

Angels, an Introduction (Angelology)

Basic Information about Angels

The Creation of Angels

Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them. ² And on the seventh day God finished his work that he had done, and he rested on the seventh day from all his work that he had done. (Genesis 2:1-2)

By the word of the Lord the heavens are made, and all the host of them by the breath of his mouth. He gathers the waters of the sea together as a heap, he lays up the deep in storehouses. (Psalm 33:6-7 NKJV)

Where were you when I created the earth? Tell me, since you know so much! Who decided on its size? Certainly you'll know that! Who came up with the blueprints and measurements? How was its foundation poured, and who set the cornerstone, while the morning stars sang in chorus and all the angels shouted praise? And who took charge of the ocean when it gushed forth like a baby from the womb? That was me! (Job 38:4-8 MSG)

- Angels were an essential part of early creation
- Lucifer and a third of the angels fell prior to the creation of man
- God's plan was set and established *before* he declared it to be "good."

The Nature of Angels

The Bible clearly teaches that angels and humans are distinctly different and share only the fact that they both are created beings. Angels were created *chronologically* before humans, but humans are created *preeminently* before angels:

Do you not know that we are to judge angels? How much more, then, matters pertaining to this life! (1 Corinthians 6:3)

The Responsibilities of Angels

- Angels are God's messengers. They communicate messages that God wants people to know.
- Angels are God's military. They fight against God's enemies as he commands.
- Angels are God's ministering spirits. They tend to the needs of those who God loves.

Are not all angels ministering spirits sent to serve those who will inherit salvation? (Hebrews 1:14 NIV)

Because you have made the LORD...your dwelling place...He will give His angels orders concerning you, to protect you in all your ways. (Psalm 91:9,11 CSB)

Limitations of Angels

What is man that You are mindful of him,...you have made him a little lower than the angels. (Hebrews 2:6-7 NKJV)

Heaven and earth will pass away...But of that day or hour no one knows, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but the Father alone. (Mark 13:31-32 NASB)

- Angels demonstrate incredible feats of strength and insight into God's plans that far surpasses human limitations. However, angels are not all-powerful and all-knowing. God has limited their abilities.
- In heaven, angels and humans will have a more equitable relationship because humans will have bodies that have been perfected and all God's creatures will live fully in the eternal spiritual reality.

The Role of Fallen Angels in Temptation, Possession, and Sin

The demons had gone out of him, and he was sitting there at the feet of Jesus. He had clothes on and was in his right mind. (Luke 8:35 CEV)

And the unclean spirits, whenever they saw Him, fell down before Him and cried out, saying, "You are the Son of God." (Mark 3:11 NKJV)

It is in Christ that you...found yourselves home free—signed, sealed, and delivered by the Holy Spirit. (Ephesians 1:13-14 MSG)

- Demon possession was a real and supernatural phenomenon. It caused people to behave in unnatural, dangerous ways that frightened others and caused the people to become alienated from everyone else.
- Jesus demonstrated the consistent ability to free people from demon possession. No demon could withstand the command of Jesus to flee from a person and cease oppressing them. Every spirit submitted to the orders of Jesus.
- Jesus promised that any person today whose faith is in God will be protected from demon possession and spiritual oppression by the filling and fulfilling presence of the Holy Spirit in the person's life.

The Named Angels: Meet God's Most Famous Messengers

"How you are fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! How you are cut down to the ground, You who weakened the nations!" (Isaiah 14:12, NKJV)

When I, Daniel, had seen the vision, I sought to understand it. And behold, there stood before me one having the appearance of a man. ¹⁶ And I heard a man's voice between the banks of the Ulai, and it called, "Gabriel, make this man understand the vision." ¹⁷ So he came near where I stood. And when he came, I was frightened and fell on my face. But he said to me, "Understand, O son of man, that the vision is for the time of the end." (Daniel 8:15-17)

Then the angel said, "I am Gabriel! I stand in the very presence of God. It was he who sent me to bring you this good news!" (Luke 1:19 NLT)

In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a city of Galilee named Nazareth, ²⁷ to a virgin betrothed to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. And the virgin's name was Mary. ²⁸ And he came to her and said, "Greetings, O favored one, the Lord is with you!" (Luke 1:26-28)

But when the archangel Michael, contending with the devil, was disputing about the body of Moses, he did not presume to pronounce a blasphemous judgment, but said, "The Lord rebuke you." (Jude 1:9)

Now war arose in heaven, Michael and his angels fighting against the dragon. (Revelation 12:7)

- Only two angels are named explicitly in the Bible, and the name of the fallen angel known as Satan has traditionally been identified as Lucifer (or "Day Star" or "Morning Star").
- More important that angels' names are the deeds they perform in serving God. Gabriel announced God's messages, and Michael fights in behalf of God's causes.

Historic Angelic Battles in the Bible and What you Can Know From Them

That same night the LORD sent an angel to the camp of the Assyrians, and he killed one hundred eighty-five thousand of them. (Isaiah 37:35 CEV)

Bless God, all you armies of angels, alert to respond to whatever he wills. (Psalm 103:21 MSG)

- God does not take the matter of warring against people lightly. However, when necessary, he will use angels to fight in these conflicts, bringing heavy losses to humans.
- Angels have also warred against their rebellious fellow angels. There are two faithful angels for every rebellious demon.

Testing the Spirits: How you Relate with Angels

How You Relate with Angelic Beings in This Life

- Abraham bowed before the angels who would later destroy Sodom and Gomorrah.
- Lot bowed his face to the ground in their presence.
- The pagan false prophet Balaam fell to his face when he saw the Lord's angel.
- The true prophet Isaiah was completely undone from a vision of God and the heavenly host of angels.
- The prophet Daniel fell to his face in the presence of God's angel.
- In the New Testament, John the Baptist's father Zechariah was seized with fear when he was met by Gabriel.
- Even though Gabriel's message to Mary was a wonderful blessing, she was troubled by his visit.
- The shepherds were greatly frightened by the angels who announced the birth of Jesus to Mary and Joseph.
- Finally, the apostle John fell on his face in the presence of an angel while given his vision of the future as recorded in Revelation.

The angel said to them, "Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people." (Luke 2:10)

The LORD spoke kind and comforting words to the angel who talked with me. Then the angel who was speaking to me said, "Proclaim this word: This is what the LORD Almighty says..." (Zechariah 1:13-14 NIV)

Satan himself is disguised as an angel of light. (2 Corinthians 11:14 CSB)

- As messengers of God, angels have at rare times interacted with humans to communicate a message to the person from God. Commonly, the person responded to angelic appearance by falling forward in an act of worship to God.
- When an angel brings a message from God, that message can be tested against the Bible for its validity. God has declared that he will not speak a message through an angel that contradicts what he has already revealed in the Bible.
- A person should not evaluate an angelic message based upon their own emotions, desires, or preconceived notions, as the cautionary example of Adam and Eve demonstrates. Satan will attempt to deceive people by getting them to doubt God, distrust him, and disobey him.

How You will relate to Angels in Eternity

It was revealed to them that they were not serving themselves but you... Angels desire to look into these things. (1 Peter 1:12 CSB)

- In heaven, humans and angels will rejoice together in unity over the fulfillment of God's work being accomplished now. The advantages held by angels over humans will change in eternity.
- The angels look forward to eternity because they do not understand all that they currently do in obedience. In heaven, they will learn important spiritual truth from the humans.