

Angels: God's Special Messengers

*"Life Foundations: Christian Faith Essentials", Part 8
Pastor Vince DiPaola*

THE BIG IDEA: ANGELS ARE GOD'S SPECIAL CREATED MESSENGERS WHO ARE SENT OUT BY HIM TO ACCOMPLISH HIS SPECIAL MINISTRY ASSIGNMENTS!

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

I) THE MEANING OF ANGELS: UNDERSTANDING THEIR NAME

The word "angel" in both the Old and New Testament means **MESSENGER**.

II) THE EXISTENCE OF ANGELS: THE BIBLICAL EVIDENCE

1) Angels are mentioned in **34** of the 66 books of the Bible from the earliest (Job, Genesis) to the latest (Revelation).

2) Angels are mentioned just over **100** times in the OT and about **165** times in the NT.

3) Jesus Christ spoke of angels as **REAL BEINGS**.

*"Do you think I cannot call on my Father, and He will at once put at my disposal twelve legions of angels?"
(Matthew 26:53, NIV)*

III) THE ORIGINATION OF ANGELS: THEIR CREATION BY GOD

1) Angels are **CREATED** beings, created by Jesus Christ.

*"Praise Him, all His angels... Let them praise the name of the Lord, for He commanded and they were created."
(Psalm 148:2b&5, 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." (Colossians 1:16, NIV)

2) Angels do not PRO-CREATE, it seems there is a fixed number of them.

"At the resurrection people will neither marry nor be given in marriage; they will be like the angels in heaven."
(Matthew 22:30, NIV)

3) Angels existed BEFORE the creation of the earth.

"Where were you when I laid the earth's foundation?... while the morning stars sang together and all the angels shouted for joy?"
(Job 38:4a&7, NIV)

4) Angels were all originally created as HOLY BEINGS.

"God saw all that He had made, and it was very good."
(Genesis 1:31, NIV)

IV) THE NATURE OF ANGELS: WHAT THEY ARE LIKE

1) Angels are CREATURES with personalities, distinct from humans.

"Do you not know that we will judge angels? How much more the things of this life."
(1 Corinthians 6:3, NIV)

2) Angels are SPIRIT beings.

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

3) Angels have LIMITED power and knowledge.

"[The Prophets were] trying to find out the time and circumstances to which the Spirit of Christ in them was pointing ... Even angels long to look into these things."
(1 Peter 1:11a&12b, NIV)

4) Angels, while subject to human judgment, are HIGHER than humans (super-humans).

"What is man that you are mindful of him... You have made him a little lower than angels; you crowned him with glory and honor."
(Hebrews 2:6b&7, NIV)

5) Angels will be subject to ultimate JUDGEMENT of their activities.

"Then he will say to those on his left, 'Depart from me, you who are cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels.'"
(Matthew 25:41, NIV)

V) THE ORGANIZATION OF ANGELS: HOW THEY WORK TOGETHER

1) Angels are very large in NUMBER and cannot be COUNTED.

"Then I looked and heard the voice of many angels, numbering thousands upon thousands, and ten thousand times ten thousand."
(Revelation 5:11a, NIV)

2) Angels are ORGANIZED in their ministry work.

- a) As an "assembly" and a "council" (Psalm 89:5-7)
- b) As organized for battle (Revelation 12:7)
- c) As having certain angels as king over them (Revelation 9:11)
- d) As having governmental classifications/ rankings (Ephesians 3:10, 6:12)

3) Angels are RANKED in their ministry scope.

- First a) The Angel of the Lord (likely the pre-incarnate Christ, see previous sessions)
- then b) Michael, the Archangel (Jude 9, 1 Thessalonians 4:16)
- then c) Gabriel, which means "Hero of God" (Daniel 8:16, 9:21, Luke 1:19,1:26)
- then d) Chief princes (Daniel 10:13)
- then e) Governmental rulers (Romans 8:38, Ephesians 1:21, 3:10, 6:12, Colossians 1:16, 2:10, 2:15, Jude 8)
- then f) Cherubim who guard God's holiness, of which Satan was one (Ezekiel 28:14, 16, Genesis 3:24)
- then g) Seraphim who worship God, an order of angels similar to Cherubim (Isaiah 6:2,6)

VI) THE MINISTRY OF ANGELS: HOW THEY FUNCTION

1) Angels minister by PRAISING and WORSHIPING God.

(see Job 1:6, 2:1, 38:6-7, Psalm 103:20, 148:1-2, Isaiah 6:3, Hebrews 1:6, Revelation 5:8-13, 7:1, 8:2, 22:9)

2) Angels minister by being involved in the life of CHRIST ON EARTH.

(see Luke 1:26-28, 2:8-15, Matthew 2:13-21, 4:11, Luke 22:43, Matthew 26:53, 28:1-2,5-6, Acts 1:10-11, 1 Thessalonians 4:16, 2 Thessalonians 1:7, Matthew 13:39-40)

3) Angels minister by being involved in the life of CHRISTIANS.

(see Luke 16:22, Acts 8:26, 10:3, 12:5-10, 27:3-4, 1 Corinthians 4:9, 11:10, Ephesians 3:10, 1 Peter 1:12, Hebrews 1:14)

4) Angels minister by being involved in the life of THE NATIONS and UNBELIEVERS.

(see Genesis 19:13, Daniel 4:17, 10:21, 11:1, Matthew 13:39-40, Acts 12:23, Revelation 8-9, 14:6-7, 16, 19:17-18)

VII) THE CATEGORIES OF ANGELS: BOTH GOOD AND EVIL

1) While all angels were created good, some of them became "FALLEN" angels or demons.

(see Isaiah 14:12-17, Ezekiel 28:11-19)

2) The number of fallen angels is ONE-THIRD of the total of all the created angels.

(see Revelation 12:4)

VIII) ANGELS: A FEW APPLICATIONAL ITEMS

1) God has given us a guardian angel to remind us of His CARE FOR US.

"Are not all angels ministering spirits sent to serve those who will inherit salvation?"

(Hebrews 1:14, NIV)

"See that you do not look down on one of these little ones. For I tell you that their angels in heaven always see the face of my Father in heaven."

(Matthew 18:10, NIV)

2) Angels are not for us to either COMMAND or WORSHIP; God oversees them.

"For He [God] will command His angels concerning you to guard you in all your ways."

(Psalm 91:11, NIV)

3) Learn from the angels how to WORSHIP God.

SUMMARY THOUGHT: ACKNOWLEDGE THE ANGELS AS HELP FROM GOD AND MODELS OF DEVOTION TO GOD!

IX) QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION IN GROUPS OR FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION

1) Do you believe in angels? Explain why you believe as you do. How does the Bible help us? Discuss.

2) Before this session, what were your conceptions of angels? What did you learn that was already understood? What did you learn that was pretty new? Explain how your view of angels has changed.

3) Why do you think that angels are so organized and ranked? What benefits does this have?

4) What are some ways you can learn from the angels? Find two or three ways in which you can apply this session to your life.