

Angel

MEMORY VERSE: ‘...For it is written: “ ‘He will command his angels concerning you to guard you carefully;’ Luke 4:10 (NIV)

STUDY PLAN: To understand the role of angels in our lives by studying Bible passages, art and history.

To earn the Angel badge, you will need to do the following:



Step 1: What do I know about Angels?

My initials _____



Angels! You have probably heard about angels since you were young - “Angels we have Heard on High”, your Guardian Angel, The Story of the Littlest Angel, but what do you really know about angels? Without talking to anyone else, write down everything you know about angels (sort of like an essay test) and draw a picture of the first thing you think of when you picture an angel.

(The space above and on the next page is for drawing and notes.)

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Share your drawing and discuss your thoughts and current knowledge of angels.

- Do you think about angels very often?
- How seriously do you think about angels?
- Are angels an integral part of your faith life?



1. Look at depictions of angels in art (use books or online photos). What do you note about the depiction of angels? What surprises you?

2. Look at the texts of hymns which you sing in church, such as:

625 – Ye Holy Angels Bright - Verse 1

324 – Let All Mortal Flesh – Verse 3 and 4

282 – Christ the Fair Glory – Verses 2, 3 and 4

In Hymn 625, verse 1 – what are 3 things angels are described as doing:

a. _____

b. _____

c. _____

In Hymn 324, verses 3 and 4 – what is “rank on rank the host of heaven” describing?

In Hymn 282, verse 2,3 and 4 – which 3 Archangels are listed and what do they do?

a. _____

b. _____

c. _____

Modern Song:

Calling All Angels – by Train – this song can be found on YouTube. The video is dated, but the words are food for thought.

Discuss other modern songs which have lyrics with messages about angels.



Step 2: Let's do some fact checking! My initials _____

The word angel comes from a Greek word meaning messenger of God.

You are probably familiar with stories of angels in the Bible when an angel delivers a specific message, such as telling Mary that she will have a baby or telling the women at the tomb that Jesus has risen. However, angels also bring other messages from God – messages of comfort and messages of guidance. Sometimes they provide for physical needs and protection, and they answer prayers. Angels also worship and praise God.

Angels are more powerful than humans, however, they are not all-powerful or all-knowing like God. Remember, only God can perform miracles. Angels are spiritual beings of a different order than humanity, but they are not to be worshipped.



Read some of the following passages from the Bible. Use your own Bible or an app on your phone or computer – you may want to read some extra verses before or after the passages to get more of the story.

Angels as messengers

Angel appears to Mary - Luke 1: 26-38

Angel at the tomb - Luke 24: 1-8

Angels as comforters

Angel comforts Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane – Luke 22: 39-43

Angels comfort Jesus after the devil tempts Him - Matthew 4: 1-11

Angels bringing guidance

Angel advises Joseph – Matthew 1: 18-25

Angels providing for physical needs and protection

An angel provides water to Hagar in the desert - Genesis 21: 9-19

Angels with men in the fiery furnace – Daniel 3:13-25

Angels answering prayers

Angels help Peter escape – Acts 12: 5-11

Angels praise and worship God

Angels announce Jesus' birth – Luke 2: 8-14

Thousands of Angels praising God - Revelations 5:11-13



Fill out the following chart below based on the readings on page 4

Bible Reading: Book and Verse	To whom does the angel appear?	What time of day is it?	What does the angel do?	How does the person react?



Step 3 – Modern stories about angels My initials _____

Angels are mediums between the spiritual world and ours. A person's belief in angels is often very personal. In Step 2, you reviewed many Bible stories about angels.

There are also many contemporary stories about angels in action today. You may even have heard stories from family members or friends. Here is a story from a law enforcement officer, Lillie Leonardi, who worked at the site of the Flight 93 crash on September 11, 2001.



Smoke rises behind investigators as they comb the crater left by the crash of United Airlines flight 93 near Shanksville, Pennsylvania September 12, 2001. Flight 93 is one of four planes that were hijacked as part of a deadly and destructive terrorist plot against the U.S. September 11.

After recalling the event of September 11, 2011, read this excerpt from her book:

In the Shadow of a Badge, Chapter 3 – A Field of Angels: Shanksville

As I looked across the immense space of the scene, I saw a shimmer of light by my left shoulder. The light flickered at first, playing against that of the sun. The light reminded me of my first trip to Ireland, when I had seen a large school of salmon swimming very close to the water's edge. The light of their scales had merged with that of the sun and sent brilliant crystal shimmers across my view. I remember that the light was mesmerizing, and many of us stood witness to it. It was an amazing moment for me.

On the field, the shimmer of light began to grow off to my left until it was almost blinding. I turned and looked at it more directly, and it began to evolve into a foggy white mist. The mist then began to move, swirling in patterns of spectacular white light. Then, before my eyes, the mist took shape. To my amazement, there at the left of the crash site stood what appeared to be a legion of angels.

There were hundreds of them, standing in columns— a field of angels, emerging from the realms of the mist. I recognized them as archangels, wings arched up toward the

sky. Each of them appeared to be dressed in warrior garments, like a legion of Roman centurions from centuries past. They were standing vigil, gazing at the surrounding perimeter. The looks on their faces were intense yet gentle. Calming. They stood like soldiers guarding their ground in preparation for the next battle. They appeared ready to receive the next command from their leader. And they clearly had a leader—for he stood majestically in front of them all.

This archangel stood with confidence, radiance, and an aura of leadership. The saber in his hand angled toward the ground in resting mode. I knew instantly this had to be Michael, for in my Catholic upbringing the Archangel Michael had always been depicted as the warrior. He was also known as the guardian of law enforcement.

These celestial beings were so numerous that their features began to blend together. The pureness of their beauty—and the radiant light surrounding them—was overwhelming to me. Each was unique, and all were beautiful. I marveled at the image of these lovely creatures. They looked just as they were depicted in the frescoes Michelangelo painted in the Sistine Chapel some 500 years ago.

As I gazed at the angels, my mind slowed its pace. I paused at each new motion they made. With each movement, a detail was forever etched in my memory. It was as if there were a sketch artist inside my mind's eye preserving all the minute details with an indelible pen.



In the book *Angel Unaware*, Dale Evans Rogers, an American country singer and songwriter, tells the story of her daughter Robin, who was born with severe handicaps and Downs Syndrome. Her life was brief, only a couple of years, but rather than being a burden, she was truly a blessing, hence the title which came from the scripture “Be not forgetful to entertain strangers: for thereby some have entertained angels unawares” (Heb. 13:2).

Discuss how conscious you are of angels in unexpected places:

- Could random acts of kindness be the work of angels?
- Can angels lead you to answers you are seeking?
- When you refer to your guardian angel, are you serious about it?



Ask your friends, your parents or other faithful people about their own beliefs about angels. Ask them how they came to their beliefs about angels. Have they experienced an angel? Were they influenced by someone else's beliefs? Have they re-examined their beliefs over time?



Step 4: The details of the world of angels and archangels

My initials _____

Although we see pictures of angels on Christmas cards and we may often refer to someone being an angel, we may not think about the world of angels very much. There are actually more angels than we can imagine!

The world of angels is structured into choirs. There are 3 ranks of angels in each choir and each type of angel is described differently and has different tasks.

The 1st verse of Hymn 618, Ye Watchers and Ye Holy Ones refers to the whole hierarchy of angels:

*Ye watchers and ye holy ones,
Bright seraphs, cherubim, and thrones,
Raise the glad strain, Alleluia!
Cry out, dominions, principedoms, powers,
Virtues, archangels, angels' choirs,
Alleluia! Alleluia!*

The infographic below and on the next page gives some information on angels to help you understand the words of this hymn:

1ST TRIAD - CONTEMPLATE AND ADORE GOD DIRECTLY

SERAPHIM ISAIAH 6:1-7
6 WINGS - 2 COVER FEET, 2 COVER FACE, AND 2 FOR FLIGHT

Name means the burning ones, and they are Attendants at the Throne of God. They praise God singing, "Holy Holy Holy is the Lord of Hosts!"

CHERUBIM EXD 25:18-21, EZK 10:14, REV 4-6
4 FACES AND 4 WINGS - 2 COVER FEET AND 2 FOR FLIGHT

Name means the Fullness of Wisdom, and they Contemplate God's providence. Assigned to protect special places.

THRONES EZK 10:17, COL 1:16, DAN 7:9
FLAMING, ROTATING RINGS COVERED WITH EYES

Represent the steadfastness of the love of God. The contemplate God's power and judgment, and they appear as the most unlike the others when revealed.

2ND TRIAD - FULFILL GOD'S PLAN IN THE UNIVERSE

DOMINIONS

EPH 1:21, COL 1:16

Lord over the lower choirs and humanity. They take illumination from the higher hierarchies and govern the universe.

VIRTUES

EPH 1:21

Run the operation of movement in the universe. They are often associated with planets, elements, seasons, and nature.

POWERS

EPH 3:10, EPH 6:12

Assist in governing the natural order. They are warrior angels tasked with fighting the war against the demonic choirs.



3RD TRIAD - INTERACT & SERVE HUMANITY CLOSELY

PRINCIPALITIES

EPH 3:10, EPH 1:21

Princes of the lowest triad assigned to care and guard communities, kingdoms, states, and parishes. They are associated with transitions in power.

ARCHANGELS

JUDE 9, 1 THES 4:16, TOB

Leader angels assigned to communicate and carry out God's important plans for man. Michael, Gabriel, and Rafael are the only 3 names we know.

ANGELS

LUK 22:43, MAT 18:10, HEB 13:2

Angels are closest to the material world and humanity. The lowest choir is where we get the majority of our personal guardian angels.



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*Angels are symbolically depicted with wings, but they are purely spiritual beings that do not have a physical body. They can take on the appearance of man to better communicate with humans.

SOURCES: SACRED SCRIPTURE, THE CELESTIAL HIERARCHY - PSEUDO-DIONYSIUS, AND SUMMA THEOLOGIAE - THOMAS AQUINAS

Designed by Christobal Almanze, found on www.soulpainter.com.

Discuss

The GFS World Day of Prayer is traditionally celebrated on St. Michael's and All Angels Day (September 29). The collect, or prayer, for this Feast Day is:

Everlasting God, you have ordained and constituted in a wonderful order the ministries of angels and mortals: Mercifully grant that, as your holy angels always serve and worship you in heaven, so by your appointment they may help and defend us here on earth; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

Archangel Michael is mentioned 3 times in the Book of Daniel and is known as the guardian of the Jewish people and is considered closer to mankind than the other Archangels.

The Book of Revelation (12:7-9) describes a war in heaven with Archangel Michael playing a major role:

Then a war began in heaven. Michael and his angels fought against the dragon. And the dragon and his angels fought back. But the dragon wasn't strong enough. Both he and his angels lost their place in heaven. The great dragon was thrown down to the earth, and his angels with him. The dragon is that old serpent called the devil, or Satan. He leads the whole world astray.

- Why do think this feast day was selected for this special GFS event?
- The GFS motto reminds us to serve others and fulfill the law of Christ. What does your new knowledge about angels add to your understanding of fulfilling that motto?



Do It!

Using your own imagination, create your own symbolic representation of an angel. Use any medium or style you wish.