

PART 10: ANGELS, THE DEVIL, AND DEMONS

Both the Old and New Testament speak of supernatural beings that have great power and do miraculous things. Even ancient mythologies tell of mystical beings with spiritual abilities that function in and out of the realm of the spirit and at times visit the earth. Scripture calls these beings angles and demons.

Nelson's Illustrated Bible Dictionary defines an angel as: “A member of an order of heavenly beings who are superior to man in power and intelligence.”

Even though the Bible does not tell us everything we would like to know about angels scripture does revealed something's important facts about these amazing beings.

Angels, like the rest of creation, are themselves created.

*Ps 148:2-5 says: Praise Him, all His angels; Praise Him, all His hosts! Praise Him, sun and moon; Praise Him, all you stars of light! Praise Him, you heavens of heavens, And you waters above the heavens! Let them praise the name of the Lord , For He commanded and they were created.*

Angels are spirit without physical bodies, which is why Jesus says: *a spirit does not have flesh and bones (Luke 24:39).*

Angels possess great power and knowledge which enables them to operate in both the spiritual and the material world doing the work of God that comes directly from His throne.

For example, the two angels sent to bring judgment upon the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah and rescue Lot said to him: *Have you anyone else here? Son-in-law, your sons, your daughters, and whomever you have in the city — take them out of this place! For we will destroy this place, because the outcry against them has grown great before the face of the Lord, and the Lord has sent us to destroy it.* (Gen 19:12-13)

One of their primary activities is to minister to God in worship and praise.

*All the angels stood around the throne and the elders and the four living creatures, and fell on their faces before the throne and worshiped God, saying: "Amen! Blessing and glory and wisdom, Thanksgiving and honor and power and might, Be to our God forever and ever. Amen."* (Rev 7:11-12)

Angels were also created to serve in ministry to man.

*Are they not all ministering spirits sent forth to minister for those who will inherit salvation?* (Heb 1:14).

They deliver heavenly messages from the court of God. In fact, the very word “angel” itself in both the Old and New Testaments, *Malak* in Hebrew and *angelos* in Greek, mean “a messenger.”

There also appears to be a hierarchy or rank within the order of angels, for the Bible speaks of archangels: *For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. (1 Thess 4:16).*

Many, especially in the New Age Movement, believe all angels are for our good. But God’s Word clearly indicates that there are angels who have fallen into rebellion against God. Such beings are in perpetual war against God and His chosen people.

The apostle Peter writes of such angels when he says: *For if God did not spare the angels who sinned, but cast them down to hell and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved for judgment (2 Peter 2:4)*

Of all of the fallen angels none is more powerful than Satan. The Bible describes Satan (who is also called the Devil) as an angel (Job. 1:6), an evil, malignant being (John. 17:15), head and chief of the world of darkness, and our foremost adversary (I Pet. 5:8). He is also portrayed as a murderer and a liar (John. 8:22),

the Father of Lies (John. 8:44), a deceiver and the accuser of the brethren (Rev. 12:9-10). Of all of God's fallen creatures, he appears to be the most powerful and cunning.

We also know from the Bible that there was a war in heaven which resulted in Satan being removed and cast out (Rev. 12) along with a host of other heavenly beings (fallen angels) that are now under his command. Even though Satan was stripped of authority for his treason and cast from heaven, with no hope of returning, he was allowed to maintain a great deal of his power (Rom. 11:29). His main desire is to abort the work of God and wreak havoc on humanity through any means allotted to him and his minions (1 Thess. 2:18). At present he continues to instigate rebellion against God and the church (Rev. 12:17) and included in his band of rebels are beings called demons.

Smith's Bible Dictionary defines demons as spiritual beings, at enmity with God, that have the power to afflict man not only with disease but spiritual impurity as well, as indicated by the frequent Scriptural epithet "unclean".

In scripture demons appear to harass mankind with sickness, mental and emotional disease, crime and other kinds of suffering. This isn't to say that all physical and mental problems are caused by a direct spiritual attack but only that such problems can be the result of such an attack.

The Kingdom of Darkness and its forces are engaged in warfare against God and His Kingdom. All human beings find themselves caught up in that war whether they like it or not. One is either serving in the Kingdom of Light or in the Kingdom of darkness. There is no neutrality. Those who think they can be neutral, or those who do not believe in the spiritual world as described by Scripture, are merely being used by Satan for his purposes. In this war there are beings of great power such as the angels that are for us and beings such as the fallen angels and demons, directed by Satan, who are against us and want to do us harm. But there is good news.

Regardless of his power, and those in league with him, Satan is still limited in what he can do because he is under God's control as attested in the book of Job where we see that Satan had to obtain God's permission in order to assault Job and his family.

We must always rejoice that Christ has given us victory over the forces of darkness through His atoning work at Calvary. It was at the cross that the powers of darkness were defeated.

*And you, being dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, He has made alive together with Him, having forgiven you all trespasses, having wiped out the handwriting of requirements that was against us, which was contrary to us. And He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross.*

*Having disarmed principalities and powers, He made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them in it. (Col 2:13-15)*

Because of what Christ has done for us in His life, death, and resurrection, and because of what Christ is doing for us right now at the right hand of God, we have authority over the forces of darkness. Jesus said that, *"All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth* (Matt 28:18) and because believers are now, as Paul says, in Christ (Rom 6:11) and seated with Him in Heavenly Places (Eph 1:11), so too we can experience and exercise authority through Christ in His name.

In this battle against the forces of evil, we have been given weapons of spiritual warfare in order to engage and win victory over these evil powers which are against our souls, bodies and the Kingdom of our Lord. These weapons are ones of spiritual power (2 Cor 10:4-6) and spiritual armor (Eph 6:11-18) and commands from God to resist the Devil by staying alert to his cunning, schemes and temptations against us.

*Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour. Resist him, steadfast in the faith, knowing that the same sufferings are experienced by your brotherhood in the world. (1 Peter 5:8-9)*

We can fight and gain victory because our Lord is Lord of Lords and King of Kings. He is Lord God Almighty, the source of our authority and power.

*So the great dragon was cast out, that serpent of old, called the Devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world; he was cast to the earth, and his angels were cast out with him. Then I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, "Now salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of His Christ have come, for the accuser of our brethren, who accused them before our God day and night, has been cast down. And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, and they did not love their lives to the death. (Rev 12:9-1)*

(For further study in Spiritual Warfare see Bread of Life School of the Bible: Level Four Authority of the Believer and Deliverance by Dr Phillip L. Wiley)