



Angelology

The Study of Angels

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THE EXISTENCE OF ANGELS

BIBLICAL REVELATION

If one accepts the biblical revelation, then there can be no question about the existence of angels.

- The biblical revelation of angels is extensive.
- Angels are mentioned throughout the Bible.
- The teaching of our Lord includes a number of references to angels as real beings.

In the Old Testament

The Old Testament always presents angels as real, objective, existing creatures. In no way are they considered illusions or figments of the imagination.

- Abraham ate and conversed with angels - Gen. 18
- An angel executed the judgment on Israel after David wrongly took a census of the people

2 Samuel 24:16 NIV When the angel stretched out his hand to destroy Jerusalem, the LORD relented concerning the disaster and said to the angel who was afflicting the people, "Enough! Withdraw your hand." The angel of the LORD was then at the threshing floor of Araunah the Jebusite.

- Isaiah refers to seraphim - *Isaiah 6:2 NIV Above him were seraphim, each with six wings: With two wings they covered their faces, with two they covered their feet, and with two they were flying.*
- Ezekiel refers to cherubim - *Ezekiel 10:1-3 NIV I looked, and I saw the likeness of a throne of lapis lazuli above the vault that was over the heads of the cherubim. (2) The LORD said to the man clothed in linen, "Go in among the wheels beneath the cherubim. Fill your hands with burning coals from among the cherubim and scatter them over the city." And as I watched, he went in. (3) Now the cherubim were standing on the south side of the temple when the man went in, and a cloud filled the inner court.*
- Daniel mentions Gabriel and Michael

Daniel 9:20-23 NIV While I was speaking and praying, confessing my sin and the sin of my people Israel and making my request to the LORD my God for his holy hill-- (21) while I was still in prayer, Gabriel, the man I had seen in the earlier vision, came to me in swift flight about the time of the evening sacrifice. (22) He instructed me and said to me, "Daniel, I have now come to give you insight and understanding. (23) As soon as you began to pray, a word went out, which I have come to tell you, for you are highly esteemed. Therefore, consider the word and understand the vision:

Daniel 10:13 NIV 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.

Daniel 12:1 NIV "At that time Michael, the great prince who protects your people, will arise. There will be a time of distress such as has not happened from the beginning of nations until then. But at that time your people--everyone whose name is found written in the book--will be delivered.

- Zechariah mentions angels frequently as agents of God (chap. 1) and interpreters of visions (chaps. 1-6).
- In the psalms angels are depicted as God's servants who worship Him and who deliver God's people from harm

Psalms 34:7 NIV The angel of the LORD encamps around those who fear him, and he delivers them.

Psalms 91:11 NIV For he will command his angels concerning you to guard you in all your ways;

Psalms 103:20 NIV Praise the LORD, you his angels, you mighty ones who do his bidding, who obey his word.

In the New Testament

In addition to what our Lord taught about angels, the writers of the New Testament also affirmed their real existence. The Gospel writers relate their ministry to Christ's birth, life, resurrection, and ascension

Matthew 2:19 NIV After Herod died, an angel of the Lord appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt

Mark 1:13 NIV and he was in the wilderness forty days, being tempted by Satan. He was with the wild animals, and angels attended him.

Luke 2:13 NIV Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God and saying,

John 20:12 NIV and saw two angels in white, seated where Jesus' body had been, one at the head and the other at the foot.

Acts 1:10-11 NIV They were looking intently up into the sky as he was going, when suddenly two men dressed in white stood beside them. (11) "Men of Galilee," they said, "why do you stand here looking into the sky? This same Jesus, who has been taken from you into heaven, will come back in the same way you have seen him go into heaven."

In the record of the book of Acts angels were involved in helping God's servants, opening prison doors for the apostles

Acts 5:19 NIV But during the night an angel of the Lord opened the doors of the jail and brought them out.

Acts 12:5-11 NIV So Peter was kept in prison, but the church was earnestly praying to God for him. (6) The night before Herod was to bring him to trial, Peter was sleeping between two soldiers, bound with two chains, and sentries stood guard at the entrance. (7) Suddenly an angel of the Lord appeared and a light shone in the cell. He struck Peter on the side and woke him up. "Quick, get up!" he said, and the chains fell off Peter's wrists. (8) Then the angel said to him, "Put on your clothes and sandals." And Peter did so. "Wrap your cloak around you and follow me," the angel told him. (9) Peter followed him out of the prison, but he had no idea that what the angel was doing was really happening; he thought he was seeing a vision. (10) They passed the first and second guards and came to the iron gate leading to the city. It opened for them by itself, and they went through it. When they had walked the length of one street, suddenly the angel left him. (11) Then Peter came to himself and said, "Now I know without a doubt that the Lord has sent his angel and rescued me from Herod's clutches and from everything the Jewish people were hoping would happen."

Directing Philip and Cornelius in ministry

Acts 8:26 NIV Now an angel of the Lord said to Philip, "Go south to the road--the desert road--that goes down from Jerusalem to Gaza."

Acts 10:1-7 NIV *At Caesarea there was a man named Cornelius, a centurion in what was known as the Italian Regiment. (2) He and all his family were devout and God-fearing; he gave generously to those in need and prayed to God regularly. (3) One day at about three in the afternoon he had a vision. He distinctly saw an angel of God, who came to him and said, "Cornelius!" (4) Cornelius stared at him in fear. "What is it, Lord?" he asked. The angel answered, "Your prayers and gifts to the poor have come up as a memorial offering before God. (5) Now send men to Joppa to bring back a man named Simon who is called Peter. (6) He is staying with Simon the tanner, whose house is by the sea." (7) When the angel who spoke to him had gone, Cornelius called two of his servants and a devout soldier who was one of his attendants.*

Encouraging Paul during the storm on his voyage to Rome

Acts 27:23-25 NIV *Last night an angel of the God to whom I belong and whom I serve stood beside me (24) and said, 'Do not be afraid, Paul. You must stand trial before Caesar; and God has graciously given you the lives of all who sail with you.' (25) So keep up your courage, men, for I have faith in God that it will happen just as he told me.*

New Testament writers assumed the existence of angels in their writings.

- Paul - **Galatians 3:19 NIV** *Why, then, was the law given at all? It was added because of transgressions until the Seed to whom the promise referred had come. The law was given through angels and entrusted to a mediator.*
1 Timothy 5:21 NIV *I charge you, in the sight of God and Christ Jesus and the elect angels, to keep these instructions without partiality, and to do nothing out of favoritism.*
- The writer of Hebrews - **Hebrews 1:4 NIV** *So he became as much superior to the angels as the name he has inherited is superior to theirs.*
- Peter - **1 Peter 1:12 NIV** *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.*
- Jude - **Jude 1:6 NIV** *And the angels who did not keep their positions of authority but abandoned their proper dwelling--these he has kept in darkness, bound with everlasting chains for judgment on the great Day.*
- About sixty-five clear references to angels occur in the Revelation, more than in any other single book of the Bible

In the Teachings of Christ

Angels ministered to Christ in the wilderness after His temptation by Satan

Jesus taught that the human state in the resurrection would be like the angels; i.e., non-procreative

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

Angels will separate the righteous from the wicked at the end of the age

- **Matthew 13:39 NIV** *and the enemy who sows them is the devil. The harvest is the end of the age, and the harvesters are angels.*

Angels will accompany the Lord at His second coming

- **Matthew 25:31 NIV** *"When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, he will sit on his glorious throne.*