



Do we each have a “Guardian Angel”?

This question came up in a recent Bible study when we read this passage from Acts 12:

6. *The night before Herod was to bring him to trial, Peter was sleeping between two soldiers, bound with two chains, and sentries stood guard at the entrance.*
7. *Suddenly an angel of the Lord appeared and a light shone in the cell. He struck Peter on the side and woke him up. “Quick, get up!” he said, and the chains fell off Peter’s wrists.*
8. *Then the angel said to him, “Put on your clothes and sandals.” And Peter did so. “Wrap your cloak around you and follow me,” the angel told him. 9 Peter followed him out of the prison, but he had no idea that what the angel was doing was really happening; he thought he was seeing a vision. 10 They passed the first and second guards and came to the iron gate leading to the city. It opened for them by itself, and they went through it. When they had walked the length of one street, suddenly the angel left him.*
9. *Then Peter came to himself and said, “Now I know without a doubt that the Lord has sent his angel and rescued me from Herod’s clutches and from everything the Jewish people were hoping would happen.”*
10. *When this had dawned on him, he went to the house of Mary the mother of John, also called Mark, where many people had gathered and were praying. 13 Peter knocked at the outer entrance, and a servant named Rhoda came to answer the door. 14 When she recognized Peter’s voice, she was so overjoyed she ran back without opening it and exclaimed, “Peter is at the door!”*
11. *“You’re out of your mind,” they told her. When she kept insisting that it was so, they said, “It must be his angel.”*

An angel plays a major part in that event, but it was the last five words “It must be **his angel**” that prompted the question above. That sentence gives the impression that the Christians who’d been praying for Peter believed that Peter had a specific angel assigned to him.

Jesus’ own comment in the following passage from Matthew 18 also leaves the impression that the kids He is referring to have angels that are assigned to them:

“See that you do not despise one of these little ones. For I tell you that their angels in heaven always see the face of my Father in heaven.”

Nowhere in the Bible is it specifically stated that we are limited to a single angel whose job it is to follow us everywhere - or that certain angels are limited in their assignments to just a single person. However, those two passages certainly do not rule out the idea that there are “guardian” angels.

So, the short answer is: “It’s possible. But we can’t say for certain.”

Whether we have one or more assigned to us isn’t the important thing. Maybe Hebrews 1:14 sums up what’s really important to remember:

Are not all angels ministering spirits sent to serve those who will inherit salvation?

Angels are sent at God's command to serve us in whatever way God knows we need. That tells us that it does no good for us to pray to angels, since they are sent at God's direction - not ours. But, you can certainly pray for God to send them! (And keep in mind that God always knows exactly what we need, when we need it, and how.)

The situation in the passage from Acts reminds us of another important truth we see pretty much every time angels are mentioned: They are extremely powerful beings - able to accomplish things that are humanly impossible! (I'm so thankful that the angels God sends to protect me are powerful warriors and NOT the cute, chubby toddlers we see depicted on some Hallmark cards and paintings!)

Thanks for asking,
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Send your questions to pastor@livingwordlutheran.net