

THE SPIRIT WORLD

“messenger spirits”

Key question

What does the Bible teach us about angels and Satan?

Key text

Hebrews 1:14

“Are they not all ministering spirits, sent out to render service for the sake of those who will inherit salvation?”

Key Definition

Angels

Angels are created spirit beings that act as worshipping messengers, and agents from God for the implementation of special activity on behalf of believers on the earth.

Satan

Satan is a fallen archangel with great but limited power who opposes the purposes of God.

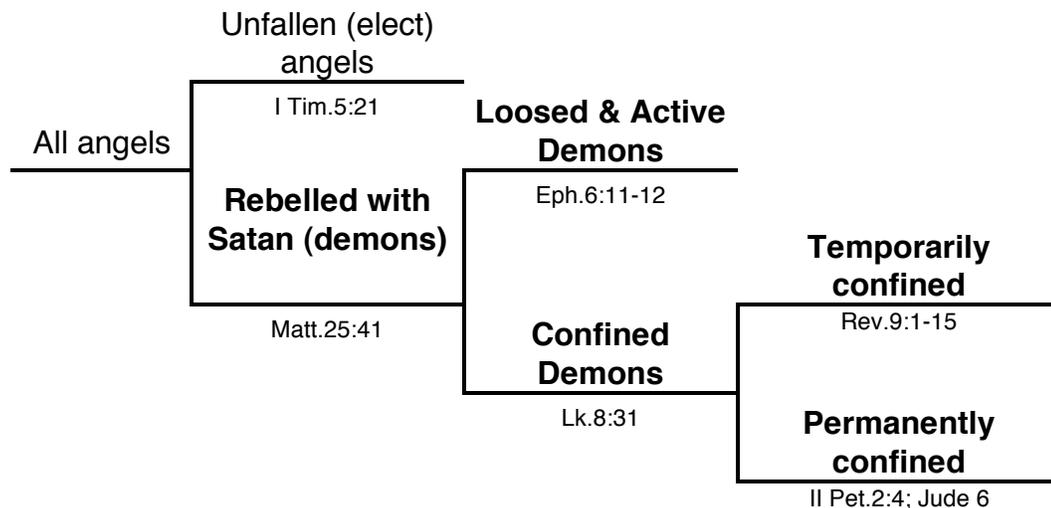
Demons

Demons are fallen angels that serve the purposes of Satan much the same way that (good) angels serve the purpose of God.

Introduction

1. Some recently published books suggesting that angels are actively engaged in fighting demonic forces as we pray. These books suggest a world that is filled with hidden spiritual drama. Is this consistent with the Biblical revelation?
 2. Can people be demon possessed today? If so what does it look like?
 3. What constitutes spiritual warfare in America? Does it take a different form than in Haiti?
- A. **The world of Spirit beings consists of both good and evil angels.**
1. Angelic forces can be divided into two categories:

- a. Good spirits (Angels) Heb.1:14
 - 1. **The Archangel** (Michael) Jude 9, I Thess.4:16 - the guardian angel of Israel (Dan.10:21; 12:1).
 - 2. **Chief Princes** Dan.10:13 - Their existence suggests a ranking among the angels. The apocryphal Book of Enoch names Michael, Gabriel, Raphael, and Uriel as the four principal angels who were privileged to stand around the throne of God (9:1; 40:9).
 - 3. **Governmental Rulers.** - Both good and evil angels are described as - Rulers, Principalities, Authorities, Thrones, Dominions - Rom.8:38; Eph.1:21; 3:10; 6:12; Col.1:16; 2:10,15; I Pet.3:22; II Pet.2:10-11,15; Jude 8.
 - 4. **Cherubim** - guardians of the holiness of God - Ezek.28:14,16 (Satan was a cherub); Gen.3:24; Ex.26:1ff; 36:8ff; I Kings 6:23-29
 - 5. **Seraphim** - attended the throne of God as worshipers and ministers of grace - Isa.6:2,6.
 - 6. **Guardian angels** - mentioned only in **Matt.18:10** “See that you do not despise one of these little ones, for I say to you, that **their angels** in heaven continually behold the face of My Father who is in heaven.” In this text note that there is no indication of their protective nature.
- b. Evil spirits (Satan & Demons) Matt.12:24, Eph.6:12



- 2. 34 books of the Bible make mention of Angels, Satan, and Demons. Christ spoke often of each.
- 3. Our age is one in which these immaterial forces are very much alive and active. As Christians, we are not to be ignorant of this subject (II Cor.2:11).
- 4. **General information.**
 - a. Angels are created (Neh.9:6) spirit beings (Heb.1:14) with great intellect (I Pet.1:12), emotion (Luke 2:13), will (Jude 6), and power (II Pet.2:11).
 - b. Angels are distinct from humans (Ps. =8:4-5), exist in great numbers (Heb.12:22) and cannot reproduce (Mk.12:25) or die (Luke 20:36).

B. Angels are messengers.

- 1. **The meaning of the term “angel.”**
 - a. Both the Hebrew and the Greek words for “angel” mean “messenger”.
 - b. These words often refer to human messengers (Lk.7:24). Only the context will determine whether the word means “angel” or human “messenger”.

2. The ministry of angels.

- a. Angels played a large role in the life of Christ. (Lk.1:26-33, 2:13, 22:43; Matt.2:13, 4:11, 26:53, 28:2,6)
- b. Angels seem to have a role in executing divine providence (Dan. 10:21), especially judgment (Rev. 8,9,16; Matt. 13:39).
- c. While some angels are described as having wings (Isa.6:1-11) they most often appear as people.
- d. Angels minister to believers in the following ways:
 1. Aiding (Heb.1:14).
 2. Answering prayer (Acts 12:7).
 3. Observing Christian experiences (I Cor.4:9; I Tim.5:21).
 4. Encouraging in time of danger (Acts 27:23-24).
 5. They are interested in evangelistic efforts (Lk.15:10; Acts 8:26).
 6. They care for righteous men at death (Lk.16:22, Jude 9).

C. Satan is a fallen angel.

1. Satan's personality and power.

- a. Satan was created as a person - Col.1:16.
- b. Satan exercises all the functions of a person - Gen.3:1-15, Job.1:6-12, 2:1-13, Lk.4:1-13.
- c. Satan's personal strength is considerable.
- d. Satan is aided by demons.
- e. Satan is identified by his names.

Title	Emphasis	Citation
Satan	Adversary	Matthew 4:10
Devil	Slanderer	Matthew 4:1
Evil One	Intrinsically evil	John 17:15
Great red dragon	Destructive creature	Revelation 12:3,7,9
Serpent of old	Deceiver in Eden	Revelation 12:9
Abaddon	Destruction	Revelation 9:11
Apollyon	Destroyer	Revelation 9:11
Adversary	Opponent	I Peter 5:8
Beelzebub	Lord of the fly (Beelzebub)	Matthew 12:24
Belial	Worthless (Belial)	II Corinthians 6:15
God of this world	Controls world views	II Corinthians 4:4
Ruler of this world	Rules in world system	John 12:31
Prince of power of air	Control of believers	Ephesians 2:2
Enemy	Opponent	Matt. 13:28, I Pet. 5:8
Tempter	Solicits people to sin	Matthew 4:3
Murderer	Leads to eternal death	John 8:44
Liar	Perverts the truth	John 8:44
Accuser	Promotes guilt	Revelation 12:10

2. **Satan's motive and fall.**

a. **Ezekiel 28:11-19**

1. This text deals with 3 subjects - Tyre, the king of Tyre, and Satan.
2. Satan was an anointed cherub (vs. 14), created perfect (vs. 15), full of wisdom and beauty (vs. 12), until the sin of pride (vs.17) was found in him (vs. 15), resulting in his expulsion from heaven (vs. 16).

b. **Isaiah 14:12-17**

1. This text deals with the expulsion of Lucifer (Satan) in greater detail
2. Verse 17 suggests that his fall came between Genesis 1:1 and 2.
3. Satan's motive was to be like "The Most High" (vs. 13-14), counterfeiting God (II Cor.11:14). His sin is described in I Tim.3:6 as pride.

3. **Satan's methods.**

a. In relation to the redemptive work of Christ

1. Conflict predicted (Gen.3:15).
2. Temptation of Christ (Matt.4:1-11).
3. Used various people to attempt to thwart the work of Christ (Matt.2:16; Jn.8:44; Matt.16:23).
4. He possessed Judas' body for the betrayal (Jn.13:27).

b. In relation to the nations

1. He deceives them now (Rev.20:3, 10).
2. He will gather them to the battle of Armageddon (Rev.16:13-14).

c. In relation to unbelievers

1. He blinds their minds (II Cor.4:4).
2. He snatches the Word from their hearts (Lk.8:12).
3. He uses men to oppose God's work (Rev.2:13).

d. In relation to Christians

1. He deceives in regard to God's word (Gen.3; Matt.4:6).
2. He bribes with material things (Lk.4:5-7).
3. He sows "tares" (false believers) in the church (Matt.13:38).
4. He accuses and slanders the believer (Rev.12:10).
5. He incites persecutions (Rev.2:10).
6. He tempts to lie (Acts 5:3; Jn.8:44).
7. He works lying wonders (II Thess.2:9).
8. He promotes anger (Eph.4:25-27).
9. He takes advantage of our mistakes (II Cor.2:11).
10. He comes as an angel of light (II Cor.11:13-15).
11. He counterfeits God (Matt.13:25-28).

D. **Demons are fallen angels that represent Satan.**

1. Demons (evil spirits or angels) are mentioned over 100 times in the New Testament (Hebrews is the only book that does not mention them.)

2. Theories as to the origin of demons.
 - a. The spirits of wicked deceased people.
 - b. Disembodied spirits of a pre-Adamic race.
 - c. The offspring of the union described in Gen.6:1-4.
 - d. Fallen angels - This seems to be the Biblical view.
 1. Satan is designated the prince of the demons - Matt.12:24
 2. They are often called “unclean spirits” - Matt.8:16; Lk.10:17-20.
3. The activity of demons.
 - a. They oppose the plan of God. - Dan.10:10-14; Rev.16:13-16.
 - b. They may be used of God in some cases. - I Sam.16:14; I Kings 22:22; II Cor.12:7.
 - c. They promote idolatry - Lev.17:7; Deut.32:17; Ps.106:36-38; I Cor.10:20.
 - d. They promote false religion - I Jn.4:1-4; I Tim.3:16-4:3.
 - e. They attack the doctrine of grace - I Tim.4:3-4.
 - f. They teach lawlessness - Rev.2:20-24.
 - g. They seem to have territorial control in some situations - Dan.10:13; Rev.16:13-16.
 - h. They can afflict people with physical diseases (Matt.9:33), cause mental disorders (Mk.5:4-5), and in some cases death (Rev.9:14-19). The Bible distinguishes natural illnesses from demonic (Matt.4:24; Mk.1:32,34; Lk.7:21; 9:1).
 - i. They are identified with the immorality of the Canaanites (Lev.18:6-30; Deut.18:9-14).
 - j. They can possess or control people. This phenomenon is common in the gospels but after Pentecost is rare (Mentioned only in Acts 5:16; 8:7; 16:16-18; 19:12). While it is possible for a Christian to be influenced by demonic forces it is not clear that they can be possessed so as to have no control over their lives.

Pastoral advice

How much attention should we give to angelic forces?

1. We should recognize that they exist and play a role in life. It should not be forgotten however that they were not emphasized by the apostles in their teaching to the early church. We might do well in following their lead.
2. Angels are messengers and as such bring messages of encouragement or condemnation. We should expect spiritual ministry to come in these forms.

Questions that you should be able to answer.

1. **Specific facts you should know.**
 - a. What does the word “angel” mean?
 - b. Where in Scripture do we read of Satan’s downfall?
 - c. Where in Scripture do we read of Satan’s tempting Adam and Eve? Jesus?

2. Issues that you should be able to discuss.

- a. What does Scripture indicate are the methods of Satan in relating to God's people?
- b. What kind of things does Scripture indicate angels do?

3. Questions you should wrestle with.

- a. How do we detect angelic and satanic activity today?