

Demons are aligned with Satan

Then war broke out in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon [Satan], and *the dragon and his angels fought back*.

REVELATION 12:7 NET

This illustrates that evil angels or demons are aligned with Satan.

Demons can possess people . . .

When he [Jesus] came to the other side, to the region of the Gadarenes, *two demon-possessed men* coming from the tombs met him. They were extremely violent, so that no one was able to pass by that way. MATTHEW 8:28 NET

. . . and demons can cause such people much harm

[A FATHER OF A DEMON-POSSESSED BOY:] *A spirit seizes him, and he suddenly screams; it throws him into convulsions and causes him to foam at the mouth. It hardly ever leaves him alone, torturing him severely.* LUKE 9:39 NET

Demons both fear and have to submit to God and Jesus Christ

You believe that God is one; well and good. Even the demons believe that – and tremble with fear. JAMES 2:19 NET

But Jesus rebuked him [a demon-possessed man]: “*Silence! Come out of him!*” ²⁶*After throwing him into convulsions, the unclean spirit cried out with a loud voice and came out of him.* ²⁷They were all amazed so that they asked each other, “What is this? A new teaching with authority! *He even commands the unclean spirits and they obey him.*”

MARK 1:25-27 NET

Demons face eternal punishment

Then he [Jesus Christ] will say to those on his left, ‘Depart from me, you accursed, into *the eternal fire that has been prepared for the devil and his angels!*’ MATTHEW 25:41 NET

Pray for persecuted Christians

CHAPTER 5

Angels, Satan and Demons

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I. Angels

The Bible often mentions angels. The existence and role of these mighty servants of God should be a great encouragement to believers. This is in no small part due to the fact that their work often involves believers, including giving believers supernatural help.

Note that while the great majority of references to angels in the Bible are to God's holy angels, evil angels are also mentioned. These are commonly identified with demons. In headings in this book, "Angels" primarily refer to angels of God. But bear in mind that some concepts, such as angels being very powerful, are applicable to all angels.

Attributes of Angels

Angels have a human-like form, but are very awesome

[DANIEL, DESCRIBING A VISION:] *I looked up and saw a man clothed in linen; around his waist was a belt made of gold from Upaz. ⁶His body resembled yellow jasper, and his face had an appearance like lightning. His eyes were like blazing torches; his arms and feet had the gleam of polished bronze. His voice thundered forth like the sound of a large crowd.* DANIEL 10:5-6 NET

This is describing an angel. The reference to the angel as a "man" and the mention of his human-like features (waist, face, eyes, arms and feet) suggest that angels have a human-like form.

Angels are very powerful

He will do this when the Lord Jesus appears from heaven with *his mighty angels, ...* 2 THESSALONIANS 1:7B GNT

Suddenly there was a severe earthquake, for an angel of the Lord descending from heaven came and rolled away the stone and sat on it.

MATTHEW 28:2 NET

The accompanying earthquake is indicative of the angel's awesome power. The stone was the very large one that had sealed Jesus' tomb.

into prison so you may be tested, and you will experience suffering for ten days. REVELATION 2:10A NET

Satan's influence is limited by God and Jesus Christ

[PAUL:] So that I would not become too proud of the wonderful things that were shown to me, *a painful physical problem was given to me. This problem was a messenger from Satan, sent to beat me and keep me from being too proud. ⁸I begged the Lord three times to take this problem away from me. ⁹But he said to me, "My grace is enough for you. When you are weak, my power is made perfect in you."* So I am very happy to brag about my weaknesses. Then Christ's power can live in me. 2 CORINTHIANS 12:7-9 NCV™

Paul's affliction apparently came from Satan. But Paul implies that Jesus Christ permitted it, using it both to keep Paul from becoming conceited (v. 7) and to make Paul receptive to Christ's power working in him. Thus this passage illustrates that God and Jesus Christ may permit Satan to afflict (or tempt) their people, but only in accordance with their purposes. As such his power and influence is limited by them.

Demons

Evil spiritual forces are referred to by a number of names, including "demons", "evil spirits", "spirits" and (evil) "angels". In order to be concise, generally only "Demons" (or "demons") has been used in this and the following subheadings.

Demons are evil and powerful spiritual beings

[PAUL, TO BELIEVERS:] *For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world rulers of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavens.* EPHESIANS 6:12 NET

The terms "rulers" and "powers" are indicative of the great – but limited – power of demons. The last two clauses appear to together refer to the whole of the spiritual realm.

earth. *That same spirit [Satan] is now working in those who refuse to obey God.* [EPHESIANS 2:2](#) NCV™

And they [false teachers] may wake up and escape from *the trap of the devil, who catches them to do what he wants.* [2 TIMOTHY 2:26](#) NCV™

Satan is not as powerful as God

[PAUL, TO BELIEVERS:] *The God of peace will quickly crush Satan under your feet.* [ROMANS 16:20A](#) NET

Satan is not as powerful as Jesus Christ

Now he was casting out a demon that was mute. When the demon had gone out, the man who had been mute began to speak, and the crowds were amazed. ... ²¹[JESUS:] *When a strong man, fully armed, guards his own palace, his possessions are safe. ²²But when a stronger man attacks and conquers him, he takes away the first man's armor on which the man relied and divides up his plunder.* [LUKE 11:14, 21-22](#) NET

In v. 22 Jesus refers to his overpowering of Satan, stripping him of his power and taking what was his – a truth demonstrated by Jesus driving out demons (v. 14) and so releasing people from Satan's grip.

Satan stands condemned

... the ruler of this world has been condemned. [JOHN 16:11B](#) NET

Satan's Work against God's People

Satan tempts God's people

[PAUL, TO BELIEVERS IN THESSALONICA:] *So when I could bear it no longer, I sent to find out about your faith, for fear that the tempter somehow tempted you and our toil had proven useless.* [1 THESSALONIANS 3:5](#) NET

Satan can afflict God's people

So Satan went out from the presence of the LORD, and he afflicted Job with a malignant ulcer from the sole of his feet to the top of his head.

[JOB 2:7](#) NET

[JESUS CHRIST, TO THE CHURCH IN SMYRNA:] *Do not be afraid of the things you are about to suffer. The devil is about to have some of you thrown*

Angels can communicate and interact with others

Suddenly an angel came to him [Elijah] and touched him. "Get up and eat," the angel said. ⁶Elijah saw near his head a loaf baked over coals and a jar of water, so he ate and drank. Then he went back to sleep. ⁷Later the LORD's angel came to him a second time. The angel touched him and said, "Get up and eat. If you don't, the journey will be too hard for you." [1 KINGS 19:5-7B](#) NCV™

Angels and God

Angels surround God, and even stand in his presence

[JOHN, DESCRIBING A VISION OF A SCENE IN HEAVEN:] *Then I looked and heard the voice of many angels in a circle around the throne, as well as the living creatures and the elders.* [REVELATION 5:11A](#) NET

The angel answered him [Zechariah], "I am Gabriel, who stands in the presence of God ..." [LUKE 1:19A](#) NET

Angels worship God and Jesus Christ

[JOHN, DESCRIBING A VISION OF A SCENE IN HEAVEN:] *The angels who stood around the throne knelt in front of it with their faces to the ground. The elders and the four living creatures knelt there with them. Then they all worshiped God ¹²and said, "Amen! Praise, glory, wisdom, thanks, honor, power, and strength belong to our God forever and ever! Amen!"* [REVELATION 7:11-12](#) CEV

And when God brings *his firstborn Son* into the world, he says, "*Let all God's angels worship him.*" [HEBREWS 1:6](#) NCV™

Angels serve God and Jesus Christ

Praise the LORD, you angels of his, you powerful warriors who carry out his decrees and obey his orders! ²¹Praise the LORD, all you warriors of his, you servants of his who carry out his desires! [PSALMS 103:20-21](#) NET

The Son of Man will send his angels, and they will gather from his kingdom everything that causes sin as well as all lawbreakers. [MATTHEW 13:41](#) NET

Angels and God's People

Angels help and care for God's people

What are all the angels? They are spirits sent to serve those who are going to receive salvation. [HEBREWS 1:14](#) GW

The LORD's angel camps around the LORD's loyal followers and delivers them. [PSALMS 34:7](#) NET

Angels give people messages, including instructions . . .

About three o'clock one afternoon *he saw clearly in a vision an angel of God who came in and said to him, "Cornelius."* ⁴Staring at him and becoming greatly afraid, Cornelius replied, "What is it, Lord?" The angel said to him, "Your prayers and your acts of charity have gone up as a memorial before God. ⁵Now send men to Joppa and summon a man named Simon, who is called Peter." [ACTS 10:3-5](#) NET

Note that the Hebrew and Greek words for "angel" carry the meaning "messenger".

. . . Angels also give messages about future events

[PAUL:] For *last night an angel of the God to whom I belong and whom I serve came to me ²⁴and said, 'Do not be afraid, Paul! You must stand before Caesar, and God has graciously granted you the safety of all who are sailing with you.'* [ACTS 27:23-24](#) NET

The revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave him to show to his servants the things that must soon take place. He made it known by sending his angel to his servant John, ... [REVELATION 1:1](#) ESV

Pray for persecuted Christians

II. Satan and Demons

See also: *II. Spiritual Warfare*, p. 305

Many people find the existence of Satan (i.e. the devil) and demons disturbing and choose to avoid the subject. But to live the Christian life it is vital to understand our chief opponents. Moreover, the Bible has a lot to say about Satan and demons – much of which is in fact encouraging to believers.

Satan's Evilness

Satan is evil and is opposed to God's kingdom

When anyone hears the word about the kingdom and does not understand it, the evil one [Satan] comes and snatches what was sown in his heart; this is the seed sown along the path. [MATTHEW 13:19](#) NET

Satan is deceitful

[JESUS, TO THE JEW LEADERS:] The devil was a murderer from the beginning. *He has never been truthful. He doesn't know what the truth is. Whenever he tells a lie, he's doing what comes naturally to him. He's a liar and the father of lies.* [JOHN 8:44B](#) GW

Satan's Power

Satan has great power and authority in the world

Then *the devil* led him up to a high place and showed him in a flash *all the kingdoms of the world.* ⁶*And he said to him, "To you I will grant this whole realm – and the glory that goes along with it, for it has been relinquished to me, and I can give it to anyone I wish.* [LUKE 4:5-6](#) NET

[JOHN:] ... *the whole world lies in the power of the evil one.* [1 JOHN 5:19B](#) NET

Satan works in and through unbelievers

[PAUL, TO BELIEVERS IN EPHESUS:] Yes, in the past you lived the way the world lives, following the ruler of the evil powers that are above the