

Firm Foundation

Angels

Introduction:

An observer of trends in modern lifestyles and popular theology would quickly agree that the principle subject around which everything revolves is the I. Such an ego-centric orientation toward life, both natural and supernatural is reflected in many ways, including the more or less skeptical attitude toward the teaching of Scripture on the existence of good and evil angels. All that remains here is to determine the degree of skepticism toward the teaching of angels. The degree of skepticism is determined by the consistency with which the Ego controls the motivates our thoughts and actions.

The attitude of the liberal thought can be summarized as follows:

A more conservative constituency, still presupposing Ego-centric theology but less consistent with its teachings, will summarize its position as follows:

There are modern theologians who have become convinced of the existence of good and evil angels through their own investigations. However, of what do we need to be reminded concerning the source of information as we investigate the doctrine of angels?

Finally we need to address the argument that since the doctrine of angels does not occupy a central position in the order of salvation, it should not be called a "doctrine" at all. One spokesman says: "We cannot regard the idea of angels as being essential to the revelation of salvation and so must leave the use of the conception of angels to religious tact."

Part of this statement is correct. Can you identify which part?

But what does one find when one becomes a Christian and reads/studies the Bible regarding the place and activity of angels?

The idea of modern theologians that the denial of the Christian doctrine of the angels can easily be harmonized with the "christian experiences of salvation" is due largely to their wrong conception of the Christian experience of salvation. All who deny the vicarious satisfaction of Christ cannot understand the Scriptural teaching in spirit and truth.

This then, being established, the following outline of the study of the Doctrine of Angels will be used:

- I) The Existence of Angels and the Time of Their Creation
- II) The Name "Angel"
- III) The Nature and the Properties of the Angels
- IV) Number and Ranks of the Angels
- V) Good and Evil Angels
- VI) The Good Angels and Their Activity
- VII) The Evil Angels, Their Activities, and Their Eternal Punishment

I The Existence of Angels and the Time of Their Creation

From Genesis to Revelation Scripture bears witness to the existence of angels. On the basis of this testimony of Scripture, and not on the basis of reasons of probability, we believe that there are angels.

When were they created? John 1:1-3 _____

Genesis 2:2-3 _____

So what conclusion must we make? _____

Luther on this point says: "Not one word is found in all the Scriptures concerning their creation, their battle, or their fall, except that one word of Christ, John 8:44It is wonderful that Moses is wholly silent on things of such great interest." Yet another confessor says: "On which day the angels were created is a question more subtle than useful."

II The Name "Angel"

"Angel" is an official title; it does not describe the essence of the angels. What does this title designate?

This is also true of others:

Mal. 2:7 _____

Mal. 3:1; Matt 11:10 _____

Christ Himself bears that name. John 3:17, 34; 6:40; Gal. 4:4-6.

Whenever the Old Testament uses the term "angel of the Lord" in the context of Jehovah or divine worship or divine works, that angel must be understood to be the Son of God.

III The Nature and the Properties of Angels

That angels are spirits, that is, immaterial beings.

Luke 24:39 _____

Ephesians 6:12 _____

The idea of some Church Fathers and also of recent theologians who clothe the angels with some kind of ethereal body, a refined material fabric and so on, has no basis in Scripture. What, then, about occasions such as Genesis 18 and 19?

Look up John 4:24. What does this say about God?_____

Look up Heb. 1:14. What does this say about angels?_____

What is the difference between these two spirits?_____

THE PROPERTIES OF ANGELS:_____

The Good Angels know : Eph 3:10_____

And Heb. 1:14_____

Gen. 3 and Matt. 4 show us something of Evil Angels as well. What is that?_____

We must remember here that only God has omniscience and prescience. Angels do not know all things and particularly they have of themselves no knowledge of future things.

1 Kings 8:39_____

"On the hidden thoughts of men the angels can form only a conjectural opinion, based on the signs and effects."

THE POWER OF ANGELS:

Ps. 103:20 _____ 2 Thess. 1:7_____

Matt. 12:29_____

Ps. 91:11-13_____

Luke 11:21-22_____

Eph. 6:10-17 _____

However, the power of angels is not unlimited, but is rather at all times subordinate to the power of God.

In this connection the question has been raised whether the devils can perform miracles.

This is the distinction: Ps. 72:18 _____

But under God's sufferance and according to His decree the devils can do things which to men appear as miracles.

2 Thess. 2:9 _____

And that this occurs according to God's decree is stated in the words that follow:

"For this cause [because they received not the love of the truth] God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: that they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness."

So there is a difference between the wonderful (*miracula*) and the amazing (*mirabilia seu mire* (or mirage)).

The story that angels can and did contract marriages with human beings, which is retold by some modern theologians, is pure fiction. They base this fable on Genesis 6:2. But look at what the Scripture says of angels in Matt. 22:30.

The angels are illocal: _____

They are not, of course, omnipresent, for at any particular time they are only at some one place. They are, as the dogmaticians express it, somewhere, which "somewhere" can be determined. A case in point is the human soul. The immaterial soul fills no space, and still we can say where it is.

Acts 20:10 _____

IV Number and Ranks of the Angels

The number of angels is very large.

Dan. 7:10 _____

Luke 2:13 _____

Heb. 12:22 _____

That there are orders or classes among the angels is clear from different appellations given them in Scripture.

Gen. 3:24 _____ Is. 6:2 _____

Col. 1:16 _____ 1 Thess. 4:16 _____

Matt. 25:41 _____

Luke 11:15, 18, 19 _____

But we are unable to determine the number of the ranks and their precise difference, since Scripture does not give us sufficient information.

V Good and Evil Angels

Originally all angels were positively good. _____

Gen. 1:31 _____

The existence of two classes of angel, good and evil, is due to the fact that some of the angels did not remain in the original state (*status originalis*).

John 8:44 _____

Good Angels: _____

Let others declare this state of an inability to sin (*non posse peccare*) to be a "fiction"; our faith is greatly strengthened by it. How so?

Evil Angels: _____

The opinion has been voiced in practically every age that also the devils might be converted and saved from eternal damnation. What does the Bible say about this?

Matt. 8:29 _____

Matt 25:41 _____

We cannot determine the exact time when some of the angels fell. What do we know?

Gen. 3:1-14 _____

John 8:44 _____

As to the particular sin by which the defection of these angels from God took place, we cannot offer more than a surmise. The majority assume that pride was the original sin. This deduction is made in three points:

1) _____

2) _____

3) _____

This opinion is approved also by Luther and others. Still others join to pride the sin of envy.

VI

The Good Angels and Their Activity

As we have said above, the good angels are confirmed in the good and are in the state of bliss. _____

Matt 18:10 _____

With the vision of God is intimately united the most fervent love of God; _____

And so the will of the good angels coincides constantly and perfectly with the will of God; the sole object of their entire activity is the accomplishment of the good.

1 Tim 5:21 _____

What we do know from Scripture is:

1) Heb. 2:16 _____

2) 2 Pet. 2:4 _____

There is no Scriptural basis for extending Christ's work of redemption also to the angels, as some churches on both sides of the theological spectrum do. (See the study on Christ; "To Whom and for Whom Did Christ Render Satisfaction?")

The functions of good angels are:

Is. 6:3; Luke 2:13 _____

Ps. 103:20-21; 104:4; Heb. 1:14 _____

Also and in particular:

Matt. 18:10_____

Ps. 91:11-12_____

Luke 16:22_____

Does every Christian have his particular guardian angel?

Matt 18:10; Acts 12:15_____

But Scripture teaches very clearly that the angels are deeply interested in all that occurs in the Church.

Luke 2:13; 1 Pet. 1:12_____

Luke 15:10_____

Deut 33:2; Gal. 3:19_____

Luke 1:26; 2:11;24:5ff.; Acts 1:10ff _____

Matt 13:41f.; 24:31_____

1 Cor. 11:10_____

Gen 24:7; Matt 18:10; Dan 10:13_____

While many people regard the doctrine of angels as "superfluous," how should we regard this doctrine?

1 Cor. 11:10; 1 Tim. 5:21_____

But what must we not do? Rev. 22:8-9_____

VII The Evil Angels, Their Activities and Their Eternal Punishment

Why did God not provide a Savior for the fallen angels as He did for fallen man?

Of what must we be very careful with such speculation? _____

Another question that is aired is what is meant by the devil's intelligence.

Gen. 3:1ff.; 2 Cor. 11:3 _____

and, on the other hand, tells of his great stupidity in promoting the death of Christ, by which he was cast out of his kingdom.

John 12:31 _____

It is also undeniable that the devil was not unfamiliar with the prophecies of the Old Testament from Gen. 3:15 on to Isaiah 53 and beyond: he must have know how the death of the Messiah would affect his rule.

John 3:19-20 _____

All opposition to the divine truth, including the opposition to the satisfactio vicaria and the inspiration of Scripture, can clearly be shown to be unreasonable.

The activities of the evil angels are, as we have just said, evil throughout. Scripture clearly describes them, for our information and warning, very clearly and in full detail.

Luke 13:11, 16 _____

Job 1:12f.; Mat. 8:31-32 _____

1 Pet. 5:8 _____

Eph. 2:1-2 _____

Acts 26:18; Col 1:13 _____

And the fact that men do not know this and even deny the existence of the devil, is likewise due to the operation of the devil. It is Scriptural to describe the status of all who do not believe that the blood of Jesus Christ cleanses us from all sins as obsessio spiritualis. We may reserve this term for particular cases and persons using it to describe an intensified operation of the devil in individuals. What must we never forget?

Bodily possession (*obsessio corporalis*) presents an entirely different case. Also children of God may suffer this affliction. (Mark 5:6, 18,19; Luke 8:28,28,29) By it the devil, under God's sufferance, takes possession of a man by personally dwelling in him, so that the demoniac, bereft of the use of reason and will, becomes the involuntary instrument of Satan. The human personality no longer functions; the devil or one of his demons in person becomes the acting subject. The demoniac is no longer responsible for his actions.

The activity of the evil angels against the Church is portrayed fully in Scripture.

Matt. 16:18 _____

Behind everything that harms the Church are the evil spirits.

Luke 8:12 _____

Mat 13:25 _____

1 Tim. 4:1ff. _____

Persecution and oppression of the Church by the State and organizations within the State is a result of the activity of the evil angels.

12 The Doctrine of Angels

As Satan unceasingly wages war on the Church, so he is also in arms against the divine order of the State and the family.

1 Chron. 21:1 _____

1 Kings 22:21-22 _____

1 Tim. 1-2 _____

1 Cor. 7:5 _____

2 Thess. 2:11-12 _____

Job 1:7ff; 2 Cor. 12:7 _____

What is the punishment of the evil angels?

Matt 25:41 _____

The question as to the nature of this fire need not be answered. So also the question how fire can take effect upon spirits. Scripture teaches the fact!

Matt. 25:46. Upon denying eternal damnation what must one also deny to be entirely

consistent? _____

To conceive of the eternal fire as purifying or annihilating the wicked and the evil angels contradicts Scripture.

Finally, we should bear in mind that all that the Bible says of the evil angels and their eternal punishment serves the ends of divine compassion. Its purpose is to impress on men the necessity of repentance and of faith in Him who by His blood ransomed mankind not for hell, but for heaven.