



# *Angels*

By

Dr. M. DeWayne Anderson

## Chapter 1

### **Angels**

#### **Angels are extensively discussed in both biblical and secular contexts.**

There are varied ideas on their existence and being, and what constitutes or makes an angel. Several of the beliefs, images and concepts about angels are based on fantasy, superstitious and fallacious beliefs. The media has portrayed angels in a wide array of images, significantly distorting the general public's perception of their nature, appearance, and activities. They are shown as a baby, a seductive person, a cherub with a bow or harp, a warrior, and so much more! The confusion that has arisen is largely attributed to the blending of Biblical teachings and secular concepts regarding angels. Angels are real spiritual beings created by God.

#### **What are angels?**

The word "angel" is derived from the Hebrew word "*malak*" and the Greek word "*angelos*," in both cases the word refers to a messenger, envoy, minister or one who is sent from God. Angels are an order of celestial beings that possess superior power, intelligence, and functions compared to humans. They serve as ambassadors, messengers, or representatives, fulfilling God's purpose and plan. By nature, they were created spiritual beings before the creation mentioned in Genesis 1-2.

#### **The Creation Of Angels**

#### **Where do angels come from?**

Angels are a host of spirit beings created by God. They were not brought into being by reproduction or evolution, but by the direct determined creation of God. Contrary to some false concepts, humans never become angels. Masculine pronouns are always used in referring to them. The word "angel" is always used in Scripture in the masculine form. Sexuality or gender persuasion is never ascribed to them.

#### **What are angels?**

Angels are spirit beings created by God to be holy to the Lord and His servants and messengers. The Bible declares what they have done, are doing, and shall do in the future. "All angels are ministering spirits sent to serve those who will inherit salvation," (Hebrews 1:14). God uniquely created them in a different form or composition than humans or any other created being. Although they are spirit beings, they have a distinctly unique body or form that does not have spacial or time limitations.

#### **Angels were the first and highest of created beings.**

They were created by and for God before the creation of the earth. They were

present and rejoiced when God created the world (Psalms 148: 5; Job 38:4-7).

**Psalms 148:5 NKJV** Let them praise the name of the Lord, For He commanded and they were created.

Unlike man, angels were created by the command of God. Job was questioned by God on his knowledge of God's control over the world's origin, structure, and fate.

**Job 38:4-7 NIV** Where were you when I laid the earth's foundation? Tell me, if you understand. Who marked off its dimensions? Surely you know! Who stretched a measuring line across it? On what were its footings set, or who laid its cornerstone— while the morning stars sang together and all the angels shouted for joy?

The morning stars were prominent angels that sang out together with the hosts of angels and rejoiced when they observed God's creative power. Before the stars, planets, earth and man, angels were created and were in the presence of God. In Psalms 148, the list of created things appears to be given in consecutive order. The angels were created before the sun, moon, stars, heavens, and waters above the sky are mentioned.

**Psalms 148:2-5 NIV84** Praise Him, all His angels, praise Him, all His heavenly hosts. Praise Him, sun and moon, praise Him, all you shining stars. Praise Him, you highest heavens and you waters above the skies. Let them praise the name of the LORD, for He commanded and they were created.

Notice that the creation of angels, sun, moon, and stars, happened at God's command.

***Their creation is affirmed.***

**Colossians 1:16-17 NIV** For by Him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things were created by Him and for Him. He is before all things, and in Him all things hold together.

**The creation of angels appears to be one simultaneous act of God's power and will.**

They were created an innumerable host. Throughout the ages of time, the same angels have ministered according to God's plan. The different levels of thrones, powers, rulers, or authorities point to the various spiritual and earthly leaders. These visible and invisible forces that are working in the world are subject to God.

### **All angels were created holy.**

Originally, all angels were holy unto the Lord and remained as such until Satan led a rebellion against God and one-third of the angels fell by sin. Now, they are either holy angels or fallen angels. The holy angels are messengers and servants of God to the redeemed, while fallen angels work in league with Satan. [We will discuss fallen angels later.]

The existence and function of angels is seen over 273 times throughout the Word of God. It is evident that each angel was created by God to fulfill their individually assigned purpose. They were created free moral agents with the ability to obey, disobey, sin, fall, or remain true to their original state. The term “angel” is not a personal name, but a title that describes their office or being.

### **The hosts of angels in their various classifications were created to be at the Lord's disposal.**

The “LORD of hosts” is a divine title for Yahweh (Jehovah) that appears 242 times in the Old Testament. The title “LORD of hosts” indicates God's power and rule over all His angelic armies. As with all created things, angels are subject to the supremacy of Christ. (*Colossians 1:16-17*) No creature is autonomous, independent, self-sustaining and self-existent. All things were created by God and for Him. He is before all things, and in Him all things hold together.

### **The Form And Nature Of Angels**

#### **Angels are spirit beings.**

**Hebrews 1:7 NIV** In speaking of the angels he says, “He makes His angels winds, His servants flames of fire.”

**Psalms 104:4 NIV** He makes winds his messengers, flames of fire his servants.

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

A spirit being does not have the same type of body as a human being. Spirit beings function differently in relation to time and space.

#### **Angels Can Become Visible.**

**Hebrews 13:2 NKJV** Do not forget to entertain strangers, for by so doing some have unwittingly entertained angels.

- Two angels appeared to Sodom, Genesis 19:1.
- The angel Gabriel appeared to Mary and Joseph, Luke 1:25-27.
- Two angels appeared in the tomb, John 20:12.
- Two men in white apparel appeared at Jesus' ascension, Acts 1:10-11.

Angels have bodies of some kind and perform bodily acts, but not like our bodies.

### **Angels may be manifested in the form of man.**

They can take the outward appearance or form of a man. In their various classifications and forms, angels may become visible or invisible. On numerous occasions, angels assumed the form of a human body.

- In Genesis 18, three men appeared to Abraham at the terebinth trees of Mamre. One of these was the Lord Jesus and the other two were angels that were sent to destroy Sodom.
- In Genesis 19:1-3 the angels were visible to Lot who prepared food for them and they ate.
- Luke 1:11-25, Zacharias was ministering in the holy place when the angel of the Lord appeared to him, standing at the right side of the altar of incense to announce the birth of John the Baptist. When Zacharias questioned how this could be, he was made mute until the child was born.
- Luke 1:26, the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a city of Galilee named Nazareth. After giving Mary the message from God about her conception and birth of the Son of God, the angel departed.
- Matthew 1:20, later, Gabriel appeared to Joseph in a dream and told him to not be afraid to take Mary for his wife, for the child she conceived was of the Holy Spirit.
- John 20:12, after Jesus' resurrection, two angels in white were seated where Jesus' body had been, one at the head and the other at the foot, and announced His resurrection.

Due to their form, nature, and physical makeup, angels have the ability to work in the visible or invisible realm.

When Christ arose from the dead, an angel of the Lord came down from heaven.

**Matthew 28:2-3 NIV** There was a violent earthquake, for an angel of the Lord came down from heaven and, going to the tomb, rolled back the stone and sat on it. His appearance was like lightning, and his clothes were white as snow.

### **The nature of angels is superior to the human nature.**

**Hebrews 2:7 NKJV** You have made him (*man*) a little lower than the angels; You have crowned him with glory and honor, And set him over the works of Your hands.

In Genesis, man was created a little lower than angels, but was given

authority over the works of God's hands.

**Hebrews 2:9 NKJV** But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels, for the suffering of death crowned with glory and honor, that He, by the grace of God, might taste death for everyone.

When the LORD took on the form of a man, He was made a little lower than the angels. The Son of God condescended to the form of man and unlike the angels, became subjected to death. Jesus was born of a woman for the purpose of suffering death to accomplish the redemption and salvation of man. Angels were created to continue to exist perpetually after their creation and as a result they remain as they were made.

**Angels possess greater power and knowledge than humans.**

**2 Peter 2:11 NKJV** ...angels, who are greater in power and might...

Although angels are greater than the strongest or greatest human being, they are not greater than God, their Creator. There are many biblical events where one or two angels stood against cities, armies, and people.

**Although angels are not omnipotent or all powerful, they possess mighty power from God.**

- In 2 Kings 19:35, the angel of the LORD put to death a hundred and eighty-five thousand men in the Assyrian army.
- An angel of the Lord opened the doors of the jail and brought the apostles out, (Acts 5:19).
- When Herod did not give praise to God, an angel of the Lord struck him down and he was eaten by worms and died, (Acts 12:23).
- In the Book of Revelation, the mighty angels of God are sent to bring judgment and the wrath of God on the whole earth.
- Two angels were sent by God to utterly destroy Sodom with fire and brimstone.

**Genesis 19:12-13 HCSB** Then the angels said to Lot, "Do you have anyone else here: a son-in-law, your sons and daughters, or anyone else in the city who belongs to you? Get them out of this place, for we are about to destroy this place because the outcry against its people is so great before the LORD, that the LORD has sent us to destroy it."

**Angels are subject to God.**

**Psalms 103:20-21 NKJV** Bless the Lord, you His angels, Who excel in strength, who do His word, heeding the voice of His word. Bless the Lord, all you His hosts, You ministers of His, who do His pleasure.

Since angels are God's messengers and ministers, they obey Him and serve His will.

**Angels exist to serve God in five ways.**

1. to "bless the LORD" in worship and service
2. to "do His word" concerning activities in heaven and earth
3. to heed the voice of God's word
4. to minister on God's behalf
5. to do God's pleasure

As created beings, angels are subject to the omnipotent sovereign rule of almighty God. They are always standing ready to do whatever God commands. Jesus is the Lord of the hosts of angels.

**Angels will never die.**

**Luke 20:35-36 NIV** But those who are considered worthy of taking part in that age and in the resurrection from the dead will neither marry nor be given in marriage, and they can no longer die; for they are like the angels. They are God's children, since they are children of the resurrection.

Angels never cease to exist, grow old, or pass away. The number of angels remains static and never increases or decreases, unless God creates more angels. They were created immortal and infinite spirit beings. Immortal means not subject to death. Infinite means not limited to the boundaries of time or space. This gives angels the ability to function in heaven and on earth and throughout the ages of mankind and time.

**Angels are innumerable.**

**Hebrews 12:22 NIV** But you have come to Mount Zion, to the heavenly Jerusalem, the city of the living God. You have come to thousands upon thousands of angels in joyful assembly.

**(NASB)** myriads of angels

**(NKJV)** an innumerable company of angels

**(NLT)** countless thousands of angels

Daniel was beholding the Ancient of Days being seated on His throne.

**Daniel 7:10 NLT** A river of fire was pouring out, flowing from His presence. Millions of angels ministered to Him; many millions stood to attend him. Then the court began its session, and the books were opened.

**Matthew 26:53 NIV** Do you think I cannot call on my Father, and he will at once

put at my disposal more than twelve legions of angels? (a legion was 6,000)

**Luke 2:13-14 NIV** Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God and saying, Glory to God in the highest...

**Revelation 5:11 NIV84** Then I looked and heard the voice of many angels, numbering thousands upon thousands, and ten thousand times ten thousand. They encircled the throne and the living creatures and the elders.

There is a vast number of angels beyond human comprehension.

***The normal abode of angels is heavens.***

**Revelation 5:11 NIV** Then I looked and heard the voice of many angels, numbering thousands upon thousands, and ten thousand times ten thousand. They encircled the throne and the living creatures and the elders.

**Revelation 7:11 NIV** All the angels were standing around the throne and around the elders and the four living creatures. They fell down on their faces before the throne and worshiped God,

In their original state, all the angels were holy and dwelled in the presence of God. At that time, the heavenly host of angels were occupied doing the bidding of the Lord of host, God almighty.

### **Discussion**

Before God created the universe and all that is in it, angels were created.

What does that mean? Where were they?

1. In the presence of God
2. In eternity before the known time
3. Before the creation of the known universe

When God created the universe, stars, planets, earth, animals, and man, the angels were present.

1. They witnessed God's creation of all things.
2. They sang and rejoiced.
3. They were witnesses of God's creative power.