

The Bulletin

Meeks Street Church of Christ

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February 4, 2024

“14 Biblical Facts About Angels” Pt. 1

By Wayne Grudem

For centuries, artists have portrayed angels as beautiful humans with wings and glowing light, complete with halos, harps, and flowing white gowns (or perfectly sculpted bodies). But is that really what angels look like? Angels have inspired all sorts of imaginative stories and depictions, but what's left when we separate fact from fiction? In order to know the truth, we have to ask, what does the Bible say about angels?

1. God created angels Angels haven't always existed.

According to Scripture, they're part of the universe God created. In a passage that refers to angels (the "host" or "armies" of heaven), we read, *"You are the Lord, you alone; you have made heaven, the heaven of heavens, with all their host . . . and the host of heaven worships you"* (Nehemiah 9:6). In the New Testament, Paul tells us that God created all things *"visible and invisible,"* and specifically includes the angelic world with the phrase *"whether thrones or dominions or principalities or authorities"* (Colossians 1:16).

While these Bible verses tell us that God created angels, the Bible also suggests that they don't "exist" in the same way we do. The author of Hebrews suggests that all angels are *"spirits"* (Hebrews 1:13-14). When Jesus appears to the disciples, he asserts that "spirits" don't have bodies like he does (Luke 24:39). In the Bible, angels can't usually be seen by humans unless God reveals them (see Numbers 22:31, 2 Kings 6:17, Luke 2:13). However, from time to time angels took on a bodily form and appeared to various people in Scripture (Matthew 28:5; Hebrews 13:2).

2. There are three types of angels in the Bible.

Scripture names three categories of heavenly beings that appear to be types of angels: cherubim, seraphim, and "living creatures."

CHERUBIM

Cherubim are mentioned in several places throughout Scripture:

- * They guarded the entrance to the Garden of Eden (Genesis 3:24).
- * God is enthroned above them (Ezekiel 10:1–22).
- * God rides on them (Psalm 18:10)
- * Two golden figures of cherubim sit above the Ark of the Covenant, where God promised to dwell among his people (Exodus 25:22, see also verses 18–21).

SERAPHIM

Another type of angel, the seraphim, are only mentioned once in the Bible. They appear in Isaiah 6:2–7, where they continually worship the Lord and say, *"Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts; the whole earth is full of his glory"* (Isaiah 6:3).

LIVING CREATURES

Ezekiel and Revelation speak of other kinds of heavenly beings known as *"living creatures"* around God's throne (Ezekiel 1:5–14, Revelation 4:6–8). They appeared like a lion, an ox, a man, and an eagle, representing various parts of God's creation (wild beasts, domesticated animals, human beings, and birds). They, too, worship

God continually: "*Day and night they never cease to sing, 'Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord God Almighty, who was and is and is to come!'*" (Revelation 4:8).

3. Angels have a hierarchy.

Angels in the Bible appear to have a rank and order. The angel hierarchy is supported by Jude 9, when the angel Michael is called an "archangel"—a title that indicates rule or authority over other angels. He's also called "*one of the chief princes*" in Daniel 10:13, and appears to lead God's angelic army in Revelation 12: "*Now war arose in heaven, Michael and his angels fighting against the dragon; and the dragon and his angels fought, but they were defeated*" (Revelation 12:7–8). Paul also tells us that the Lord will return from heaven "*with the archangel's call*" (1 Thessalonians 4:16). Scripture doesn't tell us if this refers to Michael, or if there are other archangels as well.

4. Only two angels have names in the Bible.

Only two angels are specifically named in Scripture. As we said above, the archangel Michael is mentioned in Jude 9, Revelation 12:7–8, and Daniel 10:13 and 21.

Gabriel is the only other angel named in the Bible.

He's mentioned in Daniel 8:16 and 9:21 as a messenger who comes from God to speak to Daniel. He's also identified as God's messenger in Luke 1. He tells Zechariah, "*I am Gabriel, who stand in the presence of God*" (Luke 1:19). Then we read, "*In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a city of Galilee named Nazareth, to a virgin . . . and the virgin's name was Mary*" (Luke 1:26–27).

5. Angels are not omnipresent.

Angels frequently appear as messengers in the Bible, traveling from one place to another (see the verse above, where Gabriel "was sent from God to a city of Galilee named Nazareth").

The fact that angels are not omnipresent is made explicit when an angel comes to Daniel and says: "*I have come because of your words. The prince of the kingdom of Persia withstood me twenty-one days; but Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me, so I left him there with the prince of the kingdom of Persia and came to make you understand what is to befall your people in the latter days.*" —Daniel 10:12–14

If angels were omnipresent, Michael wouldn't have "came to help" because he would've already been there, and this angel wouldn't need to leave Michael to bring this message. Unlike God, who is omnipresent, angels are finite creatures, limited to one place at one time.

6. We don't know how many angels exist.

The Bible doesn't tell us how many angels God created. But apparently, there are a lot of them. Here are a few of the ways the Bible tells us how many angels there are:

* On Mount Sinai, God "*came from the ten thousands of holy ones, with flaming fire at his right hand*" (Deuteronomy 33:2).

* We also learn that, "*the chariots of God are tens of thousands and thousands of thousands*" (Psalm 68:17 NIV).

* When we come to worship, we come into the presence of "*innumerable angels*" (Hebrews 12:22).

* John says, "*I heard around the throne and the living creatures and the elders the voice of many angels, numbering myriads of myriads and thousands of thousands*" (Revelation 5:11).

Every biblical reference to the total number of angels suggests that they're beyond counting.

7. We can't prove that guardian angels exist.

The Bible clearly tells us that God sends angels to protect people: "*He will give his angels charge of you to guard you in all your ways. On their hands they will bear you up, lest you dash your foot against a stone*" (Psalm 91:11–12).

But are these what we think of as "guardian angels"? Jesus' words in Matthew 18:10 seem to support the idea that individual people (or at least children) have guardian angels, "*in heaven their angels always behold the face of my Father who is in heaven.*" But Jesus may only mean that angels are assigned to protect little children in general. (In sports terms, the angels may be playing "zone" rather than "man-on-man" defense.)

When the disciples in Acts 12:15 say that Peter's "angel" must be knocking at the door, this doesn't necessarily imply that they believe in individual guardian angels. It's possible that they believed an angel was simply guarding Peter *at that time*.

While arguments can be made, there seems to be no definitive biblical proof for the existence of "guardian angels."

(Continued Next Week).

News and Notes:

Sick and recovering: Tim Harris Sr, Tim Harris Jr, Daniel Holloway, Debbie Keplinger, Robbie, Sheila, Sherry Doles, Sandi Poole, Nathan Cox, Sandra Oliver, Chad Harris, Eli Johnson, Burt Ward, Jamie Jones, Mary Ann Holley, Robert Howard, Billy Grisham, Fred Johnson, and Tim Harris Sr. (Left eye problems).

Those Who Serve:

Sunday Morning 9:00 A.M. Service:

Opening Prayer: Russell Briggs
Preaching: Brian Meade
Sermon #1: *“Teaching Our Children To Be Spiritually-Minded”*

Auditorium Bible Class: 9:35am:

Workbook: Fred Johnson
1 & 2 Timothy, Titus, Philemon
Author: Herschel Patton
Starting Page & Question: *Page #31, Question #6 C*

Sunday Morning 10:30 A.M. Service:

Announcements: Russell Briggs
Opening Prayer & Scripture Reading: Tim Harris Jr.
Scripture Reading: *1 Samuel 17:45-47*
Song Leader: Jerry Kennemur
Lord’s Supper: Paul Johnson
Assisting: — —
Preaching: Brian Meade
Sermon #2: *“The Battle Belongs To The Lord”*
Closing Prayer: Dan Cottrell

Wednesday Evening: 7:00 P.M.

February 7, 2024

Auditorium Bible Class: Paul Johnson
Workbook: The Book Of Daniel
Author: By Daniel H. King
Starting Page & Question: *Page #11, Question #6*
Invitation: Russell Briggs
Song Leader: Tim Harris Sr.
Closing Prayer: Brian Meade

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“Teaching Our Children To Be Spiritually-Minded”

Lesson Text: **Deuteronomy 6:1-9.**

I. First, Knowing What Spiritual Thinking Is All About.

- It Is The Opposite Of Carnal Or Worldly Thinking- **Romans 8:6; Galatians 6:1.**
- Carnality And Worldliness Is From The Devil- **1 John 2:15-17; 1 Corinthians 3:1-3.**
- Spiritual-Mindedness Is From God- **1 Corinthians 2:12-16; Romans 8:14.**
- It Is Valuing The Eternal Things Over The Temporary.
 - **Hebrews 12:16-17** (For “Profane Person” see NASB;NKJB;ESV;LEB)
 - **Luke 16:15.**
 - But Rather Like David- **Psalms 19:7-11.**
- It’s About Seeking *“Those Things Which Are Above....”* **Colossians 3:1-3.**

II. Being Intentional About Training Them In The Lord.

- **Proverbs 22:6** Our Children Must Have Been Taught God’s Ways To Be Spiritual.
- Bringing Them To Church (**Acts 20:7**); Teaching Them About Proper Worship (**Acts 2:42**); Helping Them Develop A Love For God (**Luke 10:27**); Teaching Them What Righteousness Is (**2 Timothy 3:16; Acts 24:24-25**); Teaching Them To Guard Their Hearts From Worldliness (**1 John 5:21**); Teaching Them To Be A Good Example To Others (**Matthew 5:16**).
- So Your Children Will Also Teach Their Children- **Deuteronomy 4:9.**

III. It Demands Correcting Bad Behavior.

- **Ephesians 6:1-4 (vs.4).**
- We may have to “Beat The Meanness Out Of Them.”
- Sadly, Too Many Parents Think It Unloving Or Too Harsh To Disciple Their Children.
- But We Must!— **Proverbs 22:15; 23:13-14.**

IV. It Is Motivated By Love.

- **1 Corinthians 16:14; 1 Peter 4:8.** Directed To The Church, But Also In Everything We Do.
- *“Love Is Patient and kind,”* **1 Corinthians 13:4 (ESV).**
- Children Need To Know They Are Loved— Especially After Being Disciplined.

V. It Starts With Us And Our Example.

- See **Deuteronomy 6:1-9** Again. Note: God Told The Parents To Do These Things First...
- Parents, You Are The Greatest Influence On Your Children! Make It Count....
- If Our Children See Us:
 - Doing The Wrong Things (Sin); Placing More Priority On Temporary Things; Forsaking The Assembly; Neglecting God’s Word... Can We Expect Something Different From Them?
- **Philippians 2:15.** Shining As Lights Should Begin At Home.

“The Battle Belongs To The Lord”

Lesson Text: **1 Samuel 17:45-47.**

I. David Answered The Call To The Fight.

– **1 Samuel 17:1-30.**

- The Giant Goliath’s Challenge- **17:4-10.**
- No One Takes Goliath’s Challenge- **17:11;23-24.**
- David Seeks To Challenge Him- **17:26-32.**

II. David Trusted In God’s Way For Victory.

– **1 Samuel 17:31-40.**

- David Tells Of God’s Help With The Lion & Bear- **17:33-37.**
- David Tries On Armor And Weapons Of War- **17:38-39.**
- David Chooses The Unconventional Means- **17:40-43.**

III. The Lord Helped David To Win The Battle.

– **1 Samuel 17:48-51.**

IV. David Gave God All The Glory.

– **1 Samuel 17:47.**

- David’s Way Of Life- **2 Samuel 22:1-4.**

V. How The Battle Is The Lord’s Today?

– **When We Answer The Call To The Fight-**

- God Still Calls Us To Fight- **1 Timothy 6:12.**
- Not A Time For Neutrality Or Pacifism- **Jude 1:3; Philippians 1:17.**
- Sin, Error, And False Teaching Must Be Challenged- **Titus 1:10-13.**
- There Are Still “Giants” That Must Be Faced- **2 Timothy 4:14-15.**

– **When We Trust In God’s Way For Victory.**

- God’s Way Is Acting Under His Authority- **Psalm 25:4-5.**
- Use The Armor & Weapons God Provides- **2 Corinthians 10:3-5; Rom. 13:12.**
- Fight God’s Way- **2 Timothy 2:24-26; Matthew 10:16.**

– **When The Lord Helps Us To Win The Battle.**

- The Temptation To Get Discouraged When Wickedness & Error Seem To Win.
- We Must Trust That God Will Help Us Prevail- **2 Timothy 4:17-18.**

– **When We Give Him All The Glory.**

- **Hebrews 13:20-21.**