

# Do Angels Offer Personal Protection?

By Mark Mayberry  
5/6/2009

Introducing the parable of the lost sheep, Jesus said, “See that you do not despise one of these little ones, for I say to you that **their angels in heaven** continually see the face of My Father who is in heaven” (Matt. 18:10-14; cf. Luke 15:3-7). The expression “their angels” of Matthew 18:10 parallels “his angel” of Acts 12:14-15.

Nevertheless, does this imply some form of angelic guardianship or the promise of providential protection? No. Consider the context of both passages. While Peter was delivered from prison, James was put to death with the sword (Acts 12:1-13). Moreover, Matthew 18:6 implies that the little ones under consideration remained vulnerable: “whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in Me to stumble, it would be better for him to have a heavy millstone hung around his neck, and to be drowned in the depth of the sea.” The passage focuses, not on celestial guardianship or the promise of miraculous intervention, but rather upon angelic care and concern (Luke 15:7, 10; 1 Pet. 1:10-12).

Angels serve the will of God (Ps. 104:4; Heb. 1:7), offering worship (Ps. 103:20-21; 148:2), and on various occasions, rendering service to the saints: protection (Exod. 23:20-22; 2 Kings 6:11-19; Ps. 34:7; 91:11-13; Dan. 3:28; 6:22; etc.), provision (1 Kings 19:5-7; Ps. 78:24-25), instruction (Gen. 16:7-14; 22:11-12, 15-18; Exod. 3:1-2; etc.), and judgment (Exod. 33:2; 2 Sam. 24:15-16; Ps. 35:4-6; 78:49-51; Isa. 37:36; 2 Thess. 1:6-8; etc.).

“The angel of the Lord” is repeatedly referenced in Holy Scripture (Gen. 16:7, 9, 10, 11; 22:11, 15; Exod. 3:2; Num. 22:22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 31, 32, 34, 35; Judg. 2:1, 4; 5:23; 6:11, 12, 21, 22; 13:3, 13, 15, 16, 17, 18, 20, 21; 2 Sam. 24:16; 1 Kings 19:7; 2 Kings 1:3, 15; 19:35; 1 Chron. 21:12, 15, 16, 18, 30; Ps. 34:7; 35:5, 6; Isa. 37:36; Zech. 1:11, 12; 3:1, 5, 6; 12:8; Matt. 1:24).

Gabriel is mentioned by name in both the Old and New Testaments (Dan. 8:16; 9:21; Luke 1:18-20; 1:26-28). So also is Michael the archangel (Dan. 10:13, 21; 12:1; Jude 9; Rev. 12:7-9).

The book of Daniel describes Michael as “the great prince who stands guard over the sons of your people,” (Dan. 12:1-3), who struggled with the prince of the kingdom of Persia and Greece (Daniel 10:10-21).

Members of the satanic/angelic host are referred to as “princes,” namely, “the prince of the kingdom of Persia” (Dan. 10:13), the corresponding “prince of Greece” (Dan. 10:20), and also “Michael, the great prince who stands guard over the sons of your people” (Dan. 12:1-2).

Satan is described as “the ruler of this world” (John 12:31), “the prince of the power of the air” (Eph. 2:1-2), who leads “the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places” (Eph. 6:12). Yet, the outcome of this cosmic struggle is predetermined (Gen. 3:15; Matt. 8:28-29); the devil and his angels are doomed to destruction (Matt. 25:41; Rev. 12:7-17).

In comparison to the illegitimate and limited power of Satan, Jesus Christ possesses real and rightful authority (Matt. 28:18-20), being the Prince of Peace, the Lord of Lords, and King of Kings (Isa. 9:6; Rev. 17:14; 19:16). God the Father is described in similarly regal terms (Dan. 8:11, 25; 1 Tim. 6:13-16).

While God's people often experienced divine deliverance (Heb. 11:32-34), the faithful frequently faced suffering and sorrow even in Biblical times (Heb. 11:35-38). Furthermore, divine providence and power do not alter the reality that we live in a world of sin and suffering, and that it is appointed unto man once to die (Heb. 9:27).

Accordingly, angels should not be viewed as some sort of talisman, i.e., "an object held to act as a charm to avert evil and bring good fortune, or something producing apparently magical or miraculous effects" [Webster]. The doctrine of guardian angels goes far beyond divine revelation, entering the mystical realm of human speculation. On this and every other subject, let us contentedly abide in that which is written (Deut. 29:29; 1 Cor. 4:6; 2 Tim. 3:14-17).