

**TONY EVANS**



# Angels

Part 1



## Why Learn About Angels?

You might be asking yourself, *Why should I take the time to learn about angels? They have no bearing on my daily life.* Like most of us, you are likely working hard to make ends meet and to keep everything together. And if you are married or have children, your days can seem even longer and more tiring. Exhausted, you fall into bed each night, thankful that you and your loved ones made it through another day. The very thought of expending what little free time you have to study something that seems low on your list of priorities is often an easy decision—you're too busy now, but maybe someday...

But consider this: Angels may be unseen, but they *are* real. Everything you do, every step you take as a child of God, is controlled by, influenced by, and directed by this angelic realm. Nothing takes place in our physical world outside of this spiritual realm. *Nothing.*

Angels are currently in vogue—in fact, they're big business.

Major magazines,





best-selling books, prime time TV shows, big budget movies, and successful stores are taking advantage of the public's current interest in angels. But misinformation abounds. Oh, we know there are "good" angels and "bad" angels, but often, that is as far as a person's knowledge goes. We might wonder, Do we have a guardian angel? Do they look like those charming little cherubs with wings that we often see depicted in paintings and on Valentine's Day cards? Is it okay if we pray to "our" angel?

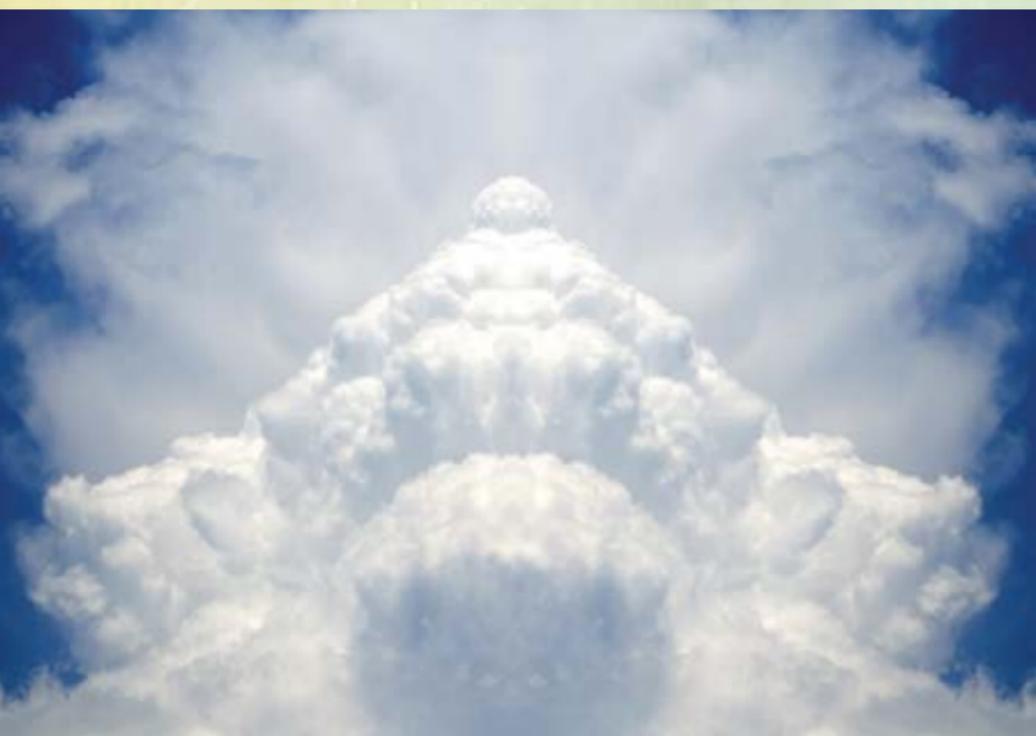
God's Word tells us quite a different story, so it only makes sense that we as believers gain a better understanding of the truth about angels through careful study. Here are several verses that give us a glimpse of what angels look like and people's reactions to seeing them:

- Genesis 18:2-3—"Abraham looked up and saw three men standing nearby. When he saw them, he hurried from the entrance of his tent to meet them and bowed low to the ground. He said, 'If I have found favor in your eyes, my lord do not pass your servant by.'"
- Exodus 25:20—"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.”

- Isaiah 6:1-4—“In the year that King Uzziah died, I saw the Lord, high and exalted, seated on a throne; and the train of his robe filled the temple. Above him were seraphim, each with six wings: With two wings they covered their faces, with two they covered their feet, and with two they were flying. And they were calling to one another: ‘Holy, holy, holy is the Lord Almighty; the whole earth is full of his glory.’ At the sound of their voices the doorposts and thresholds shook and the temple was filled with smoke.”





• Daniel 10:4-8—“On the twenty-fourth day of the first month, as I was standing on the bank of the great river, the Tigris, I looked up and there before me was a man dressed in linen, with a belt of fine gold from Uphaz around his waist. His body was like topaz, his face like lightning, his eyes like flaming torches, his arms and legs like the gleam of burnished bronze, and his voice like the sound of a multitude. I, Daniel, was the only one who saw the vision; those who were with me did not see it, but such terror overwhelmed them that they fled and hid themselves. So I was left alone, gazing at this great vision; I had no strength left, my face turned deathly pale and I was helpless.”

• Luke 1:11-12—“Then an angel of the Lord appeared to him, standing at the right side of the altar of incense. When Zechariah saw him, he was startled and was gripped with fear.”



- Hebrews 13:2—“Do not forget to show hospitality to strangers, for by so doing some people have shown hospitality to angels without knowing it.”
- Jude 9—“But even the archangel Michael, when he was disputing with the devil about the body of Moses, did not himself dare to condemn him for slander but said, ‘The Lord rebuke you!’”

## Who Are Angels?

### **Angels are created beings.**

While it's not clear *when* angels were created (see Job 38:4), what is clear is that they were created by God Himself. Colossians 1:16 tells us, “For in him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things have been created through him and for him.” Angels are assigned various functions by God, but their main purpose can be found in Psalm 148:2, “Praise him, all his angels; praise him, all his heavenly hosts.” Angels were created to give glory and honor to God, and they find their delight in God alone.



## **Angels are spiritual beings.**

Angels are spiritual—not physical—beings. Hebrews 1:14 says, “Are they not all ministering spirits, sent out to render service for the sake of those who will inherit salvation?” Sometimes, however, angels can appear in physical form. Again in the book of Hebrews (13:2), we are told to “not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for by this some have entertained angels.”

## **Angels are personal beings.**

When I say that angels are personal beings, I mean that they have “personhood.” To have personhood, one must have three characteristics:

1) Emotions: Luke 15:10—“In the same way, I tell you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents.”



2) Intellect: 1 Peter 1:2—“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.”

3) Will: 2 Peter 2:4—“God did not spare angels when they sinned, but cast them into hell and committed them to pits of darkness, reserved for judgment.”

### **Angels are an innumerable host.**

The Bible tells us that myriads of angels attend the Lord (see Daniel 7:10), their number is constant and they do not procreate (see Matthew 22:30), and they do not die (see Luke 20:36).

### **Angels are glorious beings.**

Daniel 10:5-6 gives us a wonderful description of the glorious appearance of an angel: “I lifted my eyes and looked, and behold, there was a certain man dressed in linen, whose waist was girded with a *belt of pure gold of Uphaz*. His body also *was* like beryl, his face had the appearance of lightning, his eyes were like flaming torches, his arms and feet like the gleam of polished bronze, and the sound of his words like the sound of a tumult.”

No discussion of angels as glorious beings would be complete, however, without



mentioning Lucifer. Some say he was the most beautiful angel in heaven. And he obviously believed this was true, so he chose to express his will to be “the highest” by rebelling against God. “You [Lucifer, later called Satan] had the seal of perfection, full of wisdom and perfect in beauty. You were in Eden, the garden of God; every precious stone was your covering...On the



day that you were created they were prepared. 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. You were blameless in your ways from the day you were created until



unrighteousness was found in you” (Ezekiel 28:12-13,14-15).

### **Angels are God’s royal guard.**

There are ranks of angels. Some are named, such as Gabriel and Michael. There are elite angels that surround God, such as cherubim, seraphim, and the “four living creatures.” Then there are the rank and file angels who were created to worship God and be ministering spirits to us.

### **Angels minister to God’s people.**

Hebrews 1:14 states, “Are they not all ministering spirits, sent out to render service for the sake of those who will inherit salvation?” So it stands to reason that God’s angels are available to all who are saved or who will be saved. And, according to Matthew 18:10, angels are assigned to specific people: Jesus said “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.”

In summary, angels were created by God. Their numbers are too great to be counted, and they never die. They have emotions, intellect, and will. And they minister to those who are—or



will be—saved. And when Jesus returns, He will return with His most powerful angels. “The Lord Jesus will be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels in flaming fire, dealing out retribution to those who do not know God and to those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus” (2 Thessalonians 1:7-8). For those who are in Christ Jesus, what a glorious day that will be!



## The Activities of Angels

We are in the midst of an angelic conflict, and when we understand about angels, we begin to notice how prevalent their activities are on almost every page of the Bible. They are busy functioning and fulfilling God’s mandates. Angels are basically God’s staff and He has chosen in His own sovereignty to accomplish His will through these intermediaries. But



understand this: The angels who serve God aren't there because God needs them. God uses angels in order to let them participate in His sovereign program.

The word *angel* means “*messenger*.” When I want to send a message in a hurry, I can call a courier service. They pick up my message and deliver it where I want it to be delivered. As my delivery service, they are required to deliver what I send. In much the same way, angels are God's delivery service. If we remember the word “messenger,” we will understand the fundamental, overarching job description of angels. They are God's messengers. They carry forth His divine dictates.

Let's look more closely at this idea of an angelic messenger service:

### **Angels are messengers of God's Word.**

In fact, Acts 7:53 says, “you who received the law as ordained by angels...” This is supported by Hebrews 2:2-3, “For if the word spoken through angels proved unalterable, and every transgression and disobedience received a just penalty, how will we escape if we neglect so great a salvation?”

**Angels participated in the Living Word—Jesus Christ.** Luke chapter 1 tells about the virgin Mary receiving the news from the angel



Gabriel that she would soon give birth to the “Son of the Most High.” And then in Luke 2:11, angels delivered the good news to the frightened shepherds that “there has been born...a Savior, who is Christ the Lord.”

### **Angels are messengers of God’s protection.**

Probably my favorite story of angels’ protection is found in 2 Kings 6. Elisha was a prophet who kept preaching and prophesying against Israel’s enemies the Arameans. Well, the Arameans had finally had enough and they decided they needed to get rid of Elisha. Permanently. Elisha must have been a very intimidating man because they sent an entire army to surround the city of Dothan where Elisha was currently staying with his servant. The servant looked outside and saw this vast and fearsome army and cried out in fright, “What will we do?”

Have you ever been like Elisha’s servant? You wring your hands together in worry and think the problem you are facing is just too big and you think, *Whatever shall I do?*

Elisha’s response to his frightened servant (and by association, to us as well) was classic. He said, “Do not fear. For those who are with us are more than those who are against us.”

That poor servant must have thought that



Elisha had finally cracked under the pressure because he could see no one but the enemy forces. But let's read on in 2 Kings 6:16-17 for Elisha's response: "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."

The key here is that *Elisha prayed*. And that's just as true for us today. God is in control and He sends His angels to protect us according to His will.



### **Angels escort us to heaven.**

Luke 16:22 says, "Now the poor man died and was carried away by the angels to Abraham's bosom." This poor man had angelic pallbearers! Thanks to the angelic host he was escorted safely to heaven. The good news is we never have to worry about getting to heaven and into



the very presence of God. The angels will carry us.

### **Angels are messengers of God's provision.**

God provided manna to the Israelites, and angels delivered the provision (see Psalm 78:23). After Jesus was tempted by the devil for 40 days, angels ministered to Him (see Matthew 4:11). The key to remember here is that our duty is to pray—trusting that God hears our prayers—and then patiently wait for God's miracle. It sometimes seems as though we wait and wait, but when the provision comes, it is easy to see that all glory belongs to God; it's not anything we did to make things happen.

### **Angels are agents of God's judgment and wrath.**

Let's face it—we don't want this kind of angelic activity in our lives. But God's judgment and wrath are real.

Take for instance natural phenomena—earthquakes, tornadoes, hurricanes, thunder and lightning, and so forth. God has given men and women scientific ways to read and project the possibility of inclement weather, but no one can actually *deliver* the weather—they can only predict it, and often not too well at that. But Hebrews 1:7 tells us, “And of the angels He says, ‘Who makes His angels winds, and His



ministers a flame of fire.”

And even more unsettling for many of us are some of the verses that describe these messengers of judgment and wrath found in the book of Revelation:

- Revelation 16:1—“Then I heard a loud voice from the temple, saying to the seven angels, “Go and pour out on the earth the seven bowls of the wrath of God.”
- Revelation 16:3—“The second angel poured out his bowl into the sea, and it became blood like that of a dead man; and every living thing in the sea died.”
- Revelation 16:18-19—“The fourth angel poured out his bowl upon the sun, and it was given to it to scorch men with fire. Men were scorched with fierce heat; and they blasphemed the name of God who has the power over these plagues, and they did not repent so as to give Him glory.”

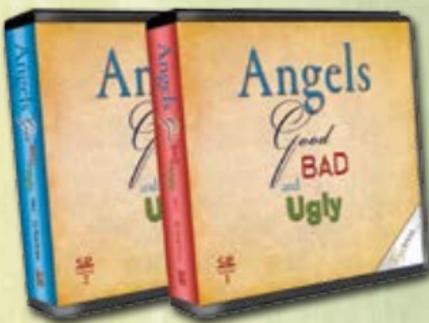
They refused to give God the glory due Him and instead “blasphemed His name.” Thankfully, God is slow to anger with humanity but can be severe to those who do not take heed.



## GO DEEPER

If you enjoyed this, you may also be interested in other teachings from Tony Evans.

### Angels: Good Bad and Ugly



Many people are enamored by spiritual things. Television shows depict angels and demons, but what does the Bible say about angels? Find out in this comprehensive study on angelic beings. Available on CD or DVD.

### Angels: Good Bad and Ugly Study Guide

The only knowledge many Christians have about angels is what is offered on Valentine's day cards and on television. This book will give you the facts about angels, demons and the devil. There is a warfare going on, but as Dr. Evans points out, Christians are on the winning team.



## HERE'S HOW

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