

Angels: God's Ministering Spirits Origin and Form

I. The Angels Of God: Developing a Biblical Perspective

"Are they not all ministering spirits, sent out to render service for the sake of those who will inherit salvation." Hebrews 1:14 (NASB)

II. The Origin & Form Of Angels

A. Angels are a part of God's creation.

1. All things, including angels, were created by and for Jesus (Colossians 1:16). The things invisible in the heavens would include angels (cf. also John 1:1-3).
2. The Psalmist calls upon all of God's creation to sing praise to Him (Psalm 148:1-5). This passage clearly teaches that angels were created by God.

B. Angels were created prior to the beginning of time.

1. The angels shouted for joy when God laid the foundation of the earth (Job 38:4-7). The "sons of God" is a reference to angels. Obviously, the reference would not be to man since he was created after the earth.
2. Since angels were created and were present when God laid the foundation of the earth, it is reasonable to conclude that they were created prior to the creation of the world.
3. Exactly how long before the creation cannot be determined. It is a fact that has not been revealed.

C. Angels were created of a higher order than man.

1. The Psalmist wrote that man was made a little lower than angels (Psalm 8:4-5).
2. It is interesting to note that even though man was made a little lower than the angels, it is the angels that minister to man (Hebrews 1:14).
3. It is also interesting to consider that as a part of God's creation, angels are under his authority and have free moral agency just like man (Psalm 103:20, 21). Their free moral agency is evident given that the angels who disobeyed God are being kept for judgment (Jude 6; 2 Peter 2:4).

D. Angels are invisible to unaided human vision.

1. Angels may be seen only when human vision is aided by God (e.g., cf. Numbers 22:22-27, 31; 2 Kings 6:15-17).
2. Thus, it can be seen that angels are incorporeal; that is, they are without material bodies. They are in essence of a spirit substance, yet they can take on a physical form and be seen when God so permits.

E. Angels frequently took on the form of a man.

1. God sent three angels to Abraham to inform him that Sarah would have a son (Genesis 18:1-2; 19:1, 11; cf. also Hebrews 13:2). Note that two of them went to warn Lot of the impending destruction of Sodom.
2. The angel that appeared to Jesus' disciples after His resurrection is described by Mark as a young man wearing a white robe (Mark 16:5).
3. When Jesus ascended back to heaven, the two angels who spoke to the apostles of his return appeared as men in white apparel (Acts 1:10-11).