

# The Role of Righteous Angels Today

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**Instructions:** The format of these mini-studies is similar to that of the Bible On-Line Study Course. Look up and read in your Bible the scripture references given in answer to the questions. Comments following the questions further explain the scriptures just read. That's all there is to it! (These studies are based on the King James Version of the Bible, unless otherwise stated.)

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In Genesis 1:1 we are told that “God created the heaven and the earth.” But physical matter - this earth, the stars, the galaxies - was not the first thing God created.

1. What did God create before bringing the material universe into existence? Job 38:4-7. What are these “stars”? Revelation 1:20.

In Job 38:7 “morning stars” and “sons of God” refer to angels. Notice that Revelation 12:4-9 also speaks of the angels who followed Satan’s rebellion as the “stars of heaven.” And in Isaiah 14:12 we learn that Lucifer, before he sinned, was called “son of the morning” or “day star” as some Bible margins render it.

Angels are individually created beings. They cannot marry and reproduce (Matthew 22:30), but are called “sons of God” because God created each angel as a separate, immortal spirit being, and in that sense is the angels’ Father (Hebrews 12:9).

And so, we find the angels shouting for joy at the creation of the earth, long before the creation of man. They were joyful because the earth was to be their home or abode.

2. But does the Bible plainly speak of angels who sinned? 2 Peter 2:4; Jude 6. How many angels remained obedient to God’s government? Revelation 12:4.

The Bible indicates that two thirds of the angels remained loyal to God. They did not follow Lucifer (now Satan) in his rebellion against the government of God (Isaiah 14:12-14; Ezekiel 28:13-15). These countless millions of angels are God’s servants, helping to carry out His plan for mankind.

3. The Bible describes various types of angels whose appearance and function differ. Are there cherubim at God’s throne? Psalms 99:1. And seraphim? Isaiah 6:1-7. Are there also “beasts” and “elders” surrounding God’s throne? Revelation 4:2-11.

Cherubim are associated with God’s throne, either transporting it about or carrying out directives from that throne, such as guarding the tree of life after Adam and Eve sinned (Genesis 3:24). Lucifer, an anointed cherub (Ezekiel 28:14), was given, before Adam was created, authority to administer God’s government over the earth and millions of angels.

The best description of cherubim is found in the book of Ezekiel. In chapters 1, 9 and 10, we read of cherubim transporting God's throne. They are large, powerful, apparently four-faced creatures with four wings.

The seraphim seem to bear a general resemblance to the human figure and have six wings, whereas the four "beasts" or, better translated, "living creatures" appear to have the combined features of cherubim and seraphim. No description of the 24 elders is given in the Bible except that they are dressed in white clothing, each having a golden crown on his head.

4. Does God also have angels who continually walk through the earth to observe and report to Him overall conditions? Revelation 5:6; Zechariah 4:10; 2 Chronicles 16:9. Do other untold millions of angels serve God at the throne, in heaven, from which God rules the universe? Daniel 7:9-10.
5. In Hebrews 1 and 2 the apostle Paul speaks about the difference between man and angels. Are we told that "the world to come" will not be ruled by angels? Hebrews 2:5. But if we become the Spirit-born sons of God, are we promised rulership over angels? Hebrews 2:6-8; 1 Corinthians 6:2-3.

Although man has been made a little lower than the angels for now, in the future he will be placed over all of God's creation including angels.

6. In what other way, besides composition, do angels and man differ? Hebrews 1:5, 13.

Man, now lower than angels, has a destiny far higher! Man was created to be literally begotten by God's spiritual reproductive process and then actually be born into the divine God Family. Angels are not begotten and born of God. Angels are not destined to become part of God's Family.

7. What is God's purpose for His created angels? Hebrews 1:7, 14. Are Spirit-begotten Christians the "heirs" Paul is talking about? Romans 8:16-17; Galatians 3:26-29; 4:6-7.

Angels, higher than man is now, were created to be God's servants, messengers and representatives in God's universe-ruling government. Angels are commissioned to minister to the Spirit-begotten children of God, who are His spiritual heirs.

To illustrate the primary activity of God's angels today, we might consider the status of the young son of a wealthy man. While still a child, the son is under the care of an adult servant or guardian chosen by the boy's father. The servant is older, farther advanced in knowledge, much more developed physically and mentally – but has much less potential. For when the son is mature, he will inherit his father's wealth and power. Therefore, the servant, older and more mature, is only a servant ministering to the young heir. Likewise, angels are ministering to Spirit-begotten humans today.

8. Do God's children have assigned to them angels who are in close contact with the Father in heaven? Matthew 18:10.

9. Are Angels powerful? 2 Peter 2:11. Do the angels of God keep close to God's obedient children to protect them from accidents, calamities, plagues and other evils? Psalm 34:7; 91:1-12. Will God's angels also fight our enemies? Psalm 35:1, 5-6.

God's angels are assigned to help God's heirs along the road to eternal life – to save them from premature death and accidents, to fight their battles and to protect them from the devil and his demons.

10. Do God's holy angels have the power to sometimes manifest themselves in the physical likeness of men in order to carry on their duties? Daniel 9:21; Hebrews 13:2. Also read Genesis 18 and 19:1-22.

Angels are also messengers. They appeared to Abraham, Lot, Hagar, Moses, Gideon, Elijah and many of the prophets and apostles. When God's angels manifest themselves to human beings, they do so in the form of ordinary men. Paul points out in Hebrews 13:2 that they sometimes travel incognito on God's business, not revealing that they are angels. But righteous angels never capriciously appear and disappear merely to amuse themselves or men.

11. Why did the prophet Elisha ask God to open the eyes of his servant? 2 Kings 6:15-17. No wonder Elisha did not fear his enemies. He saw one of God's spirit armies upon the mountain!

12. Did God commission a special angel to watch over the children of Israel and bring them into the promised land? Exodus 23:20-23.

13. Is Michael the chief guardian of the descendants of ancient Israel? Daniel 12:1. (The Revised Standard Version renders this verse: "At that [end] time shall arise Michael, the great prince who has charge of your people.")

The Bible mentions by name three angels of high rank: Lucifer (Isaiah 14:12), now Satan the devil; Gabriel, who appeared to Daniel on two occasions (Daniel 8:16; 9:21), to Zacharias, the father of John the Baptist (Luke 1:19), and later to Mary, the mother of Jesus (Luke 1:26-27); and Michael, called one of the chief princes (Daniel 10:13) and whom Jude identifies as an archangel (Jude 9). Michael is specifically assigned to minister to the 12 tribes of Israel.

14. Was Gabriel (apparently of archangel rank) sent to give Daniel understanding of visions, and even to fight spiritual battles with fallen angels ("princes") of the devil in order that God's will be carried out among the governments of men? Daniel 8:15-16; 9:21-22; 10:10-14, 20-21.

We can see that the spirit world is teeming with activity. God works (John 5:17) and His angelic servants are busy helping to carry out his will. Satan and his demons are just as busy trying to thwart and destroy the plan of God.

15. What did an angel of God do when the civic rulers put some of the apostles in prison? Acts 5:17-20. Did this enable the apostles to continue preaching the truth of God? Verse 21.

We have covered only a few of the many verses showing how God's angels serve God and God's saints today. Let us be grateful to God for sending His angels to assist in and watch over His Work and over those who are His Spirit-begotten children – His heirs soon to be born into the universe-ruling Family of God!