

## Introduction

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Most religions today have angels in their midst.

Popularized by television and movies, the concept of angels is well known in today's society and culture.

But what really is an angel?

Examining this takes you into the theological doctrine of **Angelology**.



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### Some Controversy

If you believe that the earliest recording of the Bible was during the time of Moses, then the Bible introduced the concept of angels to the world where they were first mentioned in the book of Genesis. According to the biblical record, angels were described as real beings that may appear to take on physical form.

If you believe some scholars who hold that the Bible was written after 1000 B.C., then the conceptual source of angels is attributed to an ancient religion called Zoroastrianism, which originated in Iran and started around 1500-1000 B.C. Angels of this religion personified abstract ideas and virtues, or concrete objects of nature analogous to later Greek or Roman deities.



These scholars, who do not believe in supernatural causes, rationalize that the Bible was a later composition of myths and traditions from other religions. This line of reasoning has been used in other instances as well such as the Flood.

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### A Challenge

What does the Bible say about angels?

Take this quiz to see whether your systematic understanding of angels is:

- a) grounded in the Bible or
- b) influenced by the contemporary media and culture that often shape our perceptions today!



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## Are Angels Born or Created?

1. How and when do angels come into being?

- a. Male and female angels propagate and have baby angels.
- b. Angels are departed spirits of deceased human beings and come into existence with each passing of human life.
- c. Angels were created on the first day of Creation.

The answer is "c"! Angels were all created on the first day of Creation. In Genesis 1:1-5, on the first day of Creation, God first created the heavens and then the earth. On the basis of Exodus 20:11 and Job 38:4-7, angels were created on the first day of Creation, because they observed and rejoiced as God brought earth into existence.

2. How many angels are there?

- a. Innumerable.
- b. Millions.
- c. Thousands.

The answer is "a"! An untold countless number of angels were individually created! While the Bible does not state the number of angels created, there are other references of quantity.

"He said, 'The Lord came from Sinai, And dawned on them from Seir; He shone forth from Mount Paran, And He came from the midst of ten thousand holy ones; At His right hand there was flashing lightning for them.'" (Deut 33:2)

"The chariots of God are myriads, thousands upon thousands; The Lord is among them as at Sinai, in holiness." (Ps 68:17)

"But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to myriads of angels," (Heb 12:22)

"Then I looked, and I heard the voice of many angels around the throne and the living creatures and the elders; and the number of them was myriads of myriads, and thousands of thousands," (Rev 5:11)

In an instance where a human being is indwelt with demons, the numerical term "legion" was mentioned. If taken literally, a Roman legion is comprised of 3,000-6,000 infantry and 100-200 cavalry.

"For He had been saying to him, 'Come out of the man, you unclean spirit!' And He was asking him, 'What is your name?' And he said to Him, 'My name is Legion; for we are many.'" (Mark 5:8-9)

3. At the time of their making, were all angels good?

- a. Yes.
- b. No.

The answer is "a"! At their time of their creation, the angels' spiritual state was good; they were all initially created as holy angels.

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## What is the Nature of Angels?

1. Angels are:

- a. Spirit beings with a physical body.
- b. Spirit beings without a physical body.
- c. Human beings with supernatural abilities.

The answer is "b"! Hebrews 1:14 and Ephesians 6:10-12 indicate that angels were created as a spirit beings without physical bodies.

## **What is the Nature of Angels? (continues)**

2. Angels are:

- a. Immortal and eternal.
- b. Mortal.
- c. Immortal but not eternal.

The answer is "c"! Their creation marks a beginning; thus angels, while immortal, are not eternal.

3. Angels can be seen by human beings.

- a. True – if you look hard enough.
- b. True – if God gives you the vision to see them.
- c. False.

The answer is "b"! Angels are invisible spirit personal beings. They can only be seen if God gives you the vision to see them! (2 Ki 6:11-19)

4. Angels can appear as:

- a. Men, women and babies.
- b. Men, serpent, and dragon.
- c. Fairies, witches and warlocks.

The answer is "b"! Angels may temporarily have physical bodies, and in all biblical examples, they have appeared as adult males (Gen 19:1-2). But the Bible also has examples of angels appearing in non-human forms such as Satan who appeared as a small serpent (Gen 3:14) and as a huge dragon (Rev 12:7-9).

5. Angels can marry.

- a. True.
- b. False.

The answer is "b"! Angels do not marry nor have marital relationships like human beings.

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## **Are Angels Personal Beings?**

1. Do angels have intelligence and wisdom?

- a. Yes.
- b. No.

The answer is "a"! Angels were created with intelligence and wisdom as exemplified by their ability to communicate with both God and man and sing praises to God.

2. Can angels make moral decisions?

- a. Yes.
- b. No.

The answer is "a"! Angels do have moral knowledge. This is seen by the fact that some angels sinned and fell from their position in heaven.

"For if God did not spare angels when they sinned, but cast them into hell and committed them to pits of darkness, reserved for judgment; (2 Peter 2:4).

### **Are Angels Personal Beings? (continues)**

3. Because they are spirit beings, do angels have emotion?
- Yes.
  - No.

The answer is "a"! Angels have the ability to express emotion. For example, the Bible records unfallen angels expressing joy (Job 38:6-7, Luke 15:10), or fallen angels expressing violent anger and fear (Matt 28:28-29, James 2:19).

4. Do angels have a will of their own?
- Yes.
  - No.

The answer is "a"! Angels have a will of their own (Luke 2:13-14, Jude 1:6). Because they have the essential characteristics of 1) intelligence and moral knowledge, 2) emotion, and 3) a will of their own, they are considered personal beings.

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### **What is the Hierarchy of Personal Beings?**

1. What type of hierarchy currently exists among personal beings?
- Angelic spirit personal beings, God, Human personal beings.
  - Angelic spirit personal beings, Human personal beings, Holy Spirit.
  - God and Holy Spirit, Angelic spirit personal beings, Human personal beings.
  - God incarnate, Angelic spirit personal beings, Human personal beings.

The answer is "c"! There is a hierarchy among personal beings before and after Jesus' return. Before Christ's return, the hierarchy of personal beings is: 1) God and Holy Spirit, 2) angelic personal beings, and 3) human beings. This is seen in Hebrews 2:7 where it is said, in reference to humans, "for a little while lower than the angels."

2. What type of hierarchy will exist when Christ returns?
- Angelic spirit personal beings, Divine personal beings (Triune God), Glorified Human personal beings.
  - Angelic spirit personal beings, Glorified Human personal beings, Divine personal beings.
  - Divine personal beings, Angelic spirit personal beings, Glorified Human personal beings.
  - Divine personal beings, Glorified Human personal beings, Angelic spirit personal beings.

The answer is "d"! After Christ's return, *redeemed* human beings take precedence over angelic personal beings (1 Cor 6:3, Heb 1:14); thus, the hierarchy of personal beings would be: 1) divine personal beings (Trinity), 2) glorified human beings and 3) angelic personal beings.

3. Is there a hierarchy among angels?
- Yes.
  - No.

The answer is "a"! While it is not specified or explained, there is a hierarchy among angels. Called "archangel" (Jude 9) and "one of the chief princes" (Dan 10:13), the angel Michael exhibits some leadership and authority over other angels (Rev 12:7-8).

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## What are Unfallen Angels?

### 1. What are unfallen angels?

- a. Angels whose wings were not clipped.
- b. Spiritual beings that are only Cherubim.
- c. Angels who did not sin.
- d. Angels only in heaven.

The answer is "c"! Unfallen angels are those who did not sin by following Satan and rebelling against God. They remain in the service of God in both earthly and heavenly realms.

### 2. Some of the names of good angels include Iblis, Nephi, and John.

- a. True.
- b. False.

The answer is "b"! While there are many names for unfallen angels, "Iblis" is a name for an angel in Islam, and "Nephi" and "John" are names for angels in Mormonism. The Hebrew word for "angel" is "malak" which means "morning stars" and in some instances "ambassador." In Greek, "angel" is "angelos" which means "messenger" and "envoy".

### 3. What best describes the angelic form Cherubim?

- a. They can roar like a lion, be as feisty as a bull, fly like an eagle and be as compassionate as a human.
- b. They serve as guardians of Eden and flank God's throne.
- c. They bring divine messages to human beings from God.
- d. They are found only on the walls of the Holy of Holies.

The answer is "b"! Cherubim, as described in Ezekiel, have 4 faces (human, lion, bull, and eagle), 4 wings, human hands, and hooved feet. These angels have served as guardians of Eden, flanking God's throne, and figuratively described as the chariot of God.

Closely associated with God and His presence, God instructed that images of cherubim be made of gold at the two ends of the mercy seat on top of the Ark during its construction. And, in the construction of the inner most rooms of Solomon's Temple, large cherubs (up to 10 cubits in height) were carved and adorned the walls of the Holy of Holies (where the Ark was kept) and the Holy Place.

### 4. What best describes the angelic form Seraphim?

- a. They have 3 faces (human, lion, calf, or eagle).
- b. They have 4 wings, human hands, and hooved feet.
- c. Bring divine messages to human beings from God.
- d. Seraphim are creatures of fire, unceasingly praise the Lord (holy, holy, holy is the Lord), hover about the throne of God, or standing before Him.

The answer is "d"! Seraphim, as described in Isaiah 6:2-6 and Revelation 4:4-8, have 1 face (human, lion, calf, or eagle), human hands, and 6 wings. Some have speculated whether seraphim are a special group within cherubim.

Seraphim are significant for unceasingly praising the Lord ("holy, holy, holy is the Lord"), hovering about the throne of God, or standing before Him. There is perhaps a suggestion that they serve the heavenly court

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## What do Unfallen Angels do?

1. What are some of the functions of unfallen angels for Christians?
  - a. Angels are used to answer prayers, and rescue Believers from physical harm.
  - b. Angels bring divine messages from God to guide Christians to the truth or appropriate action.
  - c. Angels are used to correct Christians of bad doctrine.
  - d. Both a and b.

The answer is "d"! Holy angels serve Christians, in their service to God, in several ways: 1) bring divine messages from God to guide Christians to the truth or appropriate action, 2) are used to answer prayers, and rescue Believers from physical harm, and 3) are used to serve believers by ministering and encouraging them.

2. What are some of the functions of unfallen angels for non-Christians?
  - a. Angels are used to answer the prayers of non-Christians and rescue them from physical harm.
  - b. Angels subdue evil and carry out God's judgment.
  - c. Unfallen angels have no function for non-Christians.
  - d. Angels teach non-Christians about salvation.

The answer is "b"! Regardless of one's faith, non-Christians do benefit from holy angels when they subdue evil according to God's will. However, non-believers will also experience the consequences of their sin when unfallen angels carry out God's judgment.

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## Guardian Angels

1. Do Christians have an individual guardian angel assigned to them who follows them around everywhere?
  - a. Yes.
  - b. No, guardian angels are also assigned to non-Christians.
  - c. Yes, Christians do have an individual guardian angel but not on duty 24 hours a day.
  - d. Maybe.

The answer is "d"! Maybe. There is no clear passage that supports the idea that each person or at least each Christian has a guardian angel. Matthew 18:10 does not necessarily mean that each child has an angel.

"See that you do not despise one of these little ones, for I say to you that their angels in heaven continually see the face of My Father who is in heaven." (Matt 18:10)

Some have interpreted the angel, mentioned in Acts 12:15, as caring for Peter at that particular moment.

"When she recognized Peter's voice, because of her joy she did not open the gate, but ran in and announced that Peter was standing in front of the gate. They said to her, 'You are out of your mind!' But she kept insisting that it was so. They kept saying, 'It is his angel.' But Peter continued knocking; and when they had opened the door, they saw him and were amazed." (Acts 12:14-16)

## **Guardian Angels (continues)**

2. How can we enlist the help of guardian angels? Can we pray to them?
  - a. Yes, we can petition them anytime.
  - b. No, never.
  - c. Yes, but only under certain circumstances.

The answer is "b"! No, never. Throughout the Old Testament, the examples of prayer were directed only towards God. In the New Testament, Jesus Christ came specifically to be the mediator and intercessor for man, and in their instructions on prayer, both Jesus and His apostles indicated that man can and should direct their petitions to God. The Bible never once encouraged humans to seek or petition any other spiritual being.

The practice of praying to holy angels or saints in heaven for one's personal petitions is a controversial issue. It does not seem to have any clear biblical evidence to support it and certainly none within the context of the whole Bible.

There are naturally inherent dangers in such a practice, among them whether the petitioner has the ability to discern a response as holy or demonic.

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## **Who and What Are Fallen Angels?**

1. What does the term "fallen" angel refer to?
  - a. Angels that no longer have an abode in heaven.
  - b. Evil and unclean spirits.
  - c. Principalities and powers.
  - d. All of the above.

The answer is "d"! All of the above. Angels no longer reside in heaven. They are morally evil which makes them unholy and unclean. From an earthly perspective, they are also known as "principalities" and "powers."

2. Every single New Testament author writes of fallen angels.
  - a. True.
  - b. False.

The answer is "a"! True! Every New Testament author writes of fallen angels!

3. Where do the free fallen angels roam?
  - a. First heaven.
  - b. Second heaven.
  - c. Third heaven.
  - d. Both second and third heaven.

The answer is "a"! As a consequence of their rebellion, Satan and his followers were removed from their dwelling in God's presence (third heaven) to reside within the atmosphere of earth (first heaven) after Jesus Christ was born (Rev 12:7-10).

## Who and What Are Fallen Angels?

4. Where do the confined fallen angels reside?
- Tartarosas.
  - Hell.
  - Abusso.
  - All of the above.

The answer is "d"! It appears that confined fallen angels are held in hell temporarily, which is also known in Greek as *tartarosas* and *abusso*, until final judgment and ultimate consignment to the eternal lake of fire.

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## Who is Satan?

1. What was Satan's sin that caused him to be cast down from heaven?
- The temptation of Eve.
  - Pride in his beauty.
  - The temptation of Jesus.
  - Pride in his status as God's anointed cherub.

The answer is "b"! Your heart was lifted up because of your beauty; You corrupted your wisdom by reason of your splendor I cast you to the ground... (Ezek 28:17)

2. What does the Greek term "diabolos" mean?
- Murderer.
  - Evil one.
  - False accuser.
  - Ruler of this world.

The answer is "c"! The Greek term means "false accuser." Bolstering his function as an accuser, Satan is associated with the *certificate of debt* which is believed to be a record of one's sins presented at the time of Judgment for the purpose of indicting human beings.

3. What does the Hebrew term *sātān* mean?
- Beelzebul.
  - Adversary.
  - Serpent.
  - Father of lies.

The answer is "b"! The Hebrew term means "adversary." It is an opponent who hinders another. An adversary of God, Satan opposes and hinders God's plan of salvation and redemption and the re-establishment of His kingdom on earth. As an adversary to Christians, Satan deceives human beings so that he can use them to establish his kingdom on earth.

4. When was Satan created?
- Day 1 of Creation.
  - Day 3 of Creation.
  - Day 6 of Creation.
  - Sometime after the first 6 days of Creation.

The answer is "a"! Satan was created on the first day of Creation, but fell from heaven sometime before the temptation of Eve. Logically think through Exodus 20:11; Job 38:4-7; Genesis 1:1-5.

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## What can Demons do or Not do?

1. What is Satan's principal intention?
  - a. Discourage the worship of God and cause the destruction of man.
  - b. Discourage the witness and ministry effectiveness of Christians.
  - c. Establish his own kingdom.
  - d. Blind and deceive non-Christians to the Gospel.

The answer is "c"! Satan intends to establish his own kingdom (Isa 14:13-14, Luke 4:5-7) and in so doing, oppose God and the personal beings who follow Him.

2. What methods do demons use?
  - a. Temptation.
  - b. Praise.
  - c. Accusation.
  - d. a and c.
  - e. All of the above.

The answer is "e"!

All of the above! One of Satan's primary methods is deception which includes flattery and disingenuous praise. This trick question was intended to raise your awareness of discerning genuine praise from flattery.

3. What do you know of the certificate of debt?
  - a. A record of a person's personal sins.
  - b. A list of sins which Satan could use to accuse a person of for the purpose of condemning man before God.
  - c. A belief in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior cancels the certificate of debt.
  - d. All of the above.

The answer is "d"!

All of the above. This list of sins, which is hostile to man for its basis of condemnation before God, is eliminated from all accounts of human beings who believe in Christ's work of atonement. Thus in canceling the certificate of debt, fallen angels are *disarmed*; they no longer have a basis from which they could impeach a Christian before God.

4. Christians should treat the demonic realm with contempt.
  - a. True.
  - b. False.

The answer is "b"! False. Open disdain or scorn are attitudes that makes one susceptible to sin. It was by Christ's atonement that defeated Satan and his demons; not by any effort or attitude by mankind.

5. Satan is limited in power and knowledge.
  - a. True.
  - b. False.

The answer is "a"! True. While Satan attempts to hamper God's work, he is limited by God. While he may wish to be God, Satan has limited power. He remains answerable to God and cannot do anything without God's permission. While he can tempt man, Satan has limited knowledge. He cannot know what is on one's mind or foretell the future.

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## Demonization

1. What is meant by demon possession?

- a. A condition where a human being has a demon inhabiting him or her.
- b. A condition where a demon controls a human being's will.
- c. A condition where a inhabiting demon controls the mind, body, and will of a human being.
- d. A condition that is the cause of all mental illness.

The answer is "c"! "Demon possession" is an incorrect translation for what should be translated as "demonization." For a Non-Christian, many examples in the Bible portray it as a condition where a demon inhabits a human being, in part or whole, and controls the human being's mind, body or, in rare cases, his will. When referring to Christians, this definition is debated; but, most theologians would agree that it is more appropriately seen, at least, as "strong demonic influence."

2. Is indwelling a human being the only way a fallen angel can affect a human being?

- a. Yes.
- b. No.

The answer is "b"! Fallen angels may adversely afflict human beings without inhabiting their bodies.

3. Physical illness and disease can be caused by:

- a. Unfallen angels.
- b. Fallen angels.
- c. Holy Spirit.
- d. Sin.
- e. All of the above.

The answer is "e"! All of the above!

4. All Christians have the means to exorcise a demon?

- a. True.
- b. False.

The answer is "a! True! All Christians have the means to exorcise demons! To learn more, see the article "Exorcism."

5. Is it possible for Christians to have a demon?

- a. Yes, it is possible.
- b. No, it is not possible.

If to "have a demon" is in the literal sense and refers to a demon indwelling a Christian, then the answer is indeed "No, it is not possible for a Christian to have an indwelt demon."

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## The End

Accustomed to the coexistence of good and evil, one does not realize that the very existence of evil and fallen evil angels is absolutely and irrevocably adjudicated at the end of human history.

When God created life, two beings, on their own volition, introduced sin into the world.

Of angelic beings, Satan deceived and tempted human beings to disobey God (Gen 3:1-6).

Of human beings, Adam disobeyed God's word (Gen 3:17-19).

Intending His Creation to be morally good (Gen 1:31), God promised a means of salvation through His covenant with Abraham (Gen 12:1-7; 22:15-18), a restoration of a relationship with God (Rev 20:6), and the promise of a land of peace in which God would dwell among the children of Abraham (Gen 15:18; Ezek 37:25-28).

And God's Salvation also came as the Judge (John 5:20-30).

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## The Role of Unfallen Angels

Throughout the Bible, good unfallen angels are portrayed as interacting primarily with individuals or groups of people. It is not until the book of Revelation that one gains a fuller understanding about unfallen angels and their global impact in the service of God.

1. In heaven, angelic beings maintain the order of the heavenly temple and display great praise and worship in an orderly manner. Nothing happens without the direction of a high ranking or strong angel under God's direction.

Jesus Christ does not break the seals until the strong angel makes his announcement, a rhetorical question that emphasizes the supremacy of Jesus Christ's work of atonement (Rev 5:2).

Once Jesus Christ breaks the seals, it is the angels who herald God's trumpet judgments (Rev 8:6), and angelic beings who direct the dispensing of God's bowl judgments (Rev 15:7-8 - 16:1).

2. On earth, angels are given the authority to have a global impact on humanity and on earth. For example: Seals 1-4 authorize angelic beings to facilitate war and famine so that 25% of the world's population would die (Rev 6:1-8).

Trumpets 1-4 authorized angelic beings to cause harm upon the earth and sea: burn up 33% of the earth, 33% of the trees and all of the grasses (Rev 8:7), kill 33% of all sea life and destroy 33% of all sea going ships (Rev 8:8-9), lethally poison 33% of all rivers and springs (Rev 8:10-11), and blot out the sun and moon for 33% of the day and 33% of the night (Rev 8:12).

Trumpet 5 authorized an unfallen angel to use a key to open the Abyss, and give the locusts a power like a scorpion that stings and hurts people for five months around the world (Rev 9:10).

Trumpet 7 authorized angelic beings to reap by dispensing God's final wrath that comes in the form of bowl judgments and accompanying Jesus Christ to Armageddon. The resulting plagues cause most, if not all, human beings to be tormented with disfiguring and painful sores (Rev 16:2), poison the seas and kill all living creatures within it (Rev 16:3), render all freshwater undrinkable (Rev 16:4-7), make the sun hotter (Rev 16:8-9), produce more pain and discomfort in non-Believers (Rev 16:10-11), and produce the greatest ever earthquake and hailstorm ever experienced by mankind (Rev 16:15-21).



## The Role of Unfallen Angels (continues)

At Armageddon, Jesus Christ, together with His host of unfallen angels, complete the reaping by destroying all who oppose Him (Matt 13:41-42; Rev 19:14).

It is important to note that good unfallen angels are not used directly to kill human beings until they accompany Jesus Christ at Armageddon when there are no Believers present at the very end of human history.

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## The Role of Fallen Angels

While God used good unfallen angels primarily to adversely affect earth, its environment, and humanity's social conditions during this period of Judgment, fallen angels were allowed to indulge in their evil.

When the sixth trumpet sounds, the unfallen angel is authorized to release the four bound angels at the Euphrates River (Rev 9:13-14).

When the Bible speaks of confined or bound angels, it is always in the context of fallen evil angels (Luke 8:26-31; Matt 8:28-32; 2 Peter 2:4; Jude 1:6-7).

These four bound angels were limited to kill 33% of the world's population.

And like good unfallen angels, these individual evil fallen angels had a global impact on a scale not seen earlier in the Bible.

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## Judgment

After Armageddon and the imprisonment of Satan in the abyss for 1,000 years, the Millennial Kingdom follows; but, the Bible does not indicate who comprises this earthly kingdom. While there is no mention of evil fallen angels, it seems unlikely that they would be mortal human beings.

- The reaping by angels involving the bowl judgments would negate human habitation on a worldwide scale.
- The battle of Armageddon occurs when there are no Believers present on earth; thus, victory would likely be absolute and decisive over any remaining human beings (Rev 19:21).
- The Bible mentions that glorified saints will judge angels (1 Cor 6:2-3), and evil fallen angels are confined to earth (Rev 12:7-10).
- When Satan is released at the end of the millennium, heavenly fire consumes the enemy (Rev 20:7-9). The battle is not fought by using any familiar weapons or with unfallen angels; instead, supernatural fire is used (Rev 20:10).

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## Conclusion

### What is the significance of having a sound theology on angels

You should see that angels remind us of God's exquisite love and plan for human beings.

While both are created beings, only humans were made in the "image of God" and have the ability to procreate.

While both have sinned, God chose to provide a plan of redemption only to human beings. Salvation will always be a "mystery" to angels including Satan!

You should be aware of angels in your daily life.

You should know your proper relationship to fallen and unfallen angels.

You should be cautious of availing yourself to angelic guidance in lieu of the authority of Scripture.

You can observe the examples of obedience and worship set by angels.

Good angels seek to follow and serve the will of God. Holy angels glorify God.

Evil angels seek to pursue and satisfy their own will.

You should be prepared for the motives and methods of demonic forces.

You can recognize and take comfort in the sovereignty of God in the spirit world.

### Why is this important?

A sound systematic theology of angels provides an objective basis for discerning the truth of what you may hear about angels and a rational basis of understanding the spirit world.

### References:

1. Grudem, W, *Systematic Theology*, Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan (1994).

[www.helpmewithbiblestudy.org/6system\\_angels/a15.aspx](http://www.helpmewithbiblestudy.org/6system_angels/a15.aspx)

