

## **A Brief Outline on Angels**

By Richard Furlow

Angels are the demonstration and manifestation of God's love towards us. Men ought always to pray and not faint. Don't give up, don't lose heart, don't forget who you're praying to, God answers prayers (especially the prayers of the righteous, there are angels assigned just for the prayers of the righteous. Psalms 34). Lord's ear is attentive and always opens to their prayers). Praise should continually be on our lips.

A transliteration and translation from Hebrew and Greek is the word angel. The word MALAK is used about 214 times for messenger human and heavenly.

The Witness of the Old Testament

### **The Pentateuch - Books of the Law.**

The word angel appears 32 in the writings of Moses. Examples: the angel of Jehovah Genesis 16,21 comforted Hagar. Abraham conversed and ate with angels, and two angels delivered Lot and his family from Sodom Genesis 18-19. Jacob dreamed of angels ascending and descending upon a ladder to heaven Genesis 28:12 a dream recognized by Jesus in John 1:51. Jacob also wrestled with an angel Genesis 32:24-28 & Hosea 12:2-4.

In Exodus Moses was called by the angel of Jehovah to deliver Israel from Egypt Exodus 3:2,10), and an angel led Moses and the Israelites through the wilderness journeys Exodus 14:19, 23:20.

Leviticus seems to refer to demons (Hebrew word sabir meaning hairy, he-goat) promoting the sacrificing of animals to idols Leviticus 17:7. Numbers records that God dealt with Israel and the false prophet Balaam through angels (Numbers 20:16, 22:22).

In the writings of Moses angels are never referred to as illusions or figures of speech.

### **The Books of History**

The word angel appears 37 times in the books of Joshua, Judges, 1 & 2 Samuel, 2 Kings and 1 & 2 Chronicles. Most occurrences are in Judges where the Angel of Jehovah conversed with Gideon and Manoah.

An angel smote the children of Israel under David's rule when David in pride took a census of his army (2 Sa. 24). Seems it was Satan that tempted David to sin and the Angel of the Lord executed the judgment and then directed David to build an altar on the future site of the temple (1 Chronicles 21).

### **The Books of the Prophets**

Isaiah makes two references to the Angel of Jehovah or the Angel of the LORD as defending Israel and defeating her enemies (37:36; 63:9). He also refers to Seraphim (6:2) but does not use the term angel. The word Seraphim is from the Hebrew word saraph meaning burning or to burn.

Jeremiah and Ezekiel do not use the word angel but Ezekiel does mention the cherubim (10:1-3, 6-8). The word cherub or cherubim plural is from the Hebrew kruwb (keroob). We first learn of these creatures that were placed at the east of the Garden of Eden as guardians whom possessed a whirling flaming sword to protect the way of the tree of life.

Angels intervened in the record of Daniel to deliver the Hebrews from the furnace and Daniel from the mouths of the lions (3,6). Gabriel who later appears in Luke 1 appears first to Daniel with a revelation of the future of Israel (Dan. 9:20-27). Michael the archangel (Jude 9) is identified as "one of the chief princes" (Dan. 10:13) and stands as Israel's principal defender against men and other beings (Dan. 10:13; 12:1).

In the Minor Prophets, Hosea identifies the man that wrestled with Jacob (Gen 32) as an angel (Ho. 12:2-4). Zechariah uses the word angel 20 times. Angels that interpret visions (1-6) and as agents of God's activity and judgment (2-4). The Angel of Jehovah is also identified who intercedes for God's people (3).

### **The Books of Poetry**

Job and psalms contribute to our knowledge of angels elect and evil as well as other beings.

The Angel of Jehovah. Some identify him as a pre-incarnation of Christ. Always singular and called malak YHWH occurs 65 times. Some will debate this as a theophany and refer to it as an angelophany.

The angel of God is used 12 times, 2 times are plural

### **Some definitions:**

Christophany - an appearance or non-physical manifestation of Christ. Sometimes refers to visions of Christ after His ascension.

Theophany - a manifestation of God in visible and bodily form before the incarnation of Christ. The eternal Son of God.

### ***Some Examples of God appearing to man:***

1. Genesis 12:7-9 – The Lord appeared to Abraham on his arrival in the land God had promised to him and his descendants.

2. Genesis 18:1-33 – One day, Abraham had some visitors: two angels and God Himself. He invited them to come to his home, and he and Sarah entertained them. .

3. Genesis 32:22-30 – Jacob wrestled with what appeared to be a man, but was actually a supernatural Being (vv. 28-30).

4. Exodus 3:2 - 4:17 – God appeared to Moses in the form of a burning bush, telling him exactly what He wanted him to do.

5. Exodus 24:9-11 – God appeared to Moses with Aaron and his sons and the seventy elders.

6. Deuteronomy 31:14-15 – God appeared to Moses and Joshua in the transfer of leadership to Joshua.

7. Job 38–42 – God answered Job out of the tempest and spoke at great length in answer to Job’s questions.

NOTE: Sometimes according to some commentators, the term “glory of the Lord” reflects a theophany, as in Exodus 24:16-18; the “pillar of cloud” has a similar function in Exodus 33:9. A frequent introduction for theophanies may be seen in the words “the Lord came down,” as in Genesis 11:5; Exodus 34:5; Numbers 11:5; and 12:5.

NOTE: The title Elohim (the mighty one) was used both of the true God and the false gods. But the title Jehovah (Hebrew. Yahweh) was reserved for the God of Israel, the eternal self-existent One who made heaven and earth and who entered into covenant relationship with His people. The angels in general are called “the sons of God (hene elohim) but never the sons of Jehovah. The Angel of Jehovah (Malak Yahweh). When the angel found Hagar (Genesis 16:7) He promised to do himself what God alone can do (vs. 10) Moses identified the angel as “Jehovah that spoke unto her in vs. 13 ASV.

When this angel appeared to Moses in a flame of fire out of the midst of a bush (Exodus 3:2), vs. 4 says God called unto him out of the midst of the bush. The one who spoke with Moses is called the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and with this announcement Moses hid his face. The Angel said vs. 14 revealing His Name I AM THAT I AM.

Judges 6:12 The Angel of Jehovah commissions Gideon.  
This angel also appeared to Zachariah when the angel in 3:1-2.

The number of angels are listed as multitudes and legions. Multitudes appeared praising God at Christ birth Luke 2:13-15.

The title Jehovah of hosts in Psalms 46:7,11 indicates that God is the head of armies (hosts) of angels.

At Christ betrayal, Jesus said he could call 12 legions of angels (Mt. 26:53). In the time of Augustus Caesar, a legion numbered about 6,000 men, usually backed by an equal number of auxiliary troops. If there is a parallel in the number of troops of angels Jesus may have had 72,000 angels or as many as 144,000 angels.

They are compared with the number of stars in the heavens because angels are associated with the stars (Job 38:7; Ps. 148:1-3; Rev. 9:1-2; 12:3-4,7-9). If so their number would exceed that of stars visible to the human eye.

NOTE: My research shows no conclusive number of the amount of stars that can be seen by the human eye. Some say between 2,000 – 6,000 stars on a clear night. Further research assumes our Milky Way is an average-sized barred spiral galaxy measuring up to 120,000 light-years across. Our Sun is located about 27,000 light-years from the galactic core in the Orion arm. It is estimated that the Milky Way contains up to 400 billion stars of various sizes and brightness. A few are

supergiants, like Betelgeuse or Rigel. Many more are average-sized stars like our Sun. The vast majority of stars in the Milky Way are red dwarf stars; dim, low mass, with a fraction of the brightness of our Sun.

There are spiral galaxies out there with more than a trillion stars, and giant elliptical galaxies with 100 trillion stars. And there are tiny dwarf galaxies with a fraction of our number of stars. According to astronomers, there are probably more than 170 billion galaxies in the observable Universe, stretching out into a region of space 13.8 billion light-years away from us in all directions. And so, if you multiply the number of stars in our galaxy by the number of galaxies in the Universe, you get approximately 10<sup>24</sup> stars. That's a 1 followed by twenty-four zeros. That's a septillion stars. But there could be more than that. It's been calculated that the observable Universe is a bubble of space 47 billion years in all directions. It defines the amount of the Universe that we can see, because that's how long light has taken to reach us. This is a minimum value, the Universe could be much bigger – it's just that we can't ever detect those stars because they're outside the observable Universe. Understand of course, this is just theory, but still very interesting.

John saw in a vision an exceedingly great number of angels 10 thousand times 10 thousand and thousands of thousands (Rev. 5:11).

Hebrews 12:22 speaks of an innumerable company of angels. This immense number reflects the vastness of God's power and wisdom. The heavens and their hosts declare the glory of God. They are all His handiwork. They are His individual creations whose number is fixed, since they do not procreate or die (Matthew 22:28-30).

The Witness in the New Testament

### **The Gospels:**

Gabriel appears

Gabriel appeared to Mary in her home uttering "Hail, thou art highly favored the Lord with thee: blessed art thou among women!" He told her, even though she was a virgin, that she would have a child that was the Son of God and she was to call him Jesus. Mary was startled and concerned but not afraid. The scene was a meeting of two persons, one earthly and the other heavenly. One brought the will of God and the other offered her obedience. (Luke 1:26-28) Gabriel also appeared to Joseph, who Mary was betrothed, in a dream to comfort him. (Mt. 1:20, 21)

Angels at Bethlehem

At the birth of Christ angels appeared to the Shepherd guarding their flocks. (Luke 2:8-14). The angels appeared so suddenly that the shepherds were fear struck so the angels reassured them, "Fear not," They glorified God, "Glory to God in the highest and on earth peace, good will to men." (Luke 2:14).

Likewise, the wise men who were the scientist of their day were warned in a dream not to return to Herod (Mt. 2:12). They followed this divine direction and returned directly to their homeland without returning to see Herod.

Jesus interacted with angels. Angels ministered to Him after the temptation in the mount [Mt. 4: 11; Mk. 1: 13].

"...Then the devil left him (for a while) and behold the angels ministered to Him."

Angels appear at the Ascension of Christ. Now when He had spoken these things, while they watched, He was taken up, and a cloud received Him out of their sight. And while they looked steadfastly toward heaven as He went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel, who also said, "Men of Galilee, why do you stand gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will so come in like manner as you saw Him go into heaven." (Acts 1: 9-11). "

### **Angels Give Direction and Reveal the Will of God.**

An angel also appeared to Joseph in dream to take the Child and His Mother into Egypt (Mt. 2:13). Then while Joseph was in Egypt, an angel of the Lord again appeared to him, telling him to return to Israel (Mt. 2:19, 20).

The angel appeared to Philip and said, "Arise and go towards the south unto the way that goeth down from Jerusalem into Gaza which is desert. And he arose and went" (Acts 8:26-27).

### **Angels bring physical deliverance.**

Peter and John were arrested. The Sanhedrin forbade them to preach in Jesus Name. "But at night an angel of the Lord opened the prison doors and brought them out, and said, 'Go, stand in the temple and speak to the people all the words of this life.'" (Acts 5:19-20)

James the brother of John had just been executed. Luke records the event: "That night Peter was sleeping, bound with two chains between two soldiers; and the guards before the door were keeping the prison. Now behold, an angel of the Lord stood by him, and a light shone in the prison; and he struck Peter on the side and raised him up, saying, "Arise quickly!" And his chains fell off his hands. Then the angel said to him, "Gird yourself and tie on your sandals"; and so he did. And he said to him, "Put on your garment and follow me." So he went out and followed him, and did not know that what was done by the angel was real, but thought he was seeing a vision. When they were past the first and the second guard posts, they came to the iron gate that leads to the city, which opened to them of its own accord; and they went out and went down one street, and immediately the angel departed from him. And when Peter had come to himself, he said, "Now I know for certain that the Lord has sent His angel, and has delivered me from the hand of Herod and from all the expectation of the Jewish people.'" (Acts 12:2-11)

Paul stood and said, "there stood by me this night the angel of God... saying, Fear not Paul; thou must be brought before Caesar: and lo God hath given thee them that sail with thee" (Acts 27:23-24).

### **Angels in Paul's Epistles**

Warning not to worship angels (Colossians 2:18)

The government of angels is mentioned by Thrones etc. (Col 1:16); Dominions (Eph 1:12); Virtues (Authorities) (1 Cor 15:26); Powers (Eph 1:21) Principalities (Rom 8:38; Eph 1:21); Archangels (1Thess 4:16)

Revelation and Jude 9 list Angels (many).

## **The Origin and Creation of Angels**

Created as angels, they did not evolve into angels. Col. 1:16 the Greek tense (aorist) of the word translated created may indicate an act or a culmination of a series of acts completed in time past. Each angel is a direct creation from God; they do not procreate (Mt. 22:28-30). They are the sons of God (Jb. 1:6; 2:1).

The exact time of their creation is not certain, but the morning stars and the sons of God sang with joy at the creation of the earth (Job 38:4-7).

They are commanded to praise the Lord (Ps. 148:2,5).

Angels have personalities. They are great in power and intelligence - they have access to God's power and mind. They rejoice with understanding and awe at salvation (Lu. 15:10).

Hebrews 1:14 called ministering spirits. They have spiritual bodies not physical as in human bodies or earthly bodies (Hebrews 13:2). In order to have a human body, they would have to come thru the legal process of the birth for a natural human body.

## **How Angels Appear**

They can appear in dreams (Mt. 1:20)

They generally appear as men.

-Abraham welcomed 3 men in the plains of Mamre (Ge 18)

-Young men appeared in the empty sepulchre (or sepulcher) of Jesus (Mk 16:5)

-Luke 24 records 2 men in shining garments.

The only exception is possibly women angels are mentioned in Zechariah 5:9  
Psalms 8:5

## **Names, Classifications and Abode:**

-Redeeming Angels Hammalak haggioel Gen 48:16

-Angel of the Lords presence malakh panaiv Isaiah 63:9

-Angel of the covenant malakh habrit. Malachi 3:1

-The Angel of great counsel Isaiah 9:6 in the Septuagint (gr. megales boules angelos).

-The word angel is a transliteration of the Greek word angelos and is the word used in many cases to translate the Hebrew word malak, both meaning messenger. As already mentioned, the word can be a human messenger or a heavenly being. There is also the Hebrew word mishrathim (pl). The Greek word is leitourgos. Translated servant, minister. Sava is the Hebrew word for the army of angels. God is Jehovah or The Lord of hosts.

-Watchers (Daniel 4:13,17).

-Sons of the Mighty (bene elim) Psalms 89:6; 29:1

-Stars (Isaiah 14:13)

-Cherubim

First mention is Genesis 3:24. They are in golden form on the lid of the ark of the covenant upon the mercy seat Ex. 25:17-22. Interestingly enough, they are never referred to as angels. Ezekiel 1:5 describe their appearance. They are considered protectors and proclaim Gods glory. They surround God (Psalms 80:1; 99:1).

They speak of the revelation of God's glory to man since they are associated with the visible form of the glory of God and present themselves in the form of living creatures and man. They emphasize God's presence and holiness.

-Seraphim

In Hebrew means burning ones. With 2 wings they cover their faces, with two wings they cover their feet and with two wings they fly. They are above the throne crying holy. Is. 6:2-3. They are the priests of heaven.

Archangel

Arche (Greek) means first. Living creatures, guardian, messengers

Guardian Angels

Jesus said to his disciples, "Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones; for I say unto you, That in heaven their angels do always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven." (Mat 18:10)

Watchers

Daniel 4 speaks of the watchers that execute verdicts and judgments.

### **The Ministry of Angels**

-Priestly ministry (he. 1:7) the term ministers (Gr. leitourgous) is generally used of a priestly service for God. It includes services carried on in God's presence. It means also that all the angelic hosts serve Him quickly as winds and fervently as fire.

-Messengers Psalms 103:20

-The Law was given by angels (Acts 7:53; Galatians 3:19; Hebrews 2:2)

-They transport men to their eternal destiny. In the parable of Lazarus and the rich man it says, "the beggar died, and was carried by the angels to the bosom of Abraham." (Luke 16:22)

-They hear our witness. Jesus says, "whoever shall confess me before me, shall the Son of Man also confess before the angels of God" (Luke 12:8)