

Angels

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1. Angels are a class of spiritual beings a little higher than the order of men (Ps. 8:5, Heb. 2:6-7). This does not suggest they are more valuable than people, because Christ did not die for angels, but for people. Angels cannot be saved through His death on the cross but people can.
2. They were created by God (Col. 1:16).
3. They were created before the earth was created (Job 38:1-7).
4. They made differently than humans (Luke 20:33-36, Ps. 8:5).
5. They are mightier than unregenerate men (2 Pet. 2:10-11), but not mightier than the Christian (Luke 10:18-20, Eph. 1:20-23, 2:6).
6. Angels are often referred to as "stars" and "sons of God" (Job 1:6, 2:1, Isa 14:12, Rev. 1:20, 9:1, 12:4,9). They are not "sons of God" in the same sense as Christians.

Why Angels Were Created

The Bible indicates that angels were created to minister to and serve the Lord (Ps. 103:20-21). Their purpose goes even further in that they are actively involved in the affairs of men. Even though they were created before us, in some respects they were created for us. God, in His predetermined plan, saw the creation of man beforehand and created angels to be actively involved in that plan. "For He did not subject to angels the world to come concerning which we are speaking." (Heb. 2:5) The world to come will subject to Christians but, not angels.

Angels guard and protect those who will inherit salvation. "Are they not all ministering spirits, sent out to render service for the sake of those who will inherit salvation?" (Heb. 1:14) Also see Ps. 91:11-12, Matt. 18:10.

Good and Evil Angels

When God created the angels, He made them good and holy (1 Tim 4:4, Col. 1:16, Gen 1:31). However, one-third of the angels (led by Lucifer) rebelled against God, were kicked out of heaven, and are now inhabiting this worldly sphere (Luke 10:18, Rev. 12:3-4, 20:2, Isa. 14:12-14, Ezek. 28:12-17).

We now refer to these fallen angels as demons. Jude 6 tells us that the "angels who did not keep their own domain, but abandoned their proper abode" are kept in eternal bonds for the judgment day. Some of the demons that are currently in bonds will be released during the Tribulation period just prior to the Second Coming of Christ (Rev. 9:1-21). However, most of the fallen angels are existing invisibly on earth for a limited time awaiting judgment.

In Matt. 8:28-29, the demons inside the man cried out to Jesus, "Have You come here to torment us before the appointed time?" There is an appointed time for their judgment and their place of torment will be the abyss (Luke 8:31). In Matt. 25:41, Jesus said eternal fire has been prepared for the devil and his angels. The lake of fire was originally prepared for Satan and the rebellious angels that were ousted from heaven, but will also be used as a place of punishment for those who follow Satan (Matt. 25:41-46, Rev. 20:10-15, Mark 9:47-48).

Ranks of Angels

There are different kinds and ranks of angels mentioned in the Scriptures:

1. Cherubim-Gen 3:24, Ex. 25:18-22, Ezek. 10:1-22, Rev. 4:6-9 (Ezek. 1)

2.Seraphim-Isa. 6:1-7

3.Archangels-1 Thess. 4:16, Jude 9 (a position)

4.Common angels-simply referred to as "angels."

It is believed that there were three archangels, each having authority over one-third of the angels. Although Michael is the only archangel mentioned by name in the Bible, Gabriel is also probably one, and Satan (once named Lucifer) was the other. The description of Satan in Ezek. 28:12-17 reveals that he was once a cherub (v.14,16). As an angel, we learn that he had a throne (Isa. 14:13) and he wanted to exalt it above God's throne. It was his attempt to overthrow God's authority that caused him to be expelled from heaven.

Satan Has a Kingdom

Satan brought his throne and kingdom of fallen angels to this earthly realm to try to deceive people and lead them in rebellion against God. In Matt. 12:22-29, Jesus said that Satan has a kingdom, and even the Pharisees recognized that he is the ruler of the demons (v.24). In John 12:31, Jesus called him the ruler of this world and in John 16:11 the prince of this world. He is also called "the prince of the power of the air" (Eph. 2:2) and the "god of this world" (2 Cor. 4:4). In all likelihood, when Satan was kicked out of heaven, the fallen angels kept the same or similar ranks of authority as they had in heaven, but perverted it to perform evil ends. Compare Ephesians 3:10, (referring to holy angels), with Ephesians 6:12, which refers to evil angels. Ephesians 6:12 reveals there are 4 levels or ranks of fallen angels.

1. Principalities-(KJV) the highest rank (Col. 1:16, 2:10, Rom 8:38).
2. Powers-execute the will of the chief rulers (Col. 2:10 KJV)
3. World rulers of the darkness of this age-(Eph. 1:21, Dan. 10:13-21) These are demons that influence world leaders for their evil purposes.
4. Spiritual wickedness in the heavenly places-(Eph. 1:21), which are evil spirits.

Not only do demons have different degrees of authority, they also have different degrees of power. When the disciples asked Jesus why they couldn't cast out a certain demon, He replied, "This kind cannot come out by anything but prayer" (Mark 9:29). There are different kinds of fallen angels and some are more powerful than others. However, no demon is more powerful than a Christian (Luke 10:17-20, 1 John 4:4).

What Do Angels Look Like?

Jesus said in Luke 20:34-36 that resurrected people "neither marry nor are given in marriage; for neither can they die anymore, for they are like the angels." It doesn't say that we will become angels, but that we will be like them in that they don't marry or die. In the Old Testament, they often appeared as men (Gen. 19), as well as in the New Testament (Mark 16:5). Hebrews 13:2 tells us that some have entertained angels without even knowing it.

They can appear in glory and brightness (Luke 2:9) or can be invisible (Num. 22:22-35, 2 Kings 6:15-17). Angels can also appear in dreams (Matt. 2:13,19), but they always appear for a purpose, either to give a message or to give aid. Their bodies are not made of flesh and bones (Luke 24:36-39), but they have knees and tongues (Phil. 2:10-11) and hands (Matt. 4:6).

Angels—What They Do

Angels have four main functions:

- 1) worship and serve God
- 2) protect and deliver saints
- 3) pour out judgment on the wicked
- 4) war against demons

I. Angels Worship and Serve God

Rev. 5:11-12--The angels join in with the 24 elders and the 4 living creatures in praise to God. Also see Rev. 7:11-12--These verses picture what the angels are doing in heaven.

Luke 2:13-15--At the birth of Jesus, the angels appeared on earth and praised God.

Ps. 103:20-21--Angels bless the Lord, perform His Word, serve Him, do His will, and obey His voice. Since angels are to obey the voice of God, we can pray that God will send His angels to protect us.

The Bible doesn't teach that we can command angels to do whatever we wish, as some interpret Matthew 18:18 to mean. Even Jesus, in Matt. 26:53, didn't command angels but spoke of asking the Father to send them. The Bible teaches that Christians can bind Satan (Matt. 12:24-29, Luke 11:17-22) and loose people in bondage (Luke 13:11-16, Mark 7:33-35, John 11:44), but it says nothing about commanding angels to do things for us.

II. Angels Protect and Deliver the Saints

The following verses show the relationship between the angels and believers, and how angels minister to us (Heb. 1:14).

1. "Joy in the presence of angels" In Luke 15:7-10, Jesus said there is joy in the presence of angels over one sinner who repents. It doesn't say the angels rejoice, but that they are present when the people in heaven rejoice over a repentant sinner. Perhaps that means they are sent out to minister to that individual at the moment the person repents (Heb. 1:14, Luke 12:8-9).

2. "Confess before the angels" In Luke 12:8-9, we find that when we confess Jesus before men, then He will confess us before the angels of God. This suggests several things:

- a. When we confess Him before men, He confesses us before an order of beings that is higher than men, the angels.
- b. This suggests a special protection upon us when we share our faith in Christ to others.
- c. This shows that the angels know us by name.

3. "Their angels in heaven continually behold the face of My Father"

In Matt. 18:10, Jesus warns those who would harm one of His little ones because their angels see the face of the Father.

- a. "Their angels" suggests that each believer has his own guardian angels to protect him and judge those who hurt him.
- b. Angels can behold the face of the Father at the same time they watch events on earth. Don't think of heaven as far away because it is in the spiritual realm
- c. This suggests the Father dispatches them to protect us.

4. Angels can prepare the way and protect us from harm.

Gen. 24:7--Angel went before him to find a wife

Ex. 14:19--The angel of God went before and behind them.

Ex. 23:20--Angel went before them to prepare the way.

Ps. 34:7--"The angel of the Lord encamps around those who fear Him, and rescues him." If you are a believer in Jesus Christ, you have an angel near you right now!

Ps. 91:11-12--The angels guard us in our ways and sometimes they intervene to keep us from hurting ourselves. This verse was misquoted by the devil in Luke 4:10 by trying to get Jesus to act foolishly on the basis that "God will protect you anyway."

5. Angels can deliver the saints if they are in trouble.

Acts 12:5-11--An angel woke up Peter in prison and his chains fell off. He then led him past the guards while the gate opened by itself, setting him free. Also see Acts 5:19.

6. Angels can give us strength.

Matt. 4:11-After Jesus was tempted, the angels ministered to Him.

Luke 22:43-In the Garden of Gethsemane, an angel strengthened Jesus.

Dan. 10:15-18-And angel touched Daniel and he was strengthened.

7. Angels carry Christians to heaven when they die.

Luke 16:22-The angels carried the spirit of the poor man to Abraham's bosom (Paradise). Angels watch over us while we are alive, and carry us to God when we die.

8. Angels are taught wisdom by Christians.

Eph. 3:10--the manifold wisdom of God is taught to angels through the Church.

1 Pet. 1:10-12--Angels desire to look into salvation. They can't experience salvation, but they desire to know more about it.

1 Cor. 4:9--They constantly watch us.

Heb. 13:2--Some have entertained angels without knowing it.

III. Angels Execute Judgment Upon the Wicked.

Acts 12:19-23-Herod was struck dead by an angel.

2 Kings 19:35-One angel killed 185,000 Assyrians.

Throughout the book of Revelation, God uses angels to pour out judgment upon the earth. At the 2nd Coming of Jesus, the angels will come with Jesus to execute judgment upon on unbelievers (Jude 14-15, Matt. 16:27, 2 Thess. 1:6-10). It is clear the angels know who is saved and who isn't because they will gather the wicked for judgment (Matt. 13:30, 37-41, 25:31-32).

IV. Angels War With Demons.

The Bible teaches there is a warfare between angels and demons in the spiritual realm. This is not to be confused with our warfare against demons (2 Cor. 10:4). Rev. 12:7-9 speaks of a war in heaven between Michael and his angels and Satan and his angels. The devil wasn't strong enough and was thrown down to earth. In Dan. 10:12-13, 20-21, Daniel prayed and the answer was delayed 21 days because was a demon "prince" over Persia was warring with the angel who was bringing the answer. The angel called upon Michael to him fight, and the angel finally got to Daniel with the answer. Satan and the demons will be bound at the Second Coming of Christ (Rev. 20:1-2, 10).