14610 - Angels

the question

Could you give us some information about the angels?

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

Allah created the angels from light. The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said: “The angels were created from light, the jinn were created from smokeless fire, and Adam was created from that which has been described to you.” [Muslim, 2996]

The angels are by nature obedient to Allah:

“[they, i.e., angels] disobey not, (from executing) the commands they receive from Allah, but do that which they are commanded.” [66:6 – interpretation of the meaning]

They are created in such a way that they do not eat or drink. Their food is tasbeeh (glorification of Allah) and tahleel (saying La ilaha ill-Allah), as Allah tells us concerning them (interpretation of the meaning):

“They (i.e. the angels) glorify His praises night and day, (and) they never slacken (to do so) [21:20]

The angels bear witness to the Oneness of Allah, as Allah says (interpretation of the meaning):

“Allah bears witness that La ilaha illa Huwa (none has the right to be worshipped but He), and the angels, and those having knowledge (also give this witness); (He always) maintains His creation in justice. La ilaha illa Huwa (none has the right to be worshipped but He), the All-Mighty, the All-Wise.” [3:18]

Allah has honoured some of the angels by choosing them as messengers, just as He has chosen some of mankind as messengers:

“Allah chooses messengers from angels and from men.” [22:75 – interpretation of the meaning]

When Allah created Adam and He wanted to honour him, He commanded the angels to prostrate to him:

“And (remember) when We said to the angels: ‘Prostrate yourselves before Adam.’ And they prostrated except Iblis (Satan), he refused and was proud and was one of the disbelievers (disobedient to Allah).’” [2:34 – interpretation of the meaning]

The angels are a mighty creation, and they perform many tasks, and they are divided into many groups, which no one knows except Allah. Some of them carry the Throne:

“Those (angels) who bear the Throne (of Allah) and those around it glorify the praises of their Lord, and believe in Him, and ask forgiveness for those who believe (in the Oneness of Allah)…” [40:7 – interpretation of the meaning]

Among them is the one who brings down the revelation to the messengers. He is Jibreel (peace be upon him), who brought the Quran down to Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him):

“Which the trustworthy Rooh [Jibreel] has brought down

Upon your heart (O Muhammad) that you may be (one) of the warners.” [26:193 – interpretation of the meaning]

Among them is Mikail, who is appointed in charge of the rain and vegetation, and Israfil who is appointed to blow the Trumpet when the Hour begins. And among them are the recording angels who are appointed to watch over the sons of Adam and their deeds:

“But verily, over you (are appointed angels in charge of mankind) to watch you,

Kiraman (Honourable) Katibeen —writing down (your deeds),

They know all that you do.” [82: 10-12 – interpretation of the meaning]

Among them are those who are entrusted with the task of writing down all deeds, whether good or evil:

“(Remember) that the two receivers (recording angels) receive (each human being), one sitting on the right and one on the left (to note his or her actions)

Not a word does he (or she) utter but there is a watcher by him ready (to record it).” [50:17-18 – interpretation of the meaning]

Among them are those who are entrusted with the task of seizing the souls of the believers:

“Those whose lives the angels take while they are in a pious state (i.e. pure from all evil, and worshipping none but Allah Alone) saying (to them): Salamun ‘Alaykum (peace be on you) enter you Paradise, because of that (the good) which you used to do (in the world).” [16:32 – interpretation of the meaning]

And among them are those who are entrusted with the task of seizing the souls of the disbelievers:

“And if you could see when the angels take away the souls of those who disbelieve (at death); they smite their faces and their backs, (saying): ‘Taste the punishment of the blazing Fire.’” [8:50 – interpretation of the meaning]

Among them are the gatekeepers of Paradise and the servants of the people of Paradise:

“And angels shall enter unto them from every gate (saying):

Salamun ‘Alaykum (peace be upon you) for you persevered in patience! Excellent indeed is the final home!” [13:23-24 – interpretation of the meaning]

And among them are the gatekeepers of Hell:

“O you who believe! Ward off yourselves and your families against a Fire (Hell) whose fuel is men and stones, over which are (appointed) angels stern (and) severe.” [66:6 – interpretation of the meaning]

Among them are some who strive in jihad (battle) with the believers:

“(Remember) when your Lord revealed to the angels, ‘Verily, I am with you, so keep firm those who have believed. I will cast terror into the hearts of those who have disbelieved, so strike them over the necks, and smite over all their fingers and toes.’” [8:12 – interpretation of the meaning]

On Laylat al-Qadr (Night of Decree) in the month of Ramadan, the angels come down to witness goodness with the Muslims, as Allah says (interpretation of the meaning):

“The Night of Al-Qadr (Decree) is better than a thousand months (i.e. worshipping Allah in that night is better than worshipping Him a thousand months, i.e. 83 years and 4 months).

Therein descend the angels and the Rooh [Jibreel] by Allah’s permission with all decrees.” [97:3-4]

The angels do not enter a house in which there is a statue, picture (image) or a dog. The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said: “The angels do not enter a house in which there is a dog or an image.” [Muslim].

Belief in the angels is one of the pillars of faith, and whoever denies it is a kafir (disbeliever):

“… and whosoever disbelieves in Allah, His angels, His Books, His messengers, and the Last Day, then indeed he has strayed far away.” [4:136 – interpretation of the meaning]

And Allah knows best.