There are many legends and fairy tales concerning angels. But the Bible teaches us exactly who they are, where they came from, their work and everything else that is germane to their existence.

Although the Scriptures have much to say about angels, there is today a very general disregard, often amounting to a rejection of the doctrine (of angels). Various things have contributed to this attitude. There is the Gnostic worship of angels (Col. 2:18). Let no man beguile you of your reward in a voluntary humility and worshiping of angels, intruding into those things which he hath not seen, vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind...); then there are the often-foolish speculations of the Middle Ages; and, finally, there is the exaggerated belief in witchcraft in more recent times. Yet there are many reasons for believing in angels.

First of all, the existence and ministry of angels are abundantly taught in the Scriptures. Our Lord has very much to say about angels and we cannot dismiss His teaching with a haughty pretense to superior knowledge. Secondly, the evidence of demon possession and demon worship. Paul seems to regard the idolatry of the world as demon worship (1 Cor. 10:20-21). But I say, that the things which the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice to devils, and not to God: and I would not that ye should have fellowship with devils. [21] Ye cannot drink the cup of the Lord, and the cup of devils: ye cannot be partakers of the Lord's table, and of the table of devils. In the latter days this demon and idol worship is to increase greatly (Rev. 9:20-21). And the rest of the men which were not killed by these plagues yet repented not of the works of their hands, that they should not worship devils, and idols of gold, and silver, and brass, and stone, and of wood: which neither can see, nor hear, nor walk: [21] Neither repented they of their murders, nor of their sorceries, nor of their fornication, nor of their thefts.) Thirdly the practice of Spiritualism. Notice how the Scriptures condemn necromancy and the consulting of familiar spirits (Deut. 18:10-12). There shall not be found among you any one that maketh his son or his daughter to pass through the fire, or that useth divination, or an observer of times, or an enchanter, or a witch, [11] Or a charmer, or a consoler with familiar spirits, or a wizard, or a necromancer. [12] For all that do these things are an abomination unto the Lord: and because of these abominations the Lord thy God doth
drive them out from before thee.) Notice also that this phenomenon is to increase in the latter days (1 Tim. 4:1 Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils;). And finally the work of Satan and the evil spirits in hindering the progress of grace in our own hearts and the work of God in the world (Ephes. 6:12 For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.)

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In this study, using the Bible as our source, we will discuss these things about angels:

- What - or who - are they?
- Where did they originate - and why?
- How many of them are there?
- What do they look like?
- Do angels have wings?
- Are angels people who have "made it" to a higher dimension?
- What about the fallen angels?
- What is the assignment of those angels who remained loyal to God?
- Etc.

Let’s start at the beginning:

NO....PEOPLE DO NOT BECOME ANGELS WHEN WE DIE

Angels are not glorified human beings. Matthew 22:30 For in the resurrection they neither marry, nor are given in marriage, but are as the angels of God in heaven. This scripture does not teach that we become angels but rather that we are "like" them in that we will not marry or procreate.

Dr. Paul Eymann teaches that "angels are a company or association - not a race from a common ancestor. Luke 20:34-36 And Jesus answering said unto them, The children of this world marry, and are given in marriage: [35] But they which shall be accounted worthy to obtain that world, and the resurrection from the dead, neither marry, nor are given in marriage: [36] Neither can they die any more: for they are equal unto the angels; and are the children of God, being the children of the resurrection.

Throughout scripture, God’s followers are often called “sons of men,” but we are never called “sons of angels.”
WHAT ARE ANGELS?

The word “angel” comes from the Greek word “aggelos” which means MESSENGER. This aptly describes that creation of God - both the ones who remained faithful to Him and those who followed Lucifer.

Angels can be subdivided into these categories:

- cherubim
- seraphim
- archangel

God’s Word is filled with references to these beings – at least 108 times in the Old Testament and 165 times in the New Testament.

ANGELS WERE CREATED

Unlike God, angels have not always existed. Any number of scriptures verify this:

Neh. 9:6  Thou, even thou, art Lord alone; thou hast made heaven, the heaven of heavens, with all their host, the earth, and all things that are therein, the seas, and all that is therein, and thou preservest them all; and the host of heaven worshipeth thee.

Col. 1:16-17  For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: [17] And he is before all things, and by him all things consist.

When were they created? I believe about the time God launched the creation process of Planet Earth. This scripture gives me reason to accept that time schedule:  

Job 38:4-7 Where wast thou when I laid the foundations of the earth? declare, if thou hast understanding. [5] Who hath laid the measures thereof, if thou knowest? or who hath stretched the line upon it? [6] Whereupon are the foundations thereof fastened? or who laid the corner stone thereof; [7] When the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy?

HOW ABOUT ANGELS IN COMPARISON WITH HUMAN BEINGS?
1. **Angels Know More Than We Do - But They Are Not Omniscient (all-knowing) as God Is.**

Matthew 24:36  But of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only.

1 Peter 1:12  Unto whom it was revealed, that not unto themselves, but unto us they did minister the things, which are now reported unto you by them that have preached the gospel unto you with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven; which things the angels desire to look into.

That last scripture indicates that angels seem to have curiosity about matters they don’t know.

2. **Angels Are Stronger Than Humans - But Not Omnipotent (all powerful)**

Psalm 103:20  Bless the Lord, ye his angels, that excel in strength, that do his commandments, hearkening unto the voice of his word.

2 Peter 2:11  Whereas angels, which are greater in power and might, bring not railing accusation against them before the Lord.

Here is an interesting fact: one angel rolled the stone away from the opening of Jesus’ tomb. Matthew 28:2  And, behold, there was a great earthquake: for the angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and came and rolled back the stone from the door, and sat upon it. Strongs concordance teaches “a wheel of granite, eight feet in diameter and one foot thick, rolling in a groove, would weigh more than four tons.”

**HOW MANY ANGELS ARE THERE?**

We don’t know any specific number; however, we are told the number is very great:

Daniel 7:10  A fiery stream issued and came forth from before him: thousand thousands ministered unto him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him: the judgment was set, and the books were opened.

Matthew 26:53  Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to my Father, and he shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels? (How many were in a legion? In the Roman army there would have been around 7,000 total soldiers in one legion. Sc
Jesus was saying, “I could ask my Father and He would send 72,000 angels to help Me!”

Hebrews 12:22  But ye are come unto mount Sion, and unto the city of the living
God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels.

WHAT DO ANGELS LOOK LIKE?

Angels apparently have the capacity to take on the appearance of mortals. Note the
mystery in Hebrews 13:2  Be not forgetful to entertain strangers: for thereby some
have entertained angels unawares. However, on other occasions their appearance was
much different from humans: Matthew 28:2-4  And, behold, there was a great
earthquake: for the angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and came and rolled
back the stone from the door, and sat upon it. [3] His countenance was like
lightning, and his raiment white as snow: [4] And for fear of him the keepers did
shake, and became as dead men.

However, it should be noted that at times angels may be present in a place but are not
visible at all  Col. 1:16  For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and
that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or
principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him:

At times an angel appears as a human but with unusual features. Daniel saw one:
Daniel 10:5-6  Then I lifted up mine eyes, and looked, and behold a certain man
clothed in linen, whose loins were girded with fine gold of Uphaz: [6] His body also
was like the beryl, and his face as the appearance of lightning, and his eyes as lamps
of fire, and his arms and his feet like in colour to polished brass, and the voice of his
words like the voice of a multitude. Or was it an angel? Many commentators deny it
claiming it was actually a “theophany” - or an earthly appearance of Christ Himself.

Note: ANGELS IN THE BIBLE NEVER APPEAR AS CUTE, CHUBBY INFANTS
WITH DAINTY WINGS. WHEN PEOPLE IN THE BIBLE SAW ANGELS, THEIR
INITIAL AND TYPICAL RESPONSE WAS TO FALL ON THEIR FACES IN AWE
AND FEAR - NOT TO REACH OUT AND TICKLE AN ADORABLE BABY!

How about wings?

The Word teaches that some angels - notably those massive seraphims who fly over the
divine throne of God - do, but not the others. How about those seraphims? Is there a
more dramatic scripture than this one?

Isaiah 6:1-6  In the year that king Uzziah died I saw also the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple. [2] Above it stood the seraphims: each one had six wings; with twain he covered his face, and with twain he covered his feet, and with twain he did fly. [3] And one cried unto another, and said, Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of hosts: the whole earth is full of his glory.

[4] And the posts of the door moved at the voice of him that cried, and the house was filled with smoke.

[5] Then said I, Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts. [6] Then flew one of the seraphims unto me, having a live coal in his hand, which he had taken with the tongs from off the altar:

It appears then that most angels, though able to fly, do not necessarily have wings.

THE REVOLUTION IN HEAVEN

When angels were created, they were given the same gift as we humans were given - that of exercise of free will. Many of the angels CHOSE to rebel against God’s authority and to follow Lucifer. Everything God made, He made good. In Genesis 1, we read seven times that all God made was good. Yes, even Satan - Lucifer: Ezekiel 28:15 Thou wast perfect in thy ways from the day that thou wast created, till iniquity was found in thee.

Dissatisfied with God’s provision and plan, a conspiracy developed, apparently led by Lucifer (whom we will study fully in a further study). Jude 1:6 And the angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, he hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day. Lucifer, the leader in this rebellion, fell so very far from God’s plan. Isaiah 14:12 How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! how art thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations! I think sometimcs of the collapse of leading world tyrants such as Hitler, who died in the ruins of Berlin by his own hand, or Mussolini who was shot and then strung up by his heels at a gas station in Milan, Italy. But no one fell as Lucifer - Satan - did. Ezekiel 28:15-17 Thou wast perfect in thy ways from the day that thou wast created, till iniquity was found in thee. [16] By the multitude of thy merchandise they have filled the midst of thee with violence, and thou hast sinned: therefore I will cast thee as profane out of the mountain of God:
and I will destroy thee, O covering cherub, from the midst of the stones of fire. [17] Thine heart was lifted up because of thy beauty, thou hast corrupted thy wisdom by reason of thy brightness: I will cast thee to the ground, I will lay thee before kings, that they may behold thee.

**WHEN DID THE “FALL” TAKE PLACE?**

Scripture is silent at this point. It must have occurred BEFORE mankind’s fall (that is, the disobedience of Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden) because Satan entered said garden in the form of a serpent and induced Eve to sin. It is my own personal feeling that when God cast down Satan and his sinning angels it was the cause of the destruction in Genesis 1:2: *And the earth was (became from the Hebrew) without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters.* God did not create the earth without form and voice or cover it with darkness. Something must have happened, cataclysmic in degree) to make such a devastation possible.

(While this is my own personal feeling, it is NOT the feeling of most of my friends. But I am convinced in my own mind that the fall of Satan and the angels took place some time after the creation of the heavens and the earth and that it was the chief cause in bring about the condition described in Genesis 1:2.)

**THE CAUSE OF THE FALL**

When we read Ezekiel 28 which describes Lucifer’s position at one time, we stand amazed that one so great, so magnificent, so blessed could fall so far. Let’s read it again:

Ezekiel 28:11-20

*Moreover the word of the Lord came unto me, saying, [12] Son of man, take up a lamentation upon the king of Tyrus, and say unto him, Thus saith the Lord God; Thou sealest up the sum, full of wisdom, and perfect in beauty. [13] Thou hast been in Eden the garden of God; every precious stone was thy covering, the sardius, topaz, and the diamond, the beryl, the onyx, and the jasper, the sapphire, the emerald, and the carbuncle, and gold: the workmanship of thy tabrets and of thy pipes was prepared in thee in the day that thou wast created. [14] Thou art the anointed cherub that covereth; and I have set thee so: thou wast upon the holy mountain of God; thou hast walked up and down in the midst of the stones of fire.*
[15] Thou wast perfect in thy ways from the day that thou wast created, till iniquity was found in thee. [16] By the multitude of thy merchandise they have filled the midst of thee with violence, and thou hast sinned: therefore I will cast thee as profane out of the mountain of God: and I will destroy thee, O covering cherub, from the midst of the stones of fire. [17] Thine heart was lifted up because of thy beauty, thou hast corrupted thy wisdom by reason of thy brightness: I will cast thee to the ground, I will lay thee before kings, that they may behold thee. [18] Thou hast defiled thy sanctuaries by the multitude of thine iniquities, by the iniquity of thy traffick; therefore will I bring forth a fire from the midst of thee, it shall devour thee, and I will bring thee to ashes upon the earth in the sight of all them that behold thee. [19] All they that know thee among the people shall be astonished at thee: thou shalt be a terror, and never shalt thou be any more.

One thing is sure: God did not make Satan sin. As Thiessen properly points out: “If God is the author of evil and then condemns His creation - humans - for committing sin, then we have no moral universe.” Free will!(ibid / page 195)

It must be said, however, that while God made His creatures with the ability to NOT sin, they also had the ability TO sin.

Certainly PRIDE must have been a factor. We conclude that the fall of the angels was due to their deliberate, self-determined revolt against God. It was THEIR CHOICE to follow their own interests rather than the much better interests of God. In addition to PRIDE we could lis: the fallen angels’ undue ambition and desire to equal, if not surpass, God.

THE RESULT OF THE FALL

1. Lucifer and his followers lost their original holiness and became corrupt in nature and conduct. Ephes. 6:11-12 Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. [12] For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.

2. Some of the fallen angels were cast into hell and are held there in chains until the final day of judgment. 2 Peter 2:4 ... God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast them down to hell, and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment;
3. Some of them remain free today and engage in definite opposition to the work of the good angel. Daniel 10:12-13 Then said he unto me, Fear not, Daniel: for from the first day that thou didst set thine heart to understand, and to chasten thyself before thy God, thy words were heard, and I am come for thy words. [13] But the prince of the kingdom of Persia withstood me one and twenty days: but, lo, Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me; and I remained there with the kings of Persia.

4. All creation groans because of the fall. Romans 8:19-22 For the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God. [20] For the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope, [21] Because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. [22] For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now.

THE CLASSIFICATION OF THE ANGELS

The Good Angels

1. There are two large classes of the angels - the good ones and the evil ones. Of the good angels, there appear to be four kinds. As before noted, the word “angel” simply means “messenger.” There is an “innumerable host” of these angels. But we can subdivide these as follows:

2. The Cherubim. Genesis 3:24 So he drove out the man; and he placed at the east of the garden of Eden Cherubim, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life. 2 Kings 19:15 And Hezekiah prayed before the Lord, and said, O Lord God of Israel, which dwellest between the cherubims, thou art the God, even thou alone, of all the kingdoms of the earth: thou hast made heaven and earth. *

* On the last page of these notes you will find a picture of the Ark of the Covenant which was kept in the Holy of Holies, first in the Tabernacle in the Wilderness and then in the great Temples in Jerusalem. You will note on the lid of the Ark (called the Mercy Seat) two angels, facing one another, their wings outspread toward each other. It was believed that the early presence of God (the Shekinah Glory) dwelt between those wings. The angels on the mercy seat were Cherubim. Note the text on line 27 and 28: “....Lord God of Israel, which dwellest between he cherubims......” It is not believed by most that all angels are “winged,” but for sure the Cherubim are. As do the four mighty seraphim.
3. The Seraphim. Isaiah 6:2 Above it stood the seraphims: each one had six wings; with twain he covered his face, and with twain he covered his feet, and with twain he did fly. Isaiah 6:6 Then flew one of the seraphims unto me, having a live coal in his hand, which he had taken with the tongs from off the altar:

These fantastic four creatures are always noted in Scripture as flying over God on His throne. Their description in Revelation is most daunting: Rev. 4:6-9 And before the throne there was a sea of glass like unto crystal: and in the midst of the throne, and round about the throne, were four beasts full of eyes before and behind. [7] And the first beast was like a lion, and the second beast like a calf, and the third beast had a face as a man, and the fourth beast was like a flying eagle. [8] And the four beasts had each of them six wings about him; and they were full of eyes within: and they rest not day and night, saying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come. [9] And when those beasts give glory and honour and thanks to him that sat on the throne, who liveth for ever and ever,

The seraphim lead heaven in the worship of God.

4. The Archangels. The term archangel occurs only twice in the Bible: 1 Thes. 4:16 For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Jude 1:9 Yet Michael the archangel, when contending with the devil he disputed about the body of Moses, durst not bring against him a railing accusation, but said, The Lord rebuke thee.

Michael is the only one actually named an archangel (though we sometimes put Gabriel in that category - perhaps erroneously). He is represented as having his own angels: Rev. 12:7 And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels... and is said to be the Prince of the people of Israel: Daniel 10:13 But the prince of the kingdom of Persia withstood me one and twenty days: but, lo, Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me; and I remained there with the kings of Persia. Daniel 12:1 And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people: and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time: and at that time thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book.

The archangels appear to have the specific responsibility of protecting and prospering Israel, of announcing the birth of Jesus, of defeating Satan and his angels in their attempt to kill the Man Child (Jesus) and His mother Mary and of heralding the return of Christ.
THE EVIL ANGELS

1. The angels that are kept imprisoned. 2 Peter 2:4  For if God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast them down to hell, and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment.... Jude 1:6  And the angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, he hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day.

Thiessen writes: ...they became unfaithful in the performance of their duties and sought a more coveted principality. "Leaving their own habitation," as Jude writes.

2. The angels that are free. Romans 8:38-39  For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, [39] Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Their chief occupation seems to be that of supporting their leader Satan in his warfare against the good angels and God’s people and cause.

3. The Demons. Deut. 32:17  (American Standard)
"They sacrificed to demons who were not God,
To gods whom they have not known,
New gods who came lately,
Whom your fathers did not dread.

These are fallen angels who are not confined as those in category 1 (line 3). Evil spirits and demons are the same classification.

NEXT WEEK: What the Bible says about Satan.