

Angelology, Part 1

First: Broad overview; then we will get into more detail.

Angels exist. But they are not like the popular images you see in store windows and way too many Christian bookstores.

Charles Ryrie points out that humans do not have the knowledge to judge the makeup of the universe. We have no a priori (claim to know something 'from former' rather than from experience and observation) way of knowing what that makeup would or would not include, so we certainly have no standing to agree or disagree with the existence of angels.

Since the natural human predisposition is anti-supernatural, our experience would not incline us to consider the possibility of angels. Humans have way too much confidence in their own intellect. So we seek naturalistic explanations for the phenomenon that we can't really understand.

But the biblical data gives ample and repeated evidence of the existence of Angels the Old Testament speaks about Angels just over 100 times. The New Testament mentions them 165 times.

In the NT, angels attended the entire ministry of Christ: at His birth, during His earthly sojourn, His resurrection, and ascension. Angels ministered to Christ in the wilderness after his temptation (look at that in a moment), He said that our state and the resurrection would be like angels –

Matthew 22:23-30 -- On that day some Sadducees (who say there is no resurrection) came to Jesus and questioned Him, asking, "Teacher, Moses said, 'IF A MAN DIES HAVING NO CHILDREN, HIS BROTHER AS NEXT OF KIN SHALL MARRY HIS WIFE, AND RAISE UP CHILDREN FOR HIS BROTHER.' Now there were seven brothers with us; and the first married and died, and having no children left his wife to his brother; so also the second, and the third, down to the seventh. Last of all, the woman died. In the resurrection, therefore, whose wife of the seven will she be? For they all had married her." But Jesus answered and said to them, "You are mistaken, not understanding the Scriptures nor the

power of God. For in the resurrection they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are like angels in heaven.”

So, angels don't marry and they don't procreate.

Angels separate the righteous from the wicked at the end of the age, according to the parable of the wheat and the tares in Matthew 13:36–43.

And they will accompany the Lord at His second coming –

Matthew 25:31-33 -- “But when the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the angels with Him, then He will sit on His glorious throne. All the nations will be gathered before Him; and He will separate them from one another, as the shepherd separates the sheep from the goats; and He will put the sheep on His right, and the goats on the left.

In the book of Acts, angels were involved in helping the spread of the gospel and increase of the church. Angels protected the apostles. And there are 65 clear references to angels occur in the book of Revelation, more than in any other single book of the Bible.

They are created beings --

Psalms 148:1-6 -- Praise the LORD! Praise the LORD from the heavens; Praise Him in the heights! Praise Him, all His angels; Praise Him, all His hosts! Praise Him, sun and moon; Praise Him, all stars of light! Praise Him, highest heavens, And the waters that are above the heavens! Let them praise the name of the LORD, For He commanded and they were created. He has also established them forever and ever; He has made a decree which will not pass away.

They did not evolve from some lower or less complex form of life. They were created as holy beings. Since they are part of God's creation and He pronounced it to be good, and since He cannot create sin, we must conclude that the angels were created good.

In Mark 8:38 we read of "holy angels." 1 Timothy 5:21 refers to "elect angels."

But some of them fell and became evil angels as they followed Satan in his rebellion.

Angels are created, they are not the Creator.

But they are distinct from human beings – - 1Corinthians 6:3 says we will judge angels, Hebrews 1:14 says that they are “ministering spirits.”.

So, they are distinct from humans – most notably because Christ did not die to atone for fallen angels the way that He became human to redeem fallen men.

As creatures, they are limited in power, knowledge, and activity. They can apparently only be in one place at any given time. And angels will be subject to judgment (1Cor. 6:3).

They have personal existence and appear to be individual persons. In the Bible, two of them are given individual names: Michael and Gabriel.

They possess intelligence –

Matthew 8:29 – And they cried out, saying, "What business do we have with each other, Son of God? Have You come here to torment us before the time?"

1Peter 1:10-12 -- As to this salvation, the prophets who prophesied of the grace that would come to you made careful searches and inquiries, seeking to know what person or time the Spirit of Christ within them was indicating as He predicted the sufferings of Christ and the glories to follow. It was revealed to them that they were not serving themselves, but you, in these things which now have been announced to you through those who preached the gospel to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven—things into which angels long to look.

They show emotion –

James 2:19 -- You believe that God is one. You do well; the demons also believe, and shudder. (Or, tremble, KJV)

Revelation 12:17 – So the dragon was enraged with the woman, and went off to make war with the rest of her children, who keep the commandments of God and hold to the testimony of Jesus.

They have wills --

Luke 8:32 – Now there was a herd of many swine feeding there on the mountain; and the demons implored Him to permit them to enter the swine. And He gave them permission.

2Timothy 2:24-26 -- The Lord's bond-servant must not be quarrelsome, but be kind to all, able to teach, patient when wronged, with gentleness correcting those who are in opposition, if perhaps God may grant them repentance leading to the knowledge of the truth, and they may come to their senses and escape from the snare of the devil, having been held captive by him to do his will.

Jude 5-7 – Now I desire to remind you, though you know all things once for all, that the Lord, after saving a people out of the land of Egypt, subsequently destroyed those who did not believe. And angels who did not keep their own domain, but abandoned their proper abode, He has kept in eternal bonds under darkness for the judgment of the great day, just as Sodom and Gomorrah and the cities around them, since they in the same way as these indulged in gross immorality and went after strange flesh, are exhibited as an example in undergoing the punishment of eternal fire.

These are all the attributes of persons or personalities.

They are not omniscient. They are not omnipresent.

Matthew 24:36 -- "But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but the Father alone."

Yet they seem to have greater knowledge than humans. They know things in the heavenly realm that we do not know. They have been

around longer than we have. They have direct access to God and are more thoroughly familiar with his ways.

They are spiritual, non-corporeal beings. They are immortal and do not propagate. They do not die –

Luke 20:3-36 -- Jesus said to them, “The sons of this age marry and are given in marriage, but those who are considered worthy to attain to that age and the resurrection from the dead, neither marry nor are given in marriage; for they cannot even die anymore, because they are like angels, and are sons of God, being sons of the resurrection.”

But the wicked angels will be punished in a place of separation.

Matthew 25:41 -- "Then He will also say to those on His left, 'Depart from Me, accursed ones, into the eternal fire which has been prepared for the devil and his angels;

Luke 8:31 -- They were imploring Him not to command them to go away into the abyss.

Specifics:

Greek : Angelos– messenger

ἄγγελος *ángelos*

The Bible uses the terms מלאך אלהים (*mal'āk 'ēlōhîm*; messenger of God), יהוה מלאך (*mal'āk YHWH*; messenger of the Lord), אלהים בני (*bənē 'ēlōhîm*; sons of God) and הקודשים (*haqqôḏəšîm*; the holy ones) to refer to beings traditionally interpreted as angels.

The term מלאך (*mal'āk*) is also used in the Tanakh; a similar term, ملائكة (*malā'ikah*), is used in the Qur'an. The Greek and Hebrew words, depending on the context may refer either to a human messenger or a supernatural messenger. The human messenger could possibly be a prophet or priest, such as Malachi, "my

messenger", and the Greek superscription that the Book of Malachi was written "by the hand of his messenger" ἀγγέλου *angélu*. Examples of a supernatural messenger^[10] are the "Malak YHWH," who is either a messenger from God, an aspect of God (such as the Logos), or God himself as the messenger (theophany).

Other names:

Job 1:6 – Now there was a day when the **sons of God** came to present themselves before the LORD, and Satan also came among them.

Psalms 89:5-7 – The heavens will praise Your wonders, O LORD; Your faithfulness also in the **assembly of the holy ones**. For who in the skies is comparable to the LORD? Who among the sons of the mighty is like the LORD, a God greatly feared in the **council of the holy ones**, and awesome above all those who are around Him?

Daniel 4:13 – I was looking in the visions in my mind as I lay on my bed, and behold, an (angelic) **watcher**, a holy one, descended from heaven.

Colossians 1:16 – For by him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things were created through him and for him.

1Tim. 5:21 – I solemnly charge you in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus and of His **chosen angels**, to maintain these principles without bias, doing nothing in a spirit of partiality.

These "elect angels" are apparently confirmed in righteousness, not able to fall.

Also called Cherubim ('im' is like 's' – making plural) – very common OT word.

Gen. 3:24 -- So He drove the man out; and at the east of the garden of Eden He stationed the **cherubim**, and the flaming sword which turned every direction, to guard the way to the tree of life.

God gave Moses explicit details about the furniture in the tabernacle, especially the Ark of the Covenant.

Ex. 25:18 “And you shall make two **cherubim** of gold, make them of hammered work at the two ends of the mercy seat.

Ex. 25:19 “And make one **cherub** at one end and one **cherub** at the other end; you shall make the **cherubim** *of one piece* with the mercy seat at its two ends.

Ex. 25:20 “And the **cherubim** shall have *their* wings spread upward, covering the mercy seat with their wings and facing one another; the faces of the **cherubim** are to be *turned* toward the mercy seat.

Ex. 25:22 “And there I will meet with you; and from above the mercy seat, from between the two **cherubim** which are upon the ark of the testimony, I will speak to you about all that I will give you in commandment for the sons of Israel.

Ex. 36:35 Moreover, he made the veil of blue and purple and scarlet *material*, and fine twisted linen; he made it with **cherubim**, the work of a skillful workman.

Ex. 37:7 And he made two **cherubim** of gold; he made them of hammered work, at the two ends of the mercy seat;

Ex. 37:8 one **cherub** at the one end, and one **cherub** at the other end; he made the **cherubim** *of one piece* with the mercy seat at the two ends.

Ex. 37:9 And the **cherubim** had *their* wings spread upward, covering the ¹mercy seat with their wings, with their faces toward each other; the faces of the **cherubim** were toward the mercy seat.

Num. 7:89 -- Now when Moses went into the tent of meeting to speak with Him, he heard the voice speaking to him from above the mercy seat that was on the ark of the testimony, from between the two **cherubim**, so He spoke to him.

And that became a descriptor of God – the One who sits between the cherubim --

1Sam. 4:4 -- So the people sent to Shiloh, and from there they carried the ark of the covenant of the LORD of hosts who sits *above* the **cherubim**; and the two sons of Eli, Hophni and Phinehas, *were* there with the ark of the covenant of God.

2Sam. 6:2 -- And David arose and went with all the people who were with him to Baale-judah, to bring up from there the ark of God which is called by the Name, the very name of the LORD of hosts who is enthroned *above* the **cherubim**.

In David's Psalms, he described God as riding on the cherubim –

2Sam. 22:11 -- And He rode on a **cherub** and flew, and He appeared on the wings of the wind.

Psa. 18:10 -- And He rode upon a **cherub** and flew; And He sped upon the wings of the wind.

He is above, seated on, enthroned upon, riding on – the cherubim.

Psa. 80:1 -- Oh, give ear, Shepherd of Israel, Thou who dost lead Joseph like a flock; Thou who art enthroned *above* the **cherubim**, shine forth!

Psa. 99:1 -- The LORD reigns, let the peoples tremble; He is enthroned *above* the **cherubim**, let the earth shake!

Is. 37:16 -- “O LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, who art enthroned *above* the **cherubim**, Thou art the God, Thou alone, of all the kingdoms of the earth. Thou hast made heaven and earth.

In a few minutes, we'll read **Ezekiel 10:1-20** for a description of Cherubim.

And again, God appears to ride on them –

Ezek. 11:22 -- Then the **cherubim** lifted up their wings with the wheels beside them, and the glory of the God of Israel hovered over them.

Satan was referred to as a cherub –

Ezek. 28:14 -- “You were the anointed **cherub** who covers, And I placed you *there*. You were on the holy mountain of God; You walked in the midst of the stones of fire.

Ezek. 28:16 -- “By the abundance of your trade You were internally filled with violence, And you sinned; Therefore I have cast you as profane From the mountain of God. And I have destroyed you, O covering **cherub**, from the midst of the stones of fire.

And then there are the **Seraph, or seraphim** (the burning ones) –

Isaiah 6:2-7 (only mention) –

Is. 6:1 In the year of King Uzziah’s death, I saw the Lord sitting on a throne, lofty and exalted, with the train of His robe filling the temple. Seraphim stood above Him, each having six wings; with two he covered his face, and with two he covered his feet, and with two he flew. And one called out to another and said, “Holy, Holy, Holy, is the LORD of hosts, the whole earth is full of His glory.” And the foundations of the thresholds trembled at the voice of him who called out, while the temple was filling with smoke.

Is. 6:5 Then I said, “Woe is me, for I am ruined! Because I am a man of unclean lips, and I live among a people of unclean lips; For my eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts.” Then one of the seraphim flew to me, with a burning coal in his hand which he had taken from the altar with tongs. And he touched my mouth *with it* and said, “Behold, this has touched your lips; and your iniquity is taken away, and your sin is forgiven.”

And they are called “sons of God” and “morning stars” –

Job 38:1-7 – Then the LORD answered Job out of the whirlwind and said, “Who is this that darkens counsel by words without knowledge? Now gird up your loins like a man, and I will ask you, and you instruct Me! Where were you when I laid the foundation of the earth? Tell *Me*, if you have understanding, Who set its measurements? Since you know. Or who stretched the line on it? On what were its bases sunk? Or who laid its cornerstone, When the **morning stars** sang together and all the **sons of God** shouted for joy?

Angelology, Part 2

Also “living creatures” in Ezekiel 1 (also Revelation 4:6-8) – “four living creatures, human likeness, four faces”

READ Ezekiel 1

Then read **Ezekiel 9 and 10:1-20**

They have rank and order – Jude refers to archangels

Jude 1:9 - But Michael the archangel, when he disputed with the devil and argued about the body of Moses, did not dare pronounce against him a railing judgment, but said, "The Lord rebuke you!"

Rev. 12:7-8 – And there was war in heaven, Michael and his angels waging war with the dragon. The dragon and his angels waged war, and they were not strong enough, and there was no longer a place found for them in heaven.

1Thess. 4:16—For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of *the* archangel and with the trumpet of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first.

Only Michael (warrior of God) and Gabriel (who is like God?) are given names in Bible, indicating different persons and tasks.

Daniel 8:16-17 – And I heard the voice of a man between the banks of Ulai, and he called out and said, "Gabriel, give this man an understanding of the vision." So he came near to where I was standing, and when he came I was frightened and fell on my face; but he said to me, "Son of man, understand that the vision pertains to the time of the end."

Daniel 9:21 - while I was still speaking in prayer, then the man Gabriel, whom I had seen in the vision previously, came to me in my extreme weariness about the time of the evening offering.

Luke 1:19 (Zechariah in temple) – “The angel answered and said to him, “I am Gabriel, who stands in the presence of God, and I have been sent to speak to you and to bring you this good news.

Luke 1:26 - Now in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a city in Galilee called Nazareth,

Angels are not ubiquitous. They are only one place at any given time. “I was sent to speak to you”

Read Daniel 10:10-21

Angels appear all through the Bible

Revelation 5:11 - Then I looked, and I heard the voice of many angels around the throne and the living creatures and the elders; and the number of them was myriads of myriads, and thousands of thousands,

Deut. 33:1-2 -- Now this is the blessing with which Moses the man of God blessed the sons of Israel before his death. He said, “The LORD came from Sinai, and dawned on them from Seir; He shone forth from Mount Paran, and He came from the midst of ten thousand holy ones; at His right hand there was flashing lightning for them.

Heb. 12:22-24 -- But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to myriads of angels, to the general assembly and church of the firstborn who are enrolled in heaven, and to God, the Judge of all, and to the spirits of *the* righteous made perfect, and to Jesus, the mediator of a new covenant, and to the sprinkled blood, which speaks better than *the blood* of Abel.

Not said to be made “in the image of God, “ like men are.

The are also guardians:

Daniel 6:22 - "My God sent His angel and shut the lions' mouths and they have not harmed me, inasmuch as I was found innocent before Him; and also toward you, O king, I have committed no crime."

Psalms 91:11-12 -- For He will give His angels charge concerning you, To guard you in all your ways. They will bear you up in their hands, that you do not strike your foot against a stone.

Matt. 18:10-11 – “See that you do not despise one of these little ones, for I say to you that their angels in heaven continually see the face of My Father who is in heaven. [“For the Son of Man has come to save that which was lost.]

Acts 12:7-11 -- On the very night when Herod was about to bring him forward, Peter was sleeping between two soldiers, bound with two chains, and guards in front of the door were watching over the prison. And behold, an angel of the Lord suddenly appeared and a light shone in the cell; and he struck Peter's side and woke him up, saying, “Get up quickly.” And his chains fell off his hands. And the angel said to him, “Gird yourself and put on your sandals.” And he did so. And he said to him, “Wrap your cloak around you and follow me.” And he went out and continued to follow, and he did not know that what was being done by the angel was real, but thought he was seeing a vision. When they had passed the first and second guard, they came to the iron gate that leads into the city, which opened for them by itself; and they went out and went along one street, and immediately the angel departed from him. When Peter came to himself, he said, “Now I know for sure that the Lord has sent forth His angel and rescued me from the hand of Herod and from all that the Jewish people were expecting.”

2Kings 6:15-19 -- Now when the attendant of the man of God had risen early and gone out, behold, an army with horses and chariots was circling the city. And his servant said to him, “Alas, my master! What shall we do?” So he answered, “Do not fear, for those who are with us are more than those who are with them.” Then Elisha prayed and said, “O LORD, I pray, open his eyes that he may see.” And the LORD opened the servant's eyes and he saw; and behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire all around Elisha. When they came down to him, Elisha prayed to the LORD and said, “Strike this people with

blindness, I pray.” So He struck them with blindness according to the word of Elisha. Then Elisha said to them, “This is not the way, nor is this the city; follow me and I will bring you to the man whom you seek.” And he brought them to Samaria.

Psalm 34:7 -- The angel of the LORD encamps around those who fear Him, And rescues them.

2Kings 19:35 -- Then it happened that night that the angel of the LORD went out and struck 185,000 in the camp of the Assyrians; and when men rose early in the morning, behold, all of them were dead.

They are powerful

Ps. 103:20 -- Bless the LORD, you His angels, Mighty in strength, who perform His word, Obeying the voice of His word!

Eph. 1:18-21 – *I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened, so that you will know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints, and what is the surpassing greatness of His power toward us who believe. These are* in accordance with the working of the strength of His might which He brought about in Christ, when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly *places*, far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the one to come.

2Pet 2:4-11 – For if God did not spare angels when they sinned, but cast them into hell and committed them to pits of darkness, reserved for judgment; and did not spare the ancient world, but preserved Noah, a preacher of righteousness, with seven others, when He brought a flood upon the world of the ungodly; and *if* He condemned the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah to destruction by reducing *them* to ashes, having made them an example to those who would live ungodly *lives* thereafter; and *if* He rescued righteous Lot, oppressed by the sensual conduct of unprincipled men (for by what he saw and heard *that* righteous man, while living among them, felt *his* righteous soul tormented day after day by *their* lawless deeds), *then* the Lord

knows how to rescue the godly from temptation, and to keep the unrighteous under punishment for the day of judgment, and especially those who indulge the flesh in *its* corrupt desires and despise authority.

Daring, self-willed, they do not tremble when they revile angelic majesties, whereas angels who are greater in might and power do not bring a reviling judgment against them before the Lord.

Heb 2:7 – "YOU HAVE MADE HIM FOR A LITTLE WHILE LOWER THAN THE ANGELS; YOU HAVE CROWNED HIM WITH GLORY AND HONOR, AND HAVE APPOINTED HIM OVER THE WORKS OF YOUR HANDS;