

Remnant Life Church
02.19.23
Receiving a Prophetic Word
Pt 3
Luke 1:8-12, 26-33

Surveys and polls regularly show that a large percentage of the general population believe in angels

- But the issue is not if you believe but what you believe
 - Angel belief is nothing new
 - The Hebrews, Egyptians, Greeks, and Phoenicians all strongly believed in these spiritual beings called angels
 - So much so that some in the first churches of the NT turned away for the worship of Jesus Christ embraced the practice of worshipping angels
 - In **Col 2:18** the Apostle Paul addressed this error
 - And I'll paraphrase what he said for you...hey, knock it off! – You are focusing on the created and not the creator

The first question asked might be do I believe in angels?

- Absolutely!
- Have I ever seen one?
 - No – then how do I know they exist?
 - It's very simple – the Bible says they do
- In the NIV translation the word angel or angels appears over 380 times
- And so we can be assured that they are found all throughout the Bible from the first book of Genesis to the very last book of Revelation
 - The first reference is actually a fallen angel
 - **Gen 3:1** introduces us to the serpent
 - The serpent was satan – a fallen angel – who had come in disguise
 - The first angelic beings identified were the Seraphim in **Gen 3:24** who were guarding the entrance to the GOE after Adam and Eve had been sent out
 - The final reference to angels is in the very last chapter of the last book of the Bible
 - **Rev 22:8** regarding the final days
- But you must know the truth of who they are so you can distinguish between the truth and what the world says about angels which is false and designed to mislead you
 - If your knowledge of angels comes primarily from movies, TV programs, books, the internet, and the fact that you own the entire series DVD collection of “Touched by an Angel” – there is a very high probability that you do not know the truth about angels, who they are, and what their purpose is
- First, an angel is a created being they are not inferior grade deities
 - God created the angels
 - They do not reproduce; the number is finite known only to God

- 1/3 of those originally created fell with satan when he was cast out of heaven
 - Many believe that when a person dies, they become an angel
 - That simply is not true
 - When we die our spirit is in the presence of the Lord
- An angel is a supernatural being
 - They exist in the spiritual realm
 - We exist in the natural or physical realm meaning that except in very unique circumstances we are not aware of their presence or their actions
- The best clue of who or what angels are is by knowing their function
 - The word “angel” translates into messenger, envoy, or ambassador
 - IOW the entire purpose, function, and role of an angel is to be a messenger for God and to accomplish His bidding
 - They serve God, they are His servants
- What do they do?
 - First, they worship God
 - The oldest and first written book of the Bible (no, not Genesis) is the book of Job
 - **Job 38** speaks of angels glorifying and worshipping God in praise
 - Second, angels are assigned by God to protect us
 - **Ps 34:7** – *The angel of the Lord encamps around those who fear Him, and He delivers them*
 - **Ps 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.*
 - Third, angels help guide us through and within the will of God for our lives
 - But only at the direction of God and not of their own desire
 - That is one reason why it is of no value to try and talk to or entreat an angel to help you
 - And you absolutely do not ever pray to an angel
 - It is in **Rev 22** that we read that John fell down at the feet of the angel speaking to him so that he could worship him and listen to what the angel said when he did that...
 - **Rev 22:9** – *But he said to me, Do not do it! I am a fellow servant with you and with your brothers the prophets and of all who keep the words of this book. Worship God!*
 - It is God and God alone who we pray to and who answers our prayers

Angels are not beings with a will as we have, they do what the Lord commands them to do

- Nor do they have power that we can tap into or command
- You cannot control angels
- And believing in the angels of God does mean you are forgiven of your sins and your soul is saved

- Only God, through the person of His Son Jesus Christ can do that

Now, let's come back to the third way God's speaks to His people

- The first is by revealing His word to their hearts and minds
 - The second is through dreams and visions
 - The third is through angelic visitations
- This happened in both the old and new testaments
 - Let's begin with Abraham and Sarah
 - In **Gen 18** we read that 3 visitors came to him
 - We know they are heavenly beings because in verse 1 it says; *The Lord appeared to Abraham...*
 - These 3 came with a prophetic word that Abraham and Sarah would have a son even though he would be 100 and she would be 90 at the time of his birth
 - Sometimes God will present us with a word that is very difficult to believe
 - What is the level and depth of your faith?
 - In **Judges 6** an angel appears to Gideon
 - He comes to Gideon because this man with very low self-esteem needed to be convinced of something that perhaps only an angel would succeed in doing – that he was a great warrior
 - Gideon was going to lead the army of Israel against the Midianite army
 - There were so many of the enemy that the Bible does not provide a number only that they were as thick as locusts
 - Gideon would only get to take 300 men with him
 - Of course, God gave Gideon the victory as told to him by the angel (**Judg 6:14-16**)
 - The OT book with the most references to angels speaking for God is one of the minor prophets, the book of **Zechariah**
 - Only **Isaiah** contains more prophetic words, and they are primarily about the coming of the Messiah
 - And Isaiah's book is nearly 4 times longer in content than Zechariah
 - What is interesting about Zechariah is that he receives from God in all three ways that we have identified
 - **1:1** - ...*the word of the Lord came to Zechariah...*
 - **1:8** - ...*during the night I had a vision*
 - **1:9** - ...*The angel who was talking with me answered...*
 - In the NT, we see several examples of angels delivering the word of God
 - **(Read) Luke 1:8-12** - *Once when Zechariah's division was on duty and he was serving as priest before God, he was chosen by lot, according to the custom of the priesthood, to go into the temple of the Lord and burn incense. And when the time for the burning of incense came, all the assembled worshipers were praying*

outside. 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.

- Even though he had the same name as the OT prophet this man lived about 500 years later
 - The angel would go on to tell him that he and his wife Elizabeth would have a son
 - They would name him John and he would be known throughout the NT and all of history as John the Baptist
 - Elizabeth and Mary were related meaning that John the Baptist and Jesus were cousins
- Of course, as we all know, Mary also experienced something very similar
 - **(Read) Luke 1:26-33** - *In the sixth month of Elizabeth's pregnancy, God sent the angel Gabriel to Nazareth, a town in Galilee, to a virgin pledged to be married to a man named Joseph, a descendant of David. The virgin's name was Mary. The angel went to her and said, "Greetings, you who are highly favored! The Lord is with you." Mary was greatly troubled at his words and wondered what kind of greeting this might be. But the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary; you have found favor with God. You will conceive and give birth to a son, and you are to call him Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of his father David, and he will reign over Jacob's descendants forever; his kingdom will never end."*
 - The angels came with a word directly from God and gave it, exactly as it was given to them, for the person God intended it for.

I have shared these things with you over the last few weeks in the hope that you will begin to understand and recognize that God still speaks to His people today

- Certainly, through His Word but also in ways that the world will not embrace without labeling you a crackpot or put you into the category of Bigfoot believers and shooters on the grassy knoll conspiracists.
 - Seen on a T-shirt - "Noah was a conspiracy theorist...then it started to rain."

The one who God will speak through is a man or a woman of humility, dedicated to the things of God, and fully surrendered in every area of their lives

The psalmist in **Psalms 105:4** writes these words

- *Look to the LORD and his strength; seek his face always.*

When you seek Him, you will find Him and He will speak in and through you.

- Now most of the time the words He gives will be just for you
- But you may find yourself being used of Him for other purposes
- And it will always be in His perfect will, always for His glory, and always to show His love to and for others

God is speaking to His people today – the big question is are you listening?