

## ST. JOHN'S LUTHERAN CHURCH

Red Bud, Illinois

### Adult Bible Study

#### *"Angels, Angels Everywhere"*

#### II. The Purpose of Angels:

Is God all-powerful? Is God present everywhere? Is God all-knowing? The Bible and the Christian church answer "yes" to each one of these questions. If this is the case, what purpose do God's angels serve? If God can do all things Himself, why does He need angels? These are the questions we will ask and answer from the Bible in this section.

#### *A) The Purpose of Angels in Regard to God's People*

##### **1) What purpose are God's angels serving in these passages?**

Genesis 31:10-13 "In breeding season I once had a dream in which I looked up and saw that the male goats mating with the flock were streaked, speckled or spotted. The angel of God said to me in the dream, 'Jacob.' I answered, 'Here I am.' And He said, 'Look up and see that all the male goats mating with the flock are streaked, speckled or spotted, for I have seen all that Laban has been doing to you. I am the God of Bethel, where you anointed a pillar and where you made a vow to me. Now leave this land at once and go back to your native land.' "

Zechariah 5:5-11 Then the angel who was speaking to me came forward and said to me, "Look up and see what this is that is appearing." I asked, "What is it?" He replied, "It is a measuring basket." And he added, "This is the iniquity of the people throughout the land." Then the cover of lead was raised, and there in the basket sat a woman! He said, "This is wickedness," and he pushed her back into the basket and pushed the lead cover down over its mouth. Then I looked up—and there before me were two women, with the wind in their wings! They had wings like those of a stork, and they lifted up the basket between heaven and earth. "Where are they taking the basket?" I asked the angel who was speaking to me. He replied, "To the country of Babylonia to build a house for it. When it is ready, the basket will be set there in its place."

Matthew 2:13, 19-20 When they had gone, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream. "Get up," he said, "take the child and his mother and escape to Egypt. Stay there until I tell you, for Herod is going to search for the child to kill him." After Herod died, an angel of the Lord appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt and said, "Get up, take the child and his mother and go to the land of Israel, for those who were trying to take the child's life are dead."

Acts 27:21-26 After the men had gone a long time without food, Paul stood up before them and said: "Men, you should have taken my advice not to sail from Crete; then you would have spared yourselves this damage and loss. But now I urge you to keep up your courage, because not one of you will be lost; only the ship will be destroyed. Last night an angel of the God whose I am and whom I serve stood beside me and said, 'Do not be afraid, Paul. You must stand trial before Caesar; and God has graciously given you the lives of all who sail with you.' So keep up your courage, men, for I have faith in God that it will happen just as he told me. Nevertheless, we must run aground on some island."

The angels bring \_\_\_\_\_ from \_\_\_\_\_ to His \_\_\_\_\_.

##### **2) What purpose are God's angels serving in the following passages?**

Judges 13:2-5 A certain man of Zorah, named Manoah, from the clan of the Danites, had a wife who was sterile and remained childless. The angel of the LORD appeared to her and said, "You are sterile and childless, but you are going to conceive and have a son. Now see to it that you drink no wine or other fermented drink and that you do not eat anything unclean, because you will conceive and give birth to a son. No razor may be used on his head, because the boy is to be a Nazirite, set apart to God from birth, and he will begin the deliverance of Israel from the hands of the Philistines."

Luke 1:11-20 Then an angel of the Lord appeared to him, standing at the right side of the altar of incense. When Zechariah saw him, he was startled and was gripped with fear. But the angel said to him: "Do not be afraid, Zechariah; your prayer has been heard. Your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you are to give him the name John. He will be a joy and delight to you, and many will rejoice because of his birth, for he will be great in the sight of the Lord. He is never to take wine or other fermented drink, and he will be filled with the Holy Spirit even from birth. Many of the people of Israel will he bring back to the Lord their God. And he will go on before the Lord, in the spirit and power of Elijah, to turn the hearts of the fathers to their children and the disobedient to the wisdom of the righteous—to make ready a people prepared for the Lord." Zechariah asked the angel, "How can I be sure of this? I am an old man and my wife is well along in years." The angel answered, "I am Gabriel. I stand in the presence of God, and I have been sent to speak to you and to tell you this good news. And now you will be silent and not able to speak until the day this happens, because you did not believe my words, which will come true at their proper time."

Luke 1:26-37 In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a city of Galilee named Nazareth, <sup>27</sup> to a virgin betrothed to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. And the virgin's name was Mary. <sup>28</sup> And he came to her and said, "Greetings, O favored one, the Lord is with you!" <sup>29</sup> But she was greatly troubled at the saying, and tried to discern what sort of greeting this might be. <sup>30</sup> And the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. <sup>31</sup> And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus. <sup>32</sup> He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. And the Lord God will give to him the throne of his father David, <sup>33</sup> and he will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end." <sup>34</sup> And Mary said to the angel, "How will this be, since I am a virgin?" <sup>35</sup> And the angel answered her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be called holy—the Son of God. <sup>36</sup> And behold, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son, and this is the sixth month with her who was called barren. <sup>37</sup> For nothing will be impossible with God."

Luke 2:9-12 And an angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were filled with great fear. And the angel said to them, "Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. And this will be a sign for you: you will find a baby wrapped in swaddling cloths and lying in a manger."

The angels \_\_\_\_\_ the upcoming \_\_\_\_\_ of children.

### 3) What purpose are God's angels serving in these passages?

Genesis 19:1, 12-13 The two angels arrived at Sodom in the evening, and Lot was sitting in the gateway of the city. When he saw them, he got up to meet them and bowed down with his face to the ground. The two men said to Lot, "Do you have anyone else here—sons-in-law, sons or daughters, or

anyone else in the city who belongs to you? Get them out of here, because we are going to destroy this place. The outcry to the LORD against its people is so great that He has sent us to destroy it."

2 Samuel 24:15-17 So the LORD sent a plague on Israel from that morning until the end of the time designated, and seventy thousand of the people from Dan to Beersheba died. When the angel stretched out his hand to destroy Jerusalem, the LORD was grieved because of the calamity and said to the angel who was afflicting the people, "Enough! Withdraw your hand." The angel of the LORD was then at the threshing floor of Araunah the Jebusite. When David saw the angel who was striking down the people, he said to the LORD, "I am the one who has sinned and done wrong. These are but sheep. What have they done? Let Your hand fall upon me and my family."

Psalms 78:49 He unleashed against them His hot anger, His wrath, indignation and hostility— a band of destroying angels.

Matthew 13:41-42, 49-50 "The Son of Man will send out His angels, and they will weed out of His kingdom everything that causes sin and all who do evil. They will throw them into the fiery furnace, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. This is how it will be at the end of the age. The angels will come and separate the wicked from the righteous and throw them into the fiery furnace, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

Acts 12:21-23 On the appointed day Herod, wearing his royal robes, sat on his throne and delivered a public address to the people. They shouted, "This is the voice of a god, not of a man." Immediately, because Herod did not give praise to God, an angel of the Lord struck him down, and he was eaten by worms and died.

The angels are agents of God's divine \_\_\_\_\_.

#### **4) What purpose are God's angels serving in the following passages?**

Exodus 23:20-26 20 "See, I am sending an angel ahead of you to guard you along the way and to bring you to the place I have prepared. Pay attention to him and listen to what he says. Do not rebel against him; he will not forgive your rebellion, since My Name is in him. If you listen carefully to what he says and do all that I say, I will be an enemy to your enemies and will oppose those who oppose you. My angel will go ahead of you and bring you into the land of the Amorites, Hittites, Perizzites, Canaanites, Hivites and Jebusites, and I will wipe them out. Do not bow down before their gods or worship them or follow their practices. You must demolish them and break their sacred stones to pieces. Worship the LORD your God, and his blessing will be on your food and water. I will take away sickness from among you, and none will miscarry or be barren in your land. I will give you a full life span."

1 Kings 19:3-8 Elijah was afraid and ran for his life. When he came to Beersheba in Judah, he left his servant there, while he himself went a day's journey into the desert. He came to a broom tree, sat down under it and prayed that he might die. "I have had enough, LORD," he said. "Take my life; I am no better than my ancestors." Then he lay down under the tree and fell asleep. All at once an angel touched him and said, "Get up and eat." He looked around, and there by his head was a cake of bread baked over hot coals, and a jar of water. He ate and drank and then lay down again. The angel of the LORD came back a second time and touched him and said, "Get up and eat, for the journey is too much for you." So he got up and ate and drank. Strengthened by that food, he traveled forty days and forty nights until he reached Horeb, the mountain of God.

Psalm 91:11-12 For He will command His angels concerning you to guard you in all your ways; they will lift you up in their hands, so that you will not strike your foot against a stone.

Daniel 6:19-22 At the first light of dawn, the king got up and hurried to the lions' den. When he came near the den, he called to Daniel in an anguished voice, "Daniel, servant of the living God, has your God, whom you serve continually, been able to rescue you from the lions?" Daniel answered, "O king, live forever! My God sent His angel, and he shut the mouths of the lions. They have not hurt me, because I was found innocent in His sight. Nor have I ever done any wrong before you, O king."

Acts 5:17-20 Then the high priest and all his associates, who were members of the party of the Sadducees, were filled with jealousy. They arrested the apostles and put them in the public jail. But during the night an angel of the Lord opened the doors of the jail and brought them out. "Go, stand in the temple courts," he said, "and tell the people the full message of this new life."

Acts 12:6-10 The night before Herod was to bring him to trial, Peter was sleeping between two soldiers, bound with two chains, and sentries stood guard at the entrance. Suddenly an angel of the Lord appeared and a light shone in the cell. He struck Peter on the side and woke him up. "Quick, get up!" he said, and the chains fell off Peter's wrists. Then the angel said to him, "Put on your clothes and sandals." And Peter did so. "Wrap your cloak around you and follow me," the angel told him. Peter followed him out of the prison, but he had no idea that what the angel was doing was really happening; he thought he was seeing a vision. They passed the first and second guards and came to the iron gate leading to the city. It opened for them by itself, and they went through it. When they had walked the length of one street, suddenly the angel left him.

The angels are agents of God's divine \_\_\_\_\_.

### *B) The Purpose of Angels in Regard to God Himself*

#### **1) What purpose are God's angels serving in these passages?**

Psalm 29:1-2 Ascribe to the LORD, O heavenly beings, ascribe to the LORD glory and strength.

<sup>2</sup> Ascribe to the LORD the glory due His name; worship the LORD in the splendor of holiness.

Psalm 103:20-22 Bless the LORD, O you His angels, you mighty ones who do His word, obeying the voice of His word! <sup>21</sup> Bless the LORD, all His hosts, His ministers, who do His will!

<sup>22</sup> Bless the LORD, all His works, in all places of His dominion. Bless the LORD, O my soul!

Psalm 148:1-2 Praise the LORD! Praise the LORD from the heavens; praise Him in the heights!

<sup>2</sup> Praise Him, all His angels; praise Him, all His hosts!

Luke 2:13-14 Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God and saying, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men on whom His favor rests."

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, saying: "Amen! Praise and glory and wisdom and thanks and honor and power and strength be to our God for ever and ever. Amen!"

The angels \_\_\_\_\_ God.

#### **2) What purpose are God's angels serving in the following passages?**

Genesis 28:10-15 Jacob left Beersheba and set out for Haran. When he reached a certain place, he stopped for the night because the sun had set. Taking one of the stones there, he put it under his head

and lay down to sleep. He had a dream in which he saw a stairway resting on the earth, with its top reaching to heaven, and the angels of God were ascending and descending on it. There above it stood the LORD, and He said: "I am the LORD, the God of your father Abraham and the God of Isaac. I will give you and your descendants the land on which you are lying. Your descendants will be like the dust of the earth, and you will spread out to the west and to the east, to the north and to the south. All peoples on earth will be blessed through you and your offspring. I am with you and will watch over you wherever you go, and I will bring you back to this land. I will not leave you until I have done what I have promised you."

Matthew 18:10 "See that you do not look down on one of these little ones. For I tell you that their angels in heaven always see the face of my Father in heaven."

John 1:50-51 Jesus said, "You believe because I told you I saw you under the fig tree. You shall see greater things than that." He then added, "I tell you the truth, you shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending on the Son of Man."

The angels highlight the \_\_\_\_\_ of God.

**3) How does Hebrews 1:14 summarize the purpose of angels?**

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*Are they not all ministering spirits sent out to serve for the sake of those who are to inherit salvation?*