

Minister's Message – June 2009

Angels and Demons

The writer Dan Brown, of 'The da Vinci Code' fame, has another movie screening called 'Angels and Demons'. Judging by the reviews it will not be a great success, although the title may get some along to see it. Many are curious about angels and demons, and they might think that Dan Brown has something interesting or new to tell them. He may well have his own ideas and imaginations, but beyond the box office what is the truth about angels and demons?

In the Bible we read about angels and demons. An angel called Gabriel appeared to Mary and spoke to her in the well loved, but not so well understood, Christmas story. Jesus was kept busy exorcising demons that were destroying the lives of people he met.

Angels were created by God before the creation of human beings. Some of these did not keep their proper place in God's creation (Jude v.6). They rebelled against God becoming fallen angels or demons. Satan or the devil was the leader of this group and he is now the *prince of the kingdom of the air, the spirit who now works in those who disobey God* (Ephesians 2:2).

Adam and Eve were the first human beings and the first led by Satan to disobey God. He appeared to them as a serpent speaking to Eve and causing her to doubt what God said (Genesis 3, Revelation 12). Later in the Bible, Satan is spoken of metaphorically as a roaring lion (I Peter 5:8), and then as a dragon (Revelation 12:9). Just how he appeared to Jesus we are not told, but he was very real as he tempted Jesus in the desert. Pictures of Satan as a black figure with two horns do not come from the Bible. The picture of him holding a three pronged fork (trishul) is common in Hinduism. Satan was not some surreal power force that Jesus encountered. Jesus said to him 'Get behind me Satan' as he resisted his suggestions to disobey God.

The angels of today did not rebel against God. They kept their proper place as spiritual servants of God. They, like the demons or fallen angels, are higher than human beings but lower than God and Jesus Christ the Son of God. Angels are spirits who minister to the people of God at the command of God. Angels and demons inhabit the 'heavenly places' beyond the realm of earth. Jesus was made a little lower than the angels, but he has been raised from the dead and exalted to the throne of God in heaven (Hebrews 2:9; 4:14).

Through his death and resurrection Jesus destroyed him who has the power of death, that is the devil (Hebrews 2:14). It is not for us as humans to mess with the devil. His power is in another league. But Jesus has overcome Satan. He has been defeated to await final destruction in the eternal lake of fire (Jude v.6).

These are some of the things God tells us about angels and demons. If you want to learn more then read further in the Bible. Do not believe what Dan Brown or other 'earthlings' tell you!

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