

# God's Ministering Angels

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I John 4:7-8 states clearly that “love [*agape*] comes from God” and that “God is love.” Since we have been created in God’s image (Genesis 1:26) and tasked with imitating Him (Leviticus 11:44; I Peter 1:16), then our learning to define and express love is of paramount importance (I Corinthians 16:14).

Without putting too fine a point on it, Romans 5:8 and John 15:13 provide both definition and expression for the godly concept of love: the working of selfless and/or beneficent acts that provide no reciprocal benefit to the doer.

In this context, could we then say that angels—those remarkable beings created to be “ministering spirits” (Hebrews 1:14) to those seeking salvation—further define, reflect, and express God’s love? As God’s peerless agents, providing protection, assistance, guidance, and comfort to His creation, as well as to Jesus Christ, these angels also provide something else we need: sterling examples of what it means to lead lives of service to God and man.

We should also note that some scriptural references to “the Angel of the Lord” (Psalm 34:7, Genesis 16:7-13, Judges 6:11-23, etc.), actually refer to the pre-incarnate Christ. But here we take a closer look at the noble efforts of the ministering angels who were created by the *same being who was the pre-incarnate Christ* and consider how they exemplify lives of giving.

## 1. Do God’s angels provide for our protection?

**C o m m e n t:** Psalm 91:11-12 shows that God has charged His angels with our protection and well-being: “For He shall give His angels charge over you, to keep you in all your ways. They shall bear you up in their hands, lest you dash your foot against a stone.”

Consider the well-known story of Daniel and the lions’ den. After spending a night in what should have been a deadly lair of lions, an unmolested Daniel remarked: “My God sent His angel and shut the lions’ mouths, so that they have not hurt me, because I was found innocent before Him” (Daniel 6:22). The angels who went into Sodom to pull Lot and his family out also rescued him from the violent mob (Genesis 19:1, 10-11).

## 2. Do angels facilitate God’s will?

**C o m m e n t:** God has commissioned His angels to guide events for the benefit of the elect. When Abraham sent his servant to find a wife for Isaac, he said, “He [God] will send His angel before you” (Genesis 24:7). Later, the servant repeated Abraham’s instructions to Bethuel and Laban, Rebekah’s father and brother: “The Lord, before whom I walk, will send His angel with you and prosper your way” (verse 40). *Prosper* in this context means “to make successful.”

## 3. Are angels capable of providing for our physical needs?

**Comment:** In I Kings 19:1-8, a despondent Elijah had escaped from the threats of Jezebel by fleeing into the wilderness. In verses 5-7, Elijah receives food and water from one of God's benevolent agents:

Then as he lay and slept under a broom tree, suddenly an angel touched him, and said to him, "Arise and eat." Then he looked, and there by his head was a cake baked on coals, and a jar of water. So he ate and drank, and lay down again. And the angel of the LORD came back the second time, and touched him, and said, "Arise and eat, because the journey is too great for you."

**4. Do angels possess a capacity to administer comfort and strengthen?**

**Comment:** The angels must sometimes comfort God's people. In Acts 27, Paul is taken by ship to Rome to appear before Caesar. While at sea, a tempestuous storm with high winds arose, and the situation became critical. Afraid that the ship would run aground or sink, the crew began to fear for their lives. But an angel appeared to Paul and said, "Do not be afraid, Paul; you must be brought before Caesar; and indeed God has granted you all those who sail with you" (Acts 27:24). Consider also the angel who comforted Jesus before His trial and crucifixion (Luke 22:43). Similarly, Gabriel's words to Daniel were comforting and strengthening (Daniel 10:10-19).

In Exodus 23:20 our Creator makes this reassuring statement to the Israelites: "Behold, I send an Angel before you to keep you in the way and to bring you into the place which I have prepared." Perhaps no other words from our Father more effectively reveal both His love for us as well as the role He designed for the angels to help further define and express that love. When combined with the incomparably superior life of Jesus Christ (Hebrews 1:4), the tireless efforts of the ministering angels bolster our confidence that God is providing all we need to attain our goal of eternal life in His Kingdom.