

Angels

I have been looking into Angels the past few weeks. I read Billy Graham's book "Angels God's Secret Agents" as well as listening to the MacNutt CDs on Angels. The classification of angels is from Wikipedia.

Heather, of course then gave me a stack of books. "Angels" by Dr. David Jeremiah, "Encountering Angels" by Judith MacNutt, and "Angels are for real" also by Judith MacNutt.

I have learned that while we know several things about the fallen angels, we don't know very much about the other two-thirds of them. But from tiny mentions of them and their actions we can get a glimpse of them and their characters.

The Bible teaches us that God's Holy Spirit has been given to empower us and guide us. In addition, the Bible has nearly three hundred different passages showing us that God has countless angels at His command. Two of the most popular Bible passages are Genesis 3:24 and then in Luke 1:11 through Luke 2:20 where there were several accounts of angels in the birth of John the Baptist and Jesus. God has commissioned these angels to aid His children in their struggles against Satan. Jesus himself declares the existence in angels in Matt. 25:31. The Bible does not give us as much information about them as we might like, but what it does say should be a source of comfort and strength for us in every circumstance.

The Bible states that angels, like men, were created by God. At one time no angels existed. There was nothing but the Triune God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Paul, in Colossians 1:16-17 says "for through him God created everything in the heavenly realms and on earth". He made the things we can see and those we can't – such as thrones, kingdoms, rulers, and authorities in the unseen world. Everything was created through him and for him. He existed before anything else, and he holds all creation together." Angels are among the invisible things made by God. They were probably created before day 3 because God told Job they were already there to celebrate the creation of the earth. Ps 104 also puts them before the creation of the earth. Though they are not called Angels but the winds. Since angels are messengers, this is an acceptable conclusion.

There are so many of them that man cannot number them. God probably knows since he knows the number of hairs on everyone's head and he numbered and named all the stars and knows if any are missing. (Ps 147:4, Is 40:26) Rev 5:11 indicates ten thousand times ten thousand.

As Christians we must never fail to sense the operation of angelic glory. It always eclipses the world of demonic powers just like the sun does the candle's light. However, we must not pray to them or worship them. They are God's to command.

What we know.

Angels are appearing, ministering, fellowshiping, and disappearing. They warn of God's impending judgment; they spell out the tenderness of His love; they meet a desperate need; then they are gone. Of one thing we can be sure: angels never draw attention to themselves but give all glory to God and press His message upon the hearers as a delivering and sustaining word of the highest order.

The Holy Spirit is not an angel. He convicts men of sin, righteousness, and judgement (John 16:7). He reveals and interprets Jesus Christ to men, while angels remain messengers of God who serve men as ministering spirits (Hebrews 1:14). The glorious Holy Spirit can be everywhere at the same time, but no

angel can be in more than one place at any given moment. We know the Holy Spirit as spirit, not flesh, but we can know angels not as spirits alone but sometimes also in a visible form.

Angels have primary jobs and studies categorize them. Though these include descriptions of angels they are usually invisible to humans and being spirits do not have bodies like we do. Not all of them have wings but they can move from place to place very quickly. They are not omnipresent. They can only be in one place at a time. So here are the general groups of angels and some descriptions.

1. Cherubim are the angels that guard the throne of God. They guarded the entrance to the Garden of Eden, and they guard us. They are not the cute baby cherubs depicted in a lot of our art. I would be more inclined to see them as very large scary looking guards able to defend against all things. In Ezekiel they are described as having four faces, one of man, an ox, a lion and an eagle, having four wings covered with eyes, a lion's body and feet of an oxen Rev 4:8 describes them with six wings.
2. Seraphim lead heaven in the worship of God and they come and help us when we worship because they love to worship God. When we sense a sudden powerful increase and anointing in worship during a service, it is because the Seraphim have come to join in the worship. They are described as majestic beings with six wings, human hands or voices when in the presence of God.
3. Thrones or elders are a class of celestial beings mentioned in Colossians 1:16. They discharge judgements from God. They are mentioned in both Ezekiel and Colossians and are described as wheels with eyes starting all around the rims.
4. Dominations or Lordships – regulate the duties of lower angels. It is only with extreme rarity that the angelic lords make themselves physically known to humans.
5. Virtues are known for their control of the elements. Some even refer to them as “the shining ones” In addition to being the Spirits of Motion, they also assist in governing nature. They also assist in miracles, as well as encourage humans to strengthen their faith in God.
6. Powers or Authorities are given their name because they are angels who have power over evil forces, which the angels are able to restrain to keep them from doing harm.
7. Principalities or Rulers Eph 3:10 are the angels that guide and protect nations, or groups of people and institutions such as the Church. The Principalities preside over the bands of angels and charge them with fulfilling the divine ministry. There are some who administer and some who assist. They are shown as having a crown and carrying a scepter. Their duty also is said to be to carry out the orders given to them by the upper sphere angels and bequeath blessings to the material world.
8. Archangels are the first rank or power. They are mentioned in twice in the New Testament: 1 Thessalonians 4:16 and Jude 1:19 and only Michael and Gabriel are mentioned by name. Gabriel is considered an Archangel by most Christian traditions but since the term Archangel is always singular only Michael is specifically mentioned as an Archangel. Gabriel is known as the angel who brings the good news. He brings words from God, words of wisdom, knowledge and prophesy. Michael is in charge of spiritual warfare. He is mentioned throughout scripture and is the one through whom Lucifer will meet his final defeat. Raphael appears only in the Book of Tobit (Tobial) and is only in the Catholic bible. It is here that he claimed to be one of the seven who stand before the Lord. Uriel is found in the Russian and Anglican bible in the second book of Esdras and the Book of Enoch. The archangels are to be the guardian angels of nations and

countries and are concerned with the issues and events surrounding these, including politics, military matters, commerce, and trade.

Angels do whatever the Holy Trinity tell them to. We can learn from this. Are we quick to do what God is asking us to do? Joseph is a great example of hearing the voice of God and doing what he said. When he was going to divorce Mary, he was told not to but to know this was from the Holy Spirit so he married her but did not have union with her. Then he was told to take them to Egypt and he did. Once in Egypt, he was told when to return and then again to settle in Galilee. He was quick to do what the messengers told him to do.

Personal stories

Throughout my studies, I have been able to read many accounts of angels helping us. These stories should focus us God's love for us and encourage us to draw close to him. If they do not, question if they are really angels working.

My friend Patty mentioned to her friend Belinda that we were having a teaching on angels and she wanted to add her story.

Belinda wanted to go from Kansas to El Paso Texas for a meeting at their sister church there. Her husband was reluctant to go because he would be working the day they needed to leave. Belinda said she would drive when her husband got tired of driving. She rarely drove so this was a scary thing for her. So when her husband returned from work, they loaded the car and started off. After a while her husband told her he was getting to tired to drive and they switched places. She prayed for Jesus to guide her and protect her as she drove. The highway is a narrow two laned one and has lots of semi-trucks on it. She was getting scared and wanted to wake her husband but decided to pray some more. Two very large men appeared on the front fenders not blocking her view but facing away from her. She had great peace. Her husband woke several hours later and asked where they were. She told him she did not know because he had instructed her to remain on the highway and keep going. Her men disappeared and her husband finished the drive to El Paso.

Does anyone have their own story to tell? – no breakout.

Read the beginning of the ride through the Bible in David Jeremiah's book