

ANGELS TESTIFY OF THE ANGER OF GOD – HUMANS OF HIS MERCY

***Genesis 19:1** And there came two angels to Sodom at even; and Lot sat in the gate of Sodom: and Lot seeing them rose up to meet them; and he bowed himself with his face toward the ground.*

Today we gather to explore a profound truth revealed in Scripture: the sending of angels and human witnesses. Throughout the Bible, when God sends angels, it signals impending judgment—a time when hope has diminished and sin has taken the lead. In contrast, when God sends humans as witnesses, it signifies that hope still exists—the chance for repentance and redemption. As we delve into this important theme, we will examine biblical examples illustrating these distinctions and affirm that as Christians, we are called to be the hope of the world. Let us embrace our calling to witness, for as long as we are sent, there is still hope.

I. God Sending Angels: A Sign of Impending Judgment

1. Sodom and Gomorrah (Genesis 19):

The account of Sodom and Gomorrah serves as a powerful illustration of divine judgment. The two angels that arrived in Sodom had a mission: to execute God's judgment.

- **Analysis:** The arrival of these angels was not to offer warnings or chances for repentance; rather, it was to fulfill the decree of destruction. The cities had reached a point of no return, with their wickedness overwhelming any chance of salvation. The angelic visitation symbolized an end to hope, as judgment fell soon after.

2. The Angel of Death (Exodus 12):

Another sobering example is found in the Exodus narrative. God sent the angel of death to strike down the firstborn of Egypt during the final plague. Exodus 12:23 declares, "For the Lord will pass through to smite the Egyptians; and when he seeth the blood upon the lintel, and on the two side posts, the Lord will pass over the door, and will not suffer the destroyer to come in unto your houses to smite you."

- **Analysis:** This dreadful action illustrates that God had reached the end of His patience with Pharaoh and the Egyptians. The repeated opportunities for

repentance had been ignored, leading to a divine judgment that could no longer be averted. The time for repentance had passed, and hope was extinguished.

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3. **Angels in Revelation (Revelation 14:6):**

In the book of Revelation, we read of an angel proclaiming the Gospel during the final days. Revelation 14:6-7 states, “And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people, Saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to him; for the hour of his judgment is come.”

- **Analysis:** While this angel preaches the Gospel, its timing indicates impending judgment. The urgent message serves as a final call to repent before divine action is taken. The presence of such angels is a sobering reminder that when they come, the door for hope is closing.

II. God Sending Humans: A Beacon of Hope

In contrast to God sending angels, let us explore instances where He sends humans as His witnesses, indicating that hope remains.

1. **Peter's Release from Prison (Acts 12):**

One of the most striking examples of God's sending humans to be witnesses is found in the story of Peter's miraculous release from prison. In Acts 12:5-7, we read, “Peter therefore was kept in prison: but prayer was made without ceasing of the church unto God for him. And when Herod would have brought him forth, the same night Peter was sleeping between two soldiers, bound with two chains: and the keepers before the door kept the prison. And, behold, the angel of the Lord came upon him, and a light shined in the prison: and he smote Peter on the side, and raised him up, saying, Arise up quickly. And his chains fell off from his hands.”

- **Analysis:** Here, we see that an angel was sent not to execute judgment, but to deliver Peter so that he could continue to witness for the Gospel. The church's fervent prayers contributed to this act of divine intervention. God prioritized

Peter's mission to share the hope of Christ rather than bringing him to judgment, reinforcing that as long as there are witnesses, hope is alive.

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2. **Jonah and Nineveh (Book of Jonah):**

Jonah's mission to Nineveh exemplifies the hope offered by human witnesses. After initially fleeing from God's command, Jonah finally arrived in Nineveh with a simple yet powerful message: "Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown" (Jonah 3:4).

- **Analysis:** The response of the people of Nineveh was remarkable. They believed Jonah's warning, proclaimed a fast, and turned from their wicked ways. From the king to the common folk, their repentance demonstrated that as long as God sends witnesses, there is always hope for change and redemption. Jonah's experience teaches us that even reluctant messengers can play a crucial role in God's plan to save.

3. **The Prophets as Witnesses (Various Scriptures):**

Throughout the Old Testament, God raised up prophets like Isaiah and Jeremiah to call His people back to repentance. For instance, in Jeremiah 26:2, God commands, "Thus saith the Lord; Stand in the court of the Lord's house, and speak unto all the cities of Judah... all the words that I command thee to speak unto them; diminish not a word."

- **Analysis:** The continuous commissioning of prophets emphasizes God's desire for His people to turn back to Him. Each prophet's mission was marked by the hope of restoration and renewal—a clear sign that as long as there were witnesses willing to proclaim the truth, hope existed for the wayward.

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4. **Jesus as the Ultimate Witness (John 3:16):**

The sending of Jesus Christ is the supreme act of God's desire to save humanity. "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (John 3:16).

- **Analysis:** Through Jesus, God revealed His heart toward humanity—a deep desire for relationship and redemption. Jesus came not to condemn the world, but to provide a pathway to salvation. As long as He existed among us, hope

was resplendent, illustrating that even in our darkest moments, God longed for us to know Him and accept His grace.

III. The Implications for Us as Witnesses

As we consider the weighty contrast between angelic visitation and human witnesses, let us reflect on our responsibility as Christians.

1. We Are the Bearers of Hope:

As long as we have breath, we are called to be witnesses of the Gospel. In Matthew 28:19-20, Jesus commissions us as His disciples: “Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world.”

- **Analysis:** This Great Commission underscores that our purpose as followers of Christ is to share the message of hope. Every act of witness, every testimony, becomes a beacon of light in a darkening world. Through our obedience, we demonstrate that as long as the Gospel is proclaimed, there remains hope for a lost generation.

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2. Urgency in Our Mission:

Just as angels signify impending judgment, our mission as witnesses carries urgency. Romans 10:14 poses a critical question: "How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher?"

- **Analysis:** This verse reveals the responsibility placed upon us. When we witness, we deliver the hope of the Gospel. The reality is that God has entrusted us with this message of hope that can change lives. The time to proclaim it is now—while we have the opportunity, we must not delay.

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3. Anticipate the Day of Judgment:

While we know that God is patient, desiring that none should perish, we must also recognize that the day of reckoning will come. 2 Peter 3:9 reminds us, “The Lord is

not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.”

- **Analysis:** This serves as a potent reminder that each day we witness is an opportunity for others to receive grace. However, we must also be aware that the calls for repentance will not last forever. Ultimately, there will come a time when the day of grace will close, and we must be diligent in our mission.

As we approach the conclusion of today’s message, let us remember the profound distinctions between the sending of angels and human witnesses. Angels signify that judgment is near, while God’s sending of humans is a testament to the enduring hope present in our world. We, dear brethren, are the hope-bringers, tasked with proclaiming the message of Jesus Christ to a world in desperate need. Reflect on your life, your community, and the people around you. Are you actively witnessing to the hope of Christ? Are you embracing your role as a beacon of light