

The Muslim Belief in the Angels

We, the Muslims, believe that angels are sentient beings that are extraterrestrial in nature (i.e. not originating from within the earth's atmosphere), on the contrary they are inhabitants of the seven heavens. We believe that Allah (God) created them from light; however, they are not literally light despite being created from it, similar to how man was created from dirt, yet we are not literally walking composites of dirt but are flesh and bone. Angels are a completely different aspect of creation from man just as light is completely different from dirt. This belief negates the myth that angels are European looking men with bird wings or that they are deceased humans who receive a halo and wings after death.

We believe that Allah (God) has given angels extraordinary abilities not given to man. For example, they have the ability to somehow manipulate sight and sound consequently being unseen to man even though they are constantly around us. In addition their movements, actions, and method of communication among themselves are unheard to man. Another example is Allah (God) giving some among them the ability to change their angelic and marvelous appearance to an outward form of a human. Moreover the composition of their bodies makes them free from need of nourishment through food and drink unlike man.

We believe that the appearance/form of angels differs immensely from man. Angels are creatures possessing wings; however, all are not the same. Some among them have two wings, some have three, and others have four. Prophet Muhammad conveyed that Gabriel has 600 wings. Nonetheless their wings enable them to travel great distances in short periods of time. Their wings even grant them the ability to transcend the heavens traveling far above the earth. This indicates the tremendous difference of their body composition from man's.

We believe that some angels have been entrusted with particularized roles and responsibilities that they carry out on occasion of Allah's commands. Some guard the heavens, some protect human beings, some record the speech and actions of humans, some control the movement of clouds, etc. The most famous of angels, Gabriel, was entrusted with delivering revelation to the prophets and messengers. We believe the angels are devoutly obedient to Allah (God), they don't move unless ordered to do so. They are eager and hasten to carry out Allah's commands and they never disobey Him. This negates the myth of alleged fallen angels or that satan was an angel as it is not the nature of angels to disobey Allah.

We believe the angels were created to worship Allah (God). They are honored creatures that never tire from worshiping Him. There are many angels that do nothing more than direct ritual acts of worship to Allah from bowing, prostration, exaltation and praise, invocation, seeking forgiveness for the people of earth, etc; and are enthusiastic and eager in worship of Him. They love and are pleased with exaltation and worship of Allah and do not deem such actions as burdensome or pointless like some of the arrogant from the descendants of Adam.