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# What You Need to Know About Angels: Part 1

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# WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT ANGELS (PART ONE)

## FACTS ABOUT OUR FEATHERED FRIENDS

This January we begin a three-week study in regard to some special beings which may have (unknown to you) either helped or hindered you during the previous year. The series will be presented in Q & A format.

### PART ONE

#### 1. Does the Bible teach there exists intelligent life in this universe apart from man?

In light of the secular scientists' frantic efforts to discover the answer to this question, it seems tragic that he does not turn to the Word of God for direction, for the Bible clearly answers this question as it does all other questions confronting humanity!

Is there intelligent life in the universe? Are there other living and rational creatures "out there" besides man? There are, indeed. Are they friend or foe? They are both. Is their "civilization" older than ours is? It is. Will we ever learn to communicate with them? We not only *will*, but a number of human beings *already* have met and talked with them.

Who are these cosmic creatures? They are called *angels*.

Belief in angels is found in the history of all nations. The ancient Egyptians, Phoenicians, Greeks, and others all expressed their belief in angels. A. S. Joppie writes: "The Mohammedans believe in angels. They believe that two angels are assigned to each person. The angel on the right hand records all your good deeds. The angel on your left records all your evil deeds.

"The Hebrews taught there were four great angels: (1) Gabriel, who reveals the secrets of God to men, (2) Michael, who fights and avenges God's foes, (3) Raphael, who receives the departing spirits of the dead, (4) Uriel, who will summon everybody to judgment." (*All About Angels*, p. 43).

The scholastics and theologians during the Middle Ages debated the following "weighty" things concerning angels:

- A. How many of them could at the same time dance on the point of a needle?
- B. Could an angel be in two places at the same time?
- C. If angels eat, are they able to digest their food?

- D. What was the nature of angel's food as mentioned in Psa. 78:25?
- E. If angels are spirit beings, why do they need wings to fly?
- F. Can they fly at the speed of thought?

In the apocryphal book of Tobit is an account of an angel by the name of Raphael. The young man whom the angel accompanied was in danger of being devoured by a big fish. The angel saved him. Then he told the young man to use the heart and liver of the fish against demon influence, and the gall against eye diseases, etc.

According to Muslim legend, when Muhammad was transported to heaven he saw an angel there with "70,000 heads, each head had 70,000 faces, each face had 70,000 mouths, each mouth had 70,000 tongues, and each tongue spoke 70,000 languages." This would make more than 1.6 *septillion* languages, and nearly 343 trillion mouths!

The earliest archaeological evidence of angels to date appears on the stela of UrNammus (2250 B.C.), and shows angels flying over the head of this king while he is in prayer.

Beginning in the 1970's angelology (the study of angels) quickly became angelmania as seen by the publishing of hundreds of books on angels. Readers were encouraged to seek advice from these heavenly creatures concerning the stock market, marriage plans, health problems, even advocating the worship of angels!

Two factors have no doubt caused this:

- A. The advent of New Age philosophy and various Eastern religions.
- B. The rising ignorance in regard to Bible truth.

## 2. What does the Bible say concerning the existence of angels?

- A. The word angel is found some 290 times in the Bible.
  - 1. It is referred to 110 times in 17 Old Testament books.
  - 2. It is referred to 180 times in 17 New Testament books.
- B. The Son of God begins and ends His earthly activities by referring to angels.
  - 1. The beginning  
*"And he saith unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Hereafter ye shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of man"*(John 1:51).

2. The ending  
"Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to my Father, and he shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels?"  
(Matt. 26:53).

C. The Word of God both begins and ends its eternal account by referring to angels.

1. The beginning  
"So he drove out the man; and he placed at the east of the garden of Eden Cherubims, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life" (Gen. 3:24).  
(The cherubim mentioned here are thought to be a special kind of angel.)
2. The ending  
"I Jesus have sent mine angel to testify unto you these things in the churches. I am the root and the offspring of David, and the bright and morning star" (Rev. 22:16).

### 3. What is the two-fold moral classification of angels?

- A. It is believed that all angels were originally created without fault and, like Adam in the Garden, placed on a probation of some sort. They were theologically, during this time, *posse non peccare* (able not to sin). But the probation period ended when heaven's chief angel, Lucifer by name, instigated a great revolt against Jehovah God Himself. See Isa. 14:12-15 and Ezek. 28:11-19.
- B. It is suggested by Rev. 12:3-4 that he was able to persuade one-third of heaven's angels to side with him in this terrible rebellion.
- C. The ones who did so, thus became *non posse non peccare* (not able not to sin), while the remaining two-thirds were pronounced *non posse peccare* (not able to sin).
- D. From that point on, the *faithful* angels are referred to as holy and elect angels (Mark 8:38; 1 Tim. 5:21), while the *fallen* angels are known as the devil's angels (Matt. 25:41; Rev. 12:9).

### 4. Who created the angels?

- A. Angels, like everything else in this universe, were made by God, the Father, through Jesus Christ in the energy of the Holy Spirit.
  1. The Old Testament record (Gen. 1:1-2, Neh. 9:6, Psa. 148:2, 5).
  2. The New Testament record (John 1:1-3, Eph. 3:9, Col. 1:16).

- B. The following conclusions may be reached in light of these verses:
1. Angels, like humans, did not come into being through the accidental and random processes of mud in evolving time.
  2. Each angel is, therefore, a direct creation from God. This is perhaps why they are referred to as sons of God. (See Gen. 6:2, 4, Job 1:6; 2:1).
  3. The word "son" seems to indicate a direct creation of God, as Adam is also called the "son of God." (See Luke 3:38).
  4. Believers are also called this, as they are recreated in Christ, individually, as sons of God (1 John 3:1).

## 5. When were the angels created?

- A. They were created before the 7<sup>th</sup> day of creation.  
*"Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them"* (Gen. 2:1).  
Here the word *host* is believed to be a reference to angels.
- B. They were created before man.  
*"For thou hast made him a little lower than the angels, and hast crowned him with glory and honour"* (Psa. 8:5).  
This implies angels were in existence before Adam and Eve came upon the scene.
- C. They were created before the earth (Job 38:1, 4, 7).
- D. They may have been created before God fashioned the material universe for two reasons:
1. The original home of Lucifer (angel who later became the devil) may have included only the heavenly Garden of Eden as described by Ezek. 28:12-17 with no recorded access to the sun, moon, or stars. Could this imply these heavenly bodies were not yet created?
  2. The horrible revolt against God as planned and carried out by Lucifer (Isa. 14:12-14) whereby one-third of heaven's angels were persuaded to join him (Rev. 12:4) surely would have required much organizational time for its implementation!

## 6. Why were the angels created?

- A. They were created to glorify God

*"And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men"*(Luke 2:13-14).

*"Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created"*(Rev. 4:11).

- B. They were created to worship Christ  
*"In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins: Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature: For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him"* (Col. 1:14-16).  
*"And again, when he bringeth in the firstbegotten into the world, he saith, And let all the angels of God worship him"*(Heb. 1:6).
- C. They were created to do the will of God  
*"Thou makest darkness, and it is night: wherein all the beasts of the forest do creep forth. The young lions roar after their prey, and seek their meat from God"*(Psa. 104:20-21).
- D. They were created to assist the people of God  
*"Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?"*(Heb. 1:14).
- E. They were created to observe the plan of God  
*"Receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls. Of which salvation the prophets have enquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you: Searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow. Unto whom it was revealed, that not unto themselves, but unto us they did minister the things, which are now reported unto you by them that have preached the gospel unto you with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven; which things the angels desire to look into"* (1 Peter 1:9-12).  
*"To the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God"* (Eph. 3:10).

There are two attributes of God that angels have never, and indeed, can never personally experience, namely, His mercy and grace! However, these sinless celestial beings can gain wonderful insights by observing God's blood-washed sons and daughters!

## 7. How many angels are there?

- A. In a sentence, they are innumerable. God of course knows their number, but they are presented to man as uncountable. Actually, there may be as many angels as there are stars in the universe, for angels are often associated with the stars! See Judges 5:20; Job 38:4, 7; Psa. 148:1-3; Isa. 14:13.
- B. If this be so, there would exist untold trillions of these heavenly beings, for modern astronomy tells us there are as many stars in the heavens as there are grains of sand on all the seashores of the world!

Thus, there may be billions and billions of angels in heaven for every saved person! A hint of their large number can be seen by the following:

1. As indicated by Moses—"*The LORD came from Sinai ... with ten thousands of saints*"(Deut. 33:2). The "saints" here are no doubt angels.
2. As indicated by Daniel—"*I beheld till the thrones were cast down, and the Ancient of days did sit, whose garment was white as snow, and the hair of his head like the pure wool: his throne was like the fiery flame, and his wheels as burning fire. A fiery stream issued and came forth from before him: thousand thousands ministered unto him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him: the judgment was set, and the books were opened*"(Dan. 7:9-10).
3. As indicated by the Psalms—"*The chariots of God are twenty thousand, even thousands of angels: the Lord is among them, as in Sinai, in the holy place*"(Psa. 68:17).
4. As indicated by the fallen angel possessing the maniac of Gadara—When Jesus demanded to know his name, the demon replied, "*My name is Legion: for we are many*"(Mark 5:9). A legion in the Roman army at that time consisted of 6,000 men. Apparently Satan controls so many fallen angels, he could afford to give over 6,000 of them to torment one poor, unimportant lunatic!
5. As indicated by Jesus—"*Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to my Father, and he shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels?*"(Matt. 26:53).
6. As indicated by the book of Hebrews—"*But ye are come unto mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels*"(Heb. 12:22).
7. As indicated by John's heavenly vision—"*And I beheld, and I heard the voice of many angels round about the throne and the beasts*

*and the elders: and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands”*(Rev. 5:11).

Dr. Fred Dickason observes:

The apostle John saw in a vision an exceedingly great number of angels, ‘ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands” (Rev. 5:11, KJV). Taken literally, this has two possibilities: (1)  $10^8$  plus  $10^6$  equals 101 million, or (2)  $10^8$  times  $10^6$  equals 100 trillion. These may be only a part of the heavenly host. This expression, however, may not be an exact number but an indication of a multitude beyond comprehension. So we read in Heb. 12:22 of “an innumerable company of angels” (KJV). (*Angels, Elect & Evil*, Moody Press, p. 90, 1995)

**8. Do angels sing?** While it is possible that they do, the Bible rarely presents them as singing, but records them as—

- shouting for joy (Job 38:7b)
- proclaiming God’s holiness (Isa. 6:3j; Rev. 4:8)
- praising God (Luke 2:13, 14)

However, some feel the phrase in Job 38:7a does indeed refer to angels—

*“... the morning stars sang together.”*

However, **if** they do sing, there is a song they will be unable to sing! Johnson/Oatman’s glorious hymn explains:

There is singing up in Heaven such as we have never known,  
Where the angels sing the praises of the Lamb upon the throne,  
Their sweet harps are ever tuneful, and their voices always clear,  
Oh, that we might be more like them while we serve the Master here!

Refrain:

Holy, holy, is what the angels sing,  
And I expect to help them make the courts of heaven ring;  
But when I sing redemption’s story, they will fold their wings,  
For angels never felt the joys that our salvation brings.

But I hear another anthem, blending voices clear and strong,  
“Unto Him who hath redeemed us and hath bought us,” is the song;  
We have come through tribulation to this land so fair and bright,  
In the fountain freely flowing He hath made our garments white.

Then the angels stand and listen, for they cannot join the song,  
Like the sound of many waters, by that happym blood-washed throng,  
For they sing about great trials, battles fought and vict’ries won,



And they praise their great Redeemer, who hath said to them, "Well done."

So, although I'm not an angel, yet I know that over there  
I will join a blessed chorus that the angels cannot share;  
I will sing about my Savior, who upon dark Calvary  
Freely pardoned my transgressions, died to set a sinner free.

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