

## Are you sure you know what an angel is?

1- According to “**Vine’s Expository Dictionary of new Testament Words,**” the word “**ANGEL**” is the Greek word “**ANGELOS,**” which is translated:

*“A messenger (from angello, to deliver a message), sent whether by God or by man or by Satan, is also used of a guardian or representative...but most frequently of an order of created beings, superior to man, belonging to Heaven, and engaged in His service.*

*Angels are spirits (Hebrews 1:14), they have not material bodies (I Corinthians 15:35-54) as men have; they are either human in form, or can assume the human form when necessary (Hebrews 13:2).*

*They are called holy and elect, in contrast with some of their original number, who sinned, and left their proper habitation (See Jude 6-9, Revelation 12:7-9, and my study guide on “Demons”).*

*Angels are always spoken of in the masculine gender, the feminine form of the word does not occur (this is why Luke 20:35,36; and Matthew 22:30, says the angels in Heaven did not marry).”*

\*NOTE: The Greek word “**Isagelos,**” translated: “**equal to angels,**” occurs only in **Luke 20:36**. Here Jesus is saying that we will change from our *natural* or *earthly* body to a *spiritual* or *heavenly* body, that will be *immortal*, as also explained in **I Corinthians 15:35-54**. Thereby, we will be “*equal to the angels*” when we go to Heaven, and neither marry nor die, according to **Luke 20:35,36, and Matthew 22:30**.

2- The Jews believed the **cherubim**, and **seraphim** made up **God’s senate in Heaven**, which included **seven ARCHANGELS** (“*arch,*” meaning “*primary*” or “*chief*” and “*angel,*” meaning “*messenger*”): **Michael, Gabriel** (only two mentioned in the Bible), **Raphael, Uriel** (mentioned in the Septuagint, and Book of Enoch), and the **remaining three are disputed**: Was it Remiel, Anael, Metatron, Raziel, Izidkiel, Hanael, Selaphiel, Jegudiel, Barachiel, or Kephanel? God did nothing without consulting them first.

A. They believed that when God said, “*Let us make man in our own image*” (**Genesis 1:26**), the word “*us*” refers to this angelic senate (not Christ).

(1) They also believe that a lot of the angels in this senate objected to God making humans, and it caused a rebellion to break out in Heaven led by Satan, who, himself, was called Lucifer or Morning Star (Greek word is *heosphoros*, literally translated, “*dawn bearer*”), and was kicked out along with all the angels who followed him against God (**Isaiah 14:12-15**).

(2) **Ezekiel 28:14-19** also confirms that Lucifer or Satan was indeed a “*guardian cherub,*” before God threw him out of Heaven to Earth.

### 3- What is the difference between a cherubim, seraphim, and an ordinary angel?

**A. Seraphim:** comes from the word “*seraph*” which in the Hebrew is translated: “*fiery serpent*,” as used in *Numbers 21:6* of the serpents who killed those who grumbled against God.

It might be interesting to note that *Revelation 12:9* refers to Satan as “*The great dragon was hurled down --- that ancient serpent called the Devil or Satan, who leads the whole world astray. He was hurled to Earth, and his angels with him.*” **Could Satan have also been a seraph as well as a cherub?** We know Satan used the form of a serpent to tempt Adam and Eve in the Garden (*Genesis 3*); and, according to *Jude 9*, Satan challenged the archangel Michael over the body of Moses, and Michael didn’t attack. **Was Satan a former seraph and archangel himself?** We know he had to have a large following to challenge God and Michael in Heaven!

(1) *Isaiah 6:1,2:* “*I saw the Lord seated on a throne...and the train of His robe filled the Temple. Above Him were seraphs (seraphim), each with six wings: With two wings they covered their faces, with two they covered their feet, and with two they were flying.*”

(2) *Ezekiel 1:4-28:* “*I saw a windstorm...with flashing lightning and surrounded by a brilliant light. The center of the fire looked like glowing metal, and in the fire was what looked like four living creatures (Jews called them “Chayot,” or “living beings”). In appearance their form was that of a man, but each of them had four faces and four wings (Isaiah couldn’t see their faces, but saw six wings)...Under their wings on their four sides they had the hands of a man. All four of them had faces and wings...*

(10) *Their faces looked like this: Each of the four had the face of a man, and on the right side each had the face of a lion, and on the left the face of an ox; each also had the face of an eagle...their wings were spread out upward; each had two wings, one touching the wing of another creature on either side, and two wings covering its body...(13)The appearance...was like burning coals of fire or like torches...*

(15) *I saw a wheel (Jews called them Ophanim, meaning “many eyed ones.”) on the ground beside each creature...they sparkled like chrysolite, and all four (wheels) looked alike. Each appeared to be made like a wheel intersecting a wheel. As they moved, they would go in any one of the four directions the creatures faced; but the wheels did not turn about as the creatures went. Their rims were high and all four rims were full of eyes all around.*

(19) *When the living creatures moved, the wheels beside them moved...(21)When the creatures moved, they also moved; when the creatures stood still, they also stood still; and when the creatures rose*

*from the ground, the wheels rose along with them, because the spirit of the living creatures was in the wheels.*

*(22) Spread out above the heads of the living creatures was what looked like an expanse, sparkling ice...*

*(25) Then there came a voice from above the expanse over their heads as they stood with lowered wings: Above the expanse over their heads was what looked like a throne of sapphire, and high above on the throne was a figure like that of a man. I saw that from what appeared to be the waist up he looked like glowing metal, as if full of fire; and brilliant light surrounded Him. Like the appearance of a rainbow in the clouds on a rainy day, so was the radiance around Him.*

*This was the appearance of the likeness of the glory of the Lord.”*

**(3) In the New Testament, the Apostle John also saw these creatures that Isaiah called “seraph” (singular), or “seraphim” (plural). He records His visit to the Throne of God in *Revelation 4:5-8*: “Also before the Throne there was what looked like a sea of glass, clear as crystal (Ezekiel said it looked like an “expanse of sparkling ice”).**

*In the center, around the Throne, were four living creatures, and they were covered with eyes, in front and in back. The first living creature was like a lion, the second was like an ox, the third had a face like a man, the fourth was like a flying eagle. Each of the four living creatures had six wings (Ezekiel only saw four wings, but Isaiah saw six) and was covered with eyes all around, even under their wings (Ezekiel said the eyes appeared to be on a wheel that was the spirit of the living creature).”*

**(4) What do we learn about these “living creatures” when we put all three accounts together?**

- (a) There are four of them**, and they are always around the Throne of God which sets on a sea of glass like sparkling ice.
- (b) They have six wings**. Remember, though Ezekiel only saw four wings, remember that two were spread upwards, and two covered its body. Perhaps the two that covered its entire body also covered the third pair of wings that Isaiah said they used to cover their faces.
- (c) They have four faces (lion, ox, man, eagle)**; but a human form with the hands of a man. Even though John didn’t see all four faces on each of the four creatures; they could have been facing directly at him.
- (d) The spirit of the living creatures was in the eyes** which were all around them (even under their wings) which could

also appear as wheels (like four wheels with rims full of eyes, intersecting each other).

(e) **They glowed like burning coals of fire or torches, and their many eyes sparkled.**

(5) It might be interesting to note, that **out of the long list of possible seven archangels, only four of them are agreed upon in the writings of both Christians and Jews: Michael** (the only one the Bible calls an “*archangel*” in *Jude 9*), **Gabriel** (who, the Bible specifies as an archangel by the definition of the word: “*arch*,” meaning “*chief*;” and “*angel*,” meaning “*messenger*.”), **Raphael**, and **Uriel**. There were also **only four seraphim mentioned in the Bible who surrounded God’s throne! Could the seraphim be archangels, and there only be four seraphim and therefore only four archangels?**

**B. Cherubim (singular: Cherub).** Maybe the archangels were only cherubs, or generals in God’s military. The archangel, Michael, definitely led God’s angelic army against Satan, who led his own great army of angels in *Revelation 12:7-9*.

- (1) **Cherubim were guardian angels**, or as *Ezekiel 28:14* says: “*guardian cherubs*.” It is interesting to note that in this passage, **Ezekiel is talking about Lucifer, or Satan (*Isaiah 14:12-15*), who was once a “*guardian cherub*,”** who, according to *verses 15-19* was a good angel who turned wicked, and thus was expelled from Heaven to Earth! DOES THAT SOUND LIKE A TINY CHILD OR SWEET FEMALE ANGEL TO YOU?
- (2) When God commissioned Moses to build the Ark of the Testimony or Covenant, *Exodus 25:18-22* tells us they were commanded to make **two cherubim** out of pure gold, and place them on either end of the cover, facing each other. Their **two wings** (as opposed to four or six like the seraphs) were to spread upward, overshadowing the cover (protecting the contents). There, above the cover of the Ark, **between the two cherubim, God would meet with Moses**, and later with Aaron and then, the High Priest.
- (3) In the beginning, when God kicked Adam and Eve out of the Garden of Eden for following the serpent and eating the forbidden fruit, *Genesis 3:24* says **God placed cherubim with flaming swords to guard (as in guardian angels) the entrance.**
- (4) These **cherubs are the angels that protect us from childhood (*Matthew 18:10*), throughout our adult life (*Hebrews 1:14*).**

- (5) They are always there as **invisible protectors, who could only be seen if God wanted you to see them, as illustrated in *II Kings 6:14-17***, when Elisha asked God to let his servant see that these guardian angels called cherubim were protecting them against the army who came to capture them. When the servant's eyes were opened, he saw a vast army of these cherubim surrounding the human army that had come to capture Elisha.

**4- Although there are millions of angels, according to *Revelation 5:11 and Hebrews 12:22*, the Jews believed God created a new company of angels every day, and they all had different jobs.**

**A.** Some controlled the movement of the stars, the years, months and days; others were over the sea, frost, dew, rain, snow, hail, thunder and lightning (*Job 38*); and some even wrote down every word that a human said (*Revelation 20:12*).

**B. Some were destroying angels**, angels of punishment, and wardens of Hell.

(1) One was even called "**The Angel of Death**" (*Exodus 12:23, I Corinthians 10:10, I Chronicles 21:15, Acts 12:23*).

(2) Another (or the same *Angel of Death*) was called "**The Destroyer**" (*Isaiah 54:16, Hebrews 11:28, Jeremiah 6:26; 15:8; 48:8,32; 51:1,56; Psalm 78:49*), or "**Abaddon**" (Hebrew), or "**Apollyon**" (Greek) according to *Revelation 9:11* (King of the demons? Satan himself?).

(3) **Lucifer or Satan** was looked upon as the **prosecuting angel**, who continually brought charges against men before God (*Job 1:6-8*).

**5- The Jews believed God spoke to man through angels.** It must be noted that the word "**angel**" is translated "**messenger**" in both the Greek and the Hebrew.

**A.** They believed **God gave the Law first to angels** (remember that **Michael and Gabriel** were "**archangels**" or "**chief messengers**," who, in the Hebrew, were called "**Malakhim**" or "**messenger angels**," who then passed it on to Moses (*Acts 7:30,35,38,53; Galatians 3:19*):

(1) In *Exodus 3:2* an angel spoke to Moses from the burning bush. Yet *verses 4-6* say it was God. *Acts 7:35* explains that God spoke through the angel.

(2) In *Exodus 31:18; 34:27,28*, God gave Moses the Law. Yet *Acts 7:38,53 and Galatians 3:19* say it was angels.

- (3) In *Exodus 12:23* it says both God and the Destroying Angel killed the Egyptian first born males.
- (4) In *Genesis 18:2,9,20,22* it says that three men told Abraham about having a child in his old age and destroying Sodom; yet in *18:20-22*, it says one was the Lord, and then *19:1* adds that two were angels.
- (5) In *Exodus 13:21,22* it says God went before Israel in the cloud and fire; yet *14:10* says it was an angel, and *Acts 10:1-4* says it was Christ! *Exodus 23:20,21* goes further in saying that this angel that led them had His (God's) Name in him.

**B.** Unfortunately, the Jews worshiped such angels (*Colossians 2:18, Revelation 22:8,9*), and felt the angels were superior to Christ (*Galatians 1:6-8*), which Paul argued in *Hebrews 1:1-13*. This is why there are so many angels listed in Jewish writings that are not mentioned in the Bible.

- (1) The Jews said there were 10 levels in the hierarchy of angels: Chayot (living beings), Ophanim (many eyed ones), Erelim (the valiant/ courageous), Hashmallim (like the color of hashmal), **Seraphim**, **Malakhim** (messenger angels), Elohim (godly beings), Bene Elohim (sons of godly beings), **Cherubim**, and Ishim (manlike beings).

**B. Scriptures in the Old Testament say such angels...**

- (1) rescued Hagar (*Genesis 16:7-12*)
- (2) announced the birth of Isaac (*Genesis 18:1-15*)
- (3) announced the destruction of Sodom (*Genesis 18:16-33*)
- (4) destroyed Sodom and rescued Lot (*Genesis 19:1-29*)
- (5) intercepted the slaying of Isaac (*Genesis 22:11,12*)
- (6) guarded Jacob (*Genesis 28:12; 31:11; 32:1; 48:18*)
- (7) commissioned Moses (*Exodus 3:2*)
- (8) led Israel (*Exodus 14:19; 23:20-23; 32:34*)
- (9) arranged the marriage of Isaac & Rebecca (*Genesis 24:7*)
- (10) rebuked Balaam (*Numbers 22:31-35*)
- (11) appeared to Joshua (*Joshua 5:13-15*)
- (12) rebuked the Israelites for idolatry (*Judges 2:1-5*)
- (13) commissioned Gideon (*Judges 6:11-40*)
- (14) announced the birth of Sampson (*Judges 13*)
- (15) struck Israel with pestilence (*II Samuel 24:16,17*)
- (16) rescued Elijah (*I Kings 19:5-8*)
- (17) saved Daniel from the lions (*Daniel 6:22*)
- (18) struck the Assyrian army (*II Kings 19:35, Isaiah 37:36*)
- (19) camped around God's people (*Psalms 34:7; 91:11*)
- (20) aided in the writings of Zechariah (*Zechariah 1:9; 2:3; 4:5*)

**6- The first 3,000 (Jewish) Christians (Acts 2) still believed what the Jews believed about angels, but they also believed that Jesus was the Son of God, and that after He rose from the dead, Christ was superior to the angels (Hebrews 1:4).**

**A. As the Son of God (Hebrews 1:5), He was now the one and only Mediator between God and man (I Timothy 2:5).**

(1) Therefore, **not even an angel could change His words** as recorded in the New Testament through His Apostles (*Galatians 1:6-8*).

**B. Christians believed that there were “elect” angels (I Timothy 5:21)**

(1) Their job now was to **take care of Christians (Hebrews 1:14), from birth (Matthew 18:10) to death (Luke 16:22).**

(2) Sometimes they appeared to Christians in human form (*Hebrews 13:2*). Remember, **Peter’s angel (Acts 12:15)** rescued him from prison in *Acts 12:7*.

(3) They also help people who are wanting to become Christians (*Acts 10:1-8*)

(4) Angels were assigned to the Churches (*Revelation 1:20; 2:8,12,18; 3:1,7,14*).

(5) They will also escort Christians to Heaven when the Lord comes back (*Matthew 24:31*).

**C. Christians also believed that Satan and his angels were kicked out of Heaven for rebelling against God (Revelation 12:7-9).**

(1) Jesus said in *Luke 10:18*: “*I saw Satan fall like lightning from Heaven*”

(2) *Jude 6* tells us these wicked angels were thrown into a place that had chains of darkness, that *II Peter 2:4* calls **Tartarus**. They were kept there to await the Judgment Day, when Jesus said, in *Matthew 25:41*, they would be thrown into the “*eternal fire prepared for the Devil and his angels.*” These angels (or, as the New Testament calls them, demons), were well aware of this place, according to *Luke 8:31*; and they begged Jesus not to send them back there.

(3) They believed that Satan’s only purpose on this earth was to destroy Christians (*I Peter 5:8*).

(4) They believed, according to *II Corinthians 11:14,15*, that Satan and his angels would masquerade as angels of light, and servants of

righteousness (as the demon possessed girl in *Acts 16:16,17* illustrated).

**(5) SEE STUDY GUIDE ON “DEMONS”**

**D. Angels during the life of Jesus...**

- (1) announced the birth and name of John the Baptist (*Luke 1:11-17*)
- (2) told Mary she would give birth to Jesus (*Luke 1:26-37*)
- (3) told Joseph that Mary would give birth through the Holy Spirit, and he was to name the baby Jesus (*Matthew 1:20,21*)
- (4) announced to the shepherds the birth of Jesus (*Luke 2:8-15*)
- (5) directed Jesus' flight to Egypt (*Matthew 2:13-20*)
- (6) ministered to Jesus during His 40 days in the wilderness to be tempted by the Devil (*Matthew 4:11*)
- (7) came to comfort Jesus at Mount of Olives before His crucifixion (*Luke 22:43*)
- (8) rolled away the stone at Christ's tomb, and announced His resurrection (*Matthew 28:2-9*).
- (9) presented Christ to Mary Magdalene (*John 20:11-14*)

**E. Jesus said angels...**

- (1) would ascend and descend on Him (*John 1:51*)
- (2) would come to Him at His command if He needed them (*Matthew 26:53*)
- (3) will come with Him when He returns at the Judgment Day (*Matthew 25:31; 16:27; Mark 8:38; Luke 9:26*).
- (4) will be the reapers of the wicked, weeding them out from the Christians at the End to be burned in Hell (*Matthew 13:39-43*)
- (5) will take Christians out of this world to Heaven (*Matthew 24:31*)
- (6) carried the beggar to Abraham's side in Paradise (*Luke 16:22*)
- (7) rejoice when a sinner repents (*Luke 15:10*)
- (8) will guard little children (*Matthew 18:10*)
- (9) will hear from Jesus who belongs to Him (*Luke 12:8*)
- (10) have no sex and cannot die (*Luke 20:35,36; Matthew 22:30*)
- (11) that follow Satan will go to Hell (*Matthew 25:41*)

**F. Acts says that angels...**

- (1) opened the prison doors for the Apostles (*5:19*)
- (2) directed Philip to the Ethiopian (*8:26*)
- (3) released Peter from prison (*12:7-9*), and was called "his angel" (*12:15*)
- (4) struck Herod dead (*12:23*)
- (5) directed Cornelius to send for Peter (*10:3*)
- (6) took care of Paul during a storm (*27:23*)
- (7) gave Moses the Law (*7:38,53*)



### **G. Other New Testament Scriptures say angels...**

- (1) are to watch over Christians (*Hebrews 1:13,14*), who sometimes even see them without knowing it (*Hebrews 13:2*)
- (2) are appointed to Churches (*I Timothy 5:21, Revelation 1:20; 2:8,12,18; 3:1,7,14*)
- (3) cannot be numbered (*Hebrews 12:22, Revelation 5:11*)
- (4) helped John write the book of Revelation (*Revelation 1:1*)
- (5) are not to be worshiped (*Colossians 2:18; Revelation 22:8,9*)
- (6) that rebelled against God, were kicked out of Heaven (*Revelation 12:7-9*); kept in darkness (*Jude 6*) in a place called Tartarus (*II Peter 2:4*) for the Judgment Day. **SEE “DEMONS”**
- (7) that are wicked, masquerade as angels of light here on earth, and (through people who follow them) act as servants of righteousness (*II Corinthians 11:13,14*), to deceive Christians.
- (8) are under Christ (*Hebrews 1:4*)
- (9) put the Old Testament Law into effect (*Galatians 3:19*); but, cannot change the New Testament Law (*Galatians 1:6-8*)