

Angels

I believe . . .

- God created spiritual beings with moral judgment and high intelligence, but without bodies (incorporeal), called angels (Ps 148:2-5; Neh 9:6).
- God created them to serve him and to do his will (Col 1:16).
- holy angels are obedient spirits ministering to the heirs of salvation and glorifying God (Ps 103:20; Heb 1:6-7, 13-14; Rev 4:11; 5:11).
- God created three other spiritual beings that may be separate from angels or may be specialized angels, called Cherubim (Gen 3:24; Ps 18:10; Ezek 10:1-22; Ex 25:22, cf. vv. 18-21), Seraphim (Isa 6:2-7), and the living creatures around God's throne (Ezek 1:5-14; Rev 4:6-8). Two angels are named in scripture – Michael, the archangel (Jude 9; Rev 12:7-8; Dan 10:13, 21) and Gabriel (Dan 8:16; 9:21; Luke 1:19, 26-27).
- that as created beings, angels can be in only one place at a time (Luke 1:26; Dan 10:12-14) but they are quite numerous (Deut 33:2; Ps 68:17; Heb 12:22; Rev 5:11). Angels may help protect us (Ps 91:11-12), but it is not clear that each person has a “guardian angel” (despite a possible hint in Acts 12:15). They have tremendous power (Ps 103:20; Eph 1:21; Dan 10:13; Rev 12:7-8; 20:1-3).
- evil angels (2 Pet 2:4; Jude 6) with Satan as their head are in rebellion against God (Matt 25:41; John 12:31).
- Satan and his evil demons made a deliberate choice to rebel and fell from their exalted position (Luke 10:18; Rev 12:7-9).
- Satan is the author of sin (Jn 8:44; 1 Jn 3:8), the enemy of God and the people of God, the angel of light and the ruler of this world under God's limitations (Eph 2:2). He and his allies tempt individuals to rebel against God (2 Cor 4:4; 1 Tim 4:1; 1 Pet 5:8).
- Christ, the Son of God, rendered powerless and destroyed the works of the devil by his death and resurrection (Heb 2:14; 1 Jn 3:8). The destiny of Satan and his demons has been sealed; they await final destruction (Rev 20:10). In the meanwhile, they continue to war against God and his people (Matt 12:26; Eph 6:12). Humans, including believers, may sin by temptation from the evil one, by the world system set up by the evil one, or by their own choices.

- evil demons remain active in the world today and may influence the world system, but as believers we have victory with Christ (Gal 5:16-26; Eph 4:1-6:9; *et al*).
- a Christian can be demon influenced and attacked, but each has a will strengthened by the Holy Spirit to limit the attack (James 4:7). The Greek NT possesses no word that we would translate “demon possession.” It speaks of someone “having a demon” (Matt 11:18; Luke 7:33; 8:27; John 7:20; 8:48, 49, 52; 10:20) or suffering from demon influence (Gk. *daimonizomai*, translated either “under demon influence” or “to be demonized” – Matt 4:24; 8:16, 28, 33; 9:32; 12:22; 15:22!; Mark 1:32; 5:15, 16, 18; Luke 8:36; John 10:21). Can a Christian experience being demonized? Perhaps it is similar to the question, can a Christian sin?
- a Christian has spiritual authority to combat demonic influence (Acts 16:18; 2 Cor 10:3-4; Eph 6:10-18). James and Peter tell their readers to resist (James 4:7; 1 Pet 5:8-9). I encourage treading lightly in this area. “Greater is he within than he who is out.” Rejoice in Christ’s victory!