

ANGELS

These days we don't hear too much about angels. There are exceptions. Sometimes we hear or see them in movies, TV shows, stories, books or some other areas. Unfortunately, the

correct biblical understanding of what angels really are has been lost or misunderstood. Most of the time, even in our churches, as well as in the lives of most believers, we tend to forget or neglect the aspect of angels.

The scriptures are clear in telling us that angels were created by God even before man was created. We must always remember, that God is not, nor has He ever been, limited by hours, days, and years such as we are. In fact, the Bible tells us that “... *one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day.*” (2 Peter 3:8). As far as God is concerned there really is no such thing as “time” as we know or think about it. God has no beginning and He has no end – He always was, is and always will be.

The book of Job describes angels worshiping God as He was creating the world. God asks, “*Where were you when I laid the foundations of the earth? Tell Me, if you have understanding. Who determined its measurements? Or who laid its cornerstone, when the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy?*” (Job 38:4-7 NKJV) In this passage, the “morning stars” and “sons of God” are referring to angels.

We also know that angels existed prior to the Garden of Eden. Angels were created to be around God's throne and to continually worship Him. Therefore, they may have been in existence millions of years—as we reckon time—before God created the world, worshiping Him and serving Him. They were originally created with a free choice.

Unfortunately, Lucifer and a third of the angels rebelled against God and were thrown out of heaven by the power of God by Michael and all the other warring angels who remained faithful to God. This is symbolically described in Isaiah 14:12–14 and Ezekiel 28:12–18. While these two passages are referring specifically to the kings of Babylon and Tyre, it is believed that they also reference the spiritual power behind those kings, namely, Lucifer/Satan.

Jesus, the eternal Son of God, witnessed Lucifer/Satan's fall. He mentions it in Luke 10:18: *"I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven."* This passage and the ones above, both describe why Satan fell. However, they do not say when the fall occurred. We only know that it was prior to Genesis 1:1,2.

The Bible defines Lucifer/Satan as an angelic being who fell from his position in heaven due to the sin of pride and rebellion. He is now completely opposed to God, doing all in his limited power to thwart God's purposes. Isaiah 14:12 gives Satan's pre-fall name as Lucifer. He was originally created as a holy angel. Ezekiel 28:12-14 describes Lucifer/Satan as having been created a cherub. He was, apparently, one of the highest level of the created angels, an arch-angel. He became arrogant in his beauty and status and decided that he wanted to sit on and usurp the throne of God (Isaiah 14:13-14; Ezekiel 28:15; 1 Timothy 3:6). As mentioned, his pride, arrogance and rebellious desire led to his fall.

Notice, the many "I will" statements in Isaiah 14:12-15 - *"How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! how art thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations! For thou hast said in thine heart, **I will** ascend into heaven, **I will** exalt my throne above the stars of God: **I will** sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north: **I will** ascend above the heights of the clouds; **I will** be like the most High. Yet thou shalt be brought down to hell, to the sides of the pit."*

Because of Lucifer's sin, God permanently removed Lucifer from his high position and his role as one of the three arch-angels. All the other angelic beings (one third of the heavenly host) that followed Lucifer's attempt to usurp God's throne were cast out of heaven along with Lucifer. Their fate was then sealed forever and ever as they had made their choice of who they really believed in and who they would follow after. Yes, the angels made their choice.

We know that because Satan, who was formerly the angel Lucifer, had previously come to this earth and brought destruction to it. The earth became "void." The Holy Spirit was then sent to throw him and the other forces of darkness who followed Lucifer in disobeying God, off this earth to re-establish it and start anew. (Genesis 1:2) Creation, as we know it, followed in Genesis 1. It was then crowned with God's highest creation – Man- Adam and then Eve.

In Genesis 3 we see that Satan came, tried, and the ultimately succeeded, in taking man's authority away from him over this earth. In deceiving Adam and Eve and by making them listen to and follow His deceptive way, they fell from God's grace. Their spirits had died and they lost their true relationship with their maker, their God.

Satan/Lucifer then became the ruler of this world. He became the prince of the power of the air (John 12:31; 2 Corinthians 4:4; Ephesians 2:2). Satan/Lucifer became the accuser of the brethren (Revelation 12:10), a tempter (Matthew 4:3; 1 Thessalonians 3:5), and a deceiver (Genesis 3; 2 Corinthians 4:4; Revelation 20:3). The very word or title that he was now given, "Satan," means "adversary" or "one who opposes." Another of his titles, the "devil," comes from the Greek word "diabolos" which means "slanderer" or "accuser." Satan is the "accuser of the brethren." (Revelation 12:10)

Even though Satan/Lucifer was cast out of heaven, he still seeks to elevate himself above God. However, Satan's destiny is sealed. He will, as well as all the other fallen angels and demonic forces, as well as all those people that have chosen to follow after his deceptive ways, will ultimately, be sentenced, at the great White Throne judgment, to eternity in the lake of fire (Revelation 20:10).

Enough about Lucifer and the forces of darkness. Let's speak about those angels that did not rebel against God and who are with our God and are with the true believer everyday. In the Bible, angels are primarily spiritual messengers, protectors, and servants of God. Their duties include worshiping the Creator (God), delivering divine revelations from God to His people, executing God's judgment, protecting believers, and engaging in spiritual warfare against the forces of darkness.

The scriptures mentions specific angels who have, and carry, out very distinct responsibilities:

Ranks and Roles of Various Angels of God

- **Seraphim:** Described in Isaiah 6:2-4. Their primary role is to continually surround God's throne, worshiping and singing His praises - "...*Holy, holy, holy.*"
- **Cherubim:** They continually guard God's holiness. It is a cherubim that protects and was placed at the entrance of the Garden of Eden (Genesis 3:24). These specific angels are represented by the two angelic beings that were mounted upon the seat of

the Ark of the Covenant which represents that they are the angels that are always beside God's heavenly throne. (Exodus 25:18)

- **Archangels:** Chief angels responsible for major spiritual battles and proclaiming monumental events. The two that we see in the Bible are Micheal, who is the archangel who is the chief of all the "warring angels." (Daniel 10:13,21 and 12:1 and Revelation 12:7) We also have Gabriel, the archangel who is the chief of all the "messenger angels." (Daniel 9:21; Luke 1:19, 26)
- **Angels.** There are references throughout the Old and New Testaments. Angels are the most frequently mentioned heavenly beings in the Bible. They act as messengers of God, serve as protectors and guides for humans, and carry out God's judgments. Angels appeared to many in the scriptures such as Abraham, Jacob, and Mary, delivering God's messages and guidance.

From Scripture, we see that angels have many different roles and functions in the heavenly realm and upon the earth.

- **Messengers:** One of the primary roles of angels is to act as messengers of God to His people. They deliver important messages to people throughout Scripture. We do not see this or hear this as much today because we now have the Holy Spirit within us that allows us to hear what God wants to tell us. Unfortunately, there are times when we are "out of tune" with God and it is at those times that God will send His messenger angels to try to communicate His will to us. Angels exist as "ministering spirits" sent to protect and serve believers, but they do not pray for us. Jesus is the sole mediator between God and us. This means only Jesus intercedes and prays for all believers.
- **Warriors:** Angels are also depicted as warriors in spiritual battles. The archangel Michael is often associated with this role, as he is described as the leader or archangel, leading the heavenly army against Satan and his forces. These angels are the ones in a battle for God purposes and on behalf of God's people.
- **Worshippers:** There are angels who are assigned and called to continuously worship and praise God in the heavenly realm. As mentioned, the seraphim in Isaiah 6:3 constantly proclaim God's holiness, saying, "*Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts; the whole earth is full of his glory.*"

- **Guides or Guardian angels:** In the Book of Exodus, an angel is said to have led the Hebrews through the wilderness (Exodus 23:20). Today, in and through Jesus, it is the Holy Spirit who leads and guides His people. Angels are always “on call” to help the believer when we choose to neglect the leading of the Holy Spirit. (Psalm 91:11) These angels also assist the non-believer in the helping them come to know Jesus.

I do not usually quote from too many people but I would like to submit what Billy Graham believed concerning angels. He believed that they are very real. He stated and wrote in His book “Angels: God's Secret Agents,” that they are powerful, spiritual beings actively deployed by God to protect, guide, and bring comfort to believers in times of trouble. He outlined and emphasized three primary convictions:

- 1) Angels are grounded in Scripture: He stated he believed in angels simply because the Bible teaches they exist, pointing to them as an expression of God's unseen reality.
- 2) They are active protectors: He believed God frequently intervenes in the lives of His people through angels, working invisibly to guard believers from unseen dangers.
- 3) They point to God: Graham maintained that while angels are powerful and involved in earthly matters, **they are strictly servants of God and His will and that they should never be worshiped.**

Angels show us that “spiritual order” is important to God. The fact that angels have jobs, that there is a hierarchy, and that they have distinct purposes show us that God seeks order, not chaos. Wow!!! Yes God is a God of order. He has and desires His distinct “spiritual order” to be followed and expressed by every true believer in Jesus, as well as His angels.

As I write this article, I want to remind and reiterate to you that I am not saying that we are to ever worship angels. We are to worship only God-the Father, Jesus and the Holy Spirit. However, angels are a very big part of the Kingdom of God. We must recognize that they do exist. Hebrews 1:6-8 tells us this and gives us the proper order of the Kingdom.

It states, “*And again, when he (the Father) brings in the first begotten (Jesus) into the world, He saith, And let all the angels of God worship him. And of the angels he (the Father) saith, Who makes his angels spirits, and his ministers a flame of fire. But unto the Son (Jesus) He*

(the Father) *saith, Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever: a scepter of righteousness is the scepter of thy kingdom.*”

The angels, along with all of us are to worship the Father, Jesus and the Holy Spirit. It is God’s throne that will be established forever. It is God’s righteousness which reigns in all this world and in heaven and in the world to come – the New Jerusalem.

Angels serve the Living God. They do this by either serving God directly or serving Him by assisting God’s people here on this earth. Hebrews 1:14 tells us, “*Are not all angels ministering spirits sent to serve those who will inherit salvation?*” Those that “inherit salvation” are all the believers in Jesus. Paul experienced an angelic visitation during a storm at sea. The angel brought him comfort (Acts 27:23–24). Peter also, had been served by angels. (Acts 12:6–10) This means that they are still active in the lives of the believers of Jesus.

Angels will fight the forces of spiritual darkness. As mentioned previously, angelic warfare is mentioned in Revelation as Michael will do battle against the forces of darkness. It will be a fierce battle but the armies of God will destroy the workers of darkness – both the spiritual forces of unholy angels and demonic forces, as well as those humans that will come against the God and His people.

Angels exist to do the will of their Creator. They go where God sends them, say what He gives them to say, and minister to His children here on this earth (Psalm 103:20; Revelation 22:9; Hebrews 1:14). After Jesus’ forty-day temptation in the wilderness, angels came and ministered to Him (Matthew 4:11). When the righteous die, it seems that angels carry them straight to the place of God’s rest. The angels carried the beggar to Abraham’s bosom in Luke 16:22. They will escort the true believer, who is now saved through Jesus and changed into a child of God through the Holy Spirit, to their spiritual home in heaven

Angels will also execute God’s judgment. Angels are not all joy and glad tidings. They also carry out God’s orders for the destruction of the forces of darkness. The book of Revelation foretells the involvement of angels in many events that will bring about the ultimate destruction of this sinful world (Revelation 7:1; 8–10).

When Pharaoh refused to let the people of God leave Egypt, God sent an angel to strike down every firstborn son who was not covered by the blood of a lamb painted on their doorposts (Exodus 12:12, 23). Angels were involved in the death of Herod Agrippa I, the grandson of Herod the Great (Acts 12:23). They were involved in the slaughter of the Assyrian army (2 Kings 19:35) as well as the punishment of Jerusalem (1 Chronicles 21:15).

We see that angels also aided in the transmission of God's Word. Hebrews 2:2 describes the Mosaic Law as "the message spoken through angels." In some way, angels were involved in the process of Moses receiving the law while at Sinai. These "messenger angels" are led by the archangel Gabriel. (Daniel 9:20-23) Gabriel came as God's messenger to tell Daniel what will take place throughout history and then ultimately show Daniel and all believers God's plan for this earth.

In conclusion, we see that angels are very real and that they are very important to the things of God. They are many times overlooked and sometimes even forgotten about. That is okay with them. After all, they just want to see God-the Father, Jesus and the Holy Spirit be glorified. That is their function and that was always their reason of existence. That is their ultimate goal. Hey, isn't that what our goal as His true believers should be, to glorify our God? One day, along with all of us who believe in Jesus, the angels will all bow down and worship, the true and living God forever and ever and ever!!! Amen!!!