our God for ever and ever. Amen!"*

F. Another thing we know of Angels are they are one gender. The Hebrew and Greek words for angel are always male. The Greek word *angelos* and the Hebrew word מַלְאָךְ (*malak*) are both masculine nouns translated "angel," meaning a messenger from God. Psalm 103:20 *Praise the Lord, you his angels [malak], you mighty ones who do his bidding, who obey his word.* Matthew 22:30 *"At the resurrection people will neither marry nor be given in marriage; they will be like the angels (angelos) in heaven."*

G. Angels do not die: Luke 20:36 *"and they can no longer die; for they are like the angels..."*

H. Angels are involved in carrying the dead to heaven: Luke 16:22 *"The time came when the beggar died and the angels carried him to Abraham's side..."*

I. The scriptural summary about angels comes right from the lips of the Jesus: Matthew 25:31-41 **31** *"When the Son of Man comes in his glory, **and all the angels** with him, he will sit on his glorious throne. **32** All the nations will be gathered before him, and he will separate the people one from another as a shepherd*

separates the sheep from the goats. **33** He will put the sheep on his right and the goats on his left. **34** "Then the King will say to those on his right, 'Come, you who are blessed by my Father; take your inheritance, the kingdom prepared for you since the creation of the world. **35** For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, **36** I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me.' **37** "Then the righteous will answer him, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you something to drink? **38** When did we see you a stranger and invite you in, or needing clothes and clothe you? **39** When did we see you sick or in prison and go to visit you?' **40** "The King will reply, 'Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.' **41** "Then he will say to those on his left, 'Depart from me, you who are cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels. (In the Greek the word angels is the familiar angelos which is further proof-text of demons as fallen angels.)

Conclusion: Angels are real beings, God's messengers and the friend, companion and servant for Christians. Their assignment cannot be contrary to the nature and will of God which teaches that mankind will be tested and tried - apparently under the direction and supervision of the angels. The great challenge for the faithful growing Christian is to understand I Corinthians 10:13 "No temptation has seized you except what is common to man. And God is faithful; HE will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, HE will also provide a way out so that you can stand up under it." That way out surely must be provided by a guardian angel because -- **"ARE NOT ALL ANGELS MINISTERING SPIRITS SENT TO SERVE THOSE WHO WILL INHERIT SALVATION?"**