

## NBC Invites Skeptics to Believe In Angels

Written by Jeff Wagg

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Please watch this video from this 12/23/2008 episode of NBC's *Today* show. We, as skeptics, are specifically invited by NBC to reconsider our belief that angels are unproven in light of new evidence. In short, a woman sees an angel on a security camera monitor, and her daughter—who has just been taken off life support—recovers. What could explain this other than angels?

How about.. a poorly adjusted camera, medical science, and the natural ability of a body to heal itself?

I see no evidence of angels there. In fact, I don't even know what an angel is. Fortunately, NBC chose to ask that question, and the answer given by the post-modernist rabbi was ultimately "they can be anything." How nice. I think I'll stick with believing the only actual angels are [ballplayers from Anaheim](#).

But let's consider the facts here, as presented by this [online version of the same story](#). Chelsea Banton was born premature, has suffered from pneumonia many times in her life, and when the doctors said they could do no more, they removed life support and she started to recover.

And the credit for this goes to angels and god. Why is it so easy for people to ignore the fact that doctors kept this child alive using the applied science of modern medicine? Why don't the doctors get any credit at all? It angers me when a spontaneous health improvement occurs, and the doctors are portrayed as impotent and cowering in the presence of a miracle. If miracles like this are real, why do we have doctors at all? In fact, what's to explain the anti-miracle of the premature birth?

It's best not to speculate too much on these things.

I understand what they're trying to do, and ultimately the rabbi is correct in one regard. It promotes happiness to assume a stance of thankfulness in the wake of a tragedy. I think that's true.. and I really have no problem with it. I was in a nearly fatal car accident in 1986, and my

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immediate response was to climb out of the wreck, take my guitar onto the roof, and play the [cl](#)  
[osing song from Harold and Maude](#)

. Yeah, the cops asked my girlfriend (at the time) if I was OK, but in the end, it made us both smile. The car was a wreck, but we were alive and we chose to be happy. I think it was a positive and healthy response, and there were no angels or divine intervention in attendance. My thanks go to the people who designed the guard rails and to Datsun, who built a very safe car. I owe every happy moment since to those people.

So congratulations to Chelsea Banton and her family. I wish them well, and hope the recovery contiues. I also hope they take some time to thank the doctors who've kept her alive all these years. And I hope the hospital has taken the time to adjust that camera, or that CRT is going to suffer from terrible burn-in.