

Guardian Angels

DO you believe you have a personal guardian angel? Many people think they do. For that matter, a [HYPERLINK "http://www.watchtower.org/e/19981115/article_01.htm"](http://www.watchtower.org/e/19981115/article_01.htm) \t "_blank" certain woman in western Canada is said to have a special gift involving angels. If you give her your full name along with \$200, she claims that she will put you in touch with your guardian angel. First, she meditates by focusing on the flame of a candle. Next, she has a vision in which your angel gives her a message to pass on to you. As a bonus, the woman provides a sketch of what your angel looks like. This example from this Jehovah Witness's website is just one among many on the internet revealing the new angel craze or the Third Wave.

Theologian Robert Lightner documents the connection between angelmania and the New Age Movement.

New Age authors Alma Daniel, Timothy Wyllie, and Andrew Ramar, in their book [HYPERLINK "http://www.booksandcollectibles.com.au/dump/Lobstabooks/books-0002/27665.html"](http://www.booksandcollectibles.com.au/dump/Lobstabooks/books-0002/27665.html) \t "_blank" *Ask Your Angel*, believe that angelic activity has been in three waves.

1. The first wave was in Bible times when angels appeared to a few individuals like the prophets.
2. The second wave came in the Dark Ages when angels appeared to outstanding leaders.
3. The third wave is our present day when angels appear to ordinary people.

Today, angelmania has assigned powers, abilities, and activities to angels that far exceed what the Bible teaches. Third wave belief in guardian angels is far beyond one on one coverage:

1. The twelve Zodiac signs are said to have angelic governors who watch over the months of the year.
2. Guardian angels are assigned to the planets.

Gustav Davidson in *A Dictionary of Angels* states that Guardian angels are assigned to the planets in our solar system. Eight guardian angels and their planets are mentioned.

- 1) Rahatiel is the chief angel of the planets
- 2) Raphael is over the sun
- 3) Gabriel is over the moon
- 4) Michael is over Mercury

5) Aniel is over Venus

6) Samel is over Mars

7) Zadkiel is over Jupiter

8) Kafziel is over Saturn

3. Others believe angels are assigned to wild beasts.

4. Even birds are under angelic supervision. Arael is the angel over birds. The dove has its own angel, Alphun.

“In a New Age book on angels, *A Book of Angels*, author Sophy Burnham writes about a woman who reported that she was visited by four angels one night as she contemplated all the things she still needed to do before she died. She said she knew the angels were there in the room with her because her golden retriever saw them. And she said she knew that because the dog nosed one of the angels out of his way so he could go to sleep on his favorite spot in the room”. Now that is very convincing empirical evidence! I’m a believer! Just kidding!

5. Angels watch over plants and trees.

6. Angels guard the seasons of the year and weather.

The influence of the New Age Movement on angelology can be read in the titles of New Age books on angels: *Where Angels Walk* by Joan Webster Anderson, *Ask Your Angels*, *A Book of Angels*, *Guardian of Hope*, by Terry Lynn Taylor, *Angels of Mercy*, Rosemary Ellen Guiley, *The Angels within Us*, John Randolph Price.

What is the New Age Movement?

The New Age movement is old Hinduism. Hinduism teaches pantheism which is the belief that everyone and everything is part of God. Here are some tenets of New Age theology which shows how conducive it is to believe in the New Age and angelmania.

1. God and creation are one. Therefore you are God and don't need the real God. Angels will suffice.

2. Revelation is special and continuous. The Bible is not authoritative. Therefore what angels say is relevant and revelatory.

3. Jesus is a man who evolved into a godlike being. Therefore he can't save you from your sins, if you have any.

4. Humanity's crises are all the result of people's ignorance of their own divinity. Our depravity is not because of sin but ignorance and angels are available with revelation to help us overcome this need.

5. Through various techniques an altered state of consciousness can be produced in individuals, resulting in a perceived change of reality.

6. The “transformation” of each individual is the basis for the transformation of the entire world . Salvation is not individual but global. New Age teaching comes from angelic instruction. The angel, AbigraeL, is acknowledged as the teacher for much of what is taught in *Ask Your Angels*. In much New Age thinking, angels replace God and the messages of the angels replace the Bible (Robert Lightner. Nashville: Word Publishing. *Angels, Satan, and Demons*. pages 17, 18, 49).

What does the Word of God teach about Guardian Angels? Does each believer have a personal, invisible, angelic bodyguard 24/7/365 or is this just part of the angle craze?

Let’s examine some Scriptures used to defend the belief in personal guardian angels
1. Psalm 91:11 is thought to teach each believer has one assigned guardian angel.

This Psalm is praise to God who protects individual believers. Repeatedly the Psalmist is praising “the most High” as “*my refuge and my fortress*” in verses 1-10. In 91:11, the Psalmist says that God will provide many “angels” not just one guardian angel “charge over you” i.e., each individual believer. God can send a multitude of angels to our aid if necessary (2 Kings 6:13-17).

Wayne Grudem sees the protection of angels more like zone defense in basketball rather than man to man. Elsewhere in the Bible, we read that not just one, but many angels accompanied, protected, and provided for believers. Elisha was surrounded by many horses and chariots of fire (2 Kgs 6:17; Lk. 16:22) (Wayne Grudem. *Systematic Theology*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan,1994, page 400.)

2. Some use Mt. 18:10 to teach that each child has only one guardian angel assigned at birth.

This was the view of [HYPERLINK "http://www.newadvent.org/summa/1113.htm" \t "_blank"](http://www.newadvent.org/summa/1113.htm) Thomas Aquinas in his *The Summa Theologica*. Question 113 addresses the guardianship of the good angels and Article 5 asks whether an angel is appointed to guard a man from his birth?

"As long as the child is in the mother's womb it is not entirely separate, but by reason of a certain intimate tie, is still part of her: just as the fruit while hanging on the tree is part of the tree. And therefore it can be said with some degree of probability, that the angel who guards the mother guards the child while in the womb. But at its birth, when it becomes separate from the mother, an angel guardian is appointed to."

Jesus is talking about only children who are already believers “who believe in me” (18:6). Aquinas taught on the basis of Mt 18:10 that each child at birth was assigned a guardian angel. Jesus is warning about offending a little child. If anyone offends a little child, God has angels ready to deal with the offenders. Jesus says these angels are in heaven, not on earth shadowing their charge. Jesus says these angels are “always beholding the face of

God the Father” rather than guarding believers.

3. In Acts 12:15, Luke records that a group of believers believed in guardian angels.

But this group of believers is not exactly the model for us to follow in belief or practice. They were praying for God to deliver Peter from prison and when God answered their prayer, they would not believe it. Instead of believing that God had answered their prayer, they thought Peter's guardian angel was at the door knocking.

"The reply to Rhoda reflects the Jewish tradition that a guardian angel resembles the person to whom it is assigned. But a report indicating that certain disciples believed in guardian angels does not invest the belief with authority. Some Christians still had mistaken or confused beliefs on various subjects. In absence of definite didactic material, we must conclude that there is insufficient evidence for the concept of guardian angels" ([HYPERLINK "http://www.amazon.com/Christian-Theology-Millard-J-Erickson/dp/0801034337"](http://www.amazon.com/Christian-Theology-Millard-J-Erickson/dp/0801034337) \t "_blank" Erickson, vol. 1, page 445).

The believers in the prayer meeting were mistaken about Rhoda being crazy. She was not. The believers in the prayer meeting were also mistaken about Peter. They did not believe Peter was at the door. He was. An angel had helped break Peter out of prison, but then left for heaven, rather than constantly guarding him.

This thought leads us to Hebrews 1:14 which is part of Hebrews one and two, the most thorough discussion on angels in the New Testament. The final word on any doctrine in Scripture is found in the Epistles. As we have already seen, angels do not perform all the ministries found in the Gospels (delivering God's revealed Word to individuals) and in the book of Acts (breaking innocent believers out of jail).

4. Hebrews 1:14 is the final teaching on angels.

Angels minister by serving God and worshiping God (see Part 1). They worship God as witnessed in Revelation. They also serve believers according to Heb 1:14. From Hebrews one and two we learn:

a. Angels are inferior to Christ.

- 1) God calls Jesus His Son, not angels (Heb 1:4-5).
- 2) God commands angels to worship His Son (Heb 1:6).
- 3) God has exalted His Son an eternal King above angels His servants (Heb 1:7-9).
- 4) God has assigned angels to serve believers in the world created by Christ (Heb 1:10-14).
- 5) Christ in His incarnation became man not angels because angels do not have a physical body and can not die (Heb 2).

Many advocates of guardian angels teach that we should develop a relationship with our

guardian angel. Terry Lynn Taylor advocates this in her book *Guardians of Hope: The Angel's Guide to Personal Growth*. "Basically, I'm suggesting that you become best friends with your guardian angel! Pretend you have an invisible best friend who witnesses everything you experience and with whom you can share insights" (page 13).

"When children make up invisible playmates on their own, it is generally cute, harmless, and even therapeutic. When adults recommend to other adults that they pretend to have an invisible friend who will protect them day and night as a guardian angel, that's bad advice" ([HYPERLINK "http://www.zondervan.com/Cultures/en-US/Product/ProductDetail.htm?ProdID=com.zondervan.9780310254294&QueryStringSite=Zondervan"](http://www.zondervan.com/Cultures/en-US/Product/ProductDetail.htm?ProdID=com.zondervan.9780310254294&QueryStringSite=Zondervan) \t "_blank" Kenneth D. Boa and Robert M. Bowman Jr. [HYPERLINK "http://www.zondervan.com/Cultures/en-US/Product/ProductDetail.htm?ProdID=com.zondervan.9780310254294&QueryStringSite=Zondervan"](http://www.zondervan.com/Cultures/en-US/Product/ProductDetail.htm?ProdID=com.zondervan.9780310254294&QueryStringSite=Zondervan) \t "_blank" *Sense & Nonsense About Angels & Demons*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2007, 80).

The Word of God teaches us to "grow in the grace and knowledge of Jesus Christ (not angels)," "Draw nigh to God (not angels) and He will draw nigh to you," and "Seek first the kingdom of God (not angels)."

Not only are angels inferior to Christ but next we learn from Hebrews 1:14 that

b. Angels serve only believers.

Hebrews 1:14 says that angels are ministering spirits "to them who shall be heirs of salvation" or believers. Psalm 34:7 teaches the same truth as Hebrews 1:14, "The angel of the Lord encamps around those who fear him". If an unsaved person claims to see an angel there are three possibilities:

- a) That unsaved person was either dreaming.
- b) That unsaved person mistook a human for an angel. It was not an angel who changed your fat tire, it was a good Samaritan.
- c) That unsaved person was visited by a fallen angel/demon.

From Hebrews 1:14 we have discovered that angels are inferior to Christ, that angels only serve believers and also that

c. Angels are created by God.

It is God who ultimately protects us, and Hebrews 1:14 says angels are "sent forth" by their Creator to protect believers.

Why was James the apostle martyred in Acts 12 and Peter was delivered? Did James' guardian angel fail? No it was God's will for James not to live.

What about babies and small children who die, did their guardian angel fall asleep on the

job? No, God is ultimately in charge not angels. While God sometimes uses angels to protect us as He sometimes uses other believers or police officers or the military, God does not need angels to protect us because He is all powerful.

David Jeremiah opens his book on angels entitled, *HYPERLINK "http://www.amazon.com/What-Bible-Says-about-Angels/dp/157673336X" \t "_blank" What The Bible says about Angels*, “In a doctor’s office one fall day last year, I was told I had cancer. I’m sure you’ll understand when I say I was fearful. It was one of those times when I would have cherished having an angel with me in the room, assuring me everything would be okay. In the months that followed I felt the same fear when I prepared to have surgery on two occasions. An angel’s hand holding mine as I was wheeled into the operating room would have been treasured comfort. But as far as I knew, I’d never seen an angel. Never. Did that mean something was wrong with me? Why did other people have that privilege? Wasn’t I spiritual enough?” (page14).

But near the end of David Jeremiah’s book he (page 188) summarizes my thoughts: “But if this is disappointing news to you, and you’re dismayed to think there may not be a specific angel responsible for your protection, you need not jump up in fear to check the locks on your doors and windows. There’s plenty of evidence that God himself is looking out for you.”