

Shayla: Is my guardian angel a boy or a girl?

Meforshim:

Angels are special guardians. They have been given the responsibility of watching over the children of God.¹ All of God's children have guardian angels, even children, and these angels report to God how their charges are being treated.² Angels will come to our rescue if we pray to God and He so commands.³ In the event of our death, they carry our souls to the afterlife.⁴

Some people believe that there are neither male nor female angels. They say this because they read a passage where Jesus taught that angels are not bound by human marriage traditions and rituals.

- Matthew 22:30 HCSB For in the resurrection they neither marry nor are given in marriage but are like angels in heaven.
- Mark 12:25 HCSB For when they rise from the dead, they neither marry nor are given in marriage but are like angels in heaven.
- Luke 20:34-36 HCSB Jesus told them, "The sons of this age marry and are given in marriage. 35 But those who are counted worthy to take part in that age and in the resurrection from the dead neither marry nor are given in marriage. 36 For they cannot die anymore, because they are like angels and are sons of God, since they are sons of the resurrection.

However, notice that Jesus never said that there weren't male or female angels. He merely said that our marital rituals will be meaningless in heaven. After all, which human marital ceremonies would we practice? African? Jewish? Russian? American? In our next life, race will not be a consideration. In fact, it should already be that way!

The passage in Luke seems to be the key to a proper understanding of the point of that particular conversation. In all three Gospels, the resurrection is being discussed. Luke clarifies that it is the fact that angels are immortal that is the crucial point, not that they do not enjoy sex.

When Hashem first created us, He did so by creating sexual beings. He created us both male and female. He proceeded to give us our very first command, "Be fruitful, multiply, fill the earth..."⁵ and then called the whole thing "very good."⁶ This command was reiterated after the flood.⁷ In the New Covenant, He commanded that His people should not refrain from sexual activity too long lest they be subject to temptation⁸, and He called the marriage bed holy.⁹

Why is this important? It is important because the idea that angels are without gender and that we will become androgynous creatures when we enter the next life is not a Christian concept but a Gnostic one. Gnosticism was always particularly prissy about bodily functions and thought that the only true spiritual being would be an ethereal, sexless one. How contrary to the Scriptures that teach that the most Holy became flesh and dwelt among us! God has never presented Himself to us as a sexless drone, even though the Father and the Spirit are spirits and thus, possess neither flesh nor bone.¹⁰ He has always presented Himself as masculine.

So sexlessness is not a Christian but a Gnostic idea, and the passages where the Christ discussed the marriage rituals are primarily meant to focus on the idea of immortality and have no

¹ Psalm 34:7; Daniel 6:21-22

² Matthew 18:10

³ Psalm 34:7; Matthew 26:53; Acts 12:7-11

⁴ Luke 16:22

⁵ Genesis 1:28

⁶ Genesis 1:31

⁷ Genesis 9:1

⁸ 1 Corinthians 7:3-5

⁹ Hebrews 13:4

¹⁰ Luke 24:39

direct bearing on the issue of angel gender. These are not, in themselves sufficient arguments. Argument by a lack of something is not an argument.

In contrast, we find the following odd passage in the Old Covenant:

- Zechariah 5:9 HCSB Then I looked up and saw two women approaching with the wind in their wings. Their wings were like those of a stork, and they lifted up the basket between earth and sky.

While angels generally appear as men in Scripture, Zechariah 5:9 may suggest this is not always the case. The two women mentioned in this passage are not specifically called angels, but they are clearly agents of God. The fate of the woman (wickedness) is portrayed: She is to be removed from the land. Although some regard the two women as agents of evil (partly because the stork is an unclean bird, Lev 11:19), it seems preferable to regard them as divinely chosen agents because they, along with the wind (also an instrument of God, Ps 104:3-4), would thus demonstrate that the removal was the work of God alone.

The simile “wings like those of a stork” is evidently intended to show that the winged women—carried along by the wind—were capable of supporting the woman in the basket over a great distance. Though Scripture does not clearly identify them as angels, we must be careful about making dogmatic statements about angels being without gender or sex.

In our opinion then, the issue of whether or not our guardian angels are male or female remains open. We probably have many angels surrounding us – whether any of them are boys or girls...who’s to say?