



WHEN KIDS ASK...



“Do the dead become angels?”

Why kids might ask:

After people die, it's common to hear things like, “Heaven needed some more angels” or “At least they have wings now.” The idea of someone being free to fly is comforting, but it can lead to questions about how those who died can talk to those who are alive or why God would be so greedy in wanting more angels. There is comfort in the idea of being a part of God's army and becoming more powerful than humans are and being able to guard the living in some way. Kids can be curious about those who died and how angels interact with humans. A kid might even like the idea of a person becoming a higher being or having superhero-like qualities.



...➤ What the Bible says:



Angels are messengers. The word angel comes from Greek and means to bring news. Leaders sent out angels to deliver messages. Frequently the Bible describes human messengers as angels, whether they were sent by human leaders or by God. As the ultimate leader, God has heavenly messengers who can be sent to specific people at specific times. It is comforting that God cares about us so much that God sends angels to communicate and to help us.

The Bible does not say that humans become angels after death. In fact God usually does not have a dead human communicate with those who are alive. God has enough angels and does not need humans to die to take that role. Sometimes God will comfort us with visions or dreams about those we care about who have died, but that does not mean that those who have died have super-powers or grow wings. God is the only one who is super-powerful. Instead of making dead humans into angels, God wants to give humans resurrected bodies like Jesus.

One last thing about angels is that while it may be incredible to hear messages from an angel or even speak messages like an angel, we should not worship angels. We worship God because we know that all truth and everything good comes from God. So we do not need to worry about those who have died because we can trust that God cares about them and will make sure they have what they need too!

...➤ What you could discuss:



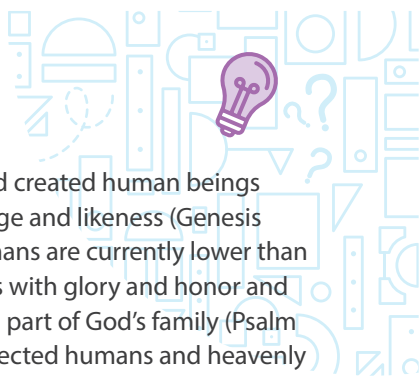
With preschool ages: "God made angels with special jobs; they tell people things that God says like when your teacher or parent gives you something to say to a sibling or friend. God made people have special connections with Him too. When people die, God takes care of them and gives them new bodies that can't die anymore. People don't need to turn into angels because God made them to be people who are with Him forever."

With school ages: “Sometimes people will say that whoever died is an angel now or has wings. The Bible tells us that people and angels are different. Angels are messengers who sometimes give people information that God wants them to know (similar to if your teacher told you something your principal said). God made people to be like Him, and to be with Him forever. The Bible tells us that God will give people a new kind of body like Jesus has, which can’t die anymore. People don’t need to turn into angels to be with God, because God made another plan for them. People and angels are different from each other, and God takes care of all of us.”

...➤ What you could do:

Look in Scripture. Scripture tells us that God created human beings in a specific and unique way, in His own image and likeness (Genesis 1:27). Because humans can sin and die, humans are currently lower than the angels; however God can crown humans with glory and honor and desires humans to be elevated by becoming part of God’s family (Psalm 8:5 and Hebrews 2:7). Jesus compares resurrected humans and heavenly angels. Resurrected humans will be like heavenly angels in two main ways – having no need for marriages and no longer dying (Matthew 22:29-30 and Luke 20:34-36). After death, humans can become immortal like the angels through the gift of resurrected bodies, which will be like Jesus’ body after His resurrection (Philippians 3:21).

Contrast your beliefs from other religious views. Some religions, such as Hinduism, Buddhism, and others, believe in reincarnation or hierarchies where after death people are rewarded or punished for what they have done. Some believe that those who have died become different kinds of beings or move closer to or further from God or an ultimate state of being. The Bible does not give any indication that this occurs, but rather mentions the goal of becoming like Christ (2 Corinthians 3:18) and dwelling with Christ forever (Revelation 21:3).



...➤ Where you could look for more information:

- ✦ **Human messengers called angels:** 2 Samuel 11:19-25 • 2 Kings 5:10 • Isaiah 37 • Malachi 1 • Nehemiah 6:3 • Mark 1:1-8 • Luke 7:24 • Acts 6:15 • James 2:25 • Revelation 2-3
- ✦ **Heavenly messengers sent by God:** Genesis 21-22 • Judges 13:20 • Job 1 • 1 Chronicles 21:16 • Mark 13:32 • Luke 2:13; 22:43 • 2 Thessalonians 1:7 • Revelation 14:6
- ✦ **Demonic beings called angels:** Psalm 78:49 • Matthew 25:41 • Revelation 12:7
- ✦ **Satan as an angel:** 2 Corinthians 11:14
- ✦ **Angels should not be worshiped:** Daniel 10 • Colossians 2:18 • Revelation 19:10; 22:9
- ✦ **Worship belongs to God alone:** Deuteronomy 6:13 • Luke 4:8
- ✦ **Caring for angels (sometimes unknowingly):** Genesis 18 • Hebrews 13:2
- ✦ **Angels judged by Jesus' followers:** 1 Corinthians 6:3