

## Part 4 Angels 101

A sermon series by Pastor Byron Chesney Th.D.

### † Colossians 1:16

16 For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him:

Last Sunday night we covered several things:

1. What becomes of Christians when we die?
2. Meaning of Sons of God in the N.T.
3. Orders and Ranks of Angels including; dominions, thrones, powers, and principalities.
4. Warning against angel worship.
5. What the term “host” means concerning angels.

Tonight we delve into the 4<sup>th</sup> study of our sermon series, Angels 101. I want us to answer some more common questions and misunderstandings that people have concerning angels.

I want to tackle one of the toughest ones first and that is: **“Do angels sing?”**

If you thumb through our hymn books you will find numerous songs that mention angels singing, a few that you will quickly recognize are:

1. Angles we have heard on high – sweetly singing or the plain.
2. Hark the Herald Angels sing
3. It Came Upon a Midnight Clear – “the world in solemn stillness lay, to hear the angels sing.”
4. Oh Come All Ye Faithful – “Oh sing choirs of angels, sing in exaltation.”
5. Silent Night – “Heavenly host sing alleluia.”
6. When they Ring Those Golden Bells – “can’t you hear the angels singing?”
7. Victory in Jesus – “about the angels singing, and the old redemption story”

These are just a few hymns that we sing regularly that mention angels singing. But what does the Bible say about angels singing? Or does it mention them singing at all?

I have probably read a couple of dozen different commentaries and listened to at least a dozen sermons from different preachers that I trust and there are 2 basic thoughts concerning angels singing. One group believes there is Biblical support for angels singing and the other group believes there is no Biblical support for it.

My intention tonight is to show you what God’s Word says. I’m afraid that all too often many of the things that we believe and base our theology upon are traditions, hearsay, and folklore. Look, we are Biblicists and all of our theology should come from the Bible and not from man.

Alright, so let’s address this question from the Bible; **“Do angels sing?”**

The verses that a lot of people use to declare that angels sing come from the following passages of Scripture:

**Luke 2:13-14:** And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying, 14 Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.

This is also how all of the mention of angels singing got put into Christmas hymns. But examine the Scripture closely. Nowhere does it say the angels were singing. It says they were **“saying.”**

The word **“saying”** comes from the Greek word, **“legō”** which means; **“to speak.”** There are no instances of that Greek word being translated as “singing,” anywhere in the Bible. Of course in our human mind glorifying and praising God is accompanied with singing. But that is not what the Bible says here.

Another passage of Scripture that many people look to concerning this is found in **Revelation 5:11-14**

11 And I beheld, and I heard the voice of many angels round about the throne and the beasts and the elders: and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands;

12 **Saying** with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing.

13 And every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, **heard I saying**, Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever.

14 And the four beasts said, Amen. And the four and twenty elders fell down and worshipped him that liveth for ever and ever.

Then in verse 11 it says, **“I heard the voice of many angels,”** and in verse 12 it clearly says **“Saying,”** not singing. In verse 13 as well it says **“heard I saying.”**

This is where you always want to make sure you are using a reliable translation of the Bible, the King James Version. Because some of these other translations wrongly translate the Greek words and you have a disaster such as found in the **New Living Translation (NLT): Revelation 5:13:** And then I heard every creature in heaven and on earth and under the earth and in the sea. **They sang:** “Blessing and honor and glory and power belong to the one sitting on the throne and to the Lamb forever and ever.”

Or as found in the **New Revised Standard Version (NRSV): Revelation 5:13:** Then I heard every creature in heaven and on earth and under the earth and in the sea, and all that is in them, **singing**, “To the one seated on the throne and to the Lamb be blessing and honor and glory and might forever and ever!”

Or what possibly may be the worst Bible translation every produced: **The Message (MSG): Revelation 5:11-14:** I looked again. I heard a company of Angels around the Throne, the Animals, and the Elders—ten thousand times ten thousand their number, thousand after thousand after thousand **in full song:** The slain Lamb is worthy! Take the power, the wealth, the wisdom, the strength! Take the honor, the glory, the blessing! Then I heard every creature in Heaven and earth, in underworld and sea, join in, all voices in all places, **singing:** To the One on the Throne! To the Lamb! The blessing, the honor, the glory, the strength, For age after age after age. The Four Animals called out, “Oh, Yes!” The Elders fell to their knees and worshipped.

I know I say it often but please do not trust any English translation of the Bible except for the Authorized King James Version. If the Lord should call me to leave

here and you are looking for a new pastor, don't allow somebody to come in here other than a King James man.

Okay, so just when you thought we had completely exhausted our research and if we stop here we would say that angels do not sing, but, I want us to look a little closer at God's Word.

Look back in the Old Testament at:

**Job 38:4-7: Where wast thou when I laid the foundations of the earth? declare, if thou hast understanding. 5 Who hath laid the measures thereof, if thou knowest? or who hath stretched the line upon it? 6 Whereupon are the foundations thereof fastened? or who laid the corner stone thereof; 7 When the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy?**

Here in the Book of Job, the oldest book in the Bible, these verses are speaking of the time of creation, before God created the earth or man. He asks Job the question, "**where wast thou when I laid the foundations of the earth?**" And then he mentions that during that time "**the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy.**"

Obviously God had created angels and celestial beings sometime before he created man and the earth. That is clearly indicated. Not only here but we see the same pattern given in the Book of **Psalms 148:1-5: Praise ye the LORD. Praise ye the LORD from the heavens: praise him in the heights. 2 Praise ye him, all his angels: praise ye him, all his hosts. 3 Praise ye him, sun and moon: praise him, all ye stars of light. 4 Praise him, ye heavens of heavens, and ye waters that be above the heavens. 5 Let them praise the name of the LORD: for he commanded, and they were created.**

Remember, when we speak of the Genesis creation as outline in our Bible, we are speaking of existence as we know it. The first verse in the Bible says: **Genesis 1:1: In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.**

We also know from reading the Bible that God has always existed before ANYTHING else, look back at our foundation text in: **Colossians 1:16-17 16 For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: 17 And he is before all things, and by him all things consist.**

God has always been. We have no idea what God may have done before the Genesis creation because He has always existed, He is eternal. We will not understand everything about God until we are redeemed and then these minds of ours will be free. Right now we are too burdened with sin to be free enough to think or do everything that we have the potential to do. The fact is the Bible does not tell us when God created the angels or other celestial beings but we know it was before man or the earth was created.

So let's look at that verse in Job 38 again: **Job 38:4-7: Where wast thou when I laid the foundations of the earth? declare, if thou hast understanding. 5 Who hath laid the measures thereof, if thou knowest? or who hath stretched the line upon it? 6 Whereupon are the foundations thereof fastened? or who laid the corner stone thereof; 7 When the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy?**

We've already established the fact that in the O.T. when you see the phrase, "**sons of God,**" it is always referring to angels. Here it says "when I laid the foundations of the earth,"... **the sons of God shouted for joy.** But before that it says "**the morning stars sang together.**" Who or what are the morning stars?

According to J. Vernon McGhee, an old preacher that I learned a lot from by listening to his sermons and reading his commentary series, Thru the Bible, states in his sermon titled, "Why the Angles Do Not Sing," that the "morning stars" is not referring to angels but to the physical universe. Let me read you what he says:

"Did you know that God has infinitely more creatures than you and I have ever dreamed of? If you think that somehow man on this earth constitutes just about all that God has created except a few angels to run errands for Him and that is the extent of heaven, you're wrong. God has created intelligences, they're called here "sons of God." And we're told here that the "morning stars sang together." I'm of the opinion that Job was talking about this physical universe."

**He goes on to say:**

"I cannot prove it but I believe that this physical universe that we are living in, with its millions and literally billions of planets, is making music for God today. And the only one that's out of tune is this little earth, our little orb on which we live. We're out of tune. Man sins. And when man "who had been made a little lower than the angels" sinned he lost his song."†

McGhee was very adamant that Angels do not sing. As much as I enjoy his teaching I don't agree with him on everything. So, we must turn to the Bible and ask ourselves, what sayeth the Lord? Let's look at that term, "**morning stars.**" We know that the Lord Jesus called himself "**the bright and morning star**": **Revelation 22:16: I Jesus have sent mine angel to testify unto you these things in the churches. I am the root and the offspring of David, and the bright and morning star.** But our text in Job is not referring to the Lord Jesus.

Another interesting passage of Scripture can be found in **Revelation 12:3-4 3 And there appeared another wonder in heaven; and behold a great red dragon, having seven heads and ten horns, and seven crowns upon his heads. 4 And his tail drew the third part of the stars of heaven, and did cast them to the earth: and the dragon stood before the woman which was ready to be delivered, for to devour her child as soon as it was born.**

We understand the **third part of the stars of heaven** is referring to the angels that sided with Satan and were cast out of Heaven. Here the angels are referred to as "**stars.**"

Again keep looking in **Revelation 9:1-2: And the fifth angel sounded, and I saw a star fall from heaven unto the earth: and to him was given the key of the bottomless pit. 2 And he opened the bottomless pit; and there arose a smoke out of the pit, as the smoke of a great furnace; and the sun and the air were darkened by reason of the smoke of the pit.**

If you remember from our Revelation Bible study we determined that this particular fallen star represents Satan. Since Satan was an angel then here is another reference to angels being called stars. Speaking of Satan's fall, turn with me to **Isaiah 14:12: How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! how art thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations!**

Did you notice the title given to Lucifer? The name Lucifer comes from the Hebrew name; **hay-lale'** which means **"the light bearer."** The Bible calls him the "son of the morning." The phrase **"son of"** indicates possession. It would be like saying Matthew is the "son of Byron." So by calling Lucifer, "son of the morning," it is showing that he comes from God. So he is referred to as a "star" and "son of the morning," and we know he was an angel.

Now, let's take it full circle. In **Job 38:7**, I am convinced that both the **"sons of God,"** and the **"morning stars,"** are both referring to angels. And, if they are both referring to angels then we find our first indication that angels at one time DID sing before the creation of the earth and man. Which means it was before sin entered on the scene.

Now turn again with me to **Revelation 5:7-10**: **And he came and took the book out of the right hand of him that sat upon the throne. 8 And when he had taken the book, the four beasts and four and twenty elders fell down before the Lamb, having every one of them harps, and golden vials full of odours, which are the prayers of saints. 9 And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation; 10 And hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth.**

If the "four beasts" referred to in verse 8 is referring to Cherubim, which are angels, and it says they along with the 24 elders "sung a new song," then we have to come to the conclusion that the Bible is indicating again of angels singing.

#### **So what is our conclusion?**

1. If we have rightly divided and interpreted the Scriptures and the "morning stars," in Job 38:7, and "the four beast" in Revelation 5:8 are referring to angels, then we discover that angels sang **at one time** and angels will sing **again in the future.** Right now all of creation groans; **Romans 8:22**
2. There is nowhere in the Bible between these two verses that indicate that angels sing now.
3. There is nowhere else in the Bible between these verses that indicate that angels DON'T sing now.
4. We know that our Lord loves singing and it would seem reasonable that all of Heaven and all of Creation would sing in worship to Him.
5. Whether you believe angels sing or angels do not sing has no bearing on your salvation and should not be a stumbling block for Christians.
6. The Bible does not provide the answers for everything our minds can question, but it does provide the answers to everything God wants us to know at this time.

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† All Scripture from the Authorized King James Version

‡ J. Vernon McGhee – "Why Angels Do Not Sing" Thru the Bible Radio Network