

## Minor Characters In Major Roles Lesson 10 – Angels

<Read **Psalms 91:1-12**—Good intro scripture>

- Visitors, prayer requests, prayer

**Q:** Life can be very **tough** at times, and **Satan** is always trying to **trip us up**. In what **four ways** does God provide help for us today?

1. His **Word**—the **instruction manual** for **peak performance**
  - a. We have **hope** through the **encouragement** of the Scripture (Rom 15:4)
  - b. Offensive **weapon**: “*Sword of the Spirit*” (Eph 6:17)
  - c. A **measuring device** (“*living,*” “*active,*” “*sharp,*” “*able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart*” (Heb 4:12)
2. His **Spirit**—the **Comforter** or **Helper** (ASV)
  - a. John 14:16-17, 14:26, 15:26, 16:7
3. The **Church**—“...*encourage one another, and build up one another...*” (1 Thes 5:11)
4. **Angels**—**ministering spirits** (and much **more!**)

### Opening remarks

1. “It’s a Wonderful Life” with Jimmy Stewart
  - a. Bailey Building and Loan in trouble
  - b. George Bailey jumps off the bridge
  - c. Clarence the Angel to the Rescue!
  - d. Had to “earn his wings” by helping George
2. Renaissance Artwork often featured angels
  - a. Human-like in appearance
  - b. Wings
  - c. Halo
  - d. Often pictured in the air (above man, beneath God)

**Q:** Where does all this come from?

**A:** Scripture!

3. But what does the **Bible** say about angels?
  - a. Are there still angels **today**?
  - b. Where do they come **from**?
  - c. What are their **characteristics**?
  - d. What do they **do**?
4. We’ll answer these and other questions today. But first, let’s see what you already know about angels...

### A short quiz...

1. The angel of the Lord appeared to the banished Hagar and told her what? (To name her child Ishmael (Genesis 16:1-12))
2. How many angels rescued Lot and his family from the doomed city of Sodom? (Two (Genesis 19:1-22))

3. The prophet Balaam could not see the Lord's angel, but his talking donkey could. What was it about the angel that made the donkey turn away? (He was holding a drawn sword (Numbers 22:22-35))
4. The angel who was captain of the Lord's host appeared to Joshua. Why? (To give him instructions on conquering Jericho (Joshua 5:13-15))
5. Which angel appeared to Mary and to Zacharias? (Gabriel (Luke 1:5-38))
6. Whose mother was visited by an angel who told her she would have a son who would be dedicated as a Nazarite. Who was he? (Samson (Judges 13:1-20))
7. What Roman official was visited by an angel who told him God had heard his prayers? (Cornelius (Acts 10:1-8))
8. Who was commissioned by an angel to save Israel from the Midianites? (Gideon (Judges 6:11-23))
9. What kind of angelic beings guarded the entrance to Eden? (Cherubim (Genesis 3:24))
10. Who had his lips touched by a live coal held by a seraph? (Isaiah (6:5-7))
11. What foreign army had 185,000 men killed by the angel of the Lord? (The Assyrians (2 Kings 19:35))
12. What person did an angel prevent from sacrificing a child? (Abraham (Genesis 22:11-18))

### Are they're still angels today?

1. The word "angel" appears **292** times in the Bible
  - a. **114** times in the **Old Testament**
  - b. **178** times in the **New Testament** (**77** times in Revelation!)
  - c. Only **two** angels referred to by **name**
    - i. **Michael** and **Gabriel** ("Hero of God")
2. Spoken of in the **past**, **present**, and **future** sense
3. If you believe the **Bible**, then you believe in **angels!**

Word (KJV)	Count
Angel	297
Love	310
Faith	247
Money	144
Grace	170
Abraham	231
Jesus	983

### Where do angels come from?

1. They are **created beings**
  - a. <Read Col 1:16> Like everything else, they were created **by** Jesus **for** Jesus
    - i. Jesus was the **agent** of creation
    - ii. "*rule and authority and power and dominion*"—Rabbinic references to angels
  - b. Psalms 148:1-5 lists angels as part of **God's eternal creation**
  - c. Bible doesn't say **when** they were created, but Job 38:4-7 indicates that "*the Sons of God*" (common biblical name for angels) were **present** and **rejoiced** at earth's **creation**
2. They are **between** man and God in the **hierarchy** of creation
  - a. Angels beneath Jesus <Read Heb 1:1-4>
  - b. Man beneath angels <Read Heb 2:6-7> (2 Pet 2:10-11)
  - c. *NB*: 1 Cor 6:3 says the **saints** will **judge** the angels

### Characteristics of angels

1. They are **spirits** <Read Heb 1:13-14>
2. They are **distinct** from **human beings** (1 Cor 6:3, Heb 1:14)
3. They can **choose** between **right** and **wrong**
  - a. <Read 2 Pet 2:4> <Read Jude 6> Had a special place, but some **sinned** and "*abandoned their proper abode*" and were cast into hell until judgment
4. Jesus taught that angels **do not marry**
  - a. Sadducees test Jesus by discussing marriage in heaven (Mark 12:25)

5. As a **group**, they're **very organized**
  - a. Various **types** of angels
  - b. One **Archangel**—Michael (Jude 9)
  - c. **Ruling** angels (Eph 3:10—more “rulers and authorities” language)
  - d. **Guardian** angels
    - i. For all **believers** <**Read Heb 1:14**> (see also Ps 91:11-12)
    - ii. For **children** <**Read Matt 18:10**>
  - e. **Seraphim** (Isaiah 6:1-3)
    - i. Have six wings
    - ii. Involved in worshipping God
  - f. **Cherubim** (see Ezekiel Chap 1 and Chap 10)
    - i. Have human form, with four faces, four wings, and hands like man's.
    - ii. Involved in guarding the holiness of God.
    - iii. **Satan** is an angel of order Cherubim, and was the highest of angels until his fall (Ezek 28:12-19; Is 14:12, 14:14).
6. They're **not to be worshipped** (Judges 13:15-16 (Manoah), Col 2:18)
7. They have **intellect** but they're not “**all-knowing**”
  - a. 1 Pet 1:12 says they didn't understand prophecies concerning salvation through Christ
  - b. They **long for truth** just like we do
8. They have **emotion** (Luke 2:7-14)(joy; praise for God; a sense of *our* emotion (empathy))
9. They have **superhuman strength**, but they aren't “**all powerful**”
  - a. Psalms 103:20 (“*mighty in strength*”)
  - b. 2 Pet 2:11 (“*greater in might and power*” than man, but they show **restraint**)
  - c. 2 Thes 1:7-8 (the Lord will return “*with his mighty angels in flaming fire*”)
  - d. Dan 6:22 (angels shut the lions’ mouths)
  - e. Acts 5:19 (opened prison gates for the apostles)
10. They are **innumerable** (Heb 12:22, Deut 33:2, Ps 68:17, Matt 26:53 (72,000), Mark 5:9, Luke 2:13, Rev 5:11(“*myriads of myriads*”))
11. They don't **procreate** (their number was **fixed at creation**)

### What do angels do?

1. Act as **special messengers** for God
  - a. **Warned** Abraham and Lot of the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah (Gen 19)
  - b. **Prevented** the **sacrifice** of Isaac
    - i. “*But the angel of the Lord called from heaven and said ‘Abraham, Abraham, do not stretch out your hand against the lad’*” (Gen 22:12)
  - c. **Announced** the birth of Samson to Manoah and his wife (Judges 13:3)
  - d. Gabriel (“Hero of God”) **explained** Daniel's vision to him (Dan 9:23)
2. Very active in the life of **Christ**
  - a. Gabriel **foretold birth** of **John** the Baptist (Luke 1:19) and **Jesus** (Matt 1:20-21, Luke 1:26-38)
  - b. An angel **instructed Joseph** concerning **naming** and **protecting** the baby **Jesus** (Matt 1:20-21, 2:13,19-20).
  - c. Angels **watched Jesus** while on earth (1 Tim 3:16).
  - d. **Strengthened** Him after temptation (Matt 4:11).
  - e. Would have **defended** Him (12 legions) (Matt 26:53).
  - f. **Strengthened** Him in Gethsemane (Luke 22:43).
  - g. Rolled away the **stone** from tomb (Matt 28:2).
  - h. Announced the **resurrection** (Mat 28:6).

- i. Two angels **announced** and **accompanied** Jesus in His **ascension** (Acts 1:10)
  - j. Two angels announced the **manner** of His **return** (Acts 1:11).
  - k. **Will return with Him** (2 Thes 1:7-8).
3. Active in the lives of **believers**
- a. As I said, they're "**ministering spirits**" to believers (Heb 1:14) and children (Matt 18:10), "*...guarding us in all our ways*" <**Read Ps 91:11-12**>
  - b. Observe Christian's **experiences** (1 Cor 4:9, 1 Tim 5:21).
  - c. Interested in **evangelistic efforts** of Christians <**Read Luke 15:10**>
    - i. Guided Philip to the Eunuch on Gaza road (Acts 8:26-29).
  - d. Involved in answering **prayer** <**Read Acts 12:5-8**>
  - e. **Encourage** us in times of **danger** (Acts 27:23-24).
  - f. Care for **righteous at death**
    - i. Lazarus carried to "*Abraham's bosom*" by angels (Luke 16:22)
4. Active in the lives of **unbelievers**
- a. Announce impending **judgment** <**Read Rev 14:6-11**> (Gen 19:13) (Sodom)
    - i. And they struck the wicked men of Sodom **blind** (Gen 19)
  - b. Inflict **punishment**
    - i. Smote **Herod** when he allowed himself to be called a god (Acts 12:23) ("*the voice of a god and not of a man!*") – he didn't give God the glory)
  - c. Will be the "**harvesters**" who separate the "**weeds**" (everything that causes sin and all who do evil) from the "**wheat**" (the righteous) during the "**harvest**" (end of the age) (Jesus' explanation of the parable of the soils in Matt 13:37-43)

### Closing remarks

1. Angels are very much a **part of God's plan**
  - a. They're used as **messengers**
  - b. They **watch** and **help believers**
  - c. They're going to play a big part in the events of the **end of the age**
  - d. They'll be **judged by Christians** (1 Cor 6:3)
2. We're told to love the brethren and to "*show hospitality to strangers*" because "*some have entertained angels without knowing it.*" <**Read Heb 13:1-2**>.