

**Matthew 13: 47-50; “Angels as God’s Servants”, Session # 13 on the Parable of the Dragnet,  
Presented by Pastor Paul Rendall on August 20<sup>th</sup>, 2023,  
in the Adult Sunday School.**

**Matthew 13: 47-51** – “Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a dragnet that was cast into the sea and gathered some of every kind, which, when it was full, they drew to shore; and they sat down and gathered the good into vessels, but threw the bad away.” “So it will be at the end of the age.” “The angels will come forth, separate the wicked from among the just, and cast them into the furnace of fire.” “There will be wailing and gnashing of teeth.” “Jesus said to them, “Have you understood all these things?” “They said to Him, “Yes, Lord.”

**The Part that the Angels play in evaluating the catch.**

**I. The Angels know the Reality of every person’s faith and works, or lack of them.**

**a. Angels are involved in relation to helping God’s people.**

We looked at the angel Gabriel ministering to Daniel in chapter 10, verses 1-10, when he had been fasting and mourning for three full weeks because he wanted to know what would become of God’s people during the times of the World Monarchies that would oppress them. We saw that there was a man clothed in linen in verse 5 who was the Pre-Incarnate Christ. The sight of Him was really too much for Daniel, and it was such a great vision that he had no strength left in him and his vigor was turned to frailty in him. As the vision continued the angel Gabriel came to him and touched him and said to him that he was greatly beloved, and that he had been sent to him to help him. He told him not to fear, for since the first day that he set his heart to understand and to humble himself before God, that his words were heard; and he had come because of Daniel’s words.

**b. Sometimes angels are involved in relation to the discipline of God’s people.**

We looked at David’s sin of numbering the people, and how an angel was sent by God in response to this sin, to enact a disciplinary judgment against David and Israel. We saw that the Lord sent a plague through an angel’s powerful working and slew 70,000 of the people of Israel. We saw that angels are beings of great power and great discernment of how they should use their power. They only use it as God specifically directs them. God knew, and the angel who killed these 70,000 people knew perfectly well that they deserved this judgment. And so it was very precise. This far, and no farther.

David had the right attitude in the midst of this disciplinary judgment. And we need to see this. He looked upon himself as the real transgressor and looked upon his own people as harmless sheep. He did not think of their sins, but he rather thought of his own. It grieved him that his people should suffer because of his sin. He wanted to suffer in their place so that they could go free. In this he was a type of Christ.

**II. The angels are servants of God, doing God’s will in relation to all men.**

**a. In relation to doing God’s pleasure**

**Psalm 103: 19-22** – “The LORD has established His throne in heaven, And His kingdom rules over all. Bless the LORD, you His angels, Who excel in strength, who do His word, Heeding the voice of His word. Bless the LORD, all you His hosts, You ministers of His, who do His pleasure. Bless the LORD, all His works, In all places of His dominion. Bless the LORD, O my soul!”

So, here we see the sovereignty of God. He has established His throne in heaven, and His kingdom rules over all. And so, interestingly, the exhortation that David gives here is to the angels; that they would bless the Lord, because they do excel in strength. They do perform His word. They do this, heeding the voice of His word. David calls them the Lord’s hosts. He calls them His ministers who do His pleasure. And so, I

am sure, that this is exactly what they do. They bless the Lord for their own ability to do what He commands perfectly. Their boast is not in themselves, but in God who made them and directs them to their responsibilities in perfect wisdom.

**b. The angels are God's servants in relation to ministering to us, and watching over us.**

**1. Hebrews 1: 13 & 14** – “But to which of the angels has He ever said: ‘Sit at my right hand, till I make Your enemies Your footstool?’ “Are they not all ministering spirits sent forth to minister for those who will inherit salvation?”

In relation to God the Son, who became Incarnate and became a Man, there should be no comparison. Angels were never told to sit at God's right hand til He made their enemies a footstool for their feet. Angels are all ministering spirits sent forth to minister for those who will inherit salvation. They are God's servants ministering to us.

**2. Hebrews 13: 1 & 2** – “Let brotherly love continue.” Do not forget to entertain strangers, for by so doing some have unwittingly entertained angels.”

It is very interesting that on the heels of this exhortation to let brotherly love continue comes another, not to forget to entertain strangers, for by so doing some have unwittingly entertained angels. It is evident from this statement that angels do sometimes take the form of men in order to do God's will in ministering to God's people. This happened to both Abraham and Lot. (Genesis 18: 2 & 16 and Genesis 19: 2 & 3) The angels who came to them are called “men” in the text because they had the appearance of men. Both Abraham and Lot "entertained" them. They showed them hospitality and made them food to eat.

It is evident that from this, that by the means of angels God tests the love, the kindness, the consideration that we as Christian's have, for strangers. This is for our good so that we will become more loving, more kind, more considerate of people around us who are strangers, if we are not now so inclined to think this way. God sends an angel so that we might learn to do strangers good and share the love of Christ with them, and the truth of the gospel to them. God proves the reality of our love and faithfulness to Himself and His word through sometimes sending angels to test his people.

Even though the angels are not to be seen by us on the same level as our Christ, yet we ought to have a great respect for them.