

The Heavenly Sons of God, Angels Part 2

The word "Adam" (אָדָם) means "human" or "humanity," And God used Adam to start his family male and female. These two were God's initial family here on the earth, both man and woman being equal, and operating under the same name, Adam.

God seemed to always start his families with a son. The first man, Adam. Then the last Adam, Jesus Christ, the Father's only begotten Son.

God seems to use the family to serve a dual purpose of fostering His love and managing God's Kingdom in both earthly and heavenly domains.

The Heavenly Sons of God, Angels

It seems that God creates nothing without purpose and an assignment; this, including God himself, has a purpose and an assignment. The sons of God in heaven, including angels, present themselves before God to demonstrate loyalty and report on their responsibilities, **Job chapter 1**.

Note: The Hebrew word for angel is "mal'ak", which means "messenger" or "one who is sent". They are supernatural ambassadors sent by God to deliver messages or carry out tasks.

The Bible provides several accounts of angels appearing in human form, often depicted as males. Biblical passages where angels appear as men:

- **Genesis 18:1-8:**

Abraham was visited by three men at Mamre, whom he treated as guests. The narrative later implies they were angels.

- **Judges 13:1-20:**

An angel of the Lord appears to Manoah and his wife, behaving like a man and interacting with them in a very human way.

- **Daniel 10:5-6:**

The prophet Daniel describes seeing a man clothed in linen with a golden belt, whose appearance was remarkable, like lightning and flaming torches.

- **Luke 1:11-20:**

The angel Gabriel appeared to Zechariah in the form of a man to announce the birth of John the Baptist.

- **Luke 24:4:**

When Mary Magdalene and other women went to the tomb of Jesus, they saw "two men" in clothes that shone brightly.

Winged Beings in the Bible

The Bible presents Seraphim and Cherubim as distinct celestial beings that possess prominent features not commonly associated with typical angels.

Importantly, the scriptures do not label these beings as angels, nor do they imply that angels possess the physical characteristics attributed to Seraphim and Cherubim. Both Seraphim and Cherubim are consistently depicted as celestial beings associated with God's presence and His throne.

Seraphim

- **Location:** Isaiah's vision of God's throne room.
- **Wings:** Six wings.
- **Purpose:** They use two wings to cover their faces, two to cover their feet, and two to fly, worshipping God.

Cherubim

- **Location:** Found in Ezekiel's vision and on the Ark of the Covenant.
- **Wings:** Four wings.
- **Purpose:** They are described as living creatures with human and animal-like features, guarding the presence of God and the throne itself.

Key Points:

- **Different Terminology:**

The Bible uses "angel" to describe messenger-type task-oriented beings, "sent ones," a term not applied to cherubim or seraphim in Scripture.

- **Celestial Beings:**

Both cherubim and seraphim are presented as powerful, distinct classes of heavenly creatures that serve God.

- **Biblical Descriptions:**

The biblical accounts of seraphim in **Isaiah 6** and cherubim in **Ezekiel 1 and 10** depict them as awe-inspiring, fearsome creatures, unlike the human-like appearance of angels.

- **Traditional vs. Biblical:**

While it is a widely held theological understanding to consider seraphim and cherubim as types or ranks of angels, the Bible's scriptural usage maintains them as distinct categories.

What about Michael the Archangel

The Bible identifies Michael as an angel, or more specifically, an "archangel," in the book of Jude.

Michael name means "*Who is like God?*" which shows his strength and his role in protecting God's authority.

He is called a "chief prince" and the "great prince" and is described as a powerful spiritual warrior with a strong, human-like appearance. This is similar to the angel described in **Daniel 10:5-6, 13**, who has a body like beryl, a face like lightning, and arms and feet like polished brass.

- **Chief of Angels:**

Michael is explicitly called an "archangel," meaning "chief angel" or "chief messenger".

- **Warrior and Leader:**

The Bible portrays him in military terms, leading heavenly armies against the dragon (Satan) in Revelation and fighting against other spiritual forces, such as the "prince of Persia" in the Book of Daniel. Michael is actually called a chief Prince in **Daniel 10:13**.

- **Defender of God's Rulership:**

He stands against God's enemies and defends the divine kingdom, **Revelation 12:7-9**.

- **Protector of Israel:**

In the Book of **Daniel 12:1**, he is described as the "great prince who stands guard over the sons of your people," referring to Israel.

- **Confronting Satan:**

Michael is shown directly contending with the devil, famously over the body of Moses, and ultimately casting Satan and his angels out of heaven **Jude 1:9**.

Is Satan a fallen angel

The Bible does not explicitly state that "Satan is a fallen angel." This interpretation is widely supported by Scholars and theologians who normally refer to various biblical passages. For instance, in **Luke 10:18**, Jesus mentions, "**I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven**," which alludes to Satan's expulsion, but Jesus never calls him an Angel.

Additionally, texts from **Isaiah 14** and **Revelation 12** describe a powerful being being cast out from heaven, further supporting this view. Scholars and theologians often reference these passages, alongside the mention of "**the devil and his angels**" in Matthew 25:41, to suggest that Satan was once a heavenly being who rebelled and was subsequently expelled. Nonetheless, the Bible does not explicitly define Satan as an angel, only as a powerful, spiritual being.

Supporting Verses and Interpretations:

- **Luke 10:18:** Jesus's statement, "**I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven**," is a key piece of evidence, suggesting Satan's prior existence in heaven.
- **Isaiah 14:12-15:** This passage describes the downfall of a powerful "**day star**" (often translated as Lucifer) who desired to ascend to heaven and be like God, and was consequently thrown down to the pit.

- **Ezekiel 28:12-19:** Similar to Isaiah, this text describes a "**cherub**" in Eden, who was perfect in beauty and wisdom but was cast out of the mountain of God due to pride. If we just use the Bible to describe the type of being that Satan was, it's more in line with him being like one of the creatures around the throne than your typical Angel.
- **Revelation 12:7-9:** This passage describes a war in heaven and the casting out. "**great dragon, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, and his angels**" to the earth. Just because this verse says that Satan and his angels who were cast out doesn't mean that Satan was an angel; it just means he had angels under his authority, like Michael.
- **Matthew 25:41:** The reference to a place in hell prepared for "**the devil and his angels**" Again we see the same type of reference used here in Matthew 25:41. it says the **devil and his angels**.

The Bible does not state that Lucifer had wings; the popular image of winged angels is a product of art and tradition, rather than biblical text, which many believe originated in the 4th century after the resurrection of Christ. The name "Lucifer" is a translation of a Hebrew term meaning "shining one" from **Isaiah 14:12**, and this passage describes *a fallen king, not a fallen angel. While some biblical passages mention angels with wings, these are specific types of beings, like cherubim and seraphim, not general angels, and their descriptions are primarily symbolic.*

What the Bible says (and doesn't say):

- **"Lucifer" is not a direct name:**

The term "Lucifer" comes from St. Jerome's Latin translation of **Isaiah 14:12**, which refers to a fallen Babylonian king. The Bible does not describe Satan (the entity known as the "devil") as having wings.

- **Angels as spirits:**

The Bible describes angels as spirit creatures who do not have physical bodies. While they have appeared to humans, this is not their true, unchanging form, according to the text. Angels do have a bodily form, but it's not made up of the same substance that our natural bodies are made of.

Note: We need to stop viewing the spirit world as a mystical environment lacking substance. The essence of the spiritual realm is of a higher nature than that of the physical world. It is not a vague or ethereal place; rather, it is a deeper and more fundamental reality from which the material world originates.

- **Symbolic wings:**

The idea of angels having wings was popularized in medieval art and is largely a symbolic representation of their heavenly nature and ability to travel between realms, although this is not explicitly stated in the Bible.

- **Angels appearing without wings:**

When angels have appeared to people in the Bible, they are often depicted in human form, without wings.

Scholars and theologians began to widely embrace the concept of winged angels during the fourth and fifth centuries, primarily due to the influence of Greco-Roman art. While some specific biblical beings, such as the seraphim and cherubim, are described as having wings, the idea that all angels are human-like and winged is a later artistic tradition.

Shift in artistic representation

- **Wingless beginnings:** In early Christian art, angels were typically depicted as wingless men, often indistinguishable from other human figures. For example, a 3rd-century fresco of the Annunciation in the Catacomb of Priscilla in Rome shows a wingless Gabriel.
- **4th-century transformation:** The earliest known Christian artwork featuring winged angels dates to the late 4th century. This imagery appeared after Constantine's conversion and the Roman Empire's adoption of Christianity, a period when Christian art began to incorporate classical pagan iconography. The winged figures of the Greek goddess of victory, Nike, and the Roman goddess, Victoria, are believed to be the models for the winged angel form.
- **The Prince's Sarcophagus:** One of the earliest examples of winged angels is on the "Prince's Sarcophagus," dating to the late 4th century, which was discovered in modern-day Istanbul.

Theological justification

- **Symbolic, not literal:** Early theologians acknowledged that the wings were a symbolic artistic device, not a literal physical attribute. In the late 4th century, Saint John Chrysostom explained that angels' wings were meant to convey the "sublimity and lightness and speed of their nature," as well as their ability to travel between heaven and earth.

The historian Josephus,

A prominent figure of the 1st century, reported on angels without depicting them as having wings. Instead, his references to angels typically describe them in human form or as spiritual entities, lacking detailed physical descriptions. This portrayal aligns with the biblical accounts that Josephus was interpreting, which similarly emphasize the human-like qualities of angels rather than physical attributes like wings.

Key details from Josephus's writings include:

- **Human-like form:** In *Antiquities of the Jews*, Josephus describes Jacob wrestling with a divine "angel" or "apparition" that appears in a human-like form.

- Angels intermarrying with women: Like the book of Genesis, Josephus refers to angels cohabiting with women to produce giants or demigods. His description focuses on moral transgression rather than physical ones involving wings.

Genesis 6:1-4 Now it came to pass, when men began to multiply on the face of the earth, and daughters were born to them, 2 that the sons of God saw the daughters of men, that they were beautiful; and they took wives for themselves of all whom they chose. 3 And the Lord said, "My Spirit shall not strive with man forever, for he is indeed flesh; yet his days shall be one hundred and twenty years." 4 There were giants on the earth in those days, and also afterward, when the sons of God came in to the daughters of men and they bore children to them. Those were the mighty men who were of old, men of renown.

- Emphasis on tradition, not visuals: Josephus is a careful interpreter of biblical tradition and would likely have known that the most common artistic image of winged human-like angels was a later development, influenced by Greek mythology and Roman art.
- Distinction between different celestial beings: Winged beings like cherubim and seraphim are distinct from the messenger angels in much of biblical literature and Josephus's commentary. While Josephus mentions the winged cherubim in the temple, he notes their mysterious and unknowable form.

What can we take away from all of this? It seems that God created humanity to serve as a glorified physical representation of the true sons of God who exist with Him in heaven. One scripture that supports this idea is **Matthew 22:29-31**, where Jesus said, **"You are mistaken, not knowing the Scriptures nor the power of God. For in the resurrection, they neither marry nor are given in marriage but are like angels of God in heaven."** Once God's chosen ones reach heaven, there will be no more procreation. Instead, we will serve God according to the purpose He ordained for us before the foundation of the world, ruling and reigning with Jesus Christ.

I hold the conviction that the original sons of God fell short in their divine responsibility to exercise authority on behalf of God, overseeing all aspects of His creation. As a result, I believe that a significant component, if not the entirety, of our heavenly assignments will involve ruling and reigning over both the physical and spiritual realms that God has established. In this divine order, the original angels, who are the sons of God, will operate under our leadership, as we humbly submit ourselves to the supreme authority of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

Hebrews 1:13-14 But to which of the angels has He ever said: **"Sit at My right hand, Till I make Your enemies Your footstool"**? 14 **Are they not all ministering spirits sent forth to minister for those who will inherit salvation?**