

CBC Sunday School
Angels and Demons: Angel Basics
March 12, 2023

I. Discussion

Let's get weird. Have you ever had a supernatural experience, either with angels or demons (or maybe you're not sure)? Have you ever had an experience that you couldn't explain except that spiritual beings were involved? If so, how did that experience affect your faith?

II. What Are Angels Like?

A. Physical Properties

1. They are spiritual beings.
 - a. Hebrews 1:14 – They are called “ministering spirits.”
 - b. Luke 8:2; 11:24 – Demons, which are presumably fallen angels, are sometimes referred to as evil or unclean spirits.
2. They can take on human form.
 - a. Genesis 19:1 – The angels visiting Sodom appear as humans.
 - b. Hebrews 13:2 – We can unwittingly host angels, presuming they are human
3. They sometimes take on bizarre appearances.
 - a. Ezekiel 1 – Angels are described with a number of images, including humans with multiple wings, four-faced creatures with different animal faces, and wheels with eyes.
 - b. Ezekiel 10:12 – Angels are described as wheels with wings, with many eyes.
 - c. Isaiah 6:2 – These angels, called seraphim, have six wings; two covering the face, two covering the feet, and two used to fly.
 - d. Revelation 4:6-8 – The four living creatures around the throne have four different faces (lion, ox, man, eagle), six wings, and eyes all around.
4. They apparently are not sexual.
 - a. Matthew 22:30 – We will be like angels in heaven, no longer procreating.
5. They are in some sense superior to humans.
 - a. Psalm 8:4-6; Hebrews 2:5-9 – Humans are “lower” than the angels.
6. They are powerful.
 - a. 2 Thessalonians 1:7 – They are referred to as “mighty.”
 - b. 2 Kings 19:35 – An angel sent by God destroyed 185,000 Assyrians.
 - c. Daniel 6:22 – An angel shut the lion's mouth.
7. They live forever.
 - a. Luke 20:36 – Those who are sons of the resurrection are like angels – they cannot die.
8. They are often frightening in appearance.
 - a. Luke 1:11-12 – An angel appears to Zechariah in the temple, and he is afraid.
 - b. Luke 2:9-10 – An angel appears to shepherds, and the frightening glory of the Lord shines around them.

B. Personal Properties

1. They have intelligence and personal will.
 - a. 1 Peter 1:12 – They long to know more of God’s plan of salvation.
 - b. Revelation 17:1-18 – They know and communicate God’s plans.
 - c. Matthew 24:36 – Their knowledge is limited; they don’t know the time of the second coming (and per 1 Peter did not fully know God’s salvation plan.)
2. They are emotional beings.
 - a. Job 38:7 – They rejoice over God’s creation.
 - b. Isaiah 6:1-4 – They praise God and His holiness with awe and wonder.
 - c. Luke 15:10 – They rejoice when lost people repent.
 - d. Revelation 5:11-14 – They worship with awe the Lamb that was slain.
3. They are holy and pure.
 - a. Job 5:1; Psalm 89:7 – They are called holy ones.
 - b. Mark 8:38 – Jesus will return in glory and with “holy angels.”
4. As creations of God, they are not to be worshiped.
 - a. Colossians 2:18 – Those who worship angels actually have unspiritual minds.
 - b. Revelation 19:10; 22:8-9 – John falls to worship an angel, and is corrected.
 - c. Genesis 2:1; Exodus 20:11 – God made hosts of heaven and all in creation.
5. They are elected by God.
 - a. 1 Timothy 5:21 – Paul charges Timothy in the presence of “elect angels.”

III. What Do Angels Do?

A. Ministry to God

1. Surrounding His Presence, and Offering Praise to Him
 - a. Daniel 7:9-10 – Thousands and thousands surround the Ancient of Days.
 - b. Isaiah 6:1-3 – Angels accompany God on the throne and sing praises to His holiness.
 - c. Luke 2:13-14 – Multitudes of angels sing praise to God at the announcement of Jesus to the shepherds.
 - d. Revelation 5:11-14 – Angels surround the throne of the Lamb, and lead in worshiping the Lamb on the throne.
2. Carrying Out His Will on Earth in Help and Judgment
 - a. Genesis 32:1 – Meeting Jacob on God’s behalf.
 - b. 2 Samuel 24:16-17 – Angel pouring out wrath on Jerusalem on God’s behalf.
 - c. Acts 12:23 – Angels struck Herod dead for not giving glory to God.
 - d. Hebrews 1:14 – Angels sent out by God to minister to those being saved.
3. Carrying Out His Will in Future Reward and Judgment
 - a. Matthew 13:39-42, 49-50 – Angels will take wicked from among the righteous and cast them into hell.
 - b. Luke 16:22 – Angels take the poor man to Abraham’s bosom.
 - c. Daniel 10 – Michael will intervene to defeat ungodly forces.
 - d. Daniel 12:1 – Michael will rescue God’s people from great distress.
 - e. Revelation 12:7-9 – Michael and his angels defeat the dragon and his angels.

B. Ministry to Jesus

1. Preparing for Jesus' Birth

- a. Luke 1:11-20 – Appearing to Zechariah, predicting John's birth.
- b. Luke 2:26-38 – Appearing to Mary, announcing virgin conception of Jesus.
- c. Matthew 1:20 – Appearing to Joseph, telling him to take Mary as his wife.
- d. Luke 2:8-15 – Appearing to shepherds, announcing arrival of Jesus.
- e. Matthew 2:13, 19 – Appearing to Joseph, directing his flight to Egypt and return to Israel.

2. Ministering to Jesus in Life

- a. Matthew 4:11 – Ministering to Jesus at his temptation.
- b. Luke 22:43 – Strengthening Jesus in the garden of Gethsemane.

3. Announcing His Resurrection

- a. Matthew 28:2-8 – An angel rolled away the stone and announced the resurrection to the women visiting the tomb.
- b. Acts 1:10-11 – Angels told the disciples of Jesus' ascension and future return.

4. Accompanying His Return and Affirming His Judgment

- a. Matthew 16:27 – The Son of Man comes in glory with His angels.
- b. Matthew 24:30-31 – The Son of Man will appear with His angels, and they will gather the elect for Him.
- c. Matthew 25:31 – The Son of Man will appear with all the angels.
- d. 2 Thessalonians 1:7 – Jesus will be revealed from heaven with His angels.
- e. Luke 12:8-9 – They will be witnesses to Christ's confession of who does and does not belong to Him.

C. Ministry to Humans

1. Proclaiming God's Word and Ordaining His Law

- a. Luke 1:26-38 – Gabriel announces the birth of Jesus to Mary.
- b. Acts 27:23-24 – An angel comforts Paul, encouraging him in his evangelistic efforts amongst the sailors and before Caesar.
- c. Acts 7:53 – Angels delivered the law of God on His behalf.
- d. Galatians 3:19 – The law was put in place through angels.
- e. Hebrews 2:2 – The message of salvation was declared by angels.

2. Protecting, Delivering, and Conquering

- a. Exodus 23:20-23 – Angels sent to protect Israel on entering land.
- b. 2 Kings 19:35 – Angel struck 185,000 Assyrians dead.
- c. Daniel 3:28 – Fiery furnace episode in Babylon.
- d. Daniel 6:22 – Angel closed the lions' mouths.
- e. Psalm 34:7 – Angel of the Lord encamps around those who hear him.
- f. Acts 5:19; 12:7 – Angel delivered the apostles from prison.

3. Bearing Witness to God's Salvation in Humanity

- a. 1 Corinthians 4:9 – The apostles are a spectacle to men, angels, and God – angels are witnesses of the ministry and suffering of the servants of God.
- b. Ephesians 3:10 – The wisdom of God made manifest in the church is made known to the heavenly places.
- c. 1 Peter 1:12 – Angels long to look into the unfolding salvation plan of God.
- d. 1 Corinthians 11:10 – This may indicate that angels observe church worship.

IV. What Will Angels Do in the New Creation?

A. Standing Guard

1. Revelation 21:12 – They will be stationed at the twelve gates of New Jerusalem.

B. Worshiping and Praising

1. Revelation 5:11-14 – We can assume their worship will continue for eternity.

C. Enjoying Life and Ministering Forever

1. Luke 20:36 – As they cannot die, we can assume they will carry out their ministry for eternity.

V. Discussion

How do we presently benefit from the ministry of angels?

Should we anticipate the ongoing activity and ministry of angels in our lives? If so, what should that look like?