

Angels and Demons

Revelation 5:11-14

May 24, 2026

Please open your Bibles to Revelation 5. Before we left for vacation, many of you will remember the message on hell. Nothing like a hit and run preacher. What you don't know is how hard I tried to convince Jeff Jett to set the heat on 95 that Sunday because you can't preach about hell in a cool church. My intention was to follow those messages on heaven and hell with one on angels and demons as they are connected to those two locations. We took the opportunity last Sunday to speak about life's thresholds, but we return today to take up these topics.

There're all kinds of ideas out there about both angels and demons but we want to look at what the Bible actually says about them and we'll start with angels. They are mentioned there over 300 times in the Bible and we've already encountered some with Hagar, Abraham, Sarah and Lot, and one who stopped Abraham from killing Isaac. But let's start our study on the other end of the Bible in Revelation 5. Please stand if you are able. 11 Then I looked and heard the voice of many angels, numbering thousands upon thousands, and ten thousand times ten thousand. They encircled the throne and the living creatures and the elders. 12 In a loud voice they sang: "Worthy is the Lamb, who was slain, to receive power and wealth and wisdom and strength and honor and glory and praise!" 13 Then I heard every creature in heaven and on earth and under the earth and on the sea, and all that is in them, singing: "To him who sits on the throne and to the Lamb be praise and honor and glory and power, for ever and ever!" 14 The four living creatures said, "Amen," and the elders fell down and worshiped.

Say Angels. This is part of the passage we looked at when we talked about heaven and we are told here about 100 million angels which is what ten thousand times ten thousand equals. But then ten thousand was the highest number the Greeks had at the time which meant real estate was a lot cheaper. This suggests numberless or countless angels. So we know there are many, many of them, millions and perhaps billions and even trillions of them. And the other thing we learn from this passage is that they are leading worship! Say worship. They are leading the heavenly chorus, "Worthy is the Lamb!" Angels are often seen worshipping in the Bible and in our call to worship today, Bro Kent read the command from Psalm 103 for angels to lift their praise to God! One of the jobs of angels is to lead worship in heaven and from what Paul writes in I Corinthians 11, they attend our worship services here as well meaning that there are likely angels present today that we cannot see, hear, or touch. They not only worship God, but they rejoice with Him whenever a lost sinner gets saved! Let's pray that happens today!

So what are angels exactly? They are heavenly beings created by God to do His will, as Ps 103 says, they do His bidding. Job 38:6-7 tells us the angels shouted for joy when God laid the earth's cornerstone. So exactly when they were created, we don't know but it was before the earth and certainly before the fall in the Garden of Eden, for Satan is a fallen angel. Angels are NOT deceased humans. Say not human. Again. That is a very common error many people believe, but which Christians should never accept! Heaven did not get another loved one when our loved one died. No one "gets their wings" when they die. It's a Wonderful life is a wonderful movie but it's horrible theology. Too often we get our ideas about God from the world instead from of His Word. God created angels as separate beings and there is a fixed number of them since the Bible teaches that they are eternal and cannot reproduce. **We** were created in God's image. Angels weren't. We can be redeemed by the Jesus' blood, Angels can't. The Bible says we will be LIKE the angels in some ways, but it never says we become angels. We're going to be even better than angels, we're going to be like Jesus for we will see Him as He is according to I John 3:2!

Now the angels have a long job description and besides leading worship, another job appears to be escorting the souls of Christians who die to heaven. That's what Luke 16 says happened when Lazarus died, and many who have had near death experiences report seeing beings that would certainly be considered angels. We see them doing something similar in Matt 13. Jesus said that the angels are the ones who will harvest souls from earth at the end of the age. They will then separate the wicked from the righteous and throw the wicked into the fiery furnace where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. This underscores the message on Hell, but notice that angels are God's ushers to take us across the threshold of death into His presence and will accompany Jesus when He returns.

Another job of the angels is to deliver special messages from God. In fact, the Greek word for angel literally means messenger. Say messenger. We see them doing this several times in the nativity story as an angel delivered a message to Zechariah, Joseph, Mary, and the shepherds. Angels also told the women of Jesus' resurrection and rolled away the stone telling us a bit about their great strength. An angel gives a message to Balaam and another tells Phillip in Acts 8 to go down to the Gaza road and still another in Acts 10 tells Cornelius to send for Peter. There are other examples as well. Angels are God's messengers.

Another thing angels do is protect believers. Say protect. Ps 34:7 says, "The angel of the Lord encamps around those who fear him, and he delivers them." And Ps 91:11 says, that God, "... will command his angels concerning you to guard you in all your ways..." We see angels intervening to protect various individuals in the Bible such as when one came to free Peter and John from prison in Acts 5 and another freed Peter over in Acts 12 and led him to safety.

In 2 Kings 6, Elisha and his servant were surrounded by enemies. The servant was afraid they'd be totally destroyed but Elisha was cool as a cucumber in a deep freeze. He tells his servant, 16 "Don't be afraid... "Those who are with us are more than those who are with them." 17 And Elisha prayed, "O Lord, open his eyes so he may see." Then the Lord opened the servant's eyes, and he looked and saw the hills full of horses and chariots of fire all around Elisha." God protected and delivered them. We often can't see the angels protecting us, but they are there!

Billy Graham told the story of a missionary named John Paton whose home and family had been surrounded by hostile natives. He and his wife prayed through the night and in the morning they were gone. After the chief of the tribe got saved, Paton asked him why they had not attacked that night and the chief told him of hundreds of big men with shining garments and drawn swords. Fred and Jan Beam shared a similar story here once and there's another from Kenya and Mau Mau warriors who did not attack missionaries because of the giant soldiers.

What about guardian angels? Do we each have one? The way I drive, I sure hope so! Some Scriptures perhaps lead us to that conclusion. About children, Jesus said in Matt 18:10 "See that you do not look down on one of these little ones. For I tell you that their angels in heaven always see the face of my Father in heaven." In Acts 12, the early disciples mistook Peter for **his** angel, perhaps indicated that he had one assigned to him and Hebrews 1:14 tells us that angels are ministering spirits sent to serve those who will inherit salvation. Angels are sent to serve us! And guarding is part of serving, but I can't say if we each have our own.

Angels also sometimes strike people dead on God's behalf. There are several examples. 2 Kings 19:35 says, "That night the angel of the Lord went out and put to death 185,000 men in the Assyrian camp." Another brought death to all the firstborn in Egypt on Passover night. In the NT, Acts 12:23 says, "Immediately, because Herod [Agrippa] did not give praise to God, an angel of the Lord struck him down, and he was eaten by worms and died." That's a pretty strong warning! Give praise to God and God alone! Or get ready for worms!

What do angels look like? Sometimes, as with the shepherds and at Jesus' tomb, they are glowing white, but often they appear as regular people. Heb 13:2 warns us, "Do not forget to entertain strangers, for by so doing some people have entertained angels without knowing it." My guess is that many, perhaps even most of us have encountered an angel and didn't even know it. A guest in church, a stranger at the store, that homeless man, etc. Although they appear to be genderless, they are always referred to with masculine names and pronouns like Michael and Gabriel. And I hate to break it to you, but almost none of the angels in the Bible have wings. Say no wings. Seraphim and Cherubim have wings but they seem to be special classes or species of angels. Most who report seeing angels in near death experiences also don't see wings.

Let's be clear about something else. Angels are beings created by God, they are NOT God! Some people give more time and attention to angels than they do to Jesus. Worship Him only! Not the angels He has made. A desire for angels that's greater than a desire for your Savior is idolatry. When John fell down to worship the angel that was showing him around heaven, the angel immediately stopped him! Rev 22:8-9 "... I fell down to worship at the feet of the angel who had been showing them to me. 9 But he said to me, "Do not do it! I am a fellow servant with you and with your brothers the prophets and of all who keep the words of this book. Worship God!" Angels are mighty, but not Almighty! Worship He who is!

Paul warns us in Col 2:18 "Do not let anyone who delights in false humility and the worship of angels disqualify you for the prize. Such a person goes into great detail about what he has seen, and his unspiritual mind puffs him up with idle notions." Angels are also not to be prayed to. Since Jesus died, we don't need an intermediary, a go between. We can pray directly to the Father!

The only possible exception is THE Angel of the Lord. Say THE angel. Joshua encountered Him before the battle of Jericho and He is mentioned in other places as well such as with Hagar, Gideon, Moses at the burning bush, Jacob's wrestling opponent, the 4th man in the fiery furnace and others. Many believe these are times when Jesus appeared before His incarnation in Bethlehem. Such events are called Christophanies where Jesus appeared before His birth.

Now, what about demons? Demons are only mentioned 65 times in the Bible, almost all of which are in the New Testament. But since they are mentioned in every NT book except Hebrews and because Jesus referred to them often and cast them out regularly, we know they are real. What are they? Say good question. The Bible doesn't give us a definitive answer. Most likely demons are the fallen angels who followed Lucifer into rebellion. Lucifer, who became Satan, was the star of the morning, the highest angel who thought he could attain equality with God. He was sadly mistaken and was cast out of heaven together with a third of the angels. Jude 6 says, "... the angels who did not keep their positions of authority but abandoned their own home — these he has kept in darkness, bound with everlasting chains for judgment on the great Day." 2 Peter 2:4 says that, "... God did not spare angels when they sinned, but sent them to hell, putting them into gloomy dungeons to be held for judgment;" And I Cor 6:3 says Christians will judge angels, which must be these. But if they are kept in chains for judgement, they are not free to possess or oppress people on earth. So perhaps some, but not all are in chains. Others may be on earth as demons.

Another idea is that demons are the offspring from when the sons of God married the daughters of men in Genesis 6. That may be true, but the Bible doesn't tell us that. But in the same way that angels are not deceased people, neither are demons.

Unrepentant sinners do not become demons, they go to Hades to suffer and then hell after that.

It's obvious demons are of the devil for they torment and terrorize people. But the fact that Jesus and His disciples cast many of them out demonstrates His absolute power over them. Jesus never encountered a demon He couldn't control. Christians need not fear demons, for greater is He who is in you than He that is in the world. But they are not to be toyed with, or invited in, for they are massively powerful and unbelievably evil. They can throw people into fire and water, they can give them superhuman strength to tear steel and break chains. They can speak and even inhabit animals. Many researchers, both Christian and non, have said that UFOs and aliens are actually demons; spiritual beings who manifest themselves and who terrorize humans and who immediately retreat whenever a person speaks Jesus' Name.

CS Lewis wrote a very insightful book called the Screwtape Letters in which a Sr demon named Screwtape educates an apprentice, Wormwood, on how to tempt people successfully. Anyone who ever battles temptation of any kind should read it to understand his strategies. All of us! In that book, Lewis warns of two errors we make with demons. We either don't believe they exist or we obsess about them. Both extremes will cause problems. The easiest way for an enemy to defeat you is for you to think he doesn't exist. Satan does and his demons do. They routinely harass followers of Jesus and seek to intimidate us with fear. Speaking the name of Jesus and especially quoting Scripture are powerful and effective weapons against these spiritual enemies. Demons are real and they powerful, but God is infinitely more so.

But the other extreme is also very deadly. When we dabble with the occult, we profane the holiness we hold in our earthly frame. Flirting with or using Ouija boards, tarot cards, fortune tellers, witchcraft, sorcery, horoscopes, psychics, hallucinogenic drugs, inviting a demon into you can be fatal. Playing around with the occult is like the man in Brazil last November who climbed into the lion pen at the zoo thinking he could tame them. Only to be horrifically mauled and killed. You are no match for a demon. Only Jesus is. They are no match for Him! He cast out many including 7 from Mary Magdalene and 5,000 or more from the man in Gerasa which then entered 2000 pigs that drowned themselves. That was the largest drop in pork bellies by the way. God's power exceeds the devil on all levels and in all ways. If you want REAL power, seek Him! If you suspect demonic work around you, the best weapon is Jesus Christ. His Name and His Spirit and His Word are infinitely more powerful and the evil one cannot stand against Him. Know and use God's Word. Remind demons of their destiny, which Jesus makes clear in Matthew 25:41, is eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels.

Related to this is an obsession with demons and calling every bad thing that happens demonic. No. Evil comes from within us as well. Our fleshy nature is sinful.

There's not a demon behind every rock but there are demons behind some rocks. The spiritual gift of discernment can help us know the difference.

Deut 32:17 warns against sacrificing to demons and in I Cor 10, Paul states that any sacrifices to idols are really made to demons. In 1 Tim 4:1, he says, "The Spirit clearly says that in later times some will abandon the faith and follow deceiving spirits and things taught by demons." We are living in those times. Much of the false doctrine today that is oozing from so many pulpits has come straight from hell, delivered by demons. Look to God and His Word for truth.

So we've talked about angels and demons both today and at some point we could dig deeper in a Bible Study or SS Class. But let's be sure not to let either one of them take our focus off of Jesus. As we sang earlier, Jesus is Lord of all the angels! He shines brighter than all the angels heaven can boast! And as we see from many Scriptures, He is superior and more powerful in every way to demons, who are but defeated minions awaiting final judgment. From what we've learned about both angels and demons this morning, we have all the more reason to glorify God through His Son, Jesus, as His angels help us to do so.