

## Theology 101

# Angels

This is probably the area of theology most influenced by the world of fantasy and fiction. Most people think of angels as being like Clarence from “It’s A Wonderful Life”, or maybe a haloed figure strumming a harp while floating around on a fluffy cloud. Let’s attempt to set the record straight, shall we?

- I. What are Angels?
  - A. The word *angel* simply means “messenger”, and its Hebrew and Greek roots do also.
  - B. The word is used sometimes for human messengers - Luke 7:24
  - C. "an order of supernatural or heavenly beings whose business it is to act as God's messengers to men, and as agents who carry out His will." - ISBE
- II. Nature and Characteristics
  - A. Angels are NOT glorified human spirits - Matthew 22:30 (note the words *as* or *like*)
  - B. Angels are created beings - Nehemiah 9:6, Colossians 1:16
  - C. Angels appear to be incorporeal (Ephesians 6:12), but can take the form of humans - compare John 20:11-14 to Mark 16:5-6 as one example
  - D. They are greater than men in knowledge and strength - II Peter 2:11
  - E. Described as being great in number or numberless - Daniel 7:10, Hebrews 12:22
  - F. They DO NOT accept worship or praise - Revelation 22:8-9
    1. The Bible never authorizes or encourages worshipping angels - Exodus 20:1-5, Colossians 2:18
- III. Types of Angels
  - A. “The Angel of the Lord”
    1. Likely an appearance by the pre-Incarnate Christ in the Old Testament
    2. Examples: Genesis 16:1-13, 21:17-19, 22:11-16; Exodus 3:2-4
    3. In each instance, the Angel of the Lord will do or say something that regular angels will not or will be venerated as God afterward.
  - B. Holy angels
    1. Angels
      - a) "superhuman messenger" - Thiessen
    2. Cherubim
      - a) Seen in Genesis 3:24, Ezekiel 10:1-22, Revelation 4:6-9
      - b) "...we gather that they are chiefly the guardians of the Throne of God." - Thiessen
    3. Seraphim
      - a) Seen in Isaiah 6:2-7
      - b) "...they are concerned with worship and holiness..." - Thiessen
    4. Archangels
      - a) Mentioned in I Thessalonians 4:16 and Jude 9.
      - b) Means "chief angel"
  - C. Fallen angels

1. Satan was originally an angel and many angels followed fell with him
  2. We will deal more with this area next week...
- IV. Names of Angels
- A. In Scripture
1. Michael is named as an archangel in Jude 9. He is seen multiple times in the Scripture as in Daniel 10:21 and 12:1.
  2. Gabriel is often counted as an archangel but is not expressly named as one - Daniel 8:16, Luke 1:26
  3. Satan. More next week...
- B. Samples from other sources
1. Note - *I'm not endorsing these at all. I want you to be able to recognize their sources. - MBG*
  2. Catholicism and Anglicanism - Raphael, an archangel (Tobit 12:15)
  3. Anglicanism (sometimes?) - Uriel, an archangel (various Apocryphal sources)
  4. Mormonism - Moroni
  5. Uriel, Raphael, Raguel, Michael, Zariel, Gabriel, Remiel (Book of Enoch 20:1-17)
- V. The Ministry of Angels
- A. They worship God - Revelation 5:11-12
  - B. They protect and deliver God's people - Psalm 91:11
  - C. They guide and encourage God's people - Psalm 28:5-7
  - D. They reveal or interpret God's will to men - Daniel 7:16
  - E. They are executors of judgment - Acts 12:23
  - F. They escort the saved home - Luke 16:22