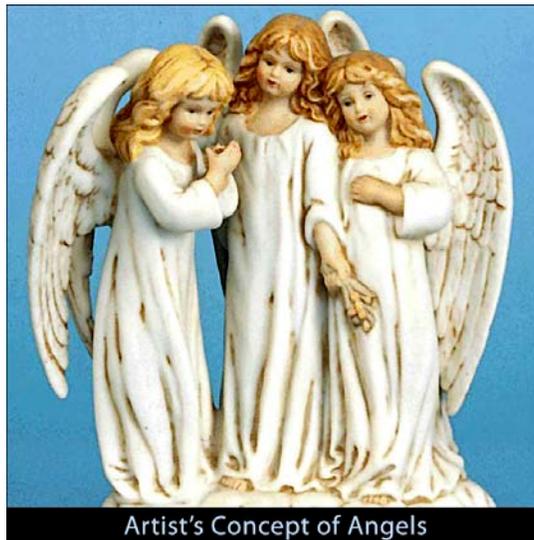


Angels - Good & Evil

Angelic beings are a mystery to us. Many of us are fascinated by angels - both real and images. We can purchase angel figurines and products in both secular and Christian stores. We imagine that angels are soft, winged creatures with pink and white clothes. Some believe that they have halos and fly. Artists usually present angels as being female, even though scripture assigns them male names such as Michael and Gabriel. It is common to see images of little baby angels too, but scripture always presents angels as adults. Many books have been written about angels in recent years. One Christian book store had over 368 books related to angels with titles such as "Darien, Guardian Angel of Jesus" and "A Tree Full of Angels." Some people worship angels because they revere them very highly. Yet, God warns us against worshipping angels.

Let no one keep defrauding you of your prize by delighting in self-abasement and the worship of the angels . . . (NASB) Colossians 2:18



Artist's Concept of Angels

But who are angels? What do they do? How did angels come into existence? What are their abilities? What is their purpose or job? What is their future?" The purpose of this study is to explore the answers to these questions as well as others.

CREATED BY GOD. Heaven is not a place where angels sit on fluffy clouds playing harps. Revelation 4 gives us a glimpse of the throne room of heaven where four angels, Cherubim, reside along with twenty-four human beings and four lamps. The floor of the throne room appears to be

like a sea of crystal. Heaven is not a place angels sitting on.

2 Corinthians 12:2-4 tells us that there are three heavens. According to Jewish custom the first heaven was our atmosphere, the second heaven was outer space, and the third one was where God dwells. The third heaven is what we commonly call heaven. God dwells there. God created everything that is in these heavens. He created everything that is visible and invisible.

For by Him all things were created, both in the heavens and on earth, visible and invisible . . . (NASB) Colossians 1:16

See that you do not despise one of these little ones, for I say to you that their angels in heaven continually see the face of My Father who is in heaven. (NASB) Matthew 18:10

These two passages clearly tell us that God created everything, including the angels in heaven. Angels are not divine beings nor are they glorified humans who were once dead. Nor are angels humans who are on probation

because of their conduct in a former life.

CREATED AS SPIRITS. So what are angels? First, angels are invisible spiritual beings who are spirits. That is the message of Hebrews.

And of the angels He says, "WHO MAKES HIS ANGELS WINDS, AND HIS MINISTERS A FLAME OF FIRE . . . Are they not all ministering spirits . . . (NASB) Hebrews 1:7, 14

On occasions they can become visible to us. The following passage reveals that the prophet Balaam did not initially see an angel. God had allowed the donkey to see the angel in the beginning, but Balaam was not allowed to see the angel until later.

When the donkey saw the angel of the LORD, she lay down under Balaam; so Balaam was angry and struck the donkey with his stick . . . Then the LORD opened the eyes of Balaam, and he saw the angel of the LORD standing in the way with his drawn sword in his hand; and he bowed all the way to the ground. And the angel of the LORD said to him, “Why have you struck your donkey these three times? (NASB) Numbers 22:27, 31-32

When angels do become visible, they appear similar to a human being.

Then the woman came and told her husband, saying, “A man of God came to me and his appearance was like the appearance of the angel of God . . . (NASB) Judges 13:6

It is possible that some of us may have unknowingly talked with or seen an angel.

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

The virgin Mary was surprised by one that apparently came through a wall and suddenly appeared in her room (Luke 1:28). This implies that angels as spirits can move through walls and go anywhere they desire.

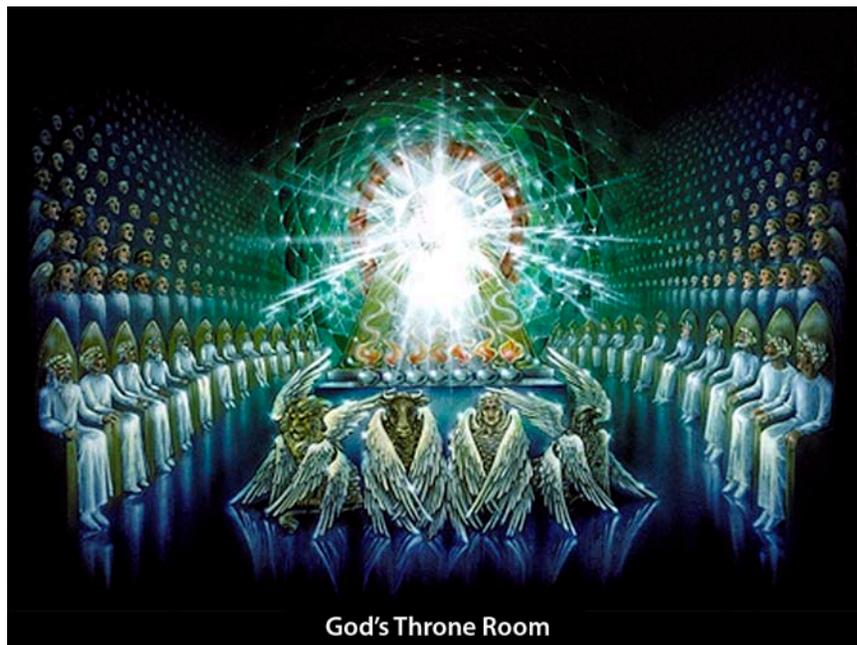
CREATED WHEN? When did God create these invisible creatures? He created them before He created us. We learn this from a conversation that He had with Job.

Where were you when I laid the foundation of the earth? Tell Me, if you have understanding, Who set its measurements, since you know? Or who stretched the line on it? On what were its bases sunk? Or who laid its cornerstone, When the morning stars sang together, And all the sons of God shouted for joy? (NASB) Job 38:4-7

In this passage the “sons of God” are angels (see Job 1:6-7) and in Dan. 4:13 they are also called “watchers.” We do not know if any angels are male or female. It does not appear

they are, but scripture never actually says. All that scripture says is that they do not get married and have children or little “cherubs.”

For when they rise from the dead, they neither marry, nor are given in marriage, but are like angels in heaven . . (NASB) Mark 12:25



God's Throne Room

How many angels did God make? He made so many that we cannot count them according to Hebrews 12:22 and Revelation 5:11,

. . . and to myriads of angels (NASB) Heb. 12:22

. . . many angels around the throne . . . the number of them was myriads of myriads, and thousands of thousands . . (NASB) Revelation 5:11

TYPES CREATED. God created different types of angels.

We do not know how many different types of angels there are because we are not sure that scripture has revealed all of them to us. Scripture only says that two types of angels have wings: cherubim, and seraphim. We usually think of angels as having two wings, but cherubim appear to have four wings and seraphim appear to have six wings.

Cherubim. Cherubim appear more often in scripture than any other type of angel. They appear throughout the entire Bible beginning in the book of Genesis and ending in the book of Revelation. They are first mentioned as guardians of the Tree of Life in the Garden of Eden.

So He drove the man out; and at the east of the garden of Eden He stationed the cherubim, and the flaming sword which turned every direction, to guard the way to the tree of life. (NASB) Genesis 3:24

God put them there to keep Adam and Eve out of the garden. God directed Moses to have gold figurines of cherubim created and placed over the mercy seat in the ark of the covenant which was located in the tabernacle and then later in the

temple in Jerusalem (Ex. 25:20). Apparently, God did this because cherubim are present in the throne room.

The cherubim described in Ezekiel 1:1-15; 10:8-10, 20-21 do not look like the typical paintings and sculptures found in museums and stores. These passages reveal that these angels have human form, legs, hands, and faces, but they also have wings.

... they had human form. Each of them had four faces and four wings. And their legs were straight and their feet were like a calf's hoof, and they gleamed like burnished bronze. Under their

wings on their four sides were human hands. As for the faces and wings of the four of them, their wings touched one another; their faces did not turn when they moved, each went straight forward. As for the form of their faces, each had the face of a man, all four had the face of a lion on the right and the face of a bull on the left, and all four had the face of an eagle. Such were their faces. Their wings were spread out above; each had two touching another being, and two covering their bodies. (NASB) Ezekiel 1:5-11

In the book of Ezekiel we discover that these angels can fly or move through space, and hover in one place.

And the cherubim appeared to have the form of a man's hand under their wings . . . When the cherubim departed, they lifted their wings and rose up from the earth in my sight with the wheels beside them; and they stood still at the entrance of the east gate of the LORD'S house. And the glory of the God of Israel hovered over them. (NASB) Ezekiel 10:8, 19



Ezekiel 28:11-16 and Isaiah 14:13-14

suggest that one of the cherubim was the most beautiful creature in heaven. He was called the "anointed cherub" (note that cherubim is the plural form of cherub). He later rebelled against God and brought evil into the universe.

Seraphim. Another special type of angels are the seraphim. These angels are only found in the book of Isaiah. They have six wings.

Seraphim stood above Him, each having six wings; with two he covered his face, and with two he covered his feet, and with two he flew . . . Then one of the seraphim flew to me, with a burning

coal in his hand which he had taken from the altar with tongs.
(NASB) Isaiah 6:2, 6

Seraphim appear to render worship to God continually. Their names means “burning ones.”

Others. There may be other types of angels, but scripture does not reveal that any others exist.

Rank and Order. God tells us that there is an authority structure among these angels. Jude 9 tells us that the angel is an archangel and Daniel 10:13 says that he is a “chief prince.” Revelation 12:7 says “Michael and his angels waging war” in heaven sometime in the future. This means that Michael is like a general leading a host of angels.

The Apostle Paul also reveals that there is rank and order among the angels when he writes,

For our struggle is not against flesh and blood,
but against the rulers, against the powers,
against the world forces of this darkness,
against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the
heavenly places. (NASB) Ephesians 6:12

This reveals that there is a command structure among the angels.

EVIL AND GOOD ANGELS. Some of the angels are good and some are evil. That means, for example, some of the cherubim are good and some are evil. In modern times, evil angels have been usually called demons, spirits, or ghosts, but the holy angels are usually called “angels.”

Evil Angels. Evil angels came into existence when one unique cherub sinned by wanting to be like God. The other evil angels, maybe cherubim and seraphim, became evil angels when they decided to rebel against God too!

- *Anointed Cherub.* There was one special cherub which God called His anointed cherub. His name is Lucifer, Satan, or the Devil.

You were the anointed cherub who covers, And I placed you
there. You were on the holy mountain of God; You walked in the

midst of the stones of fire. (NASB) Ezekiel 28:14

This cherub must have been astonishingly beautiful.

. . . You had the seal of perfection, Full of wisdom and perfect
in beauty. You were in Eden, the garden of God; Every precious
stone was your covering: The ruby, the topaz, and the dia-
mond; The beryl, the onyx, and the jasper; The lapis lazuli, the
turquoise, and the emerald; And the gold, the workmanship of
your settings and sockets, Was in you. On the day that you were
created . . . You were blameless in your ways from the day you
were created, Until unrighteousness was found in you. (NASB)
Ezekiel 28:12-13, 15



But this anointed cherub is no longer perfect and blameless because he sinned.

You were blameless in your ways from the
day you were created, until unrighteousness
was found in you . . . Your heart was lifted up
because of your beauty . . . (NASB) Ezekiel
28:15, 17

. . . you said in your heart, ‘I will ascend to
heaven; I will raise my throne above the stars
of God, And I will sit on the mount of assembly
In the recesses of the north. ‘I will ascend above
the heights of the clouds; I will make myself
like the Most High.’ (NASB) Isaiah 14:13-14

His name was also Son of the Morning.

How you are fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning!
How you are cut down to the ground . . . (NKJV) Isaiah 14:12

- *The Demons.* When Satan sinned in heaven by wanting to be like God, he motivated one-third of the angels in heaven to follow him and rebel against God. But Satan was cast out of heaven and they were thrown out too.

. . . swept away a third of the stars of heaven and threw them to

the earth. (NASB) Revelation 12:4

Today, Satan is the leader of this army of evil or fallen angels. They are called demons.

But when the Pharisees heard it, they said, “This man casts out demons only by Beelzebul the ruler of the demons.” (NASB) Matthew 12:24

Fallen angels are organized. Each one has a function. In Daniel 10:13-21 a holy angel was sent from God to Daniel. This passage gives us a surprising view into spiritual warfare. He reveals that Satan has an organization and some of his demons are called princes. The demons oversee the different nations of the world. The holy angel also reveals to Daniel that he needed help from Michael, an archangel (Jude 9), in order to come to Daniel. This means the angels also differ in power.

But the prince of the kingdom of Persia was withstanding me for twenty-one days; then behold, Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me, for I had been left there with the kings of Persia. (NASB) Daniel 10:13

Ephesians 6:12 calls evil angels “rulers of darkness.” What a title! They are in control of this age, since Satan himself is said to be the “spirit of the world” (1 Cor. 2:12) and “the god of this world” (2 Cor. 4:4).

Yet, all angels are in submission to God (Luke 8:29-31). They are not completely free to do as they want. Yet God has allowed them freedom to perform evil acts, just as God is allowing man to do evil. We are in a spiritual war zone with Satan and his demons (Eph. 6:12). Satan and his army pretend to be messengers of truth or angels of light.

And no wonder, for even Satan disguises himself as an angel of light. (NASB) 2 Corinthians 11:14

The doctrines of demons are unknowingly taught in some churches as truth according to 1 Timothy 4:1. One of the most common errors is the reinterpretation of scripture to

accommodate each culture’s view of right and wrong.

You shall not do at all what we are doing here today, every man doing whatever is right in his own eyes . . . (NASB) Deut. 12:8

Some teach that scripture is not completely accurate. They believe the Bible has errors about science and history. Consequently, they say the Bible only contains the Word of God. It is not the Word of God. They seek “spiritual uplifting” but not from God. Some years ago, I visited a church in the San Francisco area. The pastor preached a wonderful, “biblically solid” sermon. Later we discovered in conversation that he did not believe in the virgin birth of Jesus or that Jesus is God. He was a great speaker and seemed very warm and compassionate, but he was a tool of Satan. How can we recognize the teachings of demons? Many would say when they deny Jesus Christ, but that is not the only evidence. Listen to Paul,

But the Spirit explicitly says that in later times some will fall away from the faith, paying attention to deceitful spirits and doctrines of demons, by means of the hypocrisy of liars seared in their own conscience as with a branding iron, men who forbid marriage and advocate abstaining from foods, which God has created to be gratefully shared in by those who believe and know the truth. (NASB) 1 Timothy 4:1-3

Demons know the Bible too. Satan even quoted the Bible to Jesus (Matt. 4:1-11). But they want to teach you the opposite of truth. They are attacking the Word of Truth. They do not want us to know truth. They want us to believe error. Scripture says the difference between the world’s religions and the Truth is a difference not in religious philosophy, but in demonic teaching. Religious beliefs and thoughts not taught in the Bible. They are the teachings of fallen or evil angels. God is not open minded. There is one and only one truth - period! Everything else is from evil angels.

And served their idols, Which became a snare to them. They even sacrificed their sons and their daughters to the demons . . . (NASB) Psalm 106:36-37

They want to keep us from knowing Jesus as our God and Savior (Matt. 13:19; Acts 26:18). If they fail there, they will work to teach Christians lies (2 Cor. 11:14; Gal. 1:8). If they fail there, another target is to make us ineffective for Jesus' Kingdom or eventually to destroy us if God will permit them. Their goal is to create doctrinal confusion, cause division within churches, motivate Christians to sin, or produce Christians with hearts that are cold towards others.

Demons also work to motivate us to sin (Luke 22:3) in a variety of ways. Sexual sin (1 Cor. 7:5), lying (John 8:44), pride, greed, and food are just several examples of sin that the demons want us to indulge in (Matt. 4:1-11).

- *Demons in Prison.* These angels, including Satan, will be judged by God at the end of time (Rev. 20:10). While these evil angels follow Satan, there appears to be another group of even more wicked angels who are in a supernatural prison - an abyss - awaiting future judgment. It appears they sinned back at the time of Noah. From Jude 6-7 we learn they cohabited with women in some way. They violated God's boundaries (Jude 6).

For if God did not spare angels when they sinned, but cast them into hell and committed them to pits of darkness, reserved for judgment . . . (NASB) 2 Peter 2:4

Their special prison sounds bottomless (Rev. 9:2). One demon during Jesus' ministry on earth referred to this prison in a conversation with Jesus.

And Jesus asked him, "What is your name?" And he said, "Legion"; for many demons had entered him. And they were entreating Him not to command them to depart into the abyss. Now there was a herd of many swine feeding there on the mountain; and the demons entreated Him to permit them to enter the swine. And He gave them permission. (NASB) Luke 8:30-32

None of these demons on Satan's staff can be rescued from their sin of rebellion. Why? God does not give us the answer.

For assuredly He does not give help to angels, but He gives help to the descendant of Abraham. (NASB) Hebrews 2:16

- *Demons Are Ministers.* Satan and his followers are ministers of God even though they are evil. God uses them to discipline Christians and to keep Christians from sinning (Job 1-2; 2 Corinthians 12:7).

Some churches today practice church discipline. That is a God honoring practice. In Paul's day church discipline was routine. 1 Corinthians 5 deals with a brother who had sex with his step mother. The man did not repent, so Paul did the following,

I have decided to deliver such a one to Satan for the destruction of his flesh, that his spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus. (NASB) 1 Corinthians 5:5

This was church discipline, and Satan was allowed at this



Seven Angels With Trumpets of Judgment

individual. Paul had to do the same thing to some other Christians (1 Timothy 1:20). God even used demons to prevent Paul from sinning with pride (2 Cor. 12:7).

Good Angels. The holy angels are organized too according to Eph. 3:10.

... so that the manifold wisdom of God might now be made known through the church to the rulers and the authorities in the heavenly places. (NASB) Ephesians 3:10

We know the names of only two of the holy angels: Michael and Gabriel.

Michael first appeared in the book of Daniel, then in Jude and finally in Revelation. Gabriel is the other holy angel frequently mentioned in scripture. He occurs in the book of Daniel in connection with Daniel's dreams (Daniel 8:16; 9:21) and in Luke 1:19, 26 when he speaks to Zacharias and Mary. When he tells Zacharias that his wife, Elizabeth, will give birth to John the Baptist, Gabriel says,

"I am Gabriel, who stands in the presence of God." (NASB) Luke 1:19.

What a statement! He is the one who stands in the presence of God. This implies a special position.

- *Holy Angels Are Ministers.* Holy angels are servants of God - ministers for Him. They have ministered to humans by delivering messages from God, communicating the Word of God, and protecting us.

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

They have ministered as messengers to the prophet Elijah (2 Kings 1:3), Daniel (Daniel 10:10-13), Mary (Luke 1:26), and Joseph (Matt. 1:20), for example. They also ministered to Jesus in some way after His being tempted by Satan.

And He was in the wilderness forty days being tempted by Satan; and He was with the wild beasts, and the angels were minister-

ing to Him. (NASB) Mark 1:13

They can be gracious to us when it is God's desire (Zechariah 1:13).

Angels participated in the giving of the Mosaic Law. We do not fully understand how they did this, but scripture says,

... you who received the law as ordained by angels, and yet did not keep it." (NASB) Acts 7:53

Some holy angels are responsible for protecting us.

See that you do not despise one of these little ones, for I say to you, that their angels in heaven continually behold the face of My Father who is in heaven. (NASB) Matthew 18:10

Good angels had the responsibility to protect Jesus (Ps. 91:11-12).

A missionary in China, before communism ruled, related a story about a time when the Chinese army went through the country side killing foreign missionaries. News had come to the missionary compound that the army was near. So the missionaries prayed for God's protection. The missionaries could hear the soldiers nearby. When morning came the compound was untouched. Later a missionary saw one of the soldiers and asked why the soldiers never came in. The soldier replied, "Because of the army on your roof and on the grounds. There were too many." The missionary was surprised because there was no human army at the headquarters. It appears that God had sent an army of angels to protect the missionaries.

Angels can minister to us in many ways, but they do not replace the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit puts us into the body of Christ (1 Cor. 12:13), seals us (Eph. 1:13), indwells us (James 4:5), helps us pray (Rom. 8:26), teaches us (1 Cor. 2:12-14), and fills us (Eph. 5:17-18). Angels do not do these things. The ministry of the Holy Spirit is directly within us while angels minister to us externally.

THEIR CHARACTERISTICS. Both evil and holy angels are intelligent, but they do not know everything. In 1 Peter

we find that the prophets did not understand the scripture they wrote when they were under the influence of the Holy Spirit, but neither did the angels.

It was revealed to them that they were not serving themselves, but you, in these things which now have been announced to you through those who preached the gospel to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven--things into which angels long to look. (NASB) 1 Peter 1:12

Angels can influence for good or evil. Demons want us to sin, especially Satan (Acts 5:3). Demons work to motivate us to action by changing our circumstances (Job 1-2).

Angels also have emotional feelings. Jesus told us that they are happy when a person repents over his or her sins and turns to God.

In the same way, I tell you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents. (NASB) Luke 15:10

So they have emotions, a will (Satan sinned), and physical movement. They can be invisible or visible. They are not omniscient, omnipotent, nor are they omnipresent. But they are intelligent, powerful, and they can move fast.

Angels are very powerful creatures. God can use just one of them to destroy an entire city.

And God sent an angel to Jerusalem to destroy it . . . (NASB) 1 Chronicles 21:15

God used an army of angels to kill the first-born in the nation of Egypt.

He sent upon them His burning anger,

fury, and indignation, and trouble, A band of destroying angels. (NASB) Psalm 78:49

Some day Jesus will return with an army of angels from heaven to destroy the world.

And to give relief to you who are afflicted and to us as well when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels in flaming fire . . . (NASB) 2 Thessalonians 1:7

But angels are not all powerful, as we saw in Isaiah 14 and Ezekiel 28.

You were on the holy mountain of God; You walked in the midst of the stones of fire . . . And you sinned; Therefore I have cast you as profane From the mountain of God. And I have destroyed you, O covering cherub, From the midst of the stones of fire. (NASB) Ezekiel 28:14, 16

In fact some day Christians will judge the evil angels (1 Cor. 6:3). Now that is unbelievable, and it shows that God controls them. They are not in control (Hebrews 2:5). They are only God's servants. But temporarily He has allowed some angels the freedom to do as they want - within limits.

CONCLUSION. Angels are God's ministers to do His work, but they are not in submission to us. Yes, they minister to us (Heb. 1:14), but we cannot tell them what to do. God did not intend for them to obey us and take direction from us.

Some people are too interested in angels and almost worship angels. Angels are not God. We must pray not to

Personality of Angels	
Passage	Characteristic
Col. 1:16	... created
Matt. 24:36	... limited knowledge
Dan. 10: 20-21	... powerful
Heb. 1:14	... spirits/minister to us
Jude 9	... humble
Heb. 12:22	... numerous
Luke 15:10	... joy over Christians
1 Cor. 4:9; 11:10	... watch us
Luke 16:22	... carry us to heaven?
1 Pet. 1:11-12	... longed to know about Jesus
Matt. 18:10	... assigned to each of us
Acts 7:53; Gal. 3:19	... communicated the law

them but to God. God wants our praise and our thanks. We should not share God's praise with His creatures. Men and women who pursue angels to gain a spiritual or material blessing are asking for trouble. The angel you think is a minister for God may turn out to be a member of Satan's team. It is important to remember that Satan and his followers appear as angels of light.

**No wonder, for even Satan disguises himself as an angel of light.
(NASB) 2 Corinthians 11:14**

Scripture never anywhere encourages us to seek anything from angels. Anyone who teaches otherwise fits the Apostle Peter's description of a false teacher.

Daring, self-willed, they do not tremble when they revile angelic majesties, whereas angels who are greater in might and power do not bring a reviling judgment against them before the Lord. But these . . . reviling where they have no knowledge . . . They count it a pleasure to revel in the daytime. They are stains and blemishes, reveling in their deceptions, as they carouse with you, having eyes full of adultery and that never cease from sin, enticing unstable souls, having a heart trained in greed . . . (NASB) 2 Peter 2:10-14

This is a sign of a false teacher - an arrogant one - one who apparently has a light-hearted attitude towards angels and a selfish heart for himself or herself, one who feels in control and confident, one who does not understand scripture or what he is really dealing with. We are warned to resist Satan and his demons (James 4:7).

Some day we will see Jesus and be in heaven along with God's holy angels. We will join the seraphim, cherubim, archangels and the innumerable host of heaven. But best of all we will see Jesus Christ and understand the wonders of a God in three persons: God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit. What a wonderful experience we will have for eternity as we spend time together and worship Jesus,

And the four living creatures, each one of them having six wings, are full of eyes around and within; and day and night they do not cease to say, "HOLY, HOLY, HOLY, is THE LORD GOD, THE ALMIGHTY, WHO WAS AND WHO IS AND WHO IS TO COME." (NASB) Revelation 4:8