

ANGELS & ARCHANGELS

&

All the Company of Heaven

When you think of angels, what comes to mind?



But, what does the Bible say angels look like?

- *"Above him stood the seraphim. Each had six wings: with two he covered his face, and with two he covered his feet, and with two he flew." (Isaiah 6:2)*
- *"Now as I looked at the living creatures, behold, a wheel was on the earth beside each living creature with its four faces. The appearance of the wheels and their workings was like the color of beryl, and all four had the same likeness. The appearance of their workings was, as it were, a wheel in the middle of a wheel. When they moved, they went toward any one of four directions; they did not turn aside when they went." (Ezekiel 1: 15-17)*
- *"I lifted up my eyes and looked, and behold, a man clothed in linen, with a belt of fine gold from Uphaz around his waist. His body was like beryl, his face like the appearance of lightning, his eyes like flaming torches, his arms and legs like the gleam of burnished bronze, and the sound of his words like the sound of a multitude." (Daniel 10: 5-6)*

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- ***“As I looked at the living creatures, I saw a wheel on the earth beside the living creatures, one for each of the four of them. As for the appearance of the wheels and their construction: their appearance was like the gleaming of beryl; and the four had the same form, their construction being something like a wheel within a wheel. When they moved, they moved in any of the four directions without veering as they moved. Their rims were tall and awesome, for the rims of all four were full of eyes all round.” (Ezekiel 1: 15-18)***

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So, when the angel says, “Do not be afraid,”
now you know why!



VS.



What else do we know about angels?

- They were created by God before humans (Job 38:7).
- They are very different from humans, a sort of immaterial spirit or flame (Psalm 103:6).
- Humanity knew about the existence of angels from the beginning (Genesis 32: 1-2).
- Angels are messengers of God's word (they announced the birth of both John the Baptist and Jesus), and God's will (they were sent to Egypt in the tenth plague – Exodus 11 and 12; they set Peter and other apostles free from prison – Acts 5:19).
- They ministered to Jesus in the desert (Matthew 4:11)
- As they are **incorporeal**, they are less confined by space and place and can travel vast distances instantaneously, to appear where it is necessary for them to act.
- They are also **immortal** (Luke 20:36); however, their immortality is not divine (that is, independent and unconditional). Instead, it completely depends, like the immortality of human souls, on the will and mercy of God.

Number and Rank of Angels:

the world of angels is immeasurably vast and that the angels are divided into nine different ranks

- Daniel 7: 9-10 speaks to the vastness of the numbers of angels
 - *As I watched,
thrones were set in place,
and an Ancient One took his throne;
his clothing was white as snow,
and the hair of his head like pure wool;
his throne was fiery flames,
and its wheels were burning fire.
A stream of fire issued
and flowed out from his presence.
A thousand thousand served him,
and ten thousand times ten thousand stood attending him.*

Number and Rank of Angels:

the world of angels is immeasurably vast and that the angels are divided into nine different ranks

- The Lowest Hierarchy of Angels include

- **9. Angels** - Angels of the ranks closest to us (the third hierarchy) appear in Scripture as messengers or heralds of the will of God, guides for people and the servants of their salvation (Heb. 1:14).

- **8. Archangels** - called the great heralds of good news, announcing the great and most glorious. In the Bible, there are five named archangels (and tradition names two additional ones)

- **Michael** (lit. *Who is like unto God?*) – Dan. 10:13; 12:1; Rev. 12:7-8)
- **Gabriel** (lit. *Man of God*) – Dan. 8:16; 9:21; Luke 1:19-26
- **Raphael** (lit. *The help of God*) – Tobit 3:17; 12:15
- **Uriel** (lit. *Fire of God*) or **Jeremiel** (lit. *The highness or mercy of God*) – 2 Ezra 4:1, 36
- **Salathiel/Phaltiel/Psaltiel** (lit. *Prayer to God*) – 2 Ezra 5:16

- **7. Virtues**

- They both work very great miracles and send down the grace of miracle-working to God's saints, who are worthy of such grace, in order that these may work miracles, such as healing every sickness and foretelling the future. The holy virtues also help people laboring and those overburdened by the bearing of an obedience placed on them by someone—by which their name "virtues" is explained—and they bear the infirmities of the weak.



Number and Rank of Angels:

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- The Middle Hierarchy of Angels

- 6. Principalities

- They have command over the lower angels, directing them to the fulfilment of divine orders. The management of the universe and the keeping of all the kingdoms and principedoms, of lands and all peoples, races and nations, is also entrusted to them. The angels of this order also raise worthy people to various honorable offices and direct them so that they take power not for the sake of their own gain and benefit, but for the sake of honor from God, for the sake of spreading and augmenting of His holy glory, and for the sake of the benefit of their neighbors.

- 5. Dominions

- Being themselves free, they dominate over the rest of the angels that follow behind them. Having abandoned servile fear, as St. Dionysius the Areopagite says, they voluntarily and with joy serve God unceasingly. Also they send down power for prudent governing and wise management to authorities on the earth set up by God. Further they teach how to control the senses, how to subdue in oneself dissolute desires and passions, how to enslave the flesh to the spirit, and how to rule over one's will and be above all temptations.

- 4. Powers

- they have power over the evil one, in order to restrain the power of the demons, to repulse the temptations brought upon people by them, and to prevent the demons from harming anyone to the degree that they would wish. The powers strengthen the good ascetics in spiritual struggles and labors, protecting them so that they may not be deprived of the Heavenly Kingdom. They help those wrestling with passions and vices to cast out evil thoughts and slanders of the enemy and to conquer the evil one.



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- The Highest Hierarchy of Angels
 - 3. Thrones
 - The thrones are then called "God-bearing" not according to essence but according to grace, given for their service, which is mystically and incomprehensibly to bear God in themselves. Residing on them in an incomprehensible manner, God makes His righteous judgement, according to the word of David: "Thou hast sat upon a throne, O Thou that judgest righteousness" (Ps 9:4).



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- The Highest Hierarchy of Angels
 - 2. Cherubim
 - They are always radiant with the light of the knowledge of God and His Wisdom, and with the knowledge of the mysteries of God. Named 'cherubim', meaning 'great understanding' or 'effusion of wisdom' in Hebrew, they are enlightened and therefore, through the cherubim, wisdom is sent down to others and enlightenment of the spiritual eyes is given to see God and have knowledge of Him. In other words, the Lord dwells between the cherubim (2 Samuel 6:2).

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- The Highest Hierarchy of Angels
 - 1. Seraphim
 - The six-winged **Seraphim** are the angels closest to God (Isaiah 6:2) who, due to their closeness to God, resemble fire (Hebrews 12:29; Daniel 7:9; Exodus 24:17; Psalms 103:4). Due to this closeness to God, and their appearance, they were given the name 'seraphim', which in Hebrew means 'flaming'. They are aflame with love for God and kindle others to such love.



What about Guardian Angels?



- **Guardian Angel**
- The Orthodox Church believes that each person is assigned a guardian angel. Christ said, "Take heed that ye despise not ye of these little ones, for I say unto you, that their angels do always behold the face of My Father which is in heaven" (Matt 18:10).
- It was originally from the Jews that the Church inherited this belief in the ministry of the Guardian Angels. The Psalmist had declared, "The angel of the Lord encamps all around those who fear Him, and delivers them." (Psalms 34:7). And again, "He will give His angels charge over you, to keep you in all your ways" (91:11)
- Most Orthodox believe that you receive a guardian angel when you are baptized.

