

## Are Angels Personal Beings?

Are angels spirit beings, ghosts, or emanations that exert power or influence? Why does the Bible, in reference to angels, refer to them with the pronouns “we, us, they, your, I” instead of “it”? Do angels have characteristics that are similar to a person?

1. Examine 2 Samuel 14:20, Matthew 24:36, Matthew 28:5, Luke 4:33-34, Matthew 8:28-29, Acts 19:15, James 2:19, and 1 Timothy 4:1-3. What characteristics of a person do you observe here?

Angels were created with intelligence and wisdom. They know their future, or in the case of fallen angels, their doom. Angels know and recognize their adversaries as exemplified by fallen angels recognizing Jesus and the apostle Paul. Fallen angels also know about the triune nature of God and their efforts to deceive to turn away man from the worship of God. And angels have moral knowledge; they know what is morally right and wrong.

However angels are not omniscient; they do not know all things.

2. Study Job 38:6-7, Luke 15:10, Revelation 12:12, Matthew 8:28-29, and James 2:19. What characteristics of a person do you observe here?

Another aspect of personhood that angels were created with is emotion. The Bible exhibits examples of unfallen angels expressing joy; fallen angels expressing violent anger and fear. In Revelation 12:12, as the result of angelic warfare, the apostle John sees Satan, symbolized as the great red dragon, cast down from heaven during the second half of the seven-year tribulation. Satan, who knows his end is near, displays great wrath, and, in contrast, holy (unfallen) angels express great joy.

3. Read Luke 2:13-14, Hebrews 1:6, Jude 1:6, Matthew 8:31, Luke 8:32, Mark 1:27, Luke 4:35-36, and Matthew 12:43-45. Determine the characteristics of a person that you see here.

Angels exhibit the characteristic of having a will of their own; they have the free discretion to make deliberate and intentional choices. For example, unfallen angels praise God as an exercise of their will and fallen angels have chosen not worship God. Fallen angels have made requests upon Jesus, have the will to obey commands and orders, and have the will to seek and leave a human body.

For an entity to be considered a personal being, it must have 3 characteristics: 1) intelligence and moral knowledge, 2) emotion, and 3) a will of their own. The Bible reveals three types of personal beings who exhibit these characteristics:

1. Divine personal beings – the Triune God: God the Father (divine personal being), Jesus Christ (divine personal human being), and the Holy Spirit (divine personal spirit being).
2. Spirit beings – unfallen and fallen angels
3. Human beings

Understanding this provides a basis for God’s created order and a perspective for the visible and invisible world. Take the time to study and understand the Bible and God’s perspective on personal beings!

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