

Angels

- “Angel” is an official title; it does not describe the essence of the angels. That is described by the term “spirit”.
- An angel is a spiritual creature without a body created by God for the service of Christendom and the Church. —Martin Luther
- The term “angel” is an official title, it means messenger; Scripture also calls men, in particular the preachers of God’s Word, angels.
- Mal. 2:7: **“The priest’s lips should keep knowledge, and they should seek the Law at his mouth; for he is the messenger (angel) of the Lord of Hosts.”**

Angels

- As we learned in the first session, God created angelic beings sometime during the six days of creation.
- The number of the angels is very large. Dan. 7:10: “Thousand thousands ministered unto Him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before Him.”
- Scripture is clear that there are orders and ranks to the angels.
- Cherubim (Gen. 3:24; Ps. 80:1), Seraphim (Is. 6:2), “thrones, dominions, principalities, powers” (Col. 1:16), “archangel” (1 Thess. 4:16).
- But we are unable to determine the number of the ranks and their precise difference, since Scripture does not give us sufficient information.

Angels

- Originally all angels were positively good, not just morally indifferent.
- Since the angels were created within the six days, God's verdict of "very good" (Gen. 1:31) necessarily applies also to the angels.
- The existence of two classes of angels, good and evil, is due to the fact that some of the angels did not remain in the original state, but fell away from God into sin.

Angels

- The good angels are those who, when the rest fell, remained good and were by the gracious action of God confirmed in the good so that they can no longer sin and fall away.
- The evil angels are those who by their rebellion became evil and can nevermore become good
- We can't be sure of when some of the angels fell. We know, however, that the fall of the angels occurred before the fall of man, since man fell through the seduction of the devil (Gen. 3:1–14).

Angels

- A popular misconception is that humans turn into angels when they die but this isn't true.
- The Bible does not give the account of the creation of angels, but in two passages it does describe the creation of people (Genesis 1:26–27; 2:7–24).
- Humans, comprised of both a soul and a body, are an entirely separate order of created beings. We do not transform into angels at death.

Angels

- According to Scripture angels have both intellect and will.
- The good angels celebrate the “the mystery hidden for ages in God, who created all things, so that through the church the manifold wisdom of God might now be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly places” (Eph. 3:9-10) – that mystery is salvation.
- They minister to those who shall be heirs of salvation (Heb. 1:14).
- The temptation of Eve (Genesis 3) as well as that of Christ (Matthew 4) by the devil shows that the evil angels likewise possess intelligence and will.

Angels

- Scripture also informs us that angels are able to interact with material things.
- Angels take Lot and his wife and daughters by the hand (Gen. 19:16) and the devil takes Christ into the holy city and sets Him on a pinnacle of the Temple (Matt. 4:5).
- This influence is similar to how our soul works in our material body. How it is accomplished is beyond our comprehension.
- But angels can and do act in and react to our world – they can influence it.

Angels

- As created beings, angels do what all of God's creatures do—worship God. They are not to be worshipped themselves, because they are created beings just like humans, although without physical bodies.
- Read Revelation 22:8–9.
- What reaction did God's angel have when John fell down to worship him? What did God's angel tell John to do?
- What do we see angels doing in Revelation 5:11–12?

Angels

- There's a lot of superstition regarding the person and work of angels. During medieval times, people were much more supernaturally inclined such that they tended to perceive a spirit "behind every bush."
- Today, we may often find people believing that angels come to comfort people in a random manner. Angels tend to be viewed as divine "pillow-fluffers" that help us in every little discomfort we experience.
- Read Joshua 5:13–15. How does this passage present a different view of angels? How does this differ from Rev. 22 and how do you explain it?

Angels

- There are several times in the OT that the “angel of the Lord” or the “angel of God” appears.
- This angel is different than others often speaking on behalf of God or referring to God in the first person.
- The reference from Joshua is one of those. The church has believed that these occurrences are in fact the pre-incarnate Christ – the Logos (Word) of God.

Angels

- Genesis 16:7–14. The angel of the Lord appears to Hagar. The angel speaks as God in the first person, and in verse 13 Hagar identifies "the LORD that spake unto her" as "Thou God seest me".
- Genesis 22:11–15. The angel of the Lord appears to Abraham and refers to God in the first person.
- Exodus 3:2–4. The angel of the Lord appears to Moses in a flame in verse 2, and God speaks to Moses from the flame in verse 4.
- Numbers 22:22–38. The angel of the Lord meets the prophet Balaam on the road. In verse 38, Balaam identifies the angel who spoke to him as delivering the word of God.

Angels

- Judges 2:1–3. An angel of the Lord appears to Israel.
- Judges 6:11–23. An angel of the Lord appears to Gideon, and in verse 22 Gideon fears for his life because he has seen an angel of the Lord face to face.
- Judges 13:3–22. The angel of the Lord appears to Manoah and his wife and, in verse 16, differentiates himself from God ("And the angel of the Lord said unto Manoah [...] if thou wilt offer a burnt offering, thou must offer it unto the Lord. For Manoah knew not that he was an angel of the Lord.")
- Genesis 31:11. The angel of God calls out to Jacob in a dream and tells him "I am the God of Bethel".
- Exodus 14:19. The angel of God leads the camp of Israel, and also follows behind them, with the pillar of fire.

Angels and Demons

- What do angels do?
- The functions of the good angels are to praise God (Is. 6:3; Luke 2:13) and to be His ministers in the world and in the Church (Ps. 103:20–21)
- In particular, Scripture reveals that God sends the angels to serve the children (Matt. 18:10), the believers in their work and calling (Ps. 91:11–12), and the dying (Luke 16:22).
- Does every Christian have his particular guardian angel? Scripture isn't clear.
- But Scripture teaches very clearly that the angels are deeply interested in all that occurs in the Church.
- Luke 15:10 **Just so, I tell you, there is joy before the angels of God over one sinner who repents.**

Angels and Demons

- We may regard the protection God provides through angels as one of the blessings of the Gospel. Although they did not purchase eternal life for us as did Christ, nonetheless, they are sent to care for us (Acts 27:23; Psalm 34:7; 91:9–13; Hebrews 1:14).
- The concept of a personal guardian angel is alluded to in Scripture but is not emphasized (Matthew 18:10; Acts 12:15).
- Scripture emphasizes a general protection of angels over the saints, instead of a “Clarence” (the guardian angel for Jimmy Stewart’s character in the film *It’s a Wonderful Life*)

Angels and Demons

- If an angel appears to us in a dream or in any other manner, we should not be so quick to assume that it is directly from God. We are called to test the spirits and to see whether they are from God (1 John 4:1).
- Even false spirits may come across as well instructed in the faith. Instead, request that the spirit confess Christ as its Lord. Only by the Holy Spirit can a person confess that Christ is Lord (1 Corinthians 12:3), so simply ask the spirit who is its Master or Lord. If the spirit can confess Christ as Lord, then it is sent from God.
- But, if the spirit is unwilling, or evades the question, then it is a false spirit, and a messenger of Satan. You must always remember that even the devil can disguise himself as an angel of light (2 Corinthians 11:14).

Angels and Demons

- Scripture does not tell us that angelic protection is random. There seems to be a definite and set purpose as to the nature of their protection. Since angels work according to God's purpose and at His command, we can only conclude that there is a definite and organized principle behind it.
- Angels serve God by serving His plan of salvation in the Gospel. For example, the angel Gabriel announced to Mary that she was going to bear the Son of God (Luke 1:26–31).
- Angels point you to the Savior who removes your guilt. They are God's messengers who serve the most important message—salvation wrought through the death and resurrection of Christ. Angels are always there for you because you belong to Christ.

Angels and Demons

- Other interesting occurrences of angels
- Isaiah 6:1-7
- Num 22:20-35
- 2 Kings 6:11-18
- Based on just these few passages what impression do you have of angels?