

## What About Angels? What Do We Know?



With approximately 273 verses, more or less, referring to angels, why do we not hear more in church about them? Here's some reasons:

- **Reaction against SPECULATION** – Theologians especially good @ dealing w/questions that don't matter. How many angels can sit on the head of a pin? How much time passed between the creation of the angels and the fall of 1/3 of them? The Bible doesn't, nor does the Bible have to, address questions like this, but WE do, & it can be a turn-off (like discussing infralapsarianism and superlapsarianism). And, there's a fear of getting it wrong, as many do, so we shy away.
- **Reaction against WORSHIP of angels by some churches.** Some churches worship saints and angels, and not just the Triune God. They actually have dates set aside dedicated to the worship of angels, which is warned against in Colossians 2:18 . . . As a knee-jerk reaction, b/c of extremes people back off, so as not "to give too much attention to angels, like we tend to back off teaching on the Holy Spirit lest we be accused of being "Holy Rollers". Still, EXTREME cases should not scare us away from consideration of angels.
- **Reaction against PAGANISM.** Did you know that in every known pagan group in the world, the people believe in spirits, demons, and angels? Hindus, Muslims, Buddhists, endless Indonesian and jungle tribes in the world, as well as Mormons and JW's. [The Pagoda styled roofs in China are that way b/c they believe demons who try to slide down their roof will stick themselves and not come back!]
- **Reaction against TRIVIALIZATION (and ASSIMILATION)** 227 million google on "angels" / 450 mil on angel images / 13 million tattoos! / I have an "angel" of a wife, my wife must be an angel b/c she's always "harping" on something! Baby, "look @ that little angel!" Cartoon Images. Angel & Devil on shoulders. Angel trinkets, keychains, dashboard hula-angels and angel air fresheners to hang around the mirror of your car, angels on designer clothing, coins w/guardian angels you can put in your pocket. Leads to SUPERSTITION and MANIPULATION of the spirits, which is dangerous.

### What are angels?

Angels are CREATED SPIRITUAL BEINGS with moral JUDGMENT and high INTELLIGENCE but without PHYSICAL BODIES. – Wayne Grudem, *Bible Doctrine*, p. 168

### Some general characteristics of angels.

**\*\*Hebrews 1:14 = ministering SPIRITS, W/O any essential PHYSICAL FORM, but with the ability to take on HUMAN FORM** (Peter in Acts). Each angel is a direct creation of God (no original pair like Adam & Eve), and there's no Bible EVIDENCE that angels procreate (more on gender later) – although there is some SPECULATION about that from Genesis. What's striking is the total "OTHER-CENTEREDNESS" of the angels, their predisposition to SERVING God and others – in contrast to the self-centered angels that followed Lucifer. Regarding the Sometimes PHYSICAL FORM angels take, In Acts 12, Peter is miraculously released from prison when an angel visits him at night. Peter escapes and returns to the house where a [group](#) is gathered praying. A servant [girl](#), Rhoda goes to answer the [door](#), hears Peter's voice and is so excited she forgets to open the [door](#) but runs back to tell the others that Peter is there.

"You're out of your mind," they told her. When she kept insisting that it was so, they said, "**It must be his angel.**" (Acts 12:15 NIV emphasis mine)

What does this phrase mean? Is it similar to saying, "It must be his ghost/spirit?" Did Peter have a [guardian angel](#) who was familiar to the gathered church (and mistakable for Peter)? Should it simply be understood as his [messenger](#), perhaps sent from [prison](#)?

**Luke 15:10** = Beings capable of expressing EMOTIONS, the LIX tells us, ". . . *I tell you, there is REJOICING in the presence of the angels of God over ONE SINNER who repents.*" -- [dancing around in wild celebration over your team winning a football game . . . When USM Baseball team won the super-regional to go to the College World Series, my girls wondered what was wrong w/me b/c as they pulled up in the driveway, I was jumping up & down and singing the "southern fight song"! Of course, what the ANGELS celebrate is INFINITELY more significant than what I was celebrating, but you get the idea. It's not just, Tom Bodette style Motel 6 "Oh yeah, here's another one . . ."

**Revelation 10:1** = Appearance often BRILLIANT and DAZZLING, ". . . his face was like the sun . . ." Often associated w/the light of the glory of the Lord, a-la-Gospel of Luke, ". . . [New Living Translation](#) Suddenly, an angel of the Lord appeared among them, and the radiance of the Lord's glory surrounded them. They were terrified. The APPEARANCE of angels is often brilliant & dazzling, bringing an emotional reaction of HOLY FEAR, rather than "Oh that's so cute . . ."

**Job 38:4-7** = Around during the CREATION of the WORLD. Not sure exactly when created. But they were there, watching creation as it unfolded, and rejoicing in what God was doing. "Where were you when I laid the earth's [foundation](#)? Tell me, if you understand. <sup>5</sup> Who marked off its dimensions? Surely you know! Who stretched a measuring line across it? <sup>6</sup> On what were its footings set, or who laid its cornerstone— <sup>7</sup> while the morning stars sang together **and all the angels<sup>[a]</sup> shouted for joy?**

\*\* **Hebrews 12:22** = In NUMBERS, they are exceedingly LARGE. <sup>22</sup> But you have come to Mount Zion, to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem. You have come to thousands upon thousands of angels in joyful assembly, <sup>23</sup> to the church of the firstborn, whose names are written in heaven. You have come to God, the Judge of all, to the [spirits](#) of the righteous made perfect . . .

**Psalms 103:20** = In STRENGTH, they are exceedingly MIGHTY. [English Standard Version](#) Bless the LORD, O you his angels, you mighty ones who do his word, obeying the voice of his word! They are certainly stronger than people, as evidenced by numerous encounters between angels and people.

**Luke 1; Jude 9** = TWO major angels NAMED in the Bible. Gabriel and Michael. Gabriel prominent in the Birth Narratives of Jesus. He seems to be a COMMUNICATOR to God's people in both OT & NT. He scares people. Michael is the only angel to be called an archangel in the Bible. He is described as "one of the chief princes," so it is possible that there are other archangels, but we cannot be sure. The word "archangel" comes from the Greek word "archangelos" meaning "a chief angel." It refers to an angel ranked highest or in charge of other angels.

• [Daniel 10:13](#) / [Daniel 12:1](#) / [Jude 9](#) / [Revelation 12:7](#) Described as the great prince who protects God's people.

**2 Kings 6:11-17** = They FIGHT on behalf of God's people. Also, *Psalm 34:7, the angel of the Lord encamps around those who fear him, and he delivers them.*" Spiritually, we are PROTECTED by and FOUGHT FOR by armies of angels. More on **2 kings** passage later . . .

**Luke 16:20-22** = They receive DEPARTED saints, <sup>20</sup> At his gate was laid a beggar named Lazarus, covered with sores <sup>21</sup> and longing to eat what fell from the rich man's table. Even the [dogs](#) came and licked his

sores. <sup>22</sup> *"The time came when the beggar died and **the angels carried him to Abraham's side**. The rich man also died and was buried. Immediately upon death, we are escorted into paradise by angels.*

## You may be wondering . . .

1. **Do we become angels after we die?** **2 Cor 3:8** No, angels are direct creations of God and not evolved humans. Both Moses & Elijah were recognizable on the mount of transfiguration; we WILL be changed, but nowhere in the Bible does it say we become angels.
2. **Do angels have wings?** Ez 10, Isa 6 Sometimes, but very rarely. As spirit beings, they would not require wings, and as they appear in the Bible, appearance is usually w/o wings. NO biblical evidence of angels having a halo.
3. **What are cherubim?** Angelic beings involved in the worship & praise of God, and also magnifying the holiness of God. They stood @ the east side of the Garden of Eden, w/flaming swords to keep A & Eve & all us descendants "east of eden"
4. **What are seraphim?** Firey burning ones, involved in worship and communicating atonement. Only mentioned in *Isaiah 6...*

**Are angels male or female?** When they are referred to in the Bible, the gender is MALE, but Jesus in **Matthew 22:30** says, *For in the resurrection they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are like angels in heaven.*

5. **Do we have a guardian angel(s)?** **Matthew 18:10**, Peter's "angel" in Acts. With the children, are angels playing "zone" or "man on man"? But nowhere in Scripture do we find that an angel is "assigned" to an individual. This idea developed by the Jews during the intertestamental period; and in the early church it was believed that each person had both an angel and a demon assigned to him / her. No evidence of that, either. Ultimately, if we have an all-knowing, all-powerful, all-loving God with us, what does it really matter if there's an angel alongside of us, anyway?
6. **Are angels meant to be worshipped?** NO. No created thing is EVER to be worshipped.

## WHY IS IT IMPORTANT TO HAVE SOME BASIC BIBLICAL KNOWLEDGE ABOUT ANGELS?

- A reminder that the UNSEEN world is REAL. **2 Kings 6:17; Hebrews 12:22** Like the Sadducees of Jesus' day, many people refuse to believe in anything they cannot see. It was only as the Lord opened Elisha's eyes to the reality of the unseen@ the battle of Dothan against the Assyrians that he saw the mountains were full of horses and chariots of fire.
- They are EXAMPLES to us. **Matthew 6:10; Psalm 103** In Heaven, God's will is done immediately, joyfully, and w/o exception. Angels, despite their powers, abilities, are humble servants of God. They count serving God as their highest duty and greatest joy. They always bring glory to God. OTHER-oriented.
- They HIGHLIGHT the GLORY of REDEMPTION. Life of Jesus, **1 Peter 1:12** Jesus the Redeemer's life is bookended and punctuated by Angels. Announced His conception, Herald His birth, sustain Him after His temptation, Proclaim His resurrection, Accompany Him to Heaven, and will return w/him when He returns to the earth. Jesus is glorious, the Redemption Jesus brings is glorious, and the angels highlight it.