

Major Bible Themes

52 Vital Doctrines of the Scriptures Simplified and Explained

Adapted from the book *Major Bible Themes*
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The Angels

- The Nature of Angels
 - According to Scripture, before the creation of man God created an innumerable company of beings known as angels.
 - ✦ Like man, they have personality/intelligence and are moral beings who can offer up praises to God (Psalm 103:20; 148:2).
 - ✦ Like man, they continue on forever and form a prominent part of God's plan for the ages.
 - ✦ Unlike man, in their natural state they do not have physical bodies and they do not procreate – God created each and every angel.
 - ✦ Contrary to popular belief, men do not become angels when they die and go to heaven – men and angels are distinct classes of beings just as men and animals are distinct.
 - Apparently, angels were all created at the same time and are too many to number (Heb 12:22; Rev 5:11).
 - The term “angel” is from ἄγγελος (angelos = messenger) and is sometimes used of others who are messengers.
 - ✦ The forerunner: John the Baptist (Mt 11:10 || Mk 1:2 || Lk 7:27).
 - ✦ Ordinary human messengers (Luke 7:24; 9:52; James 2:25).
 - ✦ The angels of the seven churches of Asia – i.e. the pastors of those churches (Rev 1:20; 2:1, 8, 12, 18; 3:1, 7, 14).
 - ✦ The Angel of Jehovah – a reference to the pre-incarnate Christ (Gen 16:1-13; 22:11-16; Ex 3:2; Num 22:22-35; Ju 2:1-5; 6:11-27; 13:1-25; 1 Kgs 19:1-8; 2 Kgs 19:32-35; 1 Chr 21:9-30; Ps 35:5-6).
 - The terms principalities, powers, rulers, authorities, etc. are sometimes used to refer to angelic beings (Rom 8:38; Eph 1:21; 3:10; 6:12; Col 1:16; 2:10, 15; 1 Pet 3:22).
 - Some angels are designated cherubim (Gen 3:24; Ezk 10:1-22).
 - ✦ Satan was an anointed cherub (Ezk 28:14, 16).
 - ✦ Figures of cherubim overlooked the mercy seat of the Ark of the Covenant (Ex 25:18-22; 1 Kgs 6:23-27).
 - Some angels are designated seraphim (Isa 6:1-7).
 - With only a couple of exceptions (Michael, Gabriel) we are not given the names of the angels, including Satan (adversary).

- Fallen Angels and Demons
 - The angel we know as Satan (adversary), Lucifer (day star), the Devil (false accuser, slanderer) and the Evil One was created by God as a magnificent angel (Ezek 28:12-15a).
 - With no outside negative influence to tempt him, Satan self-imploded when he was overcome by his pride because he saw that he was such a magnificent creature (Ezek 28:17a).
 - Satan's pride led to a precipitous fall (Ezek 28:15b-19).
 - One-third of the angels were "swept away" by Satan after he fell (Rev 12:4) and comprise Satan's army of fallen angels working in opposition to God (along with the demons).
 - We know little about the fall of these angels, but Scripture tells us that they are locked into their fallen estate and will face eternal destruction (Matt 25:41).
 - Some of these fallen angels lusted after human women and took on bodily form such that they were able to procreate and produce creatures known as the Nephilim (Gen 6:1-4).
 - ✦ This was an attempt to thwart the "seed of the woman" promise.
 - ✦ The flood wiped out the Nephilim on the earth along with the majority of mankind that was filled with wickedness (Gen 6:5).
 - ✦ These fallen angels who had abandoned their proper abode were punished by being bound in the abyss (2 Pet 2:4; Jude 6).
 - The Nephilim were human-angel hybrid creatures and the souls of the Nephilim who have died are the demons.
 - ✦ Because the Nephilim do not have human fathers, they are not "in Adam" and their souls do not go down to Sheol when they die.
 - ✦ There is no mention of demons in the Bible prior to Gen 6.
 - ✦ Unlike fallen angels who were created as spiritual beings, demons crave being in a body of flesh (Matt 8:28-32) because they were born into bodies of flesh.
 - Though the demons know God (Jas 2:19) their ruler is Satan (Mt 12:22-28) and they oppose God (1 Cor 10:20-21; 1 Tim 4:1).
- God's Holy Angels
 - Two-thirds of the angelic realm did not follow Satan's rebellion and, as a result, did not fall into unrighteousness.
 - Of these holy angels, two are given special mention in Scripture.
 - ✦ The angel Michael (Who is like God?) is the prince of Israel (Dan 10:21; 12:1) and the archangel (Jude 9) who announces the return of Jesus Christ at the Rapture (1 Thess 4:16) and ultimately wages war defeating Satan and the fallen angels (Rev 12:7-9).
 - ✦ The angel Gabriel (Warrior of God) is the principal messenger of God bringing important messages – to Daniel (Dan 8:16; 9:21; 10:10-21), to Zacharias (Luke 1:18-19) and to Mary (Luke 1:26-38).
 - Ministries of the Holy Angels.
 - ✦ Angels were present at the creation of the Earth (Job 38:7).
 - ✦ The Law was ordained thru angels (Ac 7:53; Gal 3:19; Heb 2:2).

- ✦ Angels announced the birth of the Christ child (Luke 2:9-15).
- ✦ Angels ministered to Christ after Satan tempted Him (Matt 4:11).
- ✦ An angel strengthened Christ at Gethsemane (Luke 22:43).
- ✦ An angel announced the risen Christ (Matt 28:2-7).
- ✦ Angels were present at Christ's ascension to heaven (Acts 1:10-11).
- ✦ Angels carried Lazarus to Abraham's bosom (Luke 16:22).
- ✦ Angels observe things on earth (Luke 15:10; 1 Tim 3:16; 1 Pet 1:12).
- ✦ Angels serve those who will inherit salvation (Acts 5:19; Heb 1:14).
- ✦ Angels are assigned to protect God's people (Ps 91:11-12; Matt 18:10; Acts 12:15; 27:23).
- ✦ Angels will come with Christ at the 2nd Advent (Mt 24:31; 2 Th 1:7).
- ✦ Angels will be at the gates of the New Jerusalem (Rev 21:12).
- The ministry of God's holy angels throughout Scripture is an important doctrine and essential to understanding God's providential and sovereign direction of His creation throughout history.
- Questions
 - How did angels originate?
 - How are angels like men?
 - How is the word "angel" used of beings other than angels themselves and how is this derived from the meaning of the name?
 - What is the meaning of the term "Angel of Jehovah" in the O.T. and why is this not a reference to an angelic being?
 - How frequently do angels appear in Scripture and how is it that they appear as men?
 - Into what two major classifications can angels be placed and what is the nature of each?
 - What are some of the categories of angels in the Bible?

- Which of the holy angels are named in the Bible?

- How did demons come to exist and why do they crave being in a body of flesh?

- Describe some of the ministries of the holy angels.

- How are angels related to God's providential sovereign direction of His creation?

- What part do angels have in the second coming of Christ and in the eternal state?