

Belgic Confession of Faith 12b– Angels

Brothers and Sisters in Jesus Christ: There are many, many songs that have been written about angels...the angels in heaven and the angels you marry. There are many, many classic pieces of art (especially Roman Catholic art) that feature angels –often lady-like creatures with beautiful wings. There are many, many movies that have been made about angels.

But only twice in the Bible do angels appear to have wings. And angels only appear as men. And angels don't marry. And your wife may be sweet, but she is no angel. Angels don't sin because they have been confirmed in perfect righteousness!

If you want to know about the angels in heaven, go to God who made them and hear what he has to say. We will do that today.

Our headings are:

The Creation of Angels

The Occupation of Angels

The Corruption of Angels

Our goals are: That you **get a fuller glance of what good angels do for you**, that you **learn to watch out for evil angels**, and that you **praise the Lord for the help of his holy angels**.

He also created the angels good, to be **His messengers and to serve His elect**; some **of whom are fallen** from that excellency in which God created them into **everlasting perdition**, and the others have by the grace of God **remained steadfast** and continued in their first state. The devils and evil spirits are so depraved that they are **enemies of God** and every good thing; to the utmost of their power as murderers watching to ruin the Church and every member thereof, and by their wicked stratagems to destroy all; and are, therefore, by their own wickedness adjudged to eternal damnation, daily expecting their horrible torments. Therefore we reject and abhor the error of the Sadducees, who **deny the existence of spirits and angels**; and also that of the Manichees, who assert that the devils have their origin of themselves, and that they are wicked of their own nature, without having been corrupted.

The Creation of Angels

1. The Eternal Son of God created angels...all angels...and they were good.

Colossians 1:16 For by Him all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or **dominions or principalities or powers**. All things were created through Him and for Him.

2. When did God create angels?

No one knows the exact time angels were created because only this world has time. What we do know is that the angels were already **with God at the time of creation**.

Job 38:5-7 Who determined its measurements? Surely you know! Or who stretched the line upon it? To what were its foundations fastened? Or who laid its cornerstone, **When the morning stars sang together**, And all the **sons of God** shouted for joy?

Angels, called “sons of God” at creation (Job 1), **shouted for joy when the world was created**. These angels did not assist God to create, **but praised God when he did**.

3. This is what we know about angels: As created beings...

a. Angels have great power but they are still subject to the Lord.

Psalm 103:20 Bless the LORD, you His angels, **Who excel in strength**, who **do His word**, Heeding the voice of His word.

b. Angels have limited knowledge. For example, angels don't know the time of the second coming.

Mark 13:32 "But of that day and hour no one knows, **not even the angels in heaven**, nor the Son, but only the Father.

Angels don't fully understand the fullness of the Gospel. (Dieleman)

1Peter 1:12 To them it was revealed that, not to themselves, but to us they were ministering the things which now have been reported to you through those who have preached the gospel to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven—**things which angels desire to look into**.

c. Angels, though they are spiritual beings, may sometimes take human form in order to do the work God sends them to do. They appeared to Abraham, for instance, and ate and drank with him. Genesis 18.

4. There are some who directly doubt the existence of angels, but Jesus confirms their existence and that should be enough.

Matthew 25:31 "When the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him, then He will sit on the throne of His glory.

The Occupation of Angels

1. Angels were created to be messengers of God to man and they have been doing this throughout history.

Look at an example.

Luke 1:19 And the angel answered and said to him, "I am Gabriel, who stands in the presence of God, and **was sent to speak to you and bring you these glad tidings**.

The word “Angel” means “messenger.” (Jesus was called an angel in the general sense, as he was a messenger of God.) Before the Word of God was completed, God sent angels to speak for him. Of course God doesn't send angels today because we have the clearer message of God in his Holy Word. There could have been ambiguity when angels spoke: Was it evil or good angels?

But angels are more than simply bearer of news. These are created being, residents of heaven, confirmed in righteousness, and who do ALL the bidding of God. Let's consider some other things that angels do.

2. The Eternal Son of God created angels to protect his people.

There are many things that happen in the unseen realm and you need protection. (Evil angels are invisible but present and they try to harm you.)

Psalm 91:11 For He shall **give His angels charge over you,** To keep you in all your ways. 12 In their hands they shall bear you up, Lest you dash your foot against a stone.

“Charge” (V11) is a military term, showing that angels are used by God to fight for his people as they fight.

Hebrews 1:14 Are they not all **ministering spirits** sent forth to minister for those who will inherit salvation?

Cherubim – one type of angel - guarded the Garden of Eden to prevent fallen man from eating of the Tree of Life.

Covenant children are known to have a company of angels guarding them.

Matthew 18:10 "Take heed that you do not despise one of these little ones, for I say to you that in heaven **their angels always see the face of My Father** who is in heaven.

And you have many angels to accompany you to take away your fear!

Hebrews 12:22 But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, to an **innumerable company of angels,**

Calvin believed that angels were the source of gravity based on Psalm 91. We can't say that for sure. The point was that angels play an integral part of our lives, and when you have their company, you are safe.

How specifically does God protect his people through angels? In 2Kings, God showed his angelic protection for Elisha and his servant when the king of Syria was trying to kill him.

2Kings 6:15...the servant of the man of God arose early and went out, there

was an army, surrounding the city with horses and chariots. And his servant said to him, "Alas, my master! What shall we do?" 16 So he answered, "Do not fear, for those who are with us are more than those who are with them."17 And Elisha prayed..."LORD, I pray, open his eyes that he may see." Then the LORD opened the eyes of the young man, and he saw. And behold, **the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire all around Elisha.**

3. The Eternal Son of God created angels to praise God.

(See Job 38, above. They praised God at creation.) And they praised God at his re-creation, like when the Prodigal Son returned home. This was the whole purpose of the parable.

Luke 15:10 "Likewise, I say to you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents."

But there is more...

Isaiah 6:3 And one cried to another and said: "**Holy, holy, holy is the LORD of hosts**; The whole earth is full of His glory!"

Seraphim, another class of angels, sang constantly before God's presence.

In short, we can then say **angels were created for the good of man and the glory of God.**

The Corruption of Angels

1. One third of the angels God created, led by Lucifer, rebelled against Jesus, and were condemned and cast out of heaven.

Isaiah 14:12 "**How you are fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning!** How you are cut down to the ground, You who weakened the nations! 13 For you have said in your heart: 'I will ascend into heaven, **I will exalt my throne above the stars of God**; I will also sit on the mount of the congregation On the farthest sides of the north;

Luke 10:18 And He said to them, "**I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven.**

2. These condemned evil angels can never be saved but eternally rebel against the Lord and are bound for eternal torment in hell.

2Peter 2:4 For if God did not spare the angels who sinned, but cast them down to hell and **delivered them into chains of darkness**, to be reserved for judgment;

Jude 1:6 And the angels who did not keep their proper domain, but left their own abode, He has **reserved in everlasting chains** under darkness for the judgment of the great day;

Revelation 12:4 His tail drew a **third of the stars of heaven and threw them to the earth**. And the dragon stood before the woman who was ready to give birth, to devour her Child...

These angels are called: Devils, evil spirits, fallen angels, and demons...

3. As enemies of God and enemies of God's people, these fallen angels use all kinds of strategies to deceive: Pretending to be good, be bad, and be indifferent.

They conspire and they charm.

You can see how **Satan plotted Job's destruction even when Job was innocent**. Also,

1Peter 5:8 Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a **roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour**.

You can also see the **Devil pretending to be good and luring people into sin**.

2 Corinthians 11:14 And no wonder! For Satan **himself transforms himself into an angel of light**.

You can see how evil angels try to get people to worship them.

Colossians 2:18 Let no one cheat you of your reward, taking delight in false humility and **worship of angels**, intruding into those things which he has not seen, vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind,

While the Devil knows he can't destroy your faith, **he doesn't give up**. He still comes after you to make your life difficult. The ultimate goal of these fallen angels is the destruction of the church.

Matthew 13:39 "The enemy who sowed them is the devil, the harvest is the end of the age, and the reapers are the angels.

But be careful. Don't blame Satan for everything, like when Luther blamed the Devil for the poor beer of a city. **Don't say: "The Devil made me do it."**

4. Christians must guard themselves against the constant evil attacks, for they will never stop coming.

As long as you have life and breath, you can expect the Devil (though limited) to tempt you.

Ephesians 6:11-12 Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places.

This means you must fight the Devil with God's Word and God's Spirit. His Word and Spirit give you all the tools you need to do so – starting with faith. You don't need witches to cast evil spells on those who threaten you! You don't need a string of garlic. You don't need crosses!

Conclusion:

God created the angels through his Son, Jesus Christ. The angels' job was to pass along God's Word to God's people, to protect God's people, punish the wicked people, and to praise God eternally. Some of them rebelled against God and were put out with the Devil from heaven. These wicked ones will continue to try to destroy the people of God before they are finally and totally confined to hell for eternity.

Brothers and Sisters in Jesus Christ:

1. Angels are very real and continue working on your behalf today. They don't bring you any messages now, as you have the whole Bible, but they quietly work to protect you from the wicked. It is possible that you may have met one and didn't know! They can still appear.

2. Why do you get the protection of these angels – something you truly need? You get it because you are God's children through Jesus Christ. He shed his blood for you and then adopted you as his child.

3. Remember to praise the Lord for his angels' protection. Remember that there are more angels of Jehovah than those who are against us. And God's angels have more power!

If you are not a Christian, you will still meet God's angels, except that it will be with judgment. Your only hope is forgiveness through Jesus Christ who died for the sins of the world. Make the right choice.