

How Are Angels Involved in End-Times Evangelism?

I will admit that this “safer at home” quarantine during the current COVID-19 crisis is getting old.

Multiple times each day, even though I feel fine, doctors, scientists and newscasters are reminding me that I’m in the “vulnerable” senior-age-group! As I write, we’re at over seven weeks of home-detention and still counting.

This crisis and these weeks have caused me to reflect in a new way on the end times, the brevity of this life and the biblical hope of eternal life to come. Whether this epidemic is part of the biblical “last days” or not, it certainly has been the last days for scores of thousands of virus victims in our country alone. How many were without the hope of heaven?

A Final Harvest Awaits

John the revelator tells us that at the last days and the end of time, just before the final harvest of the remaining righteous souls is reaped, a final effort of evangelism is to be undertaken by angels (Rev. 14:6-8, 14-16).

First, an angel is said to proclaim the “everlasting gospel,” which focuses on:

–Preaching to all humans who remain on earth, “to every tribe and tongue and people and nation” (Rev. 5:9).

–Proclaiming: “Fear God and give Him glory, for the hour of His judgment has come” (Rev. 14:7b).

–Pleading for all people to “worship Him” as Creator, for He “made heaven and earth, the sea and the springs of water” (Rev. 7:14c).

It seems to me that this angelic evangelistic-effort completes and fulfills Jesus' prediction that "this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in all the world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come" (Matt. 24:14). This simple message is to be a life-changing and future transforming experience for all remaining humanity.

God's initial and ultimate intention is that He would receive worship for His "worth-ship" and praise from the people He has created and sustains: Revelation 4:11 (MEV) proclaims:

"You are worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power; for You have created all things, and by Your will they exist and were created."

Bringing People to our Creator God

That initial divine intention remains as mankind's obligation. Our "Good News" proclamations are insufficient and incomplete if they do not bring people to our "faithful Creator" (1 Pet. 4:19) and to that intended worship experience and expression.

Two reasons are stated for that needed response: the reality of God's eternal judgment and the responsibility of His creation. Sin dishonors God and contradicts His holy, moral character. It must ultimately be punished. Paul told the Romans that the ancient, unrighteous mankind "suppress(ed) the truth," which would have required them to repent and serve the living God, even by faith (1:17-18).

Today, such saving faith only comes through hearing and believing the Bible's message about Jesus, the Jewish Messiah and the Gentiles' Savior (Gen. 3:15; Rom. 1:16; 10:14-17). Evidence of God's existence and power can be seen in the created world and reflected in our inner consciences. Both should motivate everyone to repent and worship this Creator God.

Paul explained to the Romans that even the ancient neighbors

of Noah (“since the creation of the world”) “knew God,” in this universal, existential way, but were not thankful to Him nor did they worship Him. Consequently, they and we “are without excuse” (Rom. 1:20-21). The closing verses of this revealing chapter (verses 29-32) describe a society—like our own, today—totally rejecting moral purity and rebelling against God, our Creator and sustainer.

Perhaps Eugene Peterson makes it clearer to us in The Message paraphrase:

Since they didn't bother to acknowledge God, God quit bothering them and let them run loose. And then all hell broke loose: rampant evil, grabbing and grasping, vicious backstabbing. They made life hell on earth with their envy, wanton killing, bickering, and cheating. Look at them: mean-spirited, venomous, fork-tongued God-bashers. Bullies, swaggerers, insufferable windbags! They keep inventing new ways of wrecking lives. They ditch their parents when they get in the way. Stupid, slimy, cruel, cold-blooded. And it's not as if they don't know better. They know perfectly well they're spitting in God's face. And they don't care—worse, they hand out prizes to those who do the worst things best (Rom. 1:28-32, MSG).

Only What's Done for Christ Will Last

Those of that ancient world may have been acclaimed by their own for their gross sins but those of us, in this age, who have righteously run our race and are finishing our destiny for this life before God, the Bible assures us that our “labor in the Lord is not in vain” (1 Cor. 15:58b). Nothing done for Him will be overlooked. We shall be rewarded in this life and the life to come!

Death, for believers, either now or at the “harvest” or “gathering” at the end of time, is to be a blessing, as we are released to receive two precious promises, as shared by John

in Revelation 14:12-13:

1. Eternal Rest: No more tears, death, sorrow, crying nor pain (Rev. 21:1-7).
2. Eternal Rewards: We become jewels in His crown. We will be rewarded according to our own labors. Our rewards will be tested and purified by fire, as an inheritance worthy of the Lord Jesus Christ, whom we serve (Mal. 3:17; 1 Cor. 3:5-17; 15:58; Col. 3:24).

May “we who are alive and remain” until the harvest of the righteous (1 Thess. 4:17-18; Rev. 14:12-16) recommit—even now—to persistently keeping the commandment of Jesus (Rev. 3:10) and of God, His Father (Rev. 12:17), patiently enduring trials and tribulation (Luke 21:16-19;) and boldly testifying of our faith in our Lord Jesus Christ (Rev. 12:11, 13:10, 14:12), even “to the end” (Matt. 24:13, Mark 13:13).

In so doing, we can claim Paul’s prayer that our God will: “count you worthy of this calling and with power fulfill all your good desires and works done by faith, so that the name of our Lord Jesus Christ may be glorified in you, and you in Him, according to the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ” (2 Thess. 1:11b-12).

May all the saints say, “Even so, come Lord Jesus!” (Rev. 22:20b). {eoa}

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