

# "Angels Among Us"

10 July 2005

Bible Passage: **Psalm 34:7-8** (*The Message*)

"When I was desperate, I called out, and God got me out of a tight spot. God's angel sets up a circle of protection among us while we pray."

As I was preparing this message for today, I couldn't help but think about the TV series *Touched by An Angel*. If you were a fan, you remember that it was a tearjerker. Every week the angels intervened and helped some poor unsuspecting confused person to see the light, get back on track, or helped them understand how they connect to God in a very personal way. And as far as I remember, they never failed to turn the character around.

Are there actually "Angels Among Us?" It's a curious question, isn't it? Well let's just suppose for a moment that angels are among us. Getting in the middle of our conflicts and punching out the bad guy. Totally turning things around when battling a serious illness, trying to find a job, or when we seem to fall apart. I am not asking if you want to believe they exist, but are there possibilities. (pause)

Certainly I've lived long enough to know that anything is possible. For instance, back in 1985, Lord Kelvin, president of the Royal Society in Great Britain said, "Flying machines that are heavier than air are impossible." In 1899, the Commissioner of US patents said; "Everything that can be invented has been invented." And some years back, 1977, the president and founder of Digital Equipment Corporation said, "There's no reason anyone would want to have a computer in their home." Good thing "impossibility thinking" is an opinion, and not a fact.

The highway of history is scattered with distinct comments about unforeseen possibilities. If we can be so wrong about possibilities of the physical world, how can we even pretend that we have a clue as to what the truth is -- what the possibilities are -- in the spiritual world?

I suspect some of you are wondering, what about all of those writings and references about angels? "Can we find any concrete evidence there?" Well, recently angels have become very popular and commercial, being more than just an ornament on a Christmas tree.

There are angel magazines, crystals, shirts, stuffed angels, tea sets, key chains, earrings and jewelry with angels on them. There are Angel websites, newspapers, and angel seminars for those who are serious enough to learn how to contact their own guardian angels. So, it appears that America is experiencing a wave of "angel-mania."

Over the last few years Angels have appeared on the covers of Newsweek, Time and numerous other magazines. Time Magazine conducted a poll among American adults on the subject of angels. Look at these interesting results:

- 76% confirmed their belief in the existence of angels.
- 46% acknowledged their belief in a personal guardian angel.
- 32% claimed to have felt an angelic presence at some time in their lives.

Whether we believe it or not, people are fascinated with angels. So rather than deal with proof of their existence, let's look at the angel phenomenon developmentally for a moment. Psychological studies have proven that among the basic needs of children, there is a sense for security and

protection. (pause) Infants and children need to know, that there are other beings around. They rely on parents, other family members, or close friends to take care of them, make things rights for them, or keep them out of danger and harm's way.

And we carry this childhood need for safety and protection into an adult need. A large part of becoming an adult involves coming to terms with this piece of reality. At the same time; however, we never completely let go of, or fully divest ourselves of, that fundamental childhood need for security and protection.

My feeling is that the interest in angels comes out of the security and protection side of that dynamic, as does a good deal of religion and spirituality. And based on those assumptions, studies indicate that the "New Age" literature represents a high level of similarity between the recent writings and references to angels.

You have heard the meaning of the word angel; it comes from the Greek word *angelos*, which literally translates to "messenger." In this case it means a messenger from God, or an agent who acts on God's behalf in certain situations where fear, danger, or confusion is present.

Just think back for a moment! How many times have you come to someone's rescue; gave a kind word to a stranger; or told a troubled friend over the phone you understand? Sometimes we recognize this and other times we seem to be unaware.

There was a friend that called me the other day in distressed. She asked me for advice and I found myself giving her just that. Part way through the conversation I began to realize that I was saying some very profound things. So I mentally told myself to write this down when we finished the conversation. We soon said goodbye and I got out pen and paper to jot down my own advice. Only to discover it had not been my own, nor was it meant for me. I could remember nothing of the conversation.

Now, I am not an airhead. And I have recorded hundreds of stories told to me before. Yet, there was absolutely no memory of the advice I had just given. That is when it hit me: "I had acted on God's behalf."

In today's Bible passage, the psalmist was in a desperate situation. This is what he says:

"When I was desperate, I called out, and God got me out of a tight spot. God's angel sets up a circle of protection among us while we pray." (*Psalm 34:7-8*)

The psalmist, through prayer, puts his faith, hope, and trust in God's love. So the good news in today's message is this: When we face life's difficulties, call out to God; and God's angel will set up a circle of protection.

Last summer my husband John and I were traveling back home late one night from Ft. Sill, Okalahoma. It was about 2am in the morning, when he decided we needed gas. As we exited the ramp, it was pitch black, no service station in sights. I said, "Do we need gas NOW!" He responded "not really," but something told me to get off here. The gas station we eventually found was CLOSED! Fortunately, the pumps were not shut off, and accepted credit cards.

Suddenly, a man appeared in an SUV. He didn't even know why he got off at that particular exit! All he knew was his gas light was on; and he needed gas BAD! Unfortunately, he didn't have a credit card! So he asked to use our credit card in return for cash. After gassing up, he said "You two must be guardian angels."

We cannot deny these experiences lived by millions of people, on the grounds of not being able to explain them materially or scientifically. So why don't we not look for angels, but become one. One

author says, to become an angel we must:

"Have a heart that never hardens,

a temper that never tires,

and a touch that never hurts."

So when we hear someone say that they feel separated, isolated, alienated or alone-- remind them that these are only illusions, on the surface of life. But beneath the surface, we are all woven together through faith, hope and that eternal fabric of love, God's love.

God's love shines through humans in the form of energy, and ignites someone to come at our darkest hour. I believe it was Cynthia Rose Young who said, "Angels are waves of energy." This spiritual energy comes from God's unconditional love that connects us, touches us, and guides us. So look around, are there angels among us?

Closing

I like the way that Mary Baker Eddy put it, "Angels are pure thoughts from God, winged with Truth and Love." As we leave here this morning, I hope and pray that each and every one of us will be thankful for: the "Angel" that come into our life; and to do our best to become an "Angel" in someone else's life. Have a good Sunday, and go in peace. Amen.