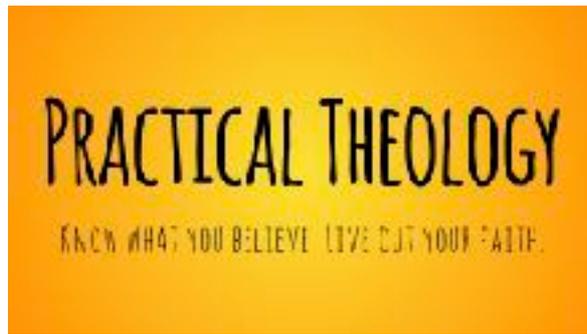


ANGELOLOGY: Doctrine of Angels



In both the Old and New Testaments “Angel” means *messenger*. This is the foundation of who and what angels are; *God’s messengers to men, and as agents who carry out His will.*¹ For the purpose of this study of Angels, we will include the study of Satan and his demons as fallen angels.

I. Angels

A. Their Importance

From Genesis to Revelation the angels of God are prominently mentioned. Thirty-four books contain references to angels; 108 x’s in the OT, and 165 x’s in the NT.

B. Their Origin

Angels were created (Col 1:16): “By [Christ] were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him.” See also Psalm 148:2, 5.

Job 38:7 speaks of the “sons of God” (angels?) rejoicing over the creation, which seems to indicate that they were created before the world (cf. Job 1:6; 2:1; Isa 14:13).

C. Their Nature

1. Angels are spirit beings:
 - a. They are less than God, for they were created by Him.
 - b. They are more than man (Ps 8:5).
 - c. They do not “die” (Lk 20:36; Jude 1:6; 2 Pet 2:4).
 - d. They can appear as men in appearance (Gen 18-19; Heb 13:2).

¹ ISBE, “Angels.”

² This same phrase at times refers to godly men. Angels are “sons of God” through the *first* creation; Man is a “son of God” through the *new* creation of salvation.

- e. They are always referred to as being masculine.
 - f. They do not marry, nor propagate after their kind (Mat 22:30).
2. Angels are personal beings:
- a. They possess intellect (Eph 3:10; 1 Pet 1:10-12).
 - b. They possess emotion (Lk 2:13; 15:10; Heb 1:6).
 - c. They possess will (Isa 14:13-14; 2 Pet 2:4).

D. Their Number and Rank

The Scriptures say that angels are “innumerable” in number (Heb 12:22); in Revelation (5:11) there is a number of “ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands.”

The Scriptures also suggest that certain angels are above others. Jude 1:9 refers to “Michael the archangel”; the use of “principalities” and “powers” also suggests a difference in rank (Rom 8:38-39; Eph 3:10; 1 Thes 4:16).

E. Their Classification

1. The “elect” angels:

The term used only in 1 Timothy 5:21; those angels who did not sin and “fall” in following Satan.

2. The Seraphim:

Found only in Isaiah 6, the name means *burning ones*; it seems they are especially associated with God’s holiness.

3. The Cherubim:

This is the most commonly mentioned name of angels, unusually in connection with God’s dwelling, temple, throne, etc. (Gen 3:24); defenders of God’s throne/holiness (?). Satan was originally an “anointed cherub” (Ezek 28:14).

4. The Archangel:

This is the *chief* angel (1 Thes 4:16; Jude 1:6); Jude mentioned that Michael is the same.

5. The Angel of the Lord:

Although this phrase seems to be generic at times (Gen 24:40; Act 5:19), most occurrences contextually refer specifically to the preincarnate Son of God (Gen 31:11-13; Ex 13:21 with 14:19).

F. Their Ministry

1. Towards Christians:

- a. Angels are “ministering spirits” of believers (Heb 1:14).
- b. Angels “rejoice” in our salvation (Lk 15:10).
- c. Angels watch over the “little ones” (Mat 18:10); by application, those who are young in the Lord.
- d. Angels aid in answering the saints’ prayers (Acts 2).
- e. Angels aid in delivering the saints (Acts 5:19).

2. Towards Christ:

- a. An angel announced Christ’s birth (Lk 2:10), and protected Him after His birth (Mat 2:13).
- b. Angels “ministered” to Christ after His temptation (Mat 4:11), and strengthened Christ in Gethsemane (Lk 22:43).
- c. Angels are ever ready to defend Christ (Mat 29:53).
- d. Angels were present at Christ’s resurrection (Mat 28:2-6), and accompany Him at His second coming (Mat 25:31).
- e. Angels worship Christ throughout eternity (Rev 4:8; 5:11).

II. Satan

A. His Importance

Every NT writer refers to the person of Satan and at least seven OT books make reference to him. Of the 29 passages in the Gospels about Satan, Jesus speaks in 25.

One of the best proofs of his personal activity in this modern world is that he has deceived the masses into disbelieving his literal existence and evil activity. Because of the popular un-biblical ideas about Satan, many ridicule those who accept the Bible’s testimony.

B. His Personality

1. He has intellect (Job 1).
2. He has emotion (Rev 12:12).
3. He has will (Isa 14). He is a moral being (Mat 25:41), and is referred to as a person—"he," not "it."

C. His Nature

1. He is a created being (Ezek 28:15). He is not omniscient, omnipotent, or omnipresent! He is not a god, nor Christ's brother.
2. He is a spirit being (Eph 6:10-12; 2:2).
3. He was a cherub, before he sinned (Ezek 28:14).
4. He was probably the highest of all angels (Isa 14:12-15; Jude 1:9).

D. His Titles

1. "Satan" – meaning *adversary* (56 x's)
2. "Devil" – meaning *slanderer* (61 x's; often used of a demon)
3. "Serpent" – meaning *guile or deceit*
4. "Lucifer" – meaning *shining one*, suggesting *splendour or handsome*
5. "Dragon" – referring to his *power* (Rev 12:7-9)
6. "Prince of this world" – his *dominion* (Jn 12:31)
7. "Prince of the power of the air" – his *kingdom* (Eph 2:2)
8. "God of this age" – his *people* (2 Cor 4:4)
9. "Accuser of the brethren" – *activity* before God (Job 1; Rev 12:10)
10. "Tempter" – *activity* among men (Mat 4:3)

11. "Evil one" – his *nature* and *what he seeks* (Eph 6:16; 1 Jn 5:19)

12. "Beelzebub" – common NT term for Satan; *lord of flies/dung*

E. His Works

1. In relation to the lost:

- a. He blinds their minds (2 Cor 4:4).
- b. He removes Gods Word from their hearts (Lk 8:12).
- c. He opposes the Gospel through men (Acts 13:6; Rev 2:13).

2. In relation to the saved:

- a. He tempts them to lie (Acts 5:3).
- b. He tempts them to immorality (1 Cor 7:5).
- c. He tries to defeat believers (Eph 6:11-12).
- d. He incites persecution of believers (Rev 2:10).
- e. He hinders Christian service (1 Thes 2:18).
- f. He accuses believers before God (Job 1; Rev 12:10).

F. His Origin, Fall, and End

In Luke 10, Jesus sent the twelve to preach "before his face into every city and place, whither he himself would come." Upon returning from an evangelistic tour, the disciples were rejoicing because even the "devils" were submissive to them.

Jesus alluded to the Devil's origin (heaven), fall, and end. Christ says (vv. 17-20), "I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven.... Notwithstanding in this rejoice not, that the spirits are subject unto you; but rather rejoice, because your names are written in heaven."

In stating the past, present and future condition of Satan—fallen and defeated—Christ lifts the disciples eyes from the particular occurrence of victory, to the all-encompassing victory of God and His children.

1. His Origin: Ezekiel 28:11-19 ³

The context of this passage is God's judgement upon the enemy of Israel, the king of Tyre. Their fall and destruction is likened to the Father of all God's enemies, God looking beyond the veil of human governments to evil which lies behind.

The passage give several descriptors unnatural for a man: a) he was full of wisdom, and perfect in beauty, b) he was in Eden the garden of God, c) he was supreme beauty and adornment in the day he was created, d) he was the anointed cherub, set so by God, e) he dwelled in the mountain of God, f) he was perfect in his ways from the day he was created, till iniquity was found in him.

2. His Fall: Isaiah 14:1-17 ⁴

In the opening verses the deliverance of Israel is foretold. God's judgement on the king of Babylon is promised, likening it to the fall of Lucifer ("the Morning Star," also a name for Venus).

Lucifer's five "I will" statements declare his chief prideful aim of being like God. The same desire he demonstrated when tempting the Lord Jesus Christ (Matt 4).

3. His End: Revelation 12; 20:1-10

In an overview of time, Israel (cf. Gen 3:15) and the Messiah are sought after by the "dragon" for destruction. However, it is the Devil who is first kept from the woman and child and then cast out of heaven to persecute the woman on earth.

The Devil is later (ch. 20) cast into the "bottomless pit" for 1,000 years, released and "fire came down from God out of heaven, and devoured them"—not to annihilation, for he and his angels are then "cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever" (cf. Matt 25:41).

III. Demons

A. Their Importance

Individuals have many confusing ideas concerning demons; largely due to the sensationalism of the film industry. The Scriptures teach a vastly different personage.

Demons are the fallen angels who followed Satan in his rebellion against God, and continue to follow him in his quest for God-ness. These evil spirits are shown throughout Scripture to have great impact upon mankind; even in the governments and rulers of our day (Dan 10:12-14, 20-21).

If God—Who is omniscient, omnipotent and omnipresent—uses His angels to carry out His will and plan, it is not surprising that Satan—who is not God—also uses his followers to attempt his will and plan.

³ Some see Isaiah merely using Canaanite mythology to explain only the literal fall of Tyre's king. The plain and simple language seems to point to a greater "fall"; that of Satan, or the Anti-Christ, or both.

⁴ Some see Ezekiel using figurative language to speak only of Babylon's literal king, or the fall of mankind in Adam. This seems forced and inadequate. The simple reading points to a greater "fall"; that of Satan, or the Anti-Christ, or both.

B. Their Origin and Fall

Demons are fallen angels; sometimes called devils (2 Pet 2:4; Jude 1:6). At the revelation of Jesus Christ, Michael and his angels will defeat the devil and his angels (Rev 12:9; see Mat 12:24-26).

C. Their Classification

Scripture refers to the Devil's angels as being both free and bound. There are two possible explanations: 1) some are presently both free and bound, or 2) they are all still "free" to act, yet "bound" concerning the already pronounced and determined end.

1. Free – Satan's angels/demons/devils are said to be actively working in the present, awaiting the future judgement of God.
2. Bound – two passages refer to these demons as being presently bound in hell⁵ (2 Pet 2:4) and kept for the final judgement (Jude 1:6).

It is possible that these passages speak figuratively of final judgement as having already transpired in the mind of God (i.e. – the devil is cast out of heaven when sinning, yet he remains to accuse the brethren, awaiting the final judgement).

D. Their Works

1. They promote false doctrine (1 Tim 4:1-3).
2. They obey Satan in opposing believers (Eph 6:10-12).
3. They can inflict physical pain and mental disorder (Mk 5:4).
4. They are used by God to carry out His purposes (1 Kgs 22:21-23; Rev 9; 16:13-14).

E. Demon Possession

The fact of demonic *influence* upon believers is evident from Scripture. However, there seems to be a difference between the power and *possession* by demons in the lives of unsaved people and those who are the children of God. The believer is indwelt by the Holy Spirit (Eph 6:12; 1 Tim 4:1-3). The Scriptural examples point to the believer being *opposed* by demons, but not *possessed* by them.

⁵ (Gr. *tartaros*) used only once and translated "hell"; the deepest parts of(?).