

Bible Doctrine 101
ANGELS, SATAN, AND DEMONS
November 19, 2011

INTRODUCTORY MATTERS

I. Angels

A. What are Angels?

1. Angels are created beings.

Angels have not always existed; they are part of the universe God created. Angels are created beings.

“He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation. For by him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things were created through him and for him.” – Colossians 1:15-16

2. Angels are spiritual beings. They do not ordinarily have physical bodies. Therefore, they cannot usually be seen by us unless God gives us a special ability to see them.

“Do not be afraid, for those who are with us are more than those who are with them.’ Then Elisha prayed and said, ‘O Lord, please open his eyes that he may see.’ So the Lord opened the eyes of the young man, and he saw, and behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire all around Elisha.”

– 2 Kings 6:16-17

3. Angels watch over and protect God's people.

Scripture clearly tells us that God sends angels for our protection.

"The angel of the Lord encamps around those who fear him, and delivers them."
– Psalm 34:7

"Because you have made the Lord your dwelling place— the Most High, who is my refuge— no evil shall be allowed to befall you, no plague come near your tent. For he will command his angels concerning you to guard you in all your ways."
– Psalm 91:9-11

Angels have great power and are awesome in appearance.

- Gabriel appears to Zechariah – *"Zechariah was troubled when he saw him, and fear fell upon him. But the angel said to him, "Do not be afraid..."* – Luke 1:12-13
- Gabriel appears to Mary – *"And the angel said to her, 'Do not be afraid..."* – Luke 1:30
- Shepherds out in the fields – *"An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were filled with fear. And the angel said to them, 'Fear not..."* – Luke 2:9-10
- *"Now after the Sabbath, toward the dawn of the first day of the week, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to see the tomb. And behold, there was a great earthquake, for an angel of the Lord descended from heaven and came and rolled back the stone and sat on it. His appearance was like lightning, and his clothing white as snow. And for fear of him the guards trembled and became like dead men. But the angel said to the women, "Do not be afraid, for I know that you seek Jesus who was crucified."*
– Matthew 28:1-5

Do people have individual guardian angels?

“See that you do not despise one of these little ones. For I tell you that in heaven their angels always see the face of my Father who is in heaven.” – Matthew 18:10

Conclusion: While angels in general have been given the task of protecting God’s people, we do not find Biblical support for the idea of individual guardian angels.

4. Angels sometimes serve as God’s messengers.

- Jesus’ Birth
- Acts 8:26
- Acts 10:1-8
- Acts 27:23-24

5. Angels carry out some of God’s judgments.

- 2 Samuel 24:10-16
- Acts 12:20-23
- Matthew 16:27

B. The Place of Angels in God's Purpose

1. Angels show the greatness of God's love and plan for us. (3 ways they do this.)

Although angels are powerful, intelligent, and capable of moral judgment; angels are never said to be made "in the image of God."

God will someday give us authority over the angels

Angels demonstrate the greatness of God's love for us in that though many angels sinned, none were saved.

- 2 Peter 2:4 – Peter tells us that *"God did not spare angels when they sinned, but cast them into hell and committed them to chains of gloomy darkness to be kept until the judgment"*

2. Angels remind us the unseen world is real.

The existence of angels is a constant reminder to us that there is an unseen world that is very real.

3. Angels are examples for us.

We should pray daily that our obedience would be like that of the angels in heaven

- Jesus teaches us to pray, “*Your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven*” – Matthew 6:10

We should pray that our worship would be like that of the angels in heaven.

Then I looked, and 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, saying with a loud voice, “Worthy is the Lamb who was slain, to receive power and wealth and wisdom and might and honor and glory and blessing!” And I heard every creature in heaven and on earth and under the earth and in the sea, and all that is in them, saying, “To him who sits on the throne and to the Lamb be blessing and honor and glory and might forever and ever!” And the four living creatures said, “Amen!” and the elders fell down and worshiped.

– Revelation 5:11-14

C. Our Relationship to Angels

1. We should be aware of angels in our daily lives. (3 ways)

In our worship

In our obedience

In danger or distress

“The angel of the Lord encamps around those who fear him, and delivers them.”

– Psalm 34:7

2. Beware of receiving false doctrine from angels.

“But even if we or an angel from heaven should preach to you a gospel contrary to the one we preached to you, let him be accursed.” – Galatians 1:8

These warnings should keep any Christians from being fooled by the claims of Mormons, for example, that an angel (Moroni) spoke to Joseph Smith and revealed to him the basis of the Mormon religion. Such “revelation” is contrary to the teachings of Scripture at many points (with respect to such doctrines as the Trinity, the person of Christ, justification by faith alone, and many others), and Christians should be warned against accepting these claims. – Grudem

3. Do not worship angels, pray to them, or seek them.

“You must not do that! I am a fellow servant with you and your brothers who hold to the testimony of Jesus. Worship God.” – Revelation 19:10

But what about praying to angels?

Scripture nowhere encourages us to seek for angels.

II. Satan and Demons

A. What are Demons?

Demons are evil angels who sinned against God and who now continually work evil in the world.

“And the angels who did not stay within their own position of authority, but left their proper dwelling, he has kept in eternal chains under gloomy darkness until the judgment of the great day” – Jude 6 (See also 2 Peter 2:4)

*“How you are fallen from heaven, O Day Star, son of Dawn! How you are cut down to the ground, you who laid the nations low! You said in your heart, ‘**I will ascend to heaven; above the stars of God I will set my throne on high; I will sit on the mount of assembly in the far reaches of the north; I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will make myself like the Most High.**’ But you are brought down to Sheol, to the far reaches of the pit.” – Isaiah 14:12-15*

B. Satan as the Head of Demons

“Satan” is the personal name of the head of the demons. It simply means “adversary.”

Other names for Satan include: the devil, the serpent, Be-elzebul, the ruler of this world, the prince of the power of the air, or “the evil one.

C. The Activity of Satan and Demons

1. Satan was the originator of sin.

Satan sinned before any human beings did so.

- 1 John 3:8 – “the devil has sinned *from the beginning*”

2. Demons oppose and try to destroy every work of God.

The tactics of Satan and his demons are ...

- Lies – Satan “*has nothing to do with the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks out of his own character, for he is a liar and the father of lies.*” – John 8:44
- Deception – Revelation 12:9 describes Satan as “*the deceiver of the whole world.*”
- Sowing seeds of doubt – “*Did God actually say, ‘You shall not eat of any tree in the garden?’*” “*You will not surely die...*” – Genesis 3:1 & 4
- They blind people to the gospel – “*The god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelievers, to keep them from seeing the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.*” – 2 Corinthians 4:4
- They keep people in bondage to things that hinder them from coming to God – “*Formerly, when you did not know God, you were enslaved to those that by nature are not gods.*” – Galatians 4:8
- They will also try to use temptation, doubt, guilt, fear, confusion, sickness, envy, pride, slander, and any other means possible to hinder a Christian’s witness and usefulness.

3. Demons are limited by God's control and have limited power.

It's important to note that in the story of Job Satan could only do what God gave him permission to do, and nothing more (Job 1:12; 2:6).

We should not think demons know the future.

Similarly, we should not think demons can know our thoughts or read our minds.

Demons can be successfully resisted by Christians through the authority that Christ gives them.

"Resist the devil, and he will flee from you." – James 4:7

D. Our Relationship to Demons

1. Demons are active in the world today, but not all evil and sin is from Satan and demons.

Scripture places the primary blame for evil and sin on people's individual choices and actions.

Scripture takes seriously the reality of demonic activity. There is some degree of demonic influence in nearly all wrongdoing and sin that occurs today.

“Whoever makes a practice of sinning is of the devil, for the devil has been sinning from the beginning” – 1 John 3:8

“Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world—the desires of the flesh and the desires of the eyes and pride in possessions—is not from the Father but is from the world.” – 1 John 2:15-16

“Be angry and do not sin; do not let the sun go down on your anger, and give no opportunity to the devil.” – Ephesians 4:26-27

2. Can a Christian be demon possessed?

A believer may come under demonic attack or influence from time to time and in varying degrees.

3. Jesus gives all believers the authority to rebuke demons and command them to leave.

“He who is in you is greater than he who is in the world.” – 1 John 4:4

“Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.” – James 4:7

Application Questions:

1. How can the example of angels who joyfully and faithfully perform their assigned tasks, whether great or small, help you as you think about the things God has called you to do (your current responsibilities in the home, at work, in the church)?
2. What difference would it make in your attitude in worship if you consciously thought about being in the presence of angels when you were singing praises to God?
3. What are the places in our culture where you think there might be some demonic influence today?
4. Are there any areas of sin in your own life now that might give a foothold to some demonic activity? If so, what would the Lord have you do with respect to that sin?
5. Do you feel some fear at the prospect of encountering demonic activity in your own life or the lives of others around you? What does the Bible say that will specifically address that feeling of fear? Do you think that the Lord wants you to feel that fear, if you do?