

SIYON

House Of Prayer



ANGELOLOGY- DOCTRINE OF ANGELS

WHAT ARE ANGELS?

Angels are spiritual beings created by God to serve Him, though created higher than man. Some, the good angels, have remained obedient to Him and carry out His will, while others, fallen angels, disobeyed, fell from their holy position, and now stand in active opposition to the work and plan of God.

CLASSIFICATION OF ANGELS

1. *Seraphims (Isaiah 6:2)*
2. *Cherubims (Ezekiel 10:1-3)*
3. *Ministering Spirits (Hebrew 1:13)*

The Hebrew word for angel is *mal'ach*, and the Greek word is *angelos*. Both words mean “messenger” and describe one who executes the purpose and will of the one whom they serve. The context must determine if a human messenger is in view, or one of the celestial beings called “angels,” or if it is being used of the second Person of the Trinity as will be discussed below. The holy angels are messengers of God, serving Him and doing His bidding.

The fallen angels serve Satan, the god of this world (2 Corinthians 4:4)

Illustrations of uses that do NOT refer to celestial beings are as follows:

- (1) For human messengers from one human to another (Luke 7:24; Jam. 2:25).
- (2) For human messengers bearing a divine message (Hag. 1:13; Gal. 4:14).
- (3) For an impersonal agent, Paul's thorn in the flesh described as “a messenger of Satan” (2 Cor. 12:7).
- (4) For the messengers of the seven churches (Rev. 2-3). It is also used in connection with the seven churches of Asia, “To the angel of the church in ...” Some take this to mean a special messenger or delegation to the church as a teaching elder, others take it to refer to a guardian angel.

Thus, the term *angelos* is not only a generic term, pertaining to a special order of beings (i.e., angels), but it is also descriptive and expressive of their office and service. So when we read the word “angel” we should think of it in this way.

The unfallen angels are also spoken of as “holy ones” (Psalm 89:5, 7) because

1. They were created perfect without any flaw or sin by the holy God.
2. They were “set apart” by God and for God as His servants and as attendants to His holiness (Isaiah 6).

“Host” is the Hebrew *tsaba*, “army, armies, hosts.” It is a military term and carries the idea of warfare.

Angels are referred to as the “host,” therefore it is used

1. To describe God’s angels as the “armies of heaven” who serve in the army of God engaged in spiritual warfare (Psalm 89:6, 8; 1 Samuel 1:11; 17:45).
2. To angels as a multitude of heavenly beings who surround and serve God as seen in the phrase “Lord of hosts” (Isaiah 31:4). In addition, *tsaba* sometimes includes the host of heavenly bodies, the stars of the universe.

Angels are created beings and not the spirits of departed human beings (Psalm 148:1-5)



From the book of Job we know that angels were present when the earth was created (Job 38:4-7) so their creation was prior to the creation of the earth as described in Genesis 1.

Christ, the one who created all things, is the creator of angels (John 1:1 -3) / (Colossian 1:16)

The angels were created simultaneously as a host or a company. God created man and the animal kingdom in pairs with the responsibility and ability to procreate. Angels, however, were created simultaneously as a company, a countless host of myriads (Colossians 1:16, Nehemiah 9:6).



While fallen angels will be judged in the future and permanently confined to the lake of fire (Matt. 25:41; 1 Cor. 6:4; 2 Pet. 2:4; Jude 6), there is never any mention of the death of angels (Luke 20:36). Nevertheless, they are an innumerable host created before the creation of the earth (Job 38:7, Nehemiah 9:6; Psalm 148:2, 5; Heb. 12:22; Dan. 7:10; Matt. 26:53; Rev. 5:11; Matt. 22:28-30; Luke 20:20-36).

Angels have fixed abodes or centers for their activities. Due to the ministry and abilities given to them in the service of God, they have access to the entire universe. They are described as serving in heaven and on earth (Isaiah 6:1; Daniel 9:21; Revelation 7:2; 10:1). The holy angels will dwell in the new heaven and new earth according to Revelation 21-22.

There are two groups of fallen angels, one consisting of those who have some freedom to carry out Satan's plans, and the others who are confined. Of those who are confined, some are temporarily so, while others are permanently confined in Tartarus (2 Peter 2:4 and Jude 6). The Greeks thought of Tartarus as a place of punishment lower than hades. *Those temporarily confined are in the abyss* (Luke 8:31; Rev. 9:1-3, 11), some apparently consigned there to await final judgment while others will be loosed to be active on the earth.

Though at times Angels have revealed themselves in the form of human bodies (Angelophanies) as in Genesis 18:3, they are described as "spirits" in Hebrews 1:14. This suggests they do not have material bodies as humans do. This is further supported by the fact they do not function as human beings in terms of marriage and procreation (Mark 12:25) nor are they subject to death (Luke 20:36). Angels, though spirit

beings and very powerful, are not omnipotent, omniscient, nor omnipresent. They cannot be everywhere at once.

Since angels are spirit beings, they are usually not seen, unless God gives the ability to see them or unless they manifest themselves. Balaam could not see the angel standing in his way until the Lord opened his eyes (Num. 22:31) and Elisha's servant could not see the host of angels surrounding him until Elisha prayed for his eyes to be opened (2 Kings 6:17). When angels have been seen as recorded in Scripture, they were often mistaken as men because they were manifested in a man-like appearance (Gen. 18:2, 16, 22; 19:1, 5, 10, 12, 15, 16; Judg. 13:6; Mark 16:5; Luke 24:4). Sometimes, they appear in a way that either manifests God's glory (Luke 2:9; 9:26) or in some form of brilliant apparel (Matt. 28:3; John 20:12; Acts 1:10 with Ezek. 1:13; Dan. 10:6). Consistently, they have appeared as real men, never as ghosts, or as winged animals (Gen. 18:2; 19:1; Mark 16:3; Luke 24:4).

They are occasionally pictured in other forms and in other manifestations as with wings, and as a combination of man, beast, and birds as in Ezekiel 1:5 and Isaiah 6:6. But apparently such manifestations only occurred by way of a vision or special revelation from God. No angel literally appeared in such form.

They also seem to always have appeared as youthful or mature men (Mark 16:5), but never as old men, perhaps because they neither age nor die (Luke 20:36). While angels generally appear as men, Zechariah 5:9 may suggest this is not always the case. The two women mentioned in this passage are not specifically called angels, but they are clearly agents of God or forces of Satan, like angels, good or evil.

Colossians 2:18 says "Do not let anyone who delights in false humility and the worship of angels disqualify you for the prize." Such a person goes into great detail about what he has seen, and his unspiritual mind puffs him up with idle notions.

The Classifications of Angels

Angels who are governmental rulers. Ephesians 6:12 refers to "ranking of fallen angels": *rulers* are "those who are first or high in rank"; *powers* are "those invested with authority"; *world-forces of this darkness* "expresses the power or authority which they exercise over the world"; *spiritual forces of wickedness* describes the wicked spirits, "expressing their character and nature." Daniel 10:13 refers to the "prince of the kingdom of Persia" opposing Michael. This was not the king of Persia but rather a fallen angel under Satan's control; he was a demon "of high rank, assigned by the chief of demons, Satan, to Persia as his special area of activity" (cf. Rev. 12:7).

Angels who are highest ranking. Michael is called the *archangel* in Jude 9 and the great prince in Daniel 12:1. Michael is the only angel designated archangel, and may possibly be the only one of this rank. The mission of the archangel is protector of Israel. (He is called "Michael your prince" in Dan.

10:21.) There were *chief princes* (Dan. 10:13), of whom Michael was one, as the highest ranking angels of God. *Ruling angels* (Eph. 3:10) are also mentioned, but no further details are given.

Angels who are prominent individuals. (1) Michael (Dan. 10:13; 12:1; Jude 9). The name *Michael* means “who is like God?” and identifies the only one classified as an archangel in Scripture. Michael is the defender of Israel who will wage war on behalf of Israel against Satan and his hordes in the Tribulation (Rev. 12:7–9). Michael also disputed with Satan about the body of Moses, but Michael refrained from judgment, leaving that to God (Jude 9). Jehovah’s Witnesses and some Christians identify Michael as Christ; this view, however, would suggest Christ has less authority than Satan, which is untenable.

(2) Gabriel (Dan. 9:21; Luke 1:26). His name means “man of God” or “God is strong.” “Gabriel seems to be God’s special messenger of His kingdom program in each of the four times he appears in the Bible record ... He reveals and interprets God’s purpose and program concerning Messiah and His kingdom to the prophets and people of Israel.” In a highly significant passage, Gabriel explained the events of the seventy weeks for Israel (Dan. 9:21–27). In Luke 1:26–27 Gabriel told Mary that the One born to her would be great and rule on the throne of David. In Daniel 8:15–16 Gabriel explained to Daniel the succeeding kingdoms of Medo-Persia and Greece as well as the untimely death of Alexander the Great. Gabriel also announced the birth of John the Baptist to Zacharias (Luke 1:11–20).

(3) Lucifer (Isa. 14:12) means “shining one” or “star of the morning.” He may have been the wisest and most beautiful of all God’s created beings who was originally placed in a position of authority over the cherubim surrounding the throne of God.

Angels who are divine attendants. (1) *Cherubim* are “of the highest order or class, created with indescribable powers and beauty ... Their main purpose and activity might be summarized in this way: they are proclaimers and protectors of God’s glorious presence, His sovereignty, and His holiness.” They stood guard at the gate of the Garden of Eden, preventing sinful man from entering (Gen. 3:24); were the golden figures covering the mercy seat above the ark in the Holy of Holies (Exod. 25:17–22); and attended the glory of God in Ezekiel’s vision (Ezek. 1). Cherubim had an extraordinary appearance with four faces—that of a man, lion, ox, and eagle. They had four wings and feet like a calf, gleaming like burnished bronze. In Ezekiel 1 they attended the glory of God preparatory for judgment.

(2) *Seraphim*, meaning “burning ones,” are pictured surrounding the throne of God in Isaiah 6:2. They are described as each having six wings. In their threefold proclamation, “holy, holy, holy” (Isa. 6:3), it means “to recognize God as extremely, perfectly holy. Therefore, they praise and proclaim the perfect holiness of God. The seraphim also express the holiness of God in that they proclaim that man must be cleansed of sin’s moral defilement before he can stand before God and serve Him.”

Regarding the governmental rulers in the angelic world, Ryrie described this as follows:

1. *Rulers or principalities*. These words, used seven times by Paul, indicate an order of angels both good and evil involved in governing the universe (Rom. 8:38; Eph. 1:21; 3:10; 6:12; Col. 1:16; 2:10, 15).

2. *Authorities or powers*. This likely emphasizes the superhuman authority of angels and demons exercised in relation to the affairs of the world (Eph. 1:21; 2:2; 3:10; 6:12; Col. 1:16; 2:10, 15; 1 Peter 3:22).

3. *Powers*. This word underscores the fact that angels and demons have greater power than humans (2 Peter 2:11). See Ephesians 1:21 and 1 Peter 3:22.

4. *Place of rule*. In one place demons are designated as world rulers of this darkness (Eph. 6:12).

5. *Thrones or dominions*. This designation emphasizes the dignity and authority of angelic rulers in God's use of them in His government (Eph. 1:21; Col. 1:16; 2 Peter 2:10; Jude 8).²⁷

Some question whether the Seraphim and Cherubim are actually angels since they are never clearly identified as angels, but due to the nature of angels and their service as superhuman servants of God, this is the most logical place to classify them. It would be helpful to also consider Ryrie's explanation of these angelic beings:

Cherubim: Cherubim constitute another order of angels, evidently of high rank since Satan was a cherub (Ezek. 28:14, 16). They seem to function as guardians of the holiness of God, having guarded the way to the tree of life in the Garden of Eden (Gen. 3:24). The use of cherubim in the decoration of the tabernacle and temple may also indicate their guarding function (Ex. 26:1ff.; 36:8ff.; 1 Kings 6:23-29). They also bore the throne-chariot which Ezekiel saw (Ezek. 1:4-5; 10:15-20). Some also identify the four living ones of Revelation 4:6 as cherubim, though others feel these represent the attributes of God. Representations of the cherubim will also be a part of the millennial temple (Ezek. 41:18-20).

Seraphim: All we know about this rank of angelic beings is found in Isaiah 6:2, 6. Apparently the seraphim were an order similar to the cherubim. They acted as attendants at the throne of God and agents of cleansing. Their duty also was to praise God. Their description suggests a six-winged humanlike creature. The word may be derived from a root meaning "to burn" or possibly from a root which means "to be noble."

Three other classification of angels remain:

1. **Elect Angels**: In 1 Timothy 5:21, Paul speaks of "the elect angels." These are the holy angels who are somehow included in the elect purposes of God. These are angels who did not follow after Satan in his rebellion. There is little revealed about their election, but apparently there was a probationary period for

the angelic world and these, being the elect of God, remained faithful and are confirmed in their holy state in the service of the Lord. As Chafer writes, "The fall of some angels is no more unanticipated by God than the fall of man. It may be implied, also that angels have passed a period of probation."²⁹

2. The Living Creatures: These are angelic creatures who seem to be involved with revealing the glory of the God of Israel in His omniscience, omnipotence, and omnipresence (Ezek. 1:5f; Rev. 4:6; 6:1). Ezekiel 10:15, 20 reveal them as cherubim. Through the four faces, they may also anticipate what God would do to bring salvation to man through His Son: (a) The face of the man suggests wisdom, compassion, intelligence and pictures Christ's humanity as the Son of man, the special focus found in the gospel of Luke; (b) the face of a lion speaks of kingly appearance and pictures Christ as King which is Matthew's emphasis; (c) the face of a bull or ox portrays a servant, the emphasis seen in Mark; and (d) the face of an eagle speaks of heavenly action and portrays the deity Christ, which is John's emphasis.

3. Watchers: "Watchers" is an Aramaic word which means, "vigilant, waking, watchful." Verse 17 may infer this is a special type of angel (if a special class is intended). It seems to describe holy angels who are constantly vigilant to serve the Lord and who watch over the rulers of the world and the affairs of men (Dan. 4:13, 17, 23). The added description, "a holy one" in verse 13 may imply there are unholy watchers, i.e., demonic forces who are watching the affairs of men and seeking to influence and destroy.