

Biblical Topics

Angels

The angels are the foremost of invisible creatures. God tells us that angels actually exist. The Bible texts quoted throughout this essay give infallible proof. They are not imaginary beings or the personified forces in nature, but real personal beings created by God during the first week.

- Colossians 1:16: 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.

GOOD angels are holy spirits. As distinguished from God, these angels are created spirits. They have no material body, but sometimes assumed visible and human forms. We have no doubt that they still may do so if God wills.

- Genesis 19:1: The two angels arrived at Sodom in the evening, and Lot was sitting in the gateway of the city. When he saw them, he got up to meet them and bowed down with his face to the ground.
- 2 Kings 6:16-17: Don't be afraid," the prophet answered. "Those who are with us are more than those who are with them." And Elisha prayed, "O LORD, open his eyes so he may see." Then the LORD opened the servant's eyes, and he looked and saw the hills full of horses and chariots of fire all around Elisha.
- Ezekiel 1:5ff: and in the fire was what looked like four living creatures. In appearance their form was that of a man.
- Luke 1:28-30: The angel went to her and said, "Greetings, you who are highly favored! The Lord is with you." ²⁹ Mary was greatly troubled at his words and wondered what kind of greeting this might be. ³⁰ But the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, you have found favor with God.

They are holy, without sin. They are established in their bliss to behold God's face which means to enjoy unspeakable happiness. To do so always means that they will not fall away from God, but are confirmed in the enjoyment of heavenly bliss.

- Hebrews 1:14: Are not all angels ministering spirits sent to serve those who will inherit salvation?
- Matthew 25:31: "When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, he will sit on his throne in heavenly glory.

GOOD angels are of great number and great power. We do not know how many angels there are, but there are multitudes of them.

- Luke 2:13: Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God and saying,
- Daniel 7:10: A river of fire was flowing, coming out from before him. Thousands upon thousands attended him; ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him. The court was seated, and the books were opened.

They do not propagate as mankind does.

- Matthew 22:30: At the resurrection people will neither marry nor be given in marriage; they will be like the angels in heaven.

Angels have great power and wisdom, but they are not almighty, omniscient, and omnipresent, yet quick as a flash of lightning they can move from place to place.

- Psalm 103:20: Praise the LORD, you his angels, you mighty ones who do his bidding, who obey his word.
- 2 Samuel 14:20: Your servant Joab did this to change the present situation. My lord has wisdom like that of an angel of God—he knows everything that happens in the land.”
- 2 Kings 19:35: That night the angel of the LORD went out and put to death a hundred and eighty-five thousand men in the Assyrian camp. When the people got up the next morning—there were all the dead bodies!
- 2 Kings 6:15-17: ¹⁵ When the servant of the man of God got up and went out early the next morning, an army with horses and chariots had surrounded the city. “Oh, my lord, what shall we do?” the servant asked. ¹⁶ “Don’t be afraid,” the prophet answered. “Those who are with us are more than those who are with them.” ¹⁷ And Elisha prayed, “O LORD, open his eyes so he may see.” Then the LORD opened the servant’s eyes, and he looked and saw the hills full of horses and chariots of fire all around Elisha.

There are classes or orders of angels:

- Cherubin - Have animal and human features. These are mentioned over 90 times in the Bible and are commonly associated with the presence of God (cf. Ex 25:22). They guard the throne of God (Ps. 80:1) and are probably the “living creatures” referred to as standing around the throne in Rev. 4:6. (TLSB - Ez 10:1 note)
 - Genesis 3:24: After he drove the man out, he placed on the east side of the Garden of Eden cherubim and a flaming sword flashing back and forth to guard the way to the tree of life.
- Seraphim - It is a plural Hebrew noun, occurring only in Isaiah 6:2 and 6:6 as a name for celestial being. Hebrew seraph suggests that they were glowing or fiery beings. (TLSB Is. 6:2 Notes)
 - Isaiah 6:2: Above him were seraphs, each with six wings: With two wings they covered their faces, with two they covered their feet, and with two they were flying.
- Archangels - It means the chief, first, or highest angel. Only Michael bears this title. (CC - Jude) Michael is Hebrew for “who is like God?” (TLSB - Jude)
 - Jude 9: But even the archangel Michael, when he was disputing with the devil about the body of Moses, did not dare to bring a slanderous accusation against him, but said, “The Lord rebuke you!”
 - 1 Thessalonians 4:16: For the Lord himself will come down from heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first.

The Bible also mentions the names of a few angels:

- Gabriel - Luke 1:19: The angel answered, "I am Gabriel. I stand in the presence of God, and I have been sent to speak to you and to tell you this good news.
- Michael - Daniel 10:13: But the prince of the Persian kingdom resisted me twenty-one days. Then Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me, because I was detained there with the king of Persia.

GOOD angels praise God, carry out His commands, and serve the Christians, especially the children. They desire to look into the things that pertain to the kingdom of Christ and rejoice in at a sinner's repentance.

- Psalm 103:20-21: Praise the LORD, you his angels, you mighty ones who do his bidding, who obey his word. ²¹Praise the LORD, all his heavenly hosts, you his servants who do his will.
- Hebrews 1:14: Are not all angels ministering spirits sent to serve those who will inherit salvation?
- Psalm 91:11-12: For he will command his angels concerning you to guard you in all your ways; ¹²they will lift you up in their hands, so that you will not strike your foot against a stone.
- Luke 2:13-14 - This is at the birth of Jesus angels appear to shepherds.
- Acts 5:19 - An angel frees the disciples from jail.
- Acts 12:1-11 - Angel frees Peter from jail.
- Daniel 6 - An angel shut the lions' mouths and saved Daniel.
- Luke 16:22 - Angels carried Lazarus into Abraham's bosom.
- 1 Peter 1:12: It was revealed to them that they were not serving themselves but you, when they spoke of the things that have now been told you by those who have preached the gospel to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven. Even angels long to look into these things.
- Luke 15:10: In the same way, I tell you, there is rejoicing in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents."

BAD angels are spirits who were created holy, but sinned and are forever rejected by God. Evil angels are not just a personification of the wickedness in the world, but the Bible speaks of them as of personal beings that really exist. We do not know what particular sin they committed, nor can we understand how it was possible for a perfect angel to sin. The Bible simply tells us they sinned, and were expelled from the bliss of heaven.

- 2 Peter 2:4: ...God did not spare angels when they sinned, but sent them to hell, putting them into gloomy dungeons to be held for judgment.
- Ephesians 6:12: For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms. But they are not as powerful as good angels (Jude 9)
- Mark 5:9: Then Jesus asked him, "What is your name?" "My name is Legion," he replied, "for we are many." (A legion of soldiers in the Roman army, numbering 500, commonly stands for a large number.)

BAD angels are enemies of God and of man and endeavor to destroy the works of God.

- John 8:44: You belong to your father, the devil, and you want to carry out your father's desire. He was a murderer from the beginning, not holding to the truth, for there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks his native language, for he is a liar and the father of lies.
- 1 Peter 5:8-9: Be self-controlled and alert. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour. ⁹ Resist him, standing firm in the faith, because you know that your brothers throughout the world are undergoing the same kind of sufferings.
- Genesis 3:1-5 - The serpent led Eve into sin.
- Job 2: - Satan sought the destruction of Job.
- Matthew 4:1-11: - The Tempter tried to mislead Jesus.

BUT let us not fear the evil angels, Christ has delivered us from the power of the devil, we can resist them in faith and overcome them with the Word of God (Ephesians 6:10-18).

The above information is taken from: "Luther's Small Catechism" annotated by Edward W. A. Koehler and A Summary of Christian Doctrine also by Edward W. A. Koehler.