

Have You Been Entertaining Angels Unaware?

Did you know that according to the Bible, each of us has a guardian angel? Jesus told His disciples:

“See that you do not look down on one of these little ones [children]. For I tell you that their angels in heaven always see the face of My Father in heaven” (Matt. 18:10, BSB).

“Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for by this some have entertained angels without knowing it” (Heb. 13:2).

Have you been entertaining angels unaware? We’ve all heard stories from people who have been rescued, warned or helped by these unusual personages.

There are “fallen” angels, however. Jude 6, mentions them as:

“Angels who did not keep their positions of authority but abandoned their own home—these [God] has kept in darkness, bound with everlasting chains for judgment on the Great Day.” The darkest abode of the fallen angels is Tartarus—a horrible pit of torment—the deepest abyss of Hades.

Named Angels

There are three named angels in the Hebrew Bible:

1. Gabriel (“man of God”) is an angelic “revealer of mysteries” (Dan. 10-12). He is seen interpreting Daniel’s visions in Daniel 8:16-26, 9:20-27 and announcing the births of John and Jesus in Luke 1:11-20 and Luke 1:26-28.
2. Michael (“who is like God”) is an archangel, a warrior, one of the chief princes and the protector of both Israel and the church (Jude 9; Dan. 10:13, 21; 12:1; Rev. 12:7).

3. Satan ("adversary") is a murderer, a liar and the father of lies (John 8:44). Pride, presumption, wickedness and violence caused him to be cast out of heaven (Isa. 14:12-14, Ezek. 28:15-19). Jesus saw it happen: "I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven" (Luke 10:18).

Raphael ("the healing of God") appears as an angel in disguise in the apocryphal book of Tobit (3:16; 12:15). He refers to himself as: "one of the seven angels who stand in the glorious presence of the Lord, ready to serve Him."

What Went Wrong?

When created by God, Adam and Eve were given authority over the earth, as evidenced by being given the right to rule over and name all the animals (Gen.1:28, 2:19-20). When they fell into sin, their authority over the earth was forfeited to the devil, who then became the "god of this world" (2 Cor. 4:4) and "the ruler of the powers of the air" (Eph. 2:1-2).

The world is under the control of the evil one (1 John 5:19), which explains why Satan was able to offer Jesus authority over the kingdoms of the world (Luke 4:6-7).

When Jesus died on the cross, however, He defeated Satan and took back that authority (Matt. 28:18, 1 Cor. 15:20-28). Having disarmed the powers and authorities, Jesus made a public spectacle of them (Colossians 2:15).

When someone surrenders his or her life to Jesus Christ, the original authority given to Adam and Eve is reinstated by Jesus (Luke 10:19; Daniel 7:6-27) and can be wielded by faith (Mark 11:22-26).

However, Satan masquerades as an angel of light (2 Cor. 11:14). He blinds the minds of men so that they cannot see the truth (2 Cor. 4:4). He performs counterfeit miracles, signs and wonders (2 Thess. 2:9-10), and maintains authority over men (Luke 4:6, Acts 26:18) until they surrender their lives to

Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior (Luke 10:18-20, Acts 26:18, Rom. 8:1-4).

What Do Angels Do?

According to the Bible, in certain key moments of salvation history they:

–Guarded the Garden of Eden from the newly fallen Adam & Eve (Gen. 3:24).

–Rescued Lot before the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah (Gen. 19:1-29).

–Told Abraham to sacrifice his only son, Isaac (Gen. 22:9-18).

–Wrestled with Jacob (Gen. 32:24-28).

–Closed the mouths of lions when Daniel was cast among them (Dan. 6:22).

–Announced to Mary that she would give birth to the Messiah (Luke 1:26-38).

–Heralded the birth of Jesus on the hills of Bethlehem (Luke 2:8-15).

–Comforted Jesus after He was tested by Satan in the wilderness (Matt. 4:11).

–Were present at the Resurrection of Jesus Christ (Matt. 28:1-7) as well as His ascension into heaven (Acts 1:10-11).

–Will cast Satan and his fallen angels and demons into the lake of fire (Rev. 20:1-3, 10).

How Are They Organized?

Sometime around 500 A.D., a Syrian church father named Pseudo-Dionysius taught that there were nine choirs of angels:

1. Seraphim are thought to be representations of divine

love (Isa. 6:2, 6). Their name means “ardor,” or the “burning” or “fiery ones.”

2. Cherubim are winged angels who enjoy deep insight into God’s secrets. Their name signifies “fullness of knowledge.” God used representations of them to cover the ark of the covenant (Ex. 25:18-22). They are considered to be the voice of divine wisdom (Ezek. 28:12b). In Ezekiel 28:14, Satan is described as having been a “guardian cherub.”
3. Thrones symbolize divine justice and judicial power. Their main characteristics are submission and peace. God conveys His Spirit by these angels (Col. 1:16).
4. Dominions rule over all the lesser angelic orders and are charged with the execution of God’s commands. They have a zeal for the maintenance of God’s authority (Col. 1:16).
5. Virtues (aka “authorities”) are known as the “shining ones.” They carry out the orders issued by the dominions. They exhibit strength to combat man’s enemies and perform miracles to inspire people to deepen their faith in God (1 Pet. 3:22).
6. Powers confront and fight against evil spirits to defeat their wicked plans (Col. 1:16, 1 Pet. 3:22). They have control over the stars, moon, seasons and the sun and provide grace and courage to deserving humans.
7. Principalities guard the nations and cities of the earth. They also announce divine things, govern men’s souls and bodies, and assist us in the attainment of our eternal destinies (Col. 1:16).
8. Archangels deliver God’s most important messages to mankind and are entrusted with the more important missions of men (1 Thess. 4:16).
9. Angels are ordinary messengers from heaven sent to men. From their ranks our own guardian angels are chosen (Matt. 18:10). They can be seen in Exodus leading and guarding the people during their wilderness journey and when they freed Peter from prison. They mirror the

goodness of God toward us, ministering to both believer and nonbeliever alike.

According to Scripture, the angelic host always sees the unveiled face of God in heaven—the Beatific Vision. They offer up the praises, prayers and the good works of mortals. They plead the cause of human beings against the devil, by offering in their behalf the precious blood of Jesus.

Accordingly, angels are referred to in Hebrews 1:14 (BSB) as “ministering spirits sent to serve those who will inherit salvation.”

The Battle Won

There is a great battle going on in the heavenlies between the forces of good and evil. A mirror battle is also happening on earth between believers and the demonic realm. The heavenly host have their angelic battles (Dan. 10:13, Rev. 12:7-9) and we ours (2 Cor. 10:4, Eph. 6:10-18, 1 Pet. 5:8-9).

It is going to be a fight to the finish, and we had best be on the right side when it's over. God is going to destroy all the work of the evil one and banish all who side with the devil to the lake of fire (1 John 3:8).

Our only hope is a saving relationship with Jesus Christ, who is the commander in chief of the armies of God (Matt. 26:52-53). If we wish it, He will send the Holy Spirit to us with power (Acts 1:8) so we can fight and be witnesses in all the heavens and earth that Jesus Christ is King of kings.

There's no contest, really, because He possesses all power and authority (Matt. 28:18-20).

“Having disarmed the powers and authorities, He has made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them by the cross” (Col. 2:15).

The Bible exhorts believers to “stand firm against the devil's

schemes.” As listed in Ephesians 6:11-18, the seven weapons of our warfare are:

1. Truth
2. Righteousness
3. Readiness
4. Faith (with which you can extinguish the flaming arrows of the evil one)
5. Salvation
6. The Word of God
7. Prayer in the Spirit

The Lord has promised:

“The God of peace will soon crush Satan under your feet!” (Rom. 16:20a).

When the “lawless one” is revealed, the Lord Jesus will overthrow him with the breath of His mouth and destroy him by the splendor of His coming (see 2 Thess. 2:8).

Did you catch that? With just *the breath of His mouth* will Jesus destroy all the power of evil! In his masterful hymn, “A Mighty Fortress is Our God,” Martin Luther described that very moment in this line: “One little word shall fell him.”

Epilogue

It is good that we have taken the time to learn about the angelic hosts, both good and bad. The good lead us to the Savior, who has all power in heaven and on earth (Matt. 28:18). He has promised to confer upon all who would follow Him power and authority to overcome all the power of the evil one and his angelic/demonic hosts (Luke 10:19). It’s an offer we shouldn’t refuse!

“With God we will gain the victory, and He will trample down our enemies” (Ps. 108:13). {eo}

Dr. David Kyle Foster is the author of *Transformed Into His*

Image and Love Hunger, and is the founder/director of Mastering Life Ministries. Read more of his take on sexual sin and brokenness in his newest book, The Sexual Healing Reference Edition and listen to his twice-weekly podcast at: .

Excerpted from David Kyle Foster's book, Angels and Archangels & All the Powers of Heaven. To read the entire book free of charge, visit .