

WHY I BELIEVE

Angels Are Real

I. INTRODUCTION

- A. Bible-believing Christians are often charged with ignorance because they are so superstitious as to believe in angels. Infidels and liberals charge that the existence of angelic beings is impossible in light of a scientific 20th century.
- B. Angelology deals with the spiritual realm and no scientific measurement is able to decipher the reality of the spiritual world. Science is not in a position to deal with the reality of the spiritual world, for science deals with that which is observable. NOTE: The real issue is over whether the Bible teaches the reality of angels. If it does, then a person must decide whether he is going to believe it or not. The issue then is not a matter of objective spiritual truth but a person's subjective response to the truth.

II. THE EXISTENCE OF ANGELS

- A. The Teaching of Scripture: There are 108 mentions of angels in the Old Testament and 165 in the New Testament. For men to deny the existence of angels, they must deny the clear teaching of the Bible. They reject the inspiration and authority of the Bible.
- B. The Teaching of Christ: Christ mentioned angels many times, indicating that He believed in angelic beings (Mark 13:32; 8:38; Matt. 13:41; 26:53; 18:10). To deny the existence of angels is to deny Christ, for Christ taught the reality of angels.
- C. The Teaching of the Apostles: Every Apostle acknowledged the existence of angels. To deny the reality of angels is to deny apostolic authority.

III. THE CREATION OF ANGELS

- A. Fact: Angels are created beings (Col. 1:16). Angels, therefore, are limited in their activities and subject to God. As created beings, they cannot be independent of God.
- B. Time: Angels were created before the creation of the world (Job 38:6-7).
- C. State: All angels in their original state were created in holiness but some rebelled against God and became evil angels (demons) (Jude 6).
- D. Conclusion: The word “angel” means messenger. Angels were created to execute the purpose of God.

IV. THE NATURE OF ANGELS

- A. They Are Spirit Beings (Heb. 1:14): Angels are incorporeal beings (purely spirit). They are real but undetectable to the human eye. A basic reason why angels are invisible is that if they were seen men would worship them rather than God, for men tend towards idolatry (Col. 2:18; Rev. 22:8-9). NOTE: Occasionally an angel takes a bodily form such as when two angels came to Lot in Sodom (Gen. 19:1) or when the two angels were in the tomb after Christ’s resurrection (John 20:12). Such appearances were the exception rather than the rule.
- B. They Do Not Reproduce (Matt. 22:30): Angels do not reproduce after their own kind. The masculine gender is always used with the word “angel.” Therefore there is no distinction in sex with these spiritual beings.
- C. They Cannot Die (Luke 20:36): Angels are eternal in that they never die.
- D. They Are Distinct From Human Beings (Psa. 8:4-5 cf. Heb. 2:6-7): By God’s order of creation, angels are higher than man. But redeemed man, as a new creation in Christ, is higher than the angels and in eternity shall have authority over them. Redeemed man will judge angels (I Cor. 6:3).
- E. They Have Great Power: Angels are more powerful than men (II Pet. 2:11) and have great strength (Psa. 103:20). One angel killed 185,000 Assyrians in one night (Isa. 37:36). On another occasion an angel destroyed 70,000 Israelites and could have destroyed the whole city of Jerusalem (II Sam.

24:15-16). NOTE: The angels always receive their power from God.

V. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF ANGELS

- A. They Are Innumerable: There is an innumerable host of angels that no man can number (Heb. 12:22 cf. Dan. 7:10; Luke 2:13; I Kings 22:19; Rev. 5:12).
- B. They Inhabit The Heavenlies (Mark 13:32): This may refer to heaven or to the heavenly spheres. NOTE: Are other planets inhabited? Not by humans but perhaps by angelic beings.
- C. They Are Elected Of God (I Tim. 5:21): Those angels who did not take part in Satan's rebellion were the elect of God.

VI. THE ORGANIZATION OF ANGELS

- A. One archangel named Michael (Jude 9).
- B. Chief Princes (Dan. 10:13).
- C. Ruling Angels (Eph. 3:10).

VII. THE MINISTRY OF ANGELS TO GOD THE FATHER

- A. They Praise God (Rev. 4:8; Isa. 6:3; Psa. 148:1-2).
- B. They Serve God (Psa. 103:20).

VIII. THE MINISTRY OF ANGELS TO JESUS CHRIST

- A. They Predicted and Announced His Birth (Luke 1:26-33; Luke 2:13).
- B. They Protected Christ As A Baby (Matt. 2:13).
- C. They Strengthened Christ After His Temptation (Matt. 4:11).
- D. They Were Prepared to Defend Christ (Matt. 26:53).
- E. They Strengthened Christ in Gethsemane (Luke 22:43).
- F. They Rolled Away the Stone From the Tomb After Christ's Resurrection (Matt. 28:2).

- G. They Announced Christ's Resurrection (Matt. 28:6).
- H. They Will Accompany Christ At the Second Advent (Matt. 13:41; 24:31; 16:27; Luke 12:8-9).

IX. THE MINISTRY OF ANGELS TO CHRISTIANS

- A. They Rejoice at a Sinner's Repentance (Luke 15:10). The angels get all excited when they see God save a sinner by grace and that sinner changes his mind about God, Christ and sin.
- B. They Minister to the Believer (Heb. 1:14): Angels specifically minister to Christians even though the Christian may not be aware of their services. An angel provided food for a discouraged and hungry Elijah (I Kings 19:5). Peter was twice released from prison by an angel (Acts 5:19; 12:8-11). They protect the believer as seen in Elisha who had an army of angels to fight an army of men (II Kings 6:14-17). NOTE: We conclude that angels defend, protect and deliver God's servants when it is in His providence to do so.
- C. They Observe the Experience of Christians: Angels are great observers of the lives and actions of believers. They seek to know God's love and grace through the lives of redeemed men (I Pet. 1:12). Angels learn of the wisdom of God through Christians (Eph. 3:10). True believers are made known to all angelic beings (Luke 12:8-9). They observe the faithfulness of pastors (I Tim. 5:21). They watch the witness of Christians (I Cor. 10:11). NOTE: Christians are constantly being watched by angels because angels learn about God from true believers. Have you lived close enough to Christ so angels could be more informed of God? Our witness is to angels as well as men.
- D. They Encourage in Time of Danger (Acts 27:22-24): Have you ever asked God to have an angel encourage and protect you in a time of crisis?
- E. They Guard the Believer (Matt. 18:10): Each believer has a guardian angel. The "little ones" in context refers to true adult believers not little children. Apparently God has assigned an angel to every Christian. NOTE: It will be interesting when we get to heaven to meet our guardian angel and to find out how many times he protected us from danger.

- F. They Care For the Righteous at Death (Luke 16:22; Jude 6): At death the believer not only falls in to the arms of his Heavenly Father but he is cared for by a host of angels. Death should be quite a new and exciting experience for the child of God.
- G. They Visit Believers (Heb. 13:2): On occasion an angel may take a human form and visit the home of a believer. It is possible to put up an angel in our home without being aware of it (cf. Gen. 18:1-3; 19:1-2).

X. THE MINISTRY OF ANGELS TO NON-CHRISTIANS

- A. They Announce Impending Judgments (Gen. 19:13; Rev. 14:6-7).
- B. They Inflict Punishment (Acts 12:23).
- C. They Act as Reapers in Separation at the End of the Age (Matt. 13:39).

XI. GENERAL CONCLUSIONS

- A. Angels are real and do have a ministry to every believer. They really exist and the Bible confirms this existence.
- B. Angels may appear today as they did in Biblical times. Experience shows, however, that this would be an exception rather than the rule, and any story of seeing an angel would need verification before it could be stated as true. Paul Little says,

It would be wise, however, to maintain an attitude of healthy skepticism toward any story of an angelic appearance, unless the report were independently verified. Sometimes impressionable people have hallucinations, and sometimes they embellish their stories unwittingly in retelling them. (Know What You Believe)