

# Hebrews 1:14 Commentary

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CONSIDER JESUS OUR GREAT HIGH PRIEST  
Click chart to enlarge  
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The Epistle to the Hebrews				
INSTRUCTION Hebrews 1-10:18			EXHORTATION Hebrews 10:19-13:25	
Superior Person of Christ Hebrews 1:1-4:13	Superior Priest in Christ Hebrews 4:14-10:18			Superior Life In Christ Hebrews 10:19-13:25
BETTER THAN PERSON Hebrews 1:1-4:13	BETTER PRIESTHOOD Heb 4:14-7:28	BETTER COVENANT Heb 8:1-13	BETTER SACRIFICE Heb 9:1-10:18	BETTER LIFE
MAJESTY OF CHRIST	MINISTRY OF CHRIST			MINISTERS FOR CHRIST
DOCTRINE			DUTY	
DATE WRITTEN: ca. 64-68AD				

See [ESV Study Bible "Introduction to Hebrews"](#)  
(See also [MacArthur's Introduction to Hebrews](#))

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Hebrews 1:14 [Are \(3PPAI\)](#) they [not all ministering spirits, sent out](#) to [render service](#) for the [sake](#) of [those](#) who [will](#) ([PAPMPA](#))

**Greek:** [ouchi pantes eisin](#) (3PPAI) [leitourgika pneumata eis diakonian apostellomena](#) (PPNPN) [dia tous mellontas](#) (PAPMPA) [kleronomein](#) (PAN) [soterian?](#)

**Amplified:** Are not the angels all ministering spirits (servants) sent out in the service [of God for the assistance] of those who are to inherit salvation? ( [Amplified Bible - Lockman](#) )

**ALT:** They are all spirits of spiritual service being sent out to render service for the sake of the ones being about to be inheriting salvation, are they not?

**BBE:** Are they not all helping spirits, who are sent out as servants to those whose heritage will be salvation?

**KJV:** Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?

**NLT:** But angels are only servants. They are spirits sent from God to care for those who will receive salvation. ([NLT - Tyndale House](#))

**Phillips:** Surely the angels are no more than spirits in the service of God, commissioned to serve the heirs of God's salvation. ([Phillips: Touchstone](#))

**Wuest:** Are not they all ministering spirits to render service, sent on a commission for the sake of those who are about to inherit salvation? (Eerdmans)

**Young's Literal:** are they not all spirits of service -- for ministration being sent forth because of those about to inherit salvation?

**HEBREWS 1:4-14**  
**JESUS IS**  
**BETTER THAN THE ANGELS:**  
**AS DEMONSTRATED BY**  
**SEVEN OT QUOTATIONS**  
 (All taken from the Septuagint - LXX)

HEBREWS	OT QUOTE	PROVES THAT...
Hebrews 1:5	Psalms 2:7	Jesus is God's only begotten Son
Hebrews 1:5	2Samuel 7:14	God is His Father Jesus is the Son
Hebrews 1:6	Psalms 97:7*	Jesus is to be worshipped by angels
Hebrews 1:7	Psalms 104:4	Angels are His Ministers
Hebrews 1:8, 1:9	Psalms 45:6-7	Jesus Christ is God Forever and ever
Hebrews 1:10, 11,12	Psalms 102:25-27	Jesus is Immutable and Eternal
Hebrews 1:13	Psalms 110:1	Jesus is Honored as Victor over All

\*Psalm 97:7 - Some scholars favor this quotation as from Deut 32:43 which in the Greek (LXX) reads "*Rejoice, ye heavens, with him, and let all the angels of God worship him!*". Either quote substantiates the writer's main premise.

**ARE THEY NOT ALL MINISTERING SPIRITS: ouchi pantes eisin (3PPAI) leitourgika pneumata:**

- Nave's Topic [ANGELS](#); [Click ISBE Article on Angels](#);
- Booklet - [What Can We Learn From The Angels?](#)
- Heb 8:6; 10:11; Ps 103:20, 21; Da 3:28; 7:10; Mt 18:10; Lk 1:19; 2:9, 13, 1Ki 22:19; Job 1:6; Ps 104:4; Isa 6:2 6:3; Da 7:10; Mt 13:41 49, 50; Lk 1:19; 2Th 1:7; Jude 1:14

are they not all spirits of service (YLT),  
 Are not all angels spirits in the divine service (NRSV)  
 But angels are only servants (NLT)  
 Surely the angels are no more than spirits in the service of God (Phillips)  
 All the angels are spirits who serve God (ICB)  
 All of them are spirits on a divine mission (ISV)  
 Aren't they all merely spirits who serve, (JNT)  
 Angels are merely spirits sent to serve people (CEV)  
 They are all spirits of spiritual service... are they not? (ALT)

The answer to this question although rhetorical (**asked primarily for effect and not expecting an answer**) is a resounding **Yes** an affirmation to which both the Old and New Testaments abundantly testify!

**Spurgeon** - They are servants of God and our willing guardians, but they are not to be worshiped. Jesus is Lord of all, and we are bound to adore Him, and Him only.

**Ministering** (3010) (**leitourgikos** from **léitos** = of the people + **érgon** = work; English **liturgy** = a prescribed form for public worship) in Greek referred especially to those who performed public duties or works of public use (public servants). It means related to the performance of religious or **liturgical** service.

See also **leitourgos** (He 1:7-note) **leitourgia** ( Heb 8:6-note, He 9:21-9:21)

**Leitourgikos** is found only in this verse in the NT. Most of the uses of this word group is found in the **Septuagint (LXX)** Greek translation of the Hebrew OT (which would have been very familiar to Jewish readers of this epistle) describing priestly service to God and public ministry to men including performance of both worship and charitable functions.

**Leitourgikos** - 5 uses in the OT - Ex 31:10, Ex 39:1, Nu 4:12, 26, Nu 7:5, 2Chr 24:14

The Psalmist describes the **ministering spirits** as God's

**angels** mighty in strength... who perform His word, obeying the voice of His word" with their purpose being to "serve (LXX = **leitourgos**) Him, doing His will." (Ps 103:20;21)

**Spurgeon comments:** We are bidden to do these commandments, and alas we fail; let those unfallen spirits, whose bliss it is never to have transgressed, give to the Lord the glory of their holiness. They hearken for yet more commands, obeying as much by reverent listening as by energetic action, and in this they teach us how the heavenly will should evermore be done; yet even for this surpassing excellence let them take no praise, but render all to him who has made and kept them what they are. O that we could hear them chant the high praises of God, as did the shepherds on that greatest of all birth nights --

When such music sweet  
 Their hearts and ears did greet  
 As never was by mortal finger struck;  
 Divinely-warbled voice  
 Answering the stringed noise,  
 As well their souls in blissful rapture took:  
 The air, such pleasure loth to lose,  
 With thousand echoes still prolongs each heavenly close.

Our glad heart anticipates the hour when we shall hear them "harping in loud and solemn guise," and all to the sole praise of God.

Bless ye the Lord, all ye his hosts; to whatever race of creatures ye may belong, for ye are all his troops, and he is the Generalissimo of all your armies. The fowl of the air and the fish of the sea, and whatsoever passeth through the paths of the sea, should all unite in praising their Creator, after the best of their ability.

Ye ministers of his that do his pleasure; in whatever way ye serve him, bless him as ye serve. The Psalmist would have every servant in the Lord's palace unite with him, and all at once sing out the praises of the Lord. We have attached a new sense to the word "ministers" in these latter days, and so narrowed it down to those who serve in word and doctrine. Yet no true minister would wish to alter it, for we are above all men bound to be the Lord's servants, and we would, beyond all other ministering intelligences or forces, desire to bless the glorious Lord.

Even as the priest was primarily ministering to God, **Jamieson** comments that the ministering of angels is "not properly rendered to men, since the latter have no power of commanding them, though their ministrations to God are often directed to the good of men."

**Matthew Henry** adds that "Angels are ministering spirits under the blessed Trinity, to execute the divine will and pleasure; they are the ministers of divine Providence."

**Gill** comments that **ministering spirits** is "a rabbinical term frequent in Jewish writings and so quite familiar and appealing to the Jewish recipients of this epistle. "

**Are they not** - Greek here is **ouchi** which when used in a question expects an affirmative answer. The point is in fact, yes, the angels are ministering spirits. Their destiny is to continue to minister to us throughout eternity but Jesus' destiny is to reign and it follows that He is immeasurably superior to the angels. The superiority of the Son to angels is sure: They all (no exceptions) minister regardless of their "rank". The Son is ministered to. The angels "stand" (Lk 1:19) before God, while the Son is "seated at the right hand of the Majesty on high" (He 1:3-note He 1:13-note)

#### SENT OUT TO RENDER SERVICE: eis diakonian apostellomena (PPPNNP):

- Ge 32:1, 32:2, 32:24; 1Pe1:12) (Ps 91:11, 91:12; Da 6:22; 9:21, 22, 23; 10:11, 10:12; Mt1:20; 2:13; 24:31; Lk 16:22; Acts 5:19; 10:3 10:4; 12:7, 12:23; 27:23

They are spirits sent from God to care for those who will receive salvation (NLT)

commissioned to serve the heirs of God's salvation (Phillips)

sent on a commission for the sake of those who are about to inherit salvation (Wuest)

and are sent to help those who will receive salvation (ICB)

sent out in the service [of God for the assistance] of those who are to inherit salvation (Amp)

being sent out to render service (ALT)

**Sent out** (649) (**apostello** from **apo** = from + **stello** = send) means literally to send forth and here used in the **present tense** indicating that the angels are **continually** sent out to minister a truth we see clearly testified to throughout Scripture.

**Does this mean they are still be sent out today to render service to believers?** Without a doubt!

**A T Robertson** says that the **present tense** signifies "sent forth repeatedly, from time to time as occasion requires."

One of the earliest examples of an occasion that God deemed necessitated the sending out of an angel is found after **Adam** sinned and God

drove the man out and at the east of the garden of Eden **He stationed the cherubim** and the flaming sword which turned every direction, to guard the way to the tree of life. (Gen 3:24)

**Comment:** Cherubim, like all angels, are spirit beings, but they can take on physical bodies. Adam and Eve were barred by a flaming sword from the garden that God had planted for their enjoyment. There was no way back in. The fact that the tree of life remained, even though guarded by angels and a sword, was a ray of hope. Is it not possible that because He had it guarded and did not uproot it, that one day its fruit may be eaten again? Indeed, one day we will see it again (Rev 22:2). Adam and Eve were no longer welcome in God's presence, but they had the hope that one day Paradise would be regained. ([Radmacher, E. D., Allen, R. B., & House, H. W. The Nelson Study Bible: NKJV. Nashville: Thomas Nelson](#))

God used His angelic messengers to not only warn **Lot** but to withdraw Lot from harm's way:

And when morning dawned, the angels urged Lot, saying, "Up, take your wife and your two daughters, who

are here, lest you be swept away in the punishment of the city." But he hesitated. So the men seized his hand and the hand of his wife and the hands of his two daughters, for the compassion of the LORD was upon him; and they brought him out, and put him outside the city." (Ge 19:15;16)

**Comment: Unfortunately, there is a "lot of Lot in a lot of us" isn't there?**

A potentially confusing Scripture on this topic of angelic service is "The **Angel of the LORD** encamps around those who fear Him, and rescues them." (Ps 34:7) because here the **Angel of the LORD** (see **Angel of the LORD**: summary) when compared to other Scriptures is undoubtedly the pre incarnate Christ. Even the context of the verse supports that this is not a reference to a created angel, for we are never commanded to fear angels but to "Fear God and give Him the glory" (Rev 14:7-[note](#)) (**fear God - This phrase occurs 18x in NAS and is worth taking a moment to study the uses - make a list of the truths you learn and then pray over that list!** = Ge 22:12; 42:18; Ex 18:21; Deut 25:18; Job 1:9; Ps 55:19; 66:16; Eccl 5:7; 8:12, 13; 12:13; Luke 18:2, 4; 23:40; Acts 13:16, 26; 1Pet 2:17; Rev 14:7)

**Solomon** appropriately sums up Ecclesiastes writing that "The conclusion, when all has been heard, is: fear God and keep His commandments, because this applies to every person." (Eccl 12:13)

The writer of Hebrews notes later that God "does not give help to angels, but He gives help to the descendant of Abraham." (He 2:16-note).

Psalms 91:11-12 is a wonderful description of angels **sent out to render service** to believers...

For He will give His angels charge concerning you, To guard (see discussion this great Greek verb **diaphulasso** used in the Septuagint) you **in all your ways**. They will bear you up in their hands, That you do not strike your foot against a stone.

This is the passage the devil quoted to Jesus in his temptation (Lk 4:10, 11-note) but he omitted the crucial phrase in all thy ways!

**C H Spurgeon** comments that the qualifying phrase **in all Thy ways** emphasizing that this phrase "is no limit (boundary or restriction) to the heart which is right with God. It is not the way of the believer to go out of His way. (**Ed**: Notice the following order) He keeps in His way, and then the angels keep him. How angels thus keep us we cannot tell. Whether they repel demons, counteract spiritual plots, or even ward off the subtler physical forces of disease, we do not know. Perhaps we shall one day stand amazed at the multiplied services which the unseen bands have rendered to us. (Amen to that last statement!)

**William MacDonald** adds that the promise of protection in Ps 91:11-13 "presupposed living in God's will. To claim the promise in an act of disobedience would be tempting God. The time would come when Jesus would be revealed as Messiah, but the cross must come first. The altar of sacrifice must precede the throne. The crown of thorns must precede the crown of glory. Jesus would await God's time and would accomplish God's will."

**Adam Clarke** that for those who walk **in all Thy ways** "Evil spirits may attempt to injure you; but they shall not be able. The angels of God shall have a special charge to accompany, defend, and preserve you; and against their power, the influence of evil spirits cannot prevail. These (angels) will, when necessary, turn your steps out of the way of danger; ward it off when it comes in your ordinary path; suggest to your mind prudent counsels, profitable designs, and pious purposes; and thus minister to you as a child of God, and an heir of salvation. The path of duty is the way of safety. We cannot reasonably expect protection if we do not walk in the way of obedience. Our ways are the paths of duty, which God's word and providence have marked out for us. The way of sin is not our way, our duty, our interest. Keep in your own ways, not in those of sin, Satan, the world, and the flesh; and God will take care of you!"

**Render service** ([1248](#)) (**diakonia**) means the rendering or assistance or help by performing certain duties, often of a humble or menial nature serve, including such mundane activities as waiting on tables or caring for household needs—activities without apparent dignity.

[Click for Scriptures that depict angels rendering service to saints](#)

**Diakonia** - 34x in 32v - Luke 10:40; Acts 1:17, 25; 6:1, 4; 11:29; 12:25; 20:24; 21:19; Rom 11:13; 12:7; 15:31; 1 Cor 12:5; 16:15; 2 Cor 3:7ff; 4:1; 5:18; 6:3; 8:4; 9:1, 12f; 11:8; Eph 4:12; Col 4:17; 1 Tim 1:12; 2 Tim 4:5, 11; Heb 1:14; Rev 2:19. **NAS** = ministries(1), ministry(19), mission(1), preparations(1), relief(1), serve(1), service(7), serving(2), support(1).

**Thomas Aquinas** - Angels mean messengers and ministers. Their function is to execute the plan of divine

providence, even in earthly things.

**Hewitt** - Angels are clothed with God's powers to accomplish his will in the realm of nature.

**John Calvin** - Angels are the ministers of God's wrath, as well as of his grace.

**Increase Mather** - Angels both good and bad have a greater influence on this world than men are generally aware of.

**C. H. Spurgeon** - Activity is the mark of holy spirits and should be the mark of holy men.

As mentioned above the rabbinical term **angel of service or ministry** was well known and was often descriptive of angels whose service was to protect a person. The psalmist gives Scriptural credence to this rabbinical belief, recording that God gives

His angels charge concerning you, to guard you in all your ways. They will bear you up in their hands, lest you strike your foot against a stone. (Ps 91:11, 12)

**Spurgeon comments (Treasury of David)** - For he shall give his angels charge over thee. Not one guardian angel, as some fondly dream, but all the angels are here alluded to. They are the bodyguard of the princes of the blood imperial of heaven, and they have received commission from their Lord and ours to watch carefully over all the interests of the faithful. When men have a charge they become doubly careful, and therefore the angels are represented as bidden by God himself to see to it that the elect are secured. It is down in the marching orders of the hosts of heaven that they take special note of the people who dwell in God. It is not to be wondered at that the servants are bidden to be careful of the comfort of their Master's guests; and we may be quite sure that when they are specially charged by the Lord himself they will carefully discharge the duty imposed upon them.

To keep thee in all thy ways. To be a bodyguard, a garrison to the body, soul, and spirit of the saint. The limit of this protection "in all thy ways" is yet no limit to the heart which is right with God. It is not the way of the believer to go out of his way. He keeps in the way, and then the angels keep him. The protection here promised is exceeding broad as to place, for it refers to all our ways, and what do we wish for more? How angels thus keep us we cannot tell. Whether they repel demons, counteract spiritual plots, or even ward off the more subtle physical forces of disease, we do not know. Perhaps we shall one day stand amazed at the multiplied services which the unseen bands have rendered to us.

They, that is the angels, God's own angels, shall cheerfully become our servants. They shall bear thee up in their hands; as nurses carry little children, with careful love, so shall those glorious spirits bear up each individual believer.

Lest thou dash thy foot against a stone; even minor ills they ward off. It is most desirable that we should not stumble, but as the way is rough, it is most gracious on the Lord's part to send his servants to bear us up above the loose pebbles. If we cannot have the way smoothed it answers every purpose if we have angels to bear us up in their hands. Since the greatest ills may arise out of little accidents, it shows the wisdom of the Lord that from the smaller evils we are protected.

## WHAT ABOUT GUARDIAN ANGELS?

Many have used this passage to suggest that each person has a so called "guardian angel". Coupling this Psalm with our Lord's warning

"See that you do not despise one of these little ones, for I say to you, that **their angels** in heaven continually behold the face of My Father who is in heaven." (Mt 18:10),

This passage has led some to teach that each Christian has a guardian angel. Jewish superstition also held the belief that each person had his own guardian angel who could assume that person's form. However close examination of the Scriptures used to support "guardian angels" leaves this "doctrine" at the very least debatable.

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**Guardian Angels** - Curtis Sliwa's Guardian Angels first showed up in the Bronx in 1979. Known initially as The Rock Brigade, the volunteer citizens group started as a neighborhood anti-litter squad. A short time later, the 23-year-old Sliwa, who was night manager of a fast-food restaurant, expanded the group to The Magnificent Thirteen. They began riding New York subways to protect riders from muggings. Seven months later they took the name Guardian Angels and adopted the identifying marks of red berets and T-shirts bearing the logo of a winged eye. Today the Angels have almost 70 chapters and 7,000 members.

We know more about Sliwa's group than we do about the angels they are named after. While the Bible has many references to spirits who worship God and do His will, there is reason for the mystery that surrounds them. Even though they serve us on behalf of God, our ultimate well-being is not in their hands. They are examples to us of the obedience and worship God deserves, but they are not to distract us from the One who is their Lord and ours.

The message of Hebrews 1 is clear. Jesus is far superior to the angels (v.4). Their worship of Christ teaches us that He alone deserves our trust and worship. --M R De Haan II ([Our Daily Bread. Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

The angels show us what it means  
To serve God and obey;  
Their constant worship of the Lord  
Inspires us to pray. --Sper

Angels are examples of worship, not objects of worship

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John Paton was a missionary in the New Hebrides Islands. One night hostile natives surrounded the mission station, intent on burning out the Patons and killing them. Paton and his wife prayed during that terror-filled night that God would deliver them. When daylight came they were amazed to see their attackers leave. A year later, the chief of the tribe was converted to Christ. Remembering what had happened, Paton asked the chief what had kept him from burning down the house and killing them. The chief replied in surprise, "Who were all those men with you there?" Paton knew no men were present--but the chief said he was afraid to attack because he had seen hundreds of big men in shining garments with drawn swords circling the mission station. (Moody Bible Institute - Today in the Word)

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**Seeing the Unseen** - In a materialistic world like ours, we are tempted to conclude that the only real things are those we experience with our five senses. Yet "there are things we cannot see: things behind our backs or far away and all things in the dark," said C. S. Lewis.

There is another realm of reality, just as actual, just as factual, just as substantial as anything we see, hear, touch, taste, or smell in this world. It exists all around us—not out there "somewhere," but "here." There are legions of angels helping us, for which the world has no counter-measures (Hebrews 1:14). The psalmist David referred to them as a force of thousands of thousands of chariots (Psalm 68:17 - [Spurgeon's note](#)). We cannot see God nor His angels with our natural eyes. But they are there, whether we see them or not. I believe the world is filled with them.

Faith is the means by which we are able to "see" this invisible world. That is belief's true function. Faith is to the spiritual realm what the five senses are to the natural realm. The writer of Hebrews says that faith is "the evidence of things not seen" (He 11:1-note). By faith we recognize the existence of the spiritual world and learn to depend on the Lord for His help in our daily life. Our goal, then, as George MacDonald once said, is to "grow eyes" to see the unseen. —David H. Roper ([Our Daily Bread. Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

At times our fears may loom so large,  
We long for proof that God is near;  
It's then our Father says to us,  
"Have faith, My child, and do not fear."  
—DJD

**Faith sees things that are out of sight.**

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John MacArthur one of the foremost evangelical expositors of our day commenting on [Mt 18:10](#) says that "This does not suggest that each believer has a personal guardian angel. Rather, the pronoun is collective and refers to the fact that believers are served by angels in general. These angels are pictured "always" watching the face of God so as to hear His command to them to help a believer when needed. It is extremely serious to treat any fellow believer with contempt since God and the holy angels are so concerned for their well-being."

The well done RBC booklet [What Can We Learn From The Angels?](#) adds that "to make this claim is to go beyond what Jesus said. His statement certainly assures us that we have angels who work in our behalf, but it does not necessarily declare that there is one assigned angel for every person. It may be, but not necessarily. However, this should not trouble us. God can and will look after



each one of us individually. He certainly has enough angels available if He chooses to use them to protect or help us. Myriads of these heavenly beings are our friends and stand ready to be our helpers and protectors. but it is difficult to specifically find this very popular teaching in Scripture." McGee has a pithy question for anyone tempted to argue over whether guardian angels exist -- "Are you a child of God?" If you are, you are indwelt by the Holy Spirit of God, Who is the third Person of the Godhead. What could a guardian angel do for you that He couldn't do for you? Do you want to think that over for a while?

Is it not even **more comforting** to know that the angels are continuously sent out from the throne of God of Him Who sees all things and Who "upholds all things by the word of His power" (see **note** Hebrews 1:3)?

Is it not even better than a "guardian angel" (if there be such) to be assured of the Lord's promise that

"I WILL NEVER DESERT YOU, NOR WILL I EVER FORSAKE YOU," so that we confidently say, "THE LORD IS MY HELPER, I WILL NOT BE AFRAID. WHAT SHALL MAN DO TO ME?" (Heb 13:5-6-note)

In much of modern evangelical doctrinally shallow teaching are we not at risk (like the early Jewish believers) of focusing more attention on the messengers (angels) rather than on "**the Messenger of the Covenant**", (Malachi 3:1-note) the Lord Jesus Christ Himself? Witness the "angel craze" in Christian bookstores (angel figurines, paintings, etc), television shows (Touched By An Angel [circa year 2000] - not a "bad" show per se but unfortunately sometimes containing "bad theology") and popular Christian books like "This Present Darkness", which sadly often is a major source of "doctrines of" angels - much of which is not Scripturally sound).

Angels are important as the writer of Hebrews emphasizes but Jesus is infinitely, incomparably much better than the angels. Fix your eyes on Jesus (see [Fix Your Eyes On Jesus - 44 excellent meditations](#)) not on the angels who themselves obey the voice of Him Who Alone is bearing all things to their final conclusion by the word of His power.

One of the most famous **services rendered** occurred when Daniel was preserved from the lions and explained to King Darius - "**My God sent His angel** and shut the lions' mouths and they have not harmed me, inasmuch as I was found innocent before Him; and also toward you, O king, I have committed no crime. (Da 6:22-note)

Later God sent Gabriel to give Daniel "insight with understanding" into the incredible OT prophecy often referred to as **Daniel's Seventieth Week** in which the time of Messiah's first coming is given as well as an overview of the last 7 years of Israel and the rule of the Antichrist (see discussion of Daniel 9:24-27: Part 1: Notes on Daniel 9:24-25) (Daniel 9:24-27: Part 2) (Summary Chart of Daniel's Seventieth Week)

In the early days of the church, Jewish resistance resulted in Peter and the apostles being cast into prison.

"But an angel of the Lord (note carefully Luke does not say "the" angel of the Lord which most evangelical commentators agree is a reference to the pre-incarnate appearances of Christ) during the night opened the gates of the prison, and taking them (Peter and the apostles) out he said "Go your way, stand and speak to the people in the temple the whole message of this Life." ([Acts 5:19,20](#))

In Acts 10 messengers from the Gentile Cornelius were sent to Peter

and they said, "Cornelius, a centurion, a righteous and God-fearing man well spoken of by the entire nation of the Jews, was **divinely directed by a holy angel** to send for you to come to his house and hear a message from you. ([Acts 10:22](#))

Thus God used the angel to open the door for the gospel to the Gentiles.

## **SUMMARY OF SERVICES RENDERED BY GOOD ANGELS**

### **1) Angels attend and worship God.**

The basic activity of angels appears to be gathering around the throne of God and proclaiming His worthiness (Mt 18:10; Rev 5:11).

### **2) Angels protect God's people.**

The Bible relates numerous instances of angels delivering heroes, such as Daniel and Peter, from threatening situations ([Da 6:22](#); [Acts 5:19](#)). However, all believers in Christ are objects of angelic concern (Heb. 1:14).

### **3) Angels guide God's people.**

Angels directed the women to see the empty tomb and told Jesus' disciples He was risen (Mt 28:5, 6, 7). An angel guided Philip to the desert where he met the Ethiopian eunuch (Acts 8:26). An angel assured Paul that he would reach Rome safely (Acts 27:23, 24). They probably guide many Christians who do not realize where



their help is coming from.

#### 4) Angels bring judgment on the wicked.

Angels participated in the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah (Ge 19:12, 13). They struck down Herod when he received worship (Acts 12:23). They pour out bowls of judgment in Rev. (Rev. 16).

#### 5) Angels assisted Jesus on earth.

Angels prepared Mary and Joseph for Jesus' birth (Mt 1:20; Lk 1:26-38). They announced Jesus' birth to the shepherds (Lk 2:8-15). They ministered to Jesus after His wilderness temptation (Mk 1:13). An angel strengthened Him in Gethsemane (Lk 22:43). Angels rolled away the rock from the tomb and ministered to the women (Mt 28:2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7). Angels were present at Christ's ascension (Acts 1:11).

#### 5) Angels will assist Christ at His return.

An archangel will announce the return of Christ (1Thes 4:16). Angels will gather all believers from the ends of the earth (Mt 24:31). They will separate the true from the false (Mt 13:39, 49, 50). They will serve as an honor guard at the gates of the New Jerusalem (Rev 21:12). (Adapted and modified from the Open Bible)

Spurgeon writes that...

Angels are the unseen attendants of the saints of God; they bear us up in their hands, lest we dash our foot against a stone. Loyalty to their Lord leads them to take a deep interest in the children of his love; they rejoice over the return of the prodigal to his father's house below, and they welcome the advent of the believer to the King's palace above. In olden times the sons of God were favoured with their visible appearance, and at this day, although unseen by us, heaven is still opened, and the angels of God ascend and descend upon the Son of man, that they may visit the heirs of salvation. Seraphim still fly with live coals from off the altar to touch the lips of men greatly beloved. If our eyes could be opened, we should see horses of fire and chariots of fire about the servants of the Lord; for we have come to an innumerable company of angels, who are all watchers and protectors of the seed-royal. Spenser's line is no poetic fiction, where he sings-

How oft do they with golden pinions cleave  
The flitting skies, like flying pursuivant  
Against foul fiends to aid us militant!

To what dignity are the chosen elevated when the brilliant courtiers of heaven become their willing servitors! Into what communion are we raised since we have intercourse with spotless celestials! How well are we defended since all the twenty- thousand chariots of God are armed for our deliverance! To whom do we owe all this? Let the Lord Jesus Christ be for ever endeared to us, for through him we are made to sit in heavenly places far above principalities and powers. He it is whose camp is round about them that fear him; he is the true Michael whose foot is upon the dragon. All hail, Jesus! thou Angel of Jehovah's presence, to thee this family offers its morning vows. (**Morning and Evening**)

**FOR THE SAKE OF THOSE WHO WILL INHERIT SALVATION: dia tous mellontas (PAPMPA) kleronomein (PAN) soterian:**

- Heb 6:12, 6:17; Mt 25:34; Ro 8:17; Gal 3:7, 3:9, 3:29; Eph 3:6; Titus 3:7; Jas 2:5; 1Pe 1:4; 3:7

for the sake of those who are about to inherit salvation (Wuest),

for the benefit of those who, before long, will inherit salvation? (WNT),

for the sake of the ones being about to be inheriting salvation (ALT)

The writer sums up the function of the angels as compared to that of the Son Who is the Ruler and the angels are His servants, appointed to minister to all the heirs of redemption.

**Inherit (2816)** (**kleronomeo** from **kleros** = a lot + **nemomai** = to possess; see study of related word **Kleronomos**) means to receive a possession and benefit as a gift from someone who has died, in this case the Son Who has made purification (Heb 1:3-note) and propitiation for sins (Heb 2:17-note) thus becoming "the Guarantee (posted bond or bail) of a better covenant" (Heb 7:22-note), which is our birthright, into the possession of which we enter by virtue of being fellow heirs (Ro 8:17-note) with the Son Who is Heir of all things.

In the Sermon on the Mount Jesus promised "blessed are the gentle, for they shall **inherit** the earth (Mt 5:5-note)

The writer of **Hebrews** adds that it is "through faith and patience" (He 6:12-note) that we "**inherit** the promises" (He 6:12-note) and thereby become "the **heirs** of the promise" (Heb 6:17-note) for "those who are of faith... are sons of Abraham" (Gal 3:7) and "Abraham's offspring, **heirs** according to promise" (Gal 3:29), "**heirs** of God and fellow (joint) **heirs** with Christ" (Ro 8:17-note).

**Paul** further explains that we "**inherit salvation**" as the result of "being justified by His grace... (so that we might be) made heirs according to the hope of eternal life." (Titus 3:7-note)

**James** adds that God chose "the poor of this world to be rich in faith and heirs of the kingdom which He promised to those who love Him" (James 2:5)

**Peter** reminds all saints undergoing various trials that "**those who will inherit salvation**" will "obtain an **inheritance** which is imperishable and undefiled and will not fade away, reserved in heaven..." (1Pe 1:4-note)

Little wonder the writer of Hebrews refers to inheritance as "**so great a salvation**".

**Are you eagerly looking forward to your glorious, safely preserved, eternal, indescribable inheritance?**

**Let this truth motivate you daily to seek His presence in His powerful Word, His powerful Spirit in your life and His Father's glory in your life.**

Such a "future focus" will radically alter your present outlook regardless of your current circumstances (cf 2Cor 4:17-18, Heb 12:2-note, Col 3:1-note; Col 3:2-note).

**Salvation** (4991) (**soteria** [word study] from **sozo** [word study] = to rescue from peril, protect, keep alive) describes the rescue or deliverance from danger, destruction, peril and slavery to and consequences of sin and unto restoration to a former state of safety, health, well being and also alludes to the continuing preservation from the danger of destruction. In the Greco-Roman world the emperor was looked upon as a savior. So the NT meaning of this great word was well understood by the reader.

The characteristic use of **soteria** and related (cognate) words (e.g., s) in the Bible is to sum up and describe the spiritual and eternal deliverances which result from the intervention of God on behalf of those who trust Him. In the NT **salvation** describes a condemned sinner who is delivered (and daily is being delivered) from enslavement to sin and to restoration to a former state of safety, health, well being in which he or she is preserved (eternally) from danger of destruction (especially eternal destruction).

**Soteria** - 46x in 45v -

Mark 16:8; Luke 1:69, 71, 77; 19:9; John 4:22; Acts 4:12; 7:25; 13:26, 47; 16:17; 27:34; Rom 1:16; 10:1, 10; 11:11; 13:11; 2 Cor 1:6; 6:2; 7:10; Eph 1:13; Phil 1:19, 28; 2:12; 1 Thess 5:8f; 2 Thess 2:13; 2 Tim 2:10; 3:15; Heb 1:14; 2:3, 10; 5:9; 6:9; 9:28; 11:7; 1 Pet 1:5, 9f; 2:2; 2 Pet 3:15; Jude 1:3; Rev 7:10; 12:10; 19:1. NAS = deliverance(2), preservation(1), salvation(42).

**Salvation** would have carried tremendous meaning to the Hebrew Christians and was a truth which undergirded and enabled them to show "**sympathy to the prisoners, and**" to accept "**joyfully the seizure of your property, knowing that you have for yourselves a better possession and an abiding one.**" (He 10:34-note).

**Hebrews 1:4-14** beautifully delineates the preeminence of Christ over the angels: He is the **Son** to whom all the angels are to give their worship (He 1:5, 6). He is called "**God,**" and His throne is "**forever and ever,**" while angels are created beings and are His servants (He 1:7, 8, 9). Jesus has existed forever, from all eternity, will never change, and is now enthroned in heaven, whereas angels are "**ministering spirits**" who are sent out by Him to serve "those who will inherit salvation" (He 1:10, 11, 12, 13, 14).

## **ANGELS**

From the International Standard Bible Encyclopedia article by John Macartney Wilson

ANGEL - Hebrew = mal'akh; Septuagint and New Testament = aggelos

### **I. DEFINITION AND SCRIPTURE TERMS**

### **II. ANGELS IN OLD TESTAMENT**

1. Nature, Appearances and Functions
2. The Angelic Host

### 3. The Angel of the Theophany

## III. ANGELS IN NEW TESTAMENT

1. Appearances
2. The Teaching of Jesus about Angels
3. Other New Testament References

## IV. DEVELOPMENT OF THE DOCTRINE

## V. THE REALITY OF ANGELS

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### I. Definition and Scripture Terms.

The word angel is applied in Scripture to an order of supernatural or heavenly beings whose business it is to act as God's messengers to men, and as agents who carry out His will. Both in Hebrew and Greek the word is applied to human messengers (1 Ki 19:2; Lk 7:24); in Hebrew it is used in the singular to denote a Divine messenger, and in the plural for human messengers, although there are exceptions to both usages. It is applied to the prophet Haggai (Hag 1:13), to the priest (Mal 2:7), and to the messenger who is to prepare the way of the Lord (Mal 3:1). Other Hebrew words and phrases applied to angels are bene ha-'elohim (Ge 6:2,4; Job 1:6; 2:1) and bene 'elim (Ps 29:1; 89:6), i.e. sons of the 'elohim or 'elim; this means, according to a common Hebrew usage, members of the class called 'elohim or 'elim, the heavenly powers. It seems doubtful whether the word 'elohim, standing by itself, is ever used to describe angels, although Septuagint so translates it in a few passages. The most notable instance is Ps 8:5; where the Revised Version (British and American) gives, "Thou hast made him but little lower than God," with the English Revised Version, margin reading of "the angels" for "God" (compare Heb 2:7,9); qedhoshim "holy ones" (Ps 89:5,7), a name suggesting the fact that they belong to God; 'ir, 'irim, "watcher," "watchers" (Da 4:13,17,23). Other expressions are used to designate angels collectively: codh, "council" (Ps 89:7), where the reference may be to an inner group of exalted angels; 'edhah and qahal, "congregation" (Ps 82:1; 89:5); and finally tsabha', tsebha'oth, "host," "hosts," as in the familiar phrase "the God of hosts."

In New Testament the word aggelos, when it refers to a Divine messenger, is frequently accompanied by some phrase which makes this meaning clear, e.g. "the angels of heaven" (Mt 24:36). Angels belong to the "heavenly host" (Lk 2:13). In reference to their nature they are called "spirits" (Heb 1:14). Paul evidently referred to the ordered ranks of supra-mundane beings in a group of words that are found in various combinations, namely, archai, "principalities," exousiai, "powers," thronoi, "thrones," kuriotetes, "dominions," and dunameis, also translated "powers." The first four are apparently used in a good sense in Col 1:16, where it is said that all these beings were created through Christ and unto Him; in most of the other passages in which words from this group occur, they seem to represent evil powers. We are told that our wrestling is against them (Eph 6:12), and that Christ triumphs over the principalities and powers (Col 2:15; compare Rom 8:38; 1Cor 15:24). In two passages the word archaggelos, "archangel" or chief angel, occurs: "the voice of the archangel" (1Th 4:16), and "Michael the archangel" (Jude 1:9).

### II. Angels in Old Testament.

#### 1. Nature, Appearances and Functions:

Everywhere in the Old Testament the existence of angels is assumed. The creation of angels is referred to in Ps 148:2,5 (compare Col 1:16). They were present at the creation of the world, and were so filled with wonder and gladness that they "shouted for joy" (Job 38:7). Of their nature we are told nothing. In general they are simply regarded as embodiments of their mission. Though presumably the holiest of created beings, they are charged by God with folly (Job 4:18), and we are told that "he putteth no trust in his holy ones" (Job 15:15). References to the fall of the angels are only found in the obscure and probably corrupt passage Gen 6:1, 2, 3, 4, and in the interdependent passages 2Pet 2:4 and Jude 1:6, which draw their inspiration from the Apocryphal book of Enoch. Demons are mentioned (see [Demon](#)); and although Satan appears among the sons of God (Job 1:6; 2:1), there is a growing tendency in later writers to attribute to him a malignity that is all his own (see [Satan](#)).

As to their outward appearance, it is evident that they bore the human form, and could at times be mistaken for men (Ezek 9:2; Ge 18:2,16). There is no hint that they ever appeared in female form. The conception of

angels as winged beings, so familiar in Christian art, finds no support in Scripture (except, perhaps Da 9:21; Rev 14:6, where angels are represented as "flying"). The cherubim and seraphim (see CHERUB; SERAPHIM) are represented as winged (Ex 25:20; Isa 6:2); winged also are the symbolic living creatures of Ezek (Ezek 1:6; compare Rev 4:8).

As above stated, angels are messengers and instruments of the Divine will. As a rule they exercise no influence in the physical sphere. In several instances, however, they are represented as destroying angels: two angels are commissioned to destroy Sodom (Ge 19:13); when David numbers the people, an angel destroys them by pestilence (2Sa 24:16); it is by an angel that the Assyrian army is destroyed (2Ki 19:35); and Ezekiel hears six angels receiving the command to destroy those who were sinful in Jerusalem (Ezek 9:1,5,7). In this connection should be noted the expression "angels of evil," i.e. angels that bring evil upon men from God and execute His judgments (Ps 78:49; compare 1Sa 16:14). Angels appear to Jacob in dreams (Gen 28:12; 31:11). The angel who meets Balaam is visible first to the ass, and not to the rider (Nu 22 ff). Angels interpret God's will, showing man what is right for him (Job 33:23). The idea of angels as caring for men also appears (Ps 91:11 f), although the modern conception of the possession by each man of a special guardian angel is not found in Old Testament.

## **2. The Angelic Host:**

The phrase "the host of heaven" is applied to the stars, which were sometimes worshipped by idolatrous Jews (Jer 33:22; 2Ki 21:3; Zeph 1:5); the name is applied to the company of angels because of their countless numbers (compare Da 7:10) and their glory. They are represented as standing on the right and left hand of Yahweh (1Ki 22:19). Hence God, who is over them all, is continually called throughout Old Testament "the God of hosts," "Yahweh of hosts," "Yahweh God of hosts"; and once "the prince of the host" (Da 8:11). One of the principal functions of the heavenly host is to be ever praising the name of the Lord (Ps 103:21; 148:1, 2). In this host there are certain figures that stand out prominently, and some of them are named. The angel who appears to Joshua calls himself "prince of the host of Yahweh" (Josh 5:14, 15). The glorious angel who interprets to Daniel the vision which he saw in the third year of Cyrus (Da 10:5), like the angel who interprets the vision in the first year of Belshazzar (Da 7:16), is not named; but other visions of the same prophet were explained to him by the angel Gabriel, who is called "the man Gabriel," and is described as speaking with "a man's voice" (Da 9:21; 8:15, 16). In Daniel we find occasional reference made to "princes": "the prince of Persia," "the prince of Greece" (Da 10:20). These are angels to whom is entrusted the charge of, and possibly the rule over, certain peoples. Most notable among them is Michael, described as "one of the chief princes," "the great prince who standeth for the children of thy people," and, more briefly, "your prince" (Da 10:13; 12:1; 10:21); Michael is therefore regarded as the patron-angel of the Jews. In Apocrypha Raphael, Uriel and Jeremiel are also named. Of Raphael it is said (Tobit 12:15) that he is "one of the seven holy angels who present the prayers of the saints" to God (compare Rev 8:2, "the seven angels that stand before God"). It is possible that this group of seven is referred to in the above-quoted phrase, "one of the chief princes". Some (notably Kusters) have maintained that the expressions "the sons of the 'elohim," God's "council" and "congregation," refer to the ancient gods of the heathen, now degraded and wholly subordinated to Yahweh. This rather daring speculation has little support in Scripture; but we find traces of a belief that the patron-angels of the nations have failed in establishing righteousness within their allotted sphere on earth, and that they will accordingly be punished by Yahweh their over-Lord (Isa 24:21, 22; Ps 82:1ff; compare Ps 58:1,2f the Revised Version, margin; compare Jude 1:6).

## **3. The Angel of the Theophany (See also Angel of the LORD):**

This angel is spoken of as "the angel of Yahweh," and "the angel of the presence (or face) of Yahweh." The following passages contain references to this angel: Gen 16:7ff--the angel and Hagar; Gen 18--Abraham intercedes with the angel for Sodom; Gen 22:11ff--the angel interposes to prevent the sacrifice of Isaac; Ge 24:7,40--Abraham sends Eliezer and promises the angel's protection; Ge 31:11ff--the angel who appears to Jacob says "I am the God of Beth-el"; Ge 32:24ff--Jacob wrestles with the angel and says, "I have seen God face to face"; Ge 48:15, 16--Jacob speaks of God and the angel as identical: Ex 3(compare Acts 7:30ff)--the angel appears to Moses in the burning bush; Ex 13:21; 14:19 (compare Nu 20:16)--God or the angel leads Israel out of Egypt; Ex 23:20 ff--the people are commanded to obey the angel; Ex 32:34 through Ex 33:17 (compare Isa 63:9)--Moses pleads for the presence of God with His people; Josh 5:13 through Josh 6:2--the angel appears to Joshua; Jdg 2:1, 2, 3, 4, 5--the angel speaks to the people; Jdg 6:11ff--the angel appears to Gideon.

A study of these passages shows that while the angel and Yahweh are at times distinguished from each other,

they are with equal frequency, and in the same passages, merged into each other. How is this to be explained? It is obvious that these apparitions cannot be the Almighty Himself, whom no man hath seen, or can see (see Jn 1:18). In seeking the explanation, special attention should be paid to two of the passages above cited. In Ex 23:20ff God promises to send an angel before His people to lead them to the promised land; they are commanded to obey him and not to provoke him "for he will not pardon your transgression: for my name is in him." Thus the angel can forgive sin, which only God can do, because God's name, i.e. His character and thus His authority, are in the angel. Further, in the passage Ex 32:34 through Ex 33:17 Moses intercedes for the people after their first breach of the covenant; God responds by promising, "Behold mine angel shall go before thee"; and immediately after God says, "I will not go up in the midst of thee." In answer to further pleading, God says, "My presence shall go with thee, and I will give thee rest." Here a clear distinction is made between an ordinary angel, and the angel who carries with him God's presence. The conclusion may be summed up in the words of Davidson in his Old Testament Theology: "In particular providences one may trace the presence of Yahweh in influence and operation; in ordinary angelic appearances one may discover Yahweh present on some side of His being, in some attribute of His character; in the angel of the Lord He is fully present as the covenant God of His people, to redeem them."

**The question still remains, Who is theophanic angel?** To this many answers have been given, of which the following may be mentioned:

- (1) This angel is simply an angel with a special commission;
- (2) He may be a momentary descent of God into visibility;
- (3) He may be the Logos, a kind of temporary pre-incarnation of the second person of the Trinity (Ed: I think the evidence is overwhelming that this "Angel" was divine and by far the most likely member of the Trinity would be Christ - See **Angel of the LORD**).

Each has its difficulties, but the last is certainly the most tempting to the mind. Yet it must be remembered that at best these are only conjectures that touch on a great mystery. It is certain that from the beginning God used angels in human form, with human voices, in order to communicate with man; and the appearances of the **Angel of the LORD**, with his special redemptive relation to God's people, show the working of that Divine mode of self-revelation which culminated in the coming of the Saviour, and are thus a fore-shadowing of, and a preparation for, the full revelation of God in Jesus Christ.

### III. Angels in New Testament.

#### 1. Appearances:

Nothing is related of angels in New Testament which is inconsistent with the teaching of Old Testament on the subject. Just as they are specially active in the beginning of Old Testament history, when God's people is being born, so they appear frequently in connection with the birth of Jesus, and again when a new order of things begins with the resurrection. An angel appears three times in dreams to Joseph (Mt 1:20; 2:13,19). The angel Gabriel appears to Zacharias, and then to Mary in the annunciation (Lk 1). An angel announces to the shepherds the birth of Jesus, and is joined by a "multitude of the heavenly host," praising God in celestial song (Lk 2:8ff). When Jesus is tempted, and again during the agony at Gethsemane, angels appear to Him to strengthen His soul (Mt 4:11; Lk 22:43). The verse which tells how an angel came down to trouble the pool (Jn 5:4) is now omitted from the text as not being genuine. An angel descends to roll away the stone from the tomb of Jesus (Mt 28:2); angels are seen there by certain women (Lk 24:23) and (two) by Mary Magdalene (Jn 20:12). An angel releases the apostles from prison, directs Philip, appears to Peter in a dream, frees him from prison, smites Herod with sickness, appears to Paul in a dream (Acts 5:19; 8:26; 10:3; 12:7ff; 12:23; 27:23). Once they appear clothed in white; they are so dazzling in appearance as to terrify beholders; hence they begin their message with the words "Fear not" (Mt 28:2, 3, 4, 5).

#### 2. The Teaching of Jesus about Angels:

It is quite certain that our Lord accepted the main teachings of Old Testament about angels, as well as the later Jewish belief in good and bad angels. He speaks of the "angels in heaven" (Mt 22:30), and of "the devil and his angels" (Mt 25:41). According to our Lord the angels of God are holy (Mk 8:38); they have no sex or sensuous desires (Mt 22:30); they have high intelligence, but they know not the time of the Second Coming (Mt 24:36); they carry (in a parable) the soul of Lazarus to Abraham's bosom (Lk 16:22); they could have been summoned to the aid of our Lord, had He so desired (Mt 26:53); they will accompany Him at the Second Coming (Mt 25:31) and separate the righteous from the wicked (Mt 13:41,49). They watch with sympathetic

eyes the fortunes of men, rejoicing in the repentance of a sinner (Lk 15:10; compare 1Pe 1:12; Ep 3:10; 1Cor 4:9); and they will hear the Son of Man confessing or denying those who have confessed or denied Him before men (Lk 12:8, 9). The angels of the presence of God, who do not appear to correspond to our conception of guardian angels, are specially interested in God's little ones (Mt 18:10). Finally, the existence of angels is implied in the Lord's Prayer in the petition, "Thy will be done, as in heaven, so on earth" (Mt 6:10).

### **3. Other New Testament References:**

Paul refers to the ranks of angels ("principalities, powers" etc.) only in order to emphasize the complete supremacy of Jesus Christ. He teaches that angels will be judged by the saints (1Co 6:3). He attacks the incipient Gnosticism of Asia Minor by forbidding the worship of angels (Col 2:18). He speaks of God's angels as "elect," because they are included in the counsels of Divine love (1Ti 5:21). When Paul commands the women to keep their heads covered in church because of the angels (1Co 11:10) he probably means that the angels, who watch all human affairs with deep interest, would be pained to see any infraction of the laws of modesty. In Heb 1:14 angels are (described as ministering spirits engaged in the service of the saints. Peter also emphasizes the supremacy of our Lord over all angelic beings (1 Pet 3:22). The references to angels in 2 Peter and Jude are colored by contact with Apocrypha literature. In Revelation, where the references are obviously symbolic, there is very frequent mention of angels. The angels of the seven churches (Rev 1:20) are the guardian angels or the personifications of these churches. The worship of angels is also forbidden (Rev 22:8 f). Specially interesting is the mention of elemental angels--"the angel of the waters" (Rev 16:5), and the angel "that hath power over fire" (Rev 14:18; compare Rev 7:1; 19:17). Reference is also made to the "angel of the bottomless pit," who is called [Abaddon](#) or [Apollyon](#) (which see), evidently an evil angel (Rev 9:11 the King James Version, the Revised Version (British and American) "abyss"). In Rev 12:7ff we are told that there was war between Michael with his angels and the dragon with his angels.

## **IV. Development of the Doctrine.**

In the childhood of the race it was easy to believe in God, and He was very near to the soul. In Paradise there is no thought of angels; it is God Himself who walks in the garden. A little later the thought of angels appears, but, God has not gone away, and as "the angel of Yahweh" He appears to His people and redeems them. In these early times the Jews believed that there were multitudes of angels, not yet divided in thought into good and bad; these had no names or personal characteristics, but were simply embodied messages. Till the time of the captivity the Jewish angelology shows little development. During that dark period they came into close contact with a polytheistic people, only to be more deeply confirmed in their monotheism thereby. They also became acquainted with the purer faith of the Persians, and in all probability viewed the tenets of Zoroastrianism with a more favorable eye, because of the great kindness of Cyrus to their nation. There are few direct traces of Zoroastrianism in the later angelology of the Old Testament. It is not even certain that the number seven as applied to the highest group of angels is Persian in its origin; the number seven was not wholly disregarded by the Jews. One result of the contact was that the idea of a hierarchy of the angels was more fully developed. The conception in Dan of angels as "watchers," and the idea of patron-princes or angel-guardians of nations may be set down to Persian influence. It is probable that contact with the Persians helped the Jews to develop ideas already latent in their minds. According to Jewish tradition, the names of the angels came from Babylon. By this time the consciousness of sin had grown more intense in the Jewish mind, and God had receded to an immeasurable distance; the angels helped to fill the gap between God and man.

The more elaborate conceptions of Daniel and Zechariah are further developed in Apocrypha, especially in 2 Esdras, Tobit and 2 Macc.

In the New Testament we find that there is little further development; and by the Spirit of God its writers were saved from the absurdly puerile teachings of contemporary Rabbinism. We find that the Sadducees, as contrasted with the Pharisees, did not believe in angels or spirits (Acts 23:8). We may conclude that the Sadducees, with their materialistic standpoint, and denial of the resurrection, regarded angels merely as symbolical expressions of God's actions. It is noteworthy in this connection that the great priestly document (Priestly Code, P) makes no mention of angels. The Book of Revelation naturally shows a close kinship to the books of Ezekiel and Daniel.

Regarding the rabbinical developments of angelology, some beautiful, some extravagant, some grotesque, but all fanciful, it is not necessary here to speak. The Essenes held an esoteric doctrine of angels, in which most scholars find the germ of the Gnostic eons.

## **V. The Reality of Angels.**

A belief in angels, if not indispensable to the faith of a Christian, has its place there. In such a belief there is nothing unnatural or contrary to reason. Indeed, the warm welcome which human nature has always given to this thought, is an argument in its favor. Why should there not be such an order of beings, if God so willed it? For the Christian the whole question turns on the weight to be attached to the words of our Lord. All are agreed that He teaches the existence, reality, and activity of angelic beings. Was He in error because of His human limitations? That is a conclusion which it is very hard for the Christian to draw, and we may set it aside. Did He then adjust His teaching to popular belief, knowing that what He said was not true? This explanation would seem to impute deliberate untruth to our Lord, and must equally be set aside. So we find ourselves restricted to the conclusion that we have the guaranty of Christ's word for the existence of angels; for most Christians that will settle the question.

The visible activity of angels has come to an end, because their mediating work is done; Christ has founded the kingdom of the Spirit, and God's Spirit speaks directly to the spirit of man. This new and living way has been opened up to us by Jesus Christ, upon whom faith can yet behold the angels of God ascending and descending. Still they watch the lot of man, and rejoice in his salvation; still they join in the praise and adoration of God, the Lord of hosts, still can they be regarded as "ministering spirits sent forth to do service for the sake of them that shall inherit salvation."

## NAVES TOPIC

### ANGELS

**One of the Holy Trinity** - Trinitarian authorities interpret the Scriptures cited under this topic as referring to Christ, who according to this view was the divine presence in the wilderness.

#### Called...

- Angel, Acts 7:30, 35;
- Mine Angel, Ex. 32:34;
- Angel of God, Ex. 14:19; Jdg. 13:6; 2Sa 14:17, 20;
- Angel of the LORD, Ex. 3:2; Jdg. 2:1
- Angel of his Presence, Isa. 63:9.

#### A Celestial Spirit

#### Called...

- Angel of the Lord, Mt. 1:20, 24; 2:13, 19; 28:2; Lk 1:11; Acts 5:19; 8:26; 12:7, 23;
- Morning Stars, Job 38:7;
- Armies, Ge 2:1; 32:2; Josh. 5:14; 1 Chr. 12:22; Ps 33:6; 103:21; Luke 2:13
- Principalities, Powers, Ep 3:10; Col. 1:16.
- Created, Gen. 2:1; Neh. 9:6; Col. 1:16.
- Of different orders, Isa. 6:2; 1 Thess. 4:16; 1 Pet. 3:22; Jude 9; Rev. 12:7.
- Immortal, Luke 20:36.
- Worship God, Neh. 9:6; Phil. 2:9-11; Heb. 1:6.
- Not to be worshipped, Col. 2:18; Rev. 19:10; 22:8, 9.
- Do not marry, Matt. 22:30; Mark 12:25; Luke 20:35.
- Are obedient, Ps. 103:20; Matt. 6:10; Luke 11:2; 1 Pet. 3:22; 2 Pet. 2:11; Jude 6.
- Have knowledge of, interest in, earthly affairs Mt 24:36; Lk 15:7, 10; 1Ti 5:21; 1Pe 1:12.
- To be judged by men, 1 Cor. 6:3.
- Men called angels, 2 Sam. 19:27.
- Are examples of meekness, 2 Pet. 2:11; Jude 9.

#### Are...

- wise, 2Sa 14:17, 20;
- mighty, Ps 103:20; 2Pe 2:11;
- holy, Mt 25:31; Mk 8:38;
- elect, 1Ti 5:21;



- innumerable, Dt. 33:2; 2Ki 6:17; Job 25:3; Ps 68:17; Heb 12:22; Jude 14.

**Aspects of,** Judg. 13:6; Isa. 6:2; Dan. 10:6; Matt. 28:3.

### **Functions of**

- Guard the way to the tree of life, Gen. 3:24.
- Law given by, Acts 7:53; Gal. 3:19; Heb. 2:2.
- Medium of revelation to prophets, 2 Kin. 1:15; Dan. 4:13-17; 8:19; 9:21-27; 10:10-20; Zech. 1:9-11; Acts 8:26; Gal. 3:19; Heb. 2:2; Rev. 1:1; 5:2-14; 7:1-3, 11-17; 8:2-13; Rev 9:1 thru Rev 20, Rev 22:6,16.
- Reproves Balaam, Nu 22:22-27.

### **Announces the birth...**

- of Samson, Judg. 13;
- of John the Baptist, Luke 1:11-20;
- of Jesus, Matt. 1:20, 21; Luke 1:28-38; 2:7-15.
- Warns Joseph to escape to Egypt, Matt. 2:13.
- Minister to Jesus after the temptation, Matt. 4:11; Mark 1:13; John 1:51;
- During his passion, Luke 22:43.
- Present at the tomb of Jesus, Matt. 28:2-6;
- The ascension, Acts 1:11.

### **Will be with Christ...**

- At his second coming, Mt. 25:31; Mk 8:38; 2Th 1:7; Jude 14, 15;
- At the judgment, Matt. 13:39, 41, 49; 16:27; 24:31; 25:31; Mk 13:27.

### **Ministrant to the Righteous:**

Gen. 16:7; Gen. 24:7 [Ex. 32:34; 33:2.] Gen. 24:40; Ex. 23:20, 23 Ex. 33:2. Num. 20:16; 1 Kin. 19:5-8; 2 Chr. 18:18; Psa. 34:7; Psa. 68:17 2 Kin. 6:17. Psa. 91:11, 12 Matt. 4:6; Luke 4:10, 11. Psa. 104:4; Eccl. 5:6; Isa. 63:9; Dan. 6:22; Dan. 7:10; Luke 16:22; John 1:51; John 5:4; Acts 5:19, 20; Acts 10:3-6; Acts 12:7-10; Heb. 1:7, 14; Heb. 13:2

### **Execute Judgments Upon the Wicked:**

Gen. 19:1, 13 vs. 1-25.; 2 Sam. 24:16, 17 1 Chr. 21:15, 16. 2 Kin. 19:35; 2 Chr. 32:21 Isa. 37:36. Psa. 35:5, 6; Psa. 78:49; Matt. 13:41, 42 vs. 49,50.; Acts 12:23; Acts 27:23, 24; Jude 14, 15; Rev. 7:1, 2; Rev. 9:15; Rev. 15:1

### **Unclassified Scriptures Relating to**

Num. 22:35; Deut. 33:2; Job 4:15-19; Job 38:7; Ps 68:17 2 Kin. 6:17. Psa. 103:20, 21; Psa. 104:4 Heb. 1:7. Psa. 148:2; Isa. 6:2, 5-7; Ezek. 1:13, 14, 24, 4-25;; Ezek. 10. Dan. 4:13, 17; Dan. 8:13, 14; Dan. 9:21-23; Zech. 1:12-14; Zech. 6:5; Matt. 4:6, 11 Mark 1:13. Matt. 13:41, 42; Matt. 18:10; Matt. 24:31, 36; Matt. 25:31; Matt. 26:53; Luke 9:30, 31 Matt. 17:3; Mark 9:4. Luke 12:8, 9 Mark 8:38. Luke 15:10 v. 7.; John 1:51; Acts 7:53; Acts 8:26; Gal. 3:19; Eph. 1:20, 21; Eph. 3:10; Col. 1:16; Col. 2:10; 2 Thess. 1:7; 1 Tim. 3:16; 1 Tim. 5:21; Heb. 1:4, 5, 13; Heb. 2:2, 7v. with v. 5.; Psa. 8:5. Heb. 2:16; Heb. 12:22; Heb. 13:2; 1 Pet. 1:12; 1 Pet. 3:22; 2 Pet. 2:11; Rev. 4:8-11; Rev. 5:9-11; Rev. 7:9, 10; Rev. 10:1-6; Rev. 14:10; Rev. 18:1-3; Rev. 19:10; Rev. 22:8, 9

### **Appearances of**

- To Abraham, Gen. 18:2; 22:11-18;
- Hagar, in the wilderness, Ge 16:7;
- Lot, in Sodom, Gen. 19:1-17;
- Jacob, in his various visions, Ge. 28:12;
- Moses, Ex. 3:2;
- Israelites, Ex 14:19; Jdg 2:1, 2, 3, 4;

- Balaam, Nu 22:31;
- Joshua, "the captain of the Lord's army," Josh 5:15;
- Gideon, Judg. 6:11-22;
- Manoah, Jdg. 13:6, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20;
- David, at the threshing floor of Araunah, 2Sa 24:16, 17; 1Chr. 21:15, 16;
- Elijah, while he lay under the juniper tree, 1Ki 19:5-11;
- Daniel, in the lions' den, Da 6:22; 8:16; 9:21; 10:5-10, 16, 18; 12:5, 6, 7
- Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego, in the fiery furnace, Da 3:25, 28; (?Jesus)
- Zechariah, in a vision, Zech. 2:3; 3:1, 2; 4:1;
- Joseph, in a dream, Mt. 1:20; 2:13, 19.
- At the transfiguration of Jesus, Matt. 17:3; Luke 9:30, 31.
- To Mary, concerning Jesus, Luke 1:26-38;
- Zacharias, Luke 1:11-20, 26-38;
- Shepherds, Luke 2:9-11, 13, 14;
- Jesus, after his temptation, Matt. 4:11;
- Jesus in Gethsemane, Luke 22:43.
- At the sepulcher, Mt. 28:2-5; Mk 16:5, 6, 7; Lk 24:23; Jn 20:12
- The ascension, Acts 1:10, 11.
- To Peter and John, while in prison, Acts 5:19;
- Philip, Acts 8:26;
- Cornelius, in a dream, Acts 10:3, 30-32;
- Peter, in prison, Acts 12:7-11;
- Paul, on the way to Damascus, Acts 27:23;
- John, in Patmos, Rev. 1:1; 5:2; 7:11; 10:9; 11:1; 17:7; 19:10; 22:8.

**Fallen** - Job 4:18; Matt. 25:41; 2 Pet. 2:4; Jude 6; Rev. 12:9.