

The  
Secret  
Life  
of Angels

RON RHODES



HARVEST HOUSE PUBLISHERS  
EUGENE, OREGON

Unless otherwise indicated, all Scripture quotations are taken from the HOLY BIBLE, NEW INTERNATIONAL VERSION®. NIV®. Copyright © 1973, 1978, 1984 by the International Bible Society. Used by permission of Zondervan. All rights reserved.

Verses marked KJV are taken from the King James Version of the Bible.

Cover by Dugan Design Group, Bloomington, Minnesota

Cover photo © vichly4thai, Ig0rZh / Fotolia

Formerly Titled *Angels Among Us*

**THE SECRET LIFE OF ANGELS**

Copyright © 1994/2008 by Harvest House Publishers

Published by Harvest House Publishers

Eugene, Oregon 97402

[www.harvesthousepublishers.com](http://www.harvesthousepublishers.com)

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Rhodes, Ron.

[Angels among us]

The secret life of angels / Ron Rhodes.

pages cm

Includes bibliographical references.

ISBN 978-0-7369-4879-1 (pbk.)

ISBN 978-0-7369-4880-7 (eBook)

1. Angels—Christianity. I. Title.

BT966.3.R5 2014

235'.3—dc23

2013043546

**All rights reserved.** No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means—electronic, mechanical, digital, photocopy, recording, or any other—except for brief quotations in printed reviews, without the prior permission of the publisher.

**Printed in the United States of America**

14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 / LB-SK / 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

*This book is lovingly dedicated to my grandmother,*

*~~~~~ Annie Belle Carothers. ~~~~~*

*Away from the body, at home with the Lord.*

## Acknowledgments

A special thanks to my wife, Kerri, for proofreading each chapter in this book prior to publication. I so appreciate her assistance and encouragement. Thanks also to our children David and Kylie—my personal cheering squad.

To all my friends at Harvest House Publishers—working with you is a pleasure. Blessings to you all!

 Contents 

From the Voices of Angels .....	9
<b>PART 1: Close Encounters of the Celestial Kind</b>	
1. Angels in the World Today .....	15
2. Flying High: The Popularity of Angels .....	27
3. Celestial Quackery, Part 1: Making Contact with Angels .....	35
4. Celestial Quackery, Part 2: Angel Appearances Today .....	51
<b>PART 2: What Angels Are Like</b>	
5. The Origin of Angels .....	65
6. The Nature of Angels .....	77
7. The Organization of Angels .....	91
8. The Titles of Angels .....	107
9. The Angel of the Lord .....	117
<b>PART 3: What Angels Do</b>	
10. Celestial Spectators of Planet Earth .....	131
11. Servants of the Most High .....	139
12. Ministers to Jesus Christ .....	147
13. Angels Among <i>Us</i> .....	163
14. Angels Among <i>Them</i> .....	177
15. Fallen Angels .....	185
<b>PART 4: Our Future with the Angels</b>	
16. Anticipating Eternity .....	213
Notes .....	219
Bibliography .....	239



## From the Voices of Angels

**P**atmos is a mountainous desert island located on the Aegean Sea and covers about 60 square miles. Rome exiled criminals to this desolate island, and this is where Domitian, the emperor of Rome, exiled the aged apostle John as a punishment for sharing the good news of Jesus Christ with everyone he met. John was sent here to die of either old age or starvation.

Little did John know what God had in store for him on this tiny, secluded island. Sometime around AD 90—about 60 years after Jesus had risen from the dead and ascended to heaven—John had the most sweeping and panoramic vision any saint of God ever received. John was privileged to behold Christ in His awesome postresurrection glory.

During this incredible vision, John witnessed innumerable angels singing a song of worship to the Messiah, Jesus Christ:

I looked and heard the voice of many angels, numbering thousands upon thousands, and ten thousand times ten thousand. They encircled the throne and the

living creatures and the elders. In a loud voice they sang: “Worthy is the Lamb, who was slain, to receive power and wealth and wisdom and strength and honor and glory and praise!” (Revelation 5:11-12).

“Ten thousand times ten thousand” is a lot of angels. In fact, this calculates to 100 million angels surrounding Christ on the throne and singing a magnificent worship song in praise of Him.

To give you a perspective regarding how many angels this is, the average football stadium in America holds about 50,000 people. It would take 2000 stadiums of that size to hold 100,000,000 people. Such large numbers boggle the mind!

Actually, the total number of angels John saw may far exceed 100 million. I say this because “ten thousand” was the highest numerical figure used in the Greek language.<sup>1</sup> “Ten thousand times ten thousand” may be John’s way of describing an inexpressibly large company of angels—myriads upon myriads.

Try to imagine the scene. This magnificent company of at least 100 million angels—with every single one radiating resplendent, luminous beauty—surrounds Christ’s glorious throne and sings praises to His matchless name. The sound of this many voices singing in unison to Christ must surely have been the most awe-inspiring experience John (or any other human) ever encountered. What a precious privilege God gave His lowly servant!

Bible expositor John MacArthur exults in this majestic praise song: “I cannot wait to hear it. I cannot wait to sing it with a glorified voice, and be part of the great chorus of the redeemed, with the entire host of heaven joining in.”<sup>2</sup> MacArthur expresses a longing in every Christian’s heart!

Note that this majestic worship scene ascribes power, glory,

and honor to Jesus Christ (Revelation 5:12). These are the exact words used to describe the worship of the Father in Revelation 4:11. Jesus receives from this vast company of angels the same worship as the Father!

Why do I begin a book on angels in this way? Simply because I want to set the tone for the rest of the book. Many recent books focus on angels as an end in themselves, completely (or largely) apart from God. This is not as it should be.

Angels exist because Christ created them to exist (Colossians 1:16). Angels exist as eternal servants to God and Christ (Psalm 103:20). Any discussion of angels that treats them as an end in themselves is unbalanced.

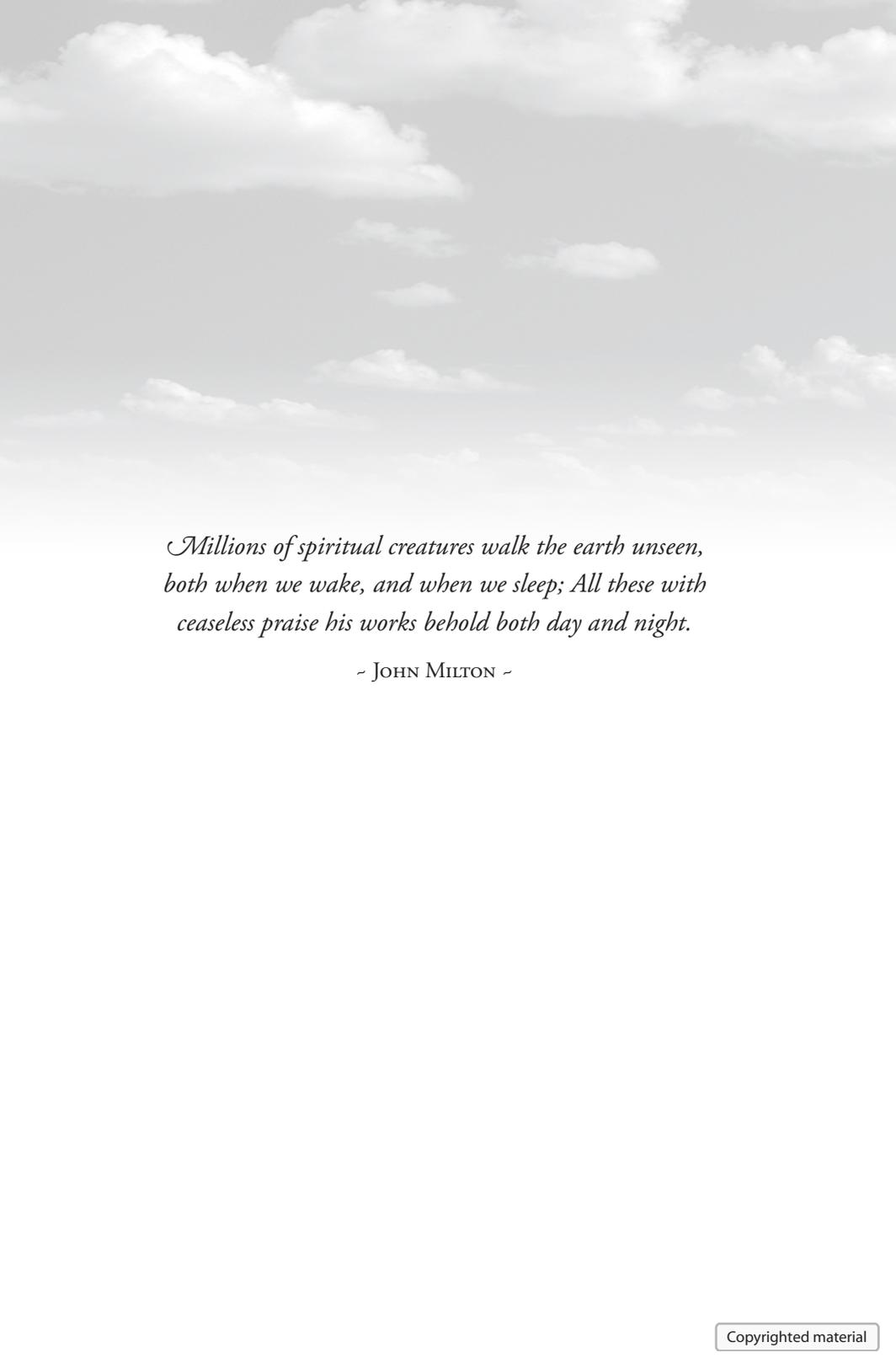
In chapter 1 we will consider some testimonies of people who claim to have had a close encounter of the celestial kind—that is, an encounter with an angel. Then, in chapters 2 through 4, we'll focus attention on some of the imbalances that have emerged in recent years regarding angels. Throughout the rest of the book, we will zero in on what the Bible tells us about this intriguing subject.

As you discover what Scripture has to say, I am confident you will begin to grasp the glorious provisions God has made for our care and well-being in the world. You will see that angels are indeed among us.



**PART 1**

**Close Encounters of  
the Celestial Kind**



*Millions of spiritual creatures walk the earth unseen,  
both when we wake, and when we sleep; All these with  
ceaseless praise his works behold both day and night.*

~ JOHN MILTON ~

## Angels in the World Today

Sally, a woman who attends my church, could not restrain her tears as she poured out her heart to Pastor Dave. After a series of medical tests, Sally's doctor had called to inform her that the baby she was expecting would be born with Down syndrome. Pastor Dave shared Sally's grief at the news. He vowed to help Sally and her husband, Jim, in any way he could.<sup>1</sup>

The following day Pastor Dave decided to send Sally and Jim a postcard with a word of encouragement. On the card, Dave assured them of how much God loved them and their soon-to-be-born little baby.

The postcard was delivered to a wrong address several miles from Sally and Jim's house. Sue—who lived at the house the card was mistakenly delivered to—decided to take the postcard to Sally personally.

When Sally opened the door, Sue said, "This card from your pastor was delivered to my house by mistake. I wanted to come by and deliver the card personally because I too have a child with Down syndrome, and I want to help you through this if

you'll let me. God has shown me so much that I would like to share with you."

Did the God of all comfort send one of His angels to reroute the mail to Sue's house? We can't know for sure, but it seems a good possibility. Skeptics would tell us this was just a freak accident, but I see the supernatural at work here.

Angels are real. Angels are alive. And though we rarely perceive their presence, they are very much with us here on the earth.

Christians have always believed in angels. We can easily understand why. After all, the same Bible that attests to the reality and activity of God among His people likewise attests—with equal vigor—to the reality and activity of angels in our world. Scripture testifies to innumerable angels, all active in some capacity in carrying out the bidding of God.

In recent years, many believers have spoken of actual encounters with angels. Many of these reports come from quite reliable sources and have the ring of authenticity. As you read the following accounts, I think you will begin to see why I originally entitled this book *Angels Among Us*.

### **Escort into Glory**

Evangelist Billy Graham reports that when his maternal grandmother died, the room seemed to fill with a heavenly light. "She sat up in bed and almost laughingly said, 'I see Jesus. He has His arms outstretched toward me. I see Ben [her husband who had died some years earlier] and I see the angels.' She slumped over, absent from the body but present with the Lord."<sup>2</sup>

### **Revival in a Hospital**

The editor of *Leadership* magazine, a popular publication

among church leaders, speaks of how his young daughter was comatose one night, very near death. *Christianity Today* magazine reported that a hospital staff worker stopped by the room and witnessed an astonishing sight—angels were hovering over the girl’s bed.

By the following morning, the daughter had amazingly revived. This editor—not prone to sensationalism—does not hesitate to believe that angels had truly visited his girl that night.<sup>3</sup> The staff worker renewed her commitment to God as a result of the incredible sight she had seen.

### **Rescue on the Missionary Field**

Reverend John G. Paton was a missionary in the New Hebrides Islands. According to his testimony, his mission headquarters was surrounded by hostile natives one night. They apparently intended to burn the building to the ground and put John and his wife to death.

The Patons turned to God, throwing themselves on His mercy and asking Him to deliver them. They prayed throughout the night, and when the first rays of sunlight came the next morning, the Patons were utterly amazed to see that the natives had left.

About a year later, the chief of that tribe became a Christian. When Paton asked the chief why the tribe had refrained from burning down the headquarters on that fateful night, the chief surprised him by inquiring, “Who were all those men you had there with you?”

Paton answered, “There were no men there—just my wife and I.”

The chief then told Paton that he and his warriors had seen hundreds of men standing guard outside the headquarters that

night—all dressed in shining garments with swords drawn. These guards completely encircled the headquarters, and the tribe dared not attack.

Paton then realized that God had dispatched His angels to guard him and his wife.<sup>4</sup> As Psalm 34:7 tells us, “The angel of the LORD encamps around those who fear him, and he delivers them.” Moreover, “He will command his angels concerning you to guard you in all your ways” (Psalm 91:11).

Paton’s testimony sounds remarkably similar to the story of Elisha in 2 Kings 6:15-17. In this story, Elisha and his servant were surrounded by hostile forces, but they were not alone.

When the servant of the man of God got up and went out early the next morning, an army with horses and chariots had surrounded the city. “Oh, my lord, what shall we do?” the servant asked. “Don’t be afraid,” the prophet answered. “Those who are with us are more than those who are with them.” And Elisha prayed, “O LORD, open his eyes so that he may see.” Then the LORD opened the servant’s eyes, and he looked and saw the hills full of horses and chariots of fire all around Elisha.

### **Protection for Children in the Congo**

Corrie ten Boom tells of an event that occurred during a rebellion in the Congo. Some rebels had advanced on a school where about 200 missionary children lived. “They planned to kill both children and teachers,” she said. “In the school, they knew of the danger and therefore went to prayer. Their only protection was a fence and a couple of soldiers, while the enemy, who came closer and closer, amounted to several hundred.”

Incredibly, as soon as the rebels came close by, they suddenly turned around and bolted away! The exact same thing happened the next day and the day after that when the rebels tried to approach the school.

One of the rebels was wounded and was brought to the missionary hospital. As the doctor was dressing his wounds, he asked the rebel, "Why did you not break into the school as you planned?"

The rebel responded, "We could not do it. We saw hundreds of soldiers in white uniforms, and we became scared."

Corrie later reflected that "in Africa, soldiers never wear white uniforms. So it must have been angels. What a wonderful thing that the Lord can open the eyes of the enemy so that they see angels!"<sup>5</sup>

### **Rescue at a Dark Intersection**

Micki Stella was a Christian missionary who participated in evangelistic crusades in Korea. An evangelistic meeting ended late one night, and she and other missionaries were being driven to their homes. Her home was more out of the way than the others, so she volunteered to be dropped off at a normally busy intersection, where she would hail a taxi to her home.

Micki had visited this location only during the daylight hours. During the day, it seemed a safe environment. Standing there at night, she soon realized it was potentially dangerous. The intersection was all but deserted at night except for some men apparently doing some heavy drinking. As well, the taxis that frequented the area during the day were conspicuously absent.

A group of five men who had been in a nearby tavern were now out on the street, stumbling around and being noisy. One

broke away from the group and started toward her, his arms extended in front of him. He said, "Come with me for one minute."

Micki, her eyes widening, started walking, looking for an escape. She was fearful of going farther down the dark street, but the man's four friends blocked the sidewalk in the other direction. "No. I don't want to go with you," she blurted out. She began to panic as the man continued toward her. She felt trapped. Here is her testimony:

Suddenly, a large Korean man appeared from the alley leading to the open-air market. He walked deliberately in our direction. What immediately struck me was that he was so different from any Korean man I had seen in my dozen years in Korea to that time. He was *big*—a really burly-looking man—whereas Korean men of that time were almost always short and slight of build. Immediately I just knew he had come to help me! My fear was replaced by a very strange sense of peace. He walked to a point between me and my would-be assailant and just stood there as solid as a rock.

The drunken man looked at him and came to the same conclusion—this man was my protector. He stopped in his tracks, then turned to go with his friends, who had already begun to walk away. I watched him just long enough to see that he was gone for good, then turned to thank my protector, who had not spoken a word. *No one was there. This is impossible*, I thought. I called to him. There was no answer. I even walked further down the dark street to the alley and called into that black hole which was normally a busy market, but heard no response.<sup>6</sup>

## **Emergency Guidance on the Road**

Marlene Wiechman, a 33-year-old mother in West Point, Nebraska, believes angels rendered assistance when her six-year-old daughter's health took a drastic turn for the worse: "Emily had had a stroke at seven months, and she's partially handicapped," Wiechman says. Years later, Emily became ill while the family was vacationing.

Last year, we went on vacation with my parents to Yellowstone National Park. On the way home, driving through Wyoming, Emily said she didn't feel well. She started vomiting, and her eyes weren't focusing. We needed to get her to a hospital, but the nearest town, Rock Springs, was 70 miles away.

Emily kept getting worse, and as we approached Rock Springs, I prayed we would find help quickly. Just then, we saw a blue-and-white hospital sign. There were three or four more signs that led us straight to the emergency room.

A doctor at the hospital was able to quickly diagnose Emily as having a seizure and was able to stabilize her with anticonvulsants. When the moment of crisis was over, Ms. Wiechman mentioned that the signs had been a lifesaver.

The doctor looked at me and said, "What signs?" He said he traveled that road every day, and there were no hospital signs. But all four adults in our van had seen them. We went back and looked again. They were gone. I called someone at the chamber of commerce, who said there had never been any hospital signs on that route. I believe they were put there for us by God or his angels.<sup>7</sup>

### **Companion on a Dangerous Mountain**

A Christian missionary in Norway believes an angel assisted him on a dangerous mountain. To reach families living in his valley, he had to descend a dangerous mountain trail. At one steep, dangerous place, he stopped to pray, asking God to protect him with His angels. He safely reached the valley without harm.

At the first cottage the missionary met a man with his wife who had been watching his descent of the dangerous trail. "What has become of your companion?" they asked.

"What companion?" the missionary responded.

"The man who was with you," they exclaimed in surprise. "We were watching you as you came down the mountain, and it really seemed to us that there were two men crossing the mountain together."

"Then," reported the missionary, "I was reminded of my prayer to God for help, and of the word of the Lord in Psalm 34:7, 'The angel of the LORD encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them.'"<sup>8</sup>

### **Rescue from a Train Disaster**

Respected Bible expositor A.C. Gaebelien speaks of an incident in which he is convinced an angel sent from God rescued him and his companions from sure disaster. While traveling on a train, Gaebelien and his friends committed themselves into God's loving hands for a safe trip. Strangely, they sensed danger in their hearts that night, but they nevertheless trusted in God for safety.

They slept through that night peacefully. When they awoke the next morning, they were informed of a near tragedy that had occurred during the night:

The train was hours late and the crew told us that near to midnight the train had been flagged by a farmer and had been brought to a stop less than five yards from a deep abyss. A storm further north sent its floodwaters down the creek and washed the wooden bridge away. A farmer was asleep. He said a voice awoke him to arise. He heard the rushing water and hastily dressed himself and lit a lantern, when he heard the oncoming train, which he stopped in time.<sup>9</sup>

Gaebelein has always believed that the voice that awoke the farmer that night was nothing less than an angel of God. He wonders how many other times in his life he has been rescued from danger without even knowing danger was present.

### **Rescue from a Burning Room**

One day in 1977 Linda Gates of Sacramento, California, was cleaning her kitchen when she suddenly heard her four-year-old boy, Michael, running down the hall. She then heard the front door slam shut—an unusual occurrence because the door was warped and required adult strength to close tightly. Going outside, Linda found Michael, his eyes wide. He said, “A man got me out, Mama! A man got me out!”

Michael then led his mother to his smoke-filled room, where a curtain was burning. As it turned out, Michael had been playing with a box of matches and set the curtains on fire. After firefighters put out the blaze, one of them told Linda the smoke could easily have killed her son.

Linda recounts, “Michael told me that a man with long blond hair and a ‘many-colored’ shirt had appeared at his door and said, ‘Michael, come out of there.’ When my son said he wanted to look for his teddy bear, the man pulled him out of the room.”

That evening their bedtime story just happened to be about Daniel and the lions' den, where they read, "My God sent his angel, and he shut the mouths of the lions. They have not hurt me, because I was found innocent in his sight" (Daniel 6:22). Linda was confident God had sent His angel to rescue her son.<sup>10</sup>

### God's Heavenly Helpers

Were bona fide angels really involved in each of the above cases? They all have the ring of authenticity, but only God knows for sure. One thing is clear. Each of the above cases illustrates in a graphic way what Scripture has to say about the role of angels: "Are not all angels ministering spirits sent to serve those who will inherit salvation?" (Hebrews 1:14).

The root meaning of the word *ministering* has to do with rendering service. God created the angels to render service in various capacities. Popular Bible expositor Ray Stedman says that angelic ministry may involve protection (Psalm 91:11), guidance (Genesis 19:16-17), encouragement (Judges 6:12), deliverance (Acts 12:7), supply (Psalm 105:40), enlightenment (Matthew 2:19-20), and empowerment (Luke 22:43).<sup>11</sup>

Later we will see that angels are also involved in other kinds of service not specifically related to Christians. Some angels render service directly to God and Christ. Other angels bring judgment against unbelievers. We will see that angels are involved in carrying out the sovereign bidding of God in many different ways.