

God's Invisible Agents

God is the Creator. Genesis 1:1 tells us, "God created the heavens and the earth." But the earth, stars and galaxies were not the first of God's creations. The Bible reveals that God created vast numbers of spirit beings before bringing the physical universe into existence. Who these beings are and the purpose for their existence will be explained in this study.

The method of study is similar to that used in the Ambassador College Bible Correspondence Course. You simply look up and read in your Bible the scriptures given in answer to each question. Comments following the questions will elaborate on these verses. Now let's begin this fascinating and eye-opening study.

1. What did God create before bringing the earth into existence? Job 38:4-7. What are these "stars"? Revelation 1:20.

In Job 38:7 "morning stars" and "sons of God" refer to angels. Notice that Revelation 12:4, 7-9 also speaks of angels as the "stars of heaven."

Angels are individually created spirit beings. They cannot marry or reproduce (Matthew 22:30). They are called "sons of God" because God created each angel a separate, immortal spirit being. And so we find the angels shouting for joy at the creation of the earth, long before the creation of Adam. They were joyful because the earth was to be the home of at least one third of them.

2. Does the Bible plainly speak of angels who sinned? II Peter 2:4, Jude 6. What details are revealed about their sin? Ezekiel 28:13-17, Isaiah 14:12-14.

Among the untold millions of angels God created was a powerful, wise and beautiful cherub — the great archangel Lucifer, who was perfect in all his ways. God set Lucifer over the angels on earth to administer God's government over them.

But Lucifer sinned. He became jealous of God, envious and resentful of God's authority. Eventually, he and one third of God's angels rebelled against their Creator. They left the earth and ascended to heaven in an attempt to take over rulership of the universe.

Lucifer (renamed Satan) and his angelic co-

horts (demons) failed in their attempted coup and were cast back to the earth (Isaiah 14:12, Revelation 12:3-4, Luke 10:18). Revelation 12:9 refers to another attempt by the devil and his demons to overthrow God, apparently to occur in the end time.

3. How many angels remained obedient to God? Revelation 12:4.

This verse indicates that two thirds of the angels remained loyal to God. These millions upon millions of spirit beings are God's servants, helping to carry out His will.

4. The Bible describes various types of angels whose appearance and function differ. Are there cherubim at God's throne? Psalm 99:1. And seraphim? Isaiah 6:1-2. What other types of angelic beings surround God's throne? Revelation 4:2-11.

Cherubim are associated with God's throne, either transporting it or carrying out directives from that throne, such as guarding the tree of life after Adam and Eve sinned (Genesis 3:24). Recall that Lucifer is the "anointed cherub" (Ezekiel 28:14) who was assigned to rule the earth. The best description of cherubim is found in the book of Ezekiel. In chapters 1 and 10, we read of cherubim transporting God's throne. They are large, powerful, four-faced creatures with four wings.

The seraphim, which are said to be above the throne, seem to bear a general resemblance to humans, but are described as having six wings. The four "living creatures" of Revelation 4:6-8 appear to have the combined features of cherubim and seraphim. No description of the 24 elders is given in the Bible except that they are dressed in white clothing, each having a golden crown on his head.

5. Has God assigned some angels to continually walk about the earth to observe and report back to Him conditions in the world? Revelation 5:6, Zechariah 4:10, II Chronicles 16:9. Do other untold millions of angels serve God at His throne in heaven, from which He rules the universe? Daniel 7:9-10.

6. In Hebrews 1 and 2 the apostle Paul speaks about the difference between man and angels. Are we told that "the world to come"

— the Millennium and thereafter — will not be ruled by angels? Hebrews 2:5. But, if we become spirit-born children of God, are we promised rulership over angels? Hebrews 2:6-8, I Corinthians 6:2-3.

Although humans have been made a little lower than the angels for now, in the world tomorrow those born of God will be placed over all of God's creation, including angels!

7. In what other way, besides composition, do angels and humans differ? Hebrews 1:5, 13.

Man, now lower than angels, has a destiny far greater. Man was created to be literally begotten by God's Spirit, ultimately to be born into the divine Family of God. Angels are not destined to ever become part of God's universe-ruling Family. Angels, higher than man is now, were created to be God's servants in His universe-ruling government.

8. What is the function of many of God's angels? Hebrews 1:7, 14. Are Spirit-begotten Christians the heirs Paul is talking about? Romans 8:16-17, Galatians 3:26-29, 4:6-7. Has God specifically assigned certain angels to look after His begotten children? Acts 12:15, Matthew 18:10.

A number of God's angels are commissioned to minister to the Spirit-begotten children of God, who are His spiritual heirs.

To illustrate this function, we might consider the status of the son of a wealthy man. While still a child, the son is under the care of an adult servant or guardian chosen by the boy's father. The servant is older, further advanced in knowledge, more developed physically and mentally — but has much less potential. For when the son matures, he will inherit his father's wealth and power. Therefore the servant, older and more mature, is only a servant ministering to the young heir. Likewise, angels are ministering to Spirit-begotten humans today.

9. Are angels powerful? II Peter 2:11. Do God's angels protect His obedient children from accidents, calamities, plagues and other evils? Psalm 34:7, 91:1-12.

God's angels are assigned to help His heirs of salvation along the road to eternal life — to save them from premature death, accidents and to protect them from the devil and his demons.

10. What did an angel of God do when the civil rulers imprisoned some of the apostles? Acts 5:17-20. Did this enable the apostles to continue preaching the truth of God? Verse 21.

11. Do God's holy angels have the power to sometimes manifest themselves in order to carry out their duties? Daniel 9:21, Hebrews 13:2. Also read Genesis 18 and 19:1-22.

Angels are also messengers. (The Hebrew and Greek words for *angel* also mean "messenger.") Angels appeared to Abraham, Lot,

Hagar, Moses, Gideon and many of God's prophets and apostles. When God's angels manifest themselves to human beings, they look like ordinary men.

Paul points out in Hebrews 13:2 that angels sometimes travel incognito on God's business, not revealing who they are. But righteous angels never capriciously appear and disappear merely to amuse either themselves or men.

12. Why did the prophet Elisha ask God to open the eyes of his servant? II Kings 6:15-17.

No wonder Elisha did not fear his enemies. He knew that one of God's spirit armies was standing upon the mountain, ready to protect him and his servant from the army of the king of Syria.

13. Has Michael the archangel been assigned to protect and minister to the 12 tribes of Israel? Daniel 12:1.

The Bible mentions by name three angels of high rank: Lucifer, now Satan the devil (Isaiah 14:12); Gabriel, who appeared to Daniel (Daniel 8:16-17, 9:21), to Zacharias, the father of John the Baptist (Luke 1:19), and to Mary, the mother of Jesus (verses 26-28); and Michael, called one of the "chief princes" (Daniel 10:13), whom Jude identifies as an archangel (Jude 9).

14. Was Gabriel (apparently of archangel rank) sent to give Daniel understanding of visions, and to fight spiritual battles with fallen angels ("princes") of the devil so God's will would be carried out among the governments of men? Daniel 8:15-16, 9:21-22, 10:10-14, 20-21.

From this brief study we can see that the spirit world is teeming with activity. God works (John 5:17), and so do His invisible servants, who are busy helping Him carry out His will.

The time is coming soon when God will send one of His powerful, righteous angels to bind Satan and all his demons — to completely restrain them, preventing them from deceiving mankind for 1,000 years (Revelation 20:1-3)!

(For more information about the origin of Satan, be sure to call or write for our free booklet *Did God Create a Devil?*) □



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