

**ECCLESIA CHURCH OF GOD IN CHRIST  
Pastor Luther H. Holmes, Jr.  
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Bible Study Series**



**THE SPIRITUAL FORCES OF GOOD: ANGELS**

**KEY VERSE:**

**The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear Him, and delivereth them. (Psalms 34:7)**

**INTRODUCTION**

This lesson explains the origin, attributes, sphere of activity, classification, and organization of angels. It also explains their ministry in spiritual warfare.

**WHAT ARE ANGELS?**

***Angels are ministering spirits sent by God to do His will: Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation. (Hebrews 1:14).*** The title "angel" means messenger.

**THE ORIGIN OF ANGELS**

Angels were created by God:

**Praise ye Him, all His angels: praise ye Him, all His hosts.**

**Let them praise the name of the Lord: For He commanded, and they were created. (Psalms 148:2 and 5)**

**For by Him were all things created, that are in Heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by Him and for Him. (Colossians 1:16.)**

All the angels were righteous and holy when they were first created. They worshiped and served the one true God. Later, some angels rebelled against God and lost their position as angels. They became part of a force of evil called "demons." There are now two kinds of angels: Good angels, which are the subject of this lesson, and evil angels (demons) which will be the subject of our next lesson.

### **THE ORGANIZATION OF ANGELS**

The good Angels have been organized by God in a special order. The Bible does not reveal the details of that order, but it does indicate such organization:

**For by Him were all things created, that are in Heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by Him and for Him. (Colossians 1:16; See also Ephesians 3:10)**

The organization of the invisible world is described here in terms of thrones, dominions, principalities, and powers. We are not given details of this structure. You will learn later how Satan has imitated this organization in his own structure of evil forces.

### **THE CLASSIFICATION OF ANGELS**

There are literally multitudes of angels (Luke 2:13-15) who are apparently classified according to the duties they perform. These are the main classifications of angels:

**MESSENGERS:** This class of angels is most likely the largest in number. These are the angels composing the innumerable group, visualized by Daniel (Daniel 7:10), who carry out the will of God in Heaven and earth. *This is the group that usually relates to the believer in terms of spiritual warfare. They interpret God's will, protect, provide guidance, bring answers to prayer, announce, warn, instruct, bring judgment, encourage, sustain, deliver, and intercede on behalf of believers.*

**ELECT ANGELS:** only one reference is made to elect angels in I Timothy 5:21. There is no further information given about this group.

**CHERUBIM:** This classification of angels is first mentioned in Genesis 3:24. They are also mentioned as part of the ark of the covenant (Exodus 25:18-22). Ezekiel mentions these beings and describes them as having four appearances; the face of a lion, the face of an ox, the face of a man, and the face of an eagle (Ezekiel 1:3-28; 10:22). This symbolism of the cherubim suggests they are the living creatures surrounding the throne of God in Revelation 4:6. They appear to be the highest order of angels, the guardians of God.

**SERAPHIM:** This group is mentioned in Isaiah 6:2,6. Their position is above the throne of God in contrast to the position of cherubims who surround His throne. The duty of these angels seems to be to lead Heaven in the worship of God.

**LIVING CREATURES:** This group of angels are mentioned in Revelation 4:6,8; 5:6. This title presents these angels as manifesting the fullness of divine life, whose chief ministry appears to be worship of God.

### **INDIVIDUAL ANGELS**

In addition to the different classifications of angels, there are some individual angels mentioned by name in the Bible:

**MICHAEL:** Michael the archangel is mentioned by name in Daniel 10:13,21; 12:1; Jude 9; and Revelation 12:7. He is the only angel who is called an archangel. He is represented as having charge over an army of angels in Revelation 12:7 and is said to be the prince of the people of Israel in Daniel 10:13,21; 12:1.

**GABRIEL:** The meaning of his name is "mighty one." He is mentioned in Daniel 8:16; 9:21; and in Luke 1:19,26. He is always used to deliver an important message from God. It is Gabriel who interpreted the vision for Daniel in 8:16; 9:21 and who announced the birth of John and Jesus Luke 1:19,26.

### **SPECIAL GROUPS OF ANGELS:**

The Bible also mentions special groups of angels which include:

Angels of the seven churches:

Revelation 1:20

Four angels who control the winds: Revelation 1:7  
Seven angels who stand before God: Revelation 8:2  
Seven angels who administrate the seven last plagues: Revelation 15:1,7  
Twenty-four elders (these may be angelic beings): Revelation 4 and 5

### **THE ATTRIBUTES OF ANGELS**

Attributes are personality traits or characteristics of an individual. Angels...

- Are spirits: Hebrews 1:14
- Are sexless: Luke 20:34-36
- Are immortal: Matthew 22:28-30
- Have both visible and invisible forms: Numbers 22:22-35
- Appear with the likeness of human form: Genesis 19:1-22; 18:2,4,8
- Have emotions: Luke 15:1-10 (angels rejoicing).
- Have appetites: Genesis 18:8
- Are glorified beings: Luke 9:26
- Are intelligent: II Samuel 14:20
- Are meek: Jude 9
- Are powerful: Psalms 103:20; II Peter 2:11
- Have no need to rest: Revelation 4:8
- Travel at an unrecorded speed: Revelation 8:13; 9:1
- Speak languages: I Corinthians 13:1
- Are innumerable: Luke 2:13; Hebrews 12:22; Psalms 68:17; Mark 1:13; Revelation 5:19
- Are immortal: Luke 20:34-36
- Do not marry or have children: Luke 20:34-36
- Are obedient: Psalms 103:20

- Are holy: Revelation 14:10; Mark 8:38
- Are reverent: Their highest activity is the worship of God. Nehemiah 9:6; Philippians 2:9-11; Hebrews 1:6

### **THEIR SPHERE OF ACTIVITY**

Angels are active in both Heaven and earth. The source of their power is both granted and governed by God. They have access to the presence of God in Heaven: ...

**In Heaven their angels do always behold the face of my Father which is in Heaven. (Matthew 18:10)**

They are also active on earth. This is documented by the varied ministries and many appearances of angels to people recorded in the Bible.

### **THE MINISTRY OF ANGELS**

Angels minister in many ways in both Heaven and earth. Look up each of the following references in your Bible. As you study these verses you will understand the importance of angels in spiritual warfare.

The ministry of angels in Heaven includes:

- Worship: Revelation 4:8; 5:11-12; Isaiah 6:3; Psalms 103:20; 148:1-2
  - Standing ready to do God's will: Psalms 103:20-21
  - Ministering to the godly who have died in Christ Jesus: Jude 9; Luke 16:22
  - Representing children in a special way: Matthew 18:10
  - Rejoicing over those who accept the Gospel: Luke 15:10
- The ministry of angels on earth includes:
- Ruling nations: Daniel 10
  - Ministering to believers in times of testing: Matthew 4:11
  - Strengthening believers: Luke 22:43
  - Interpreting God's will for men: Zechariah 1:9; Daniel 7:16
  - Guiding believers: Acts 8:26.

- Bringing judgment on individuals and nations: Acts 12:23; Genesis 19:3; II Samuel 24:16; Revelation 16:1
- Bringing answers to prayer: Daniel 9:21-22
- Announcing: Luke 1:11-20; Matthew 1:20, 21
- Warning: Matthew 2:13.
- Instructing: Matthew 28:2-6; Acts 10:3-6; Daniel 4:13-17
- Encouraging: Acts 27:23; Genesis 28:12
- Revealing: Acts 7:53; Galatians 3:19; Hebrews 2:2; Daniel 9:21-27; Revelation 1:1
- Sustaining: Matthew 4:11; Luke 22:43
- Preserving: Genesis 16:7; 24:7; Exodus 23:20; Revelation 7:1
- Protecting: Psalms 91:11
- Delivering: Numbers 20:16; Psalms 34:7; Isaiah 63:9; Daniel 3:28; 6:22; Genesis 48:16; Matthew 26:53; Acts 12:1-19
- Destroying: Acts 12:20-23
- Interceding: Zechariah 1:12; Revelation 8:3,4 55 The future activities of angels will include:
  - Participating in the return of Jesus: I Thessalonians 4:16
  - Gathering the elect: Matthew 24:31
  - Warning and preaching during the tribulation: Revelation 14:6-9
  - Separating the wicked from the righteous: Matthew 13:39 and 49
  - Binding Satan: Revelation

### **ANGELS AND SPIRITUAL WARFARE**

The Messenger angels are the group that usually relates to the believer in terms of spiritual warfare. They interpret God's will, protect, provide guidance, bring answers to prayer, announce, warn, instruct, bring judgment, encourage, sustain, deliver, and intercede on behalf of believers in battle. ***Many believers have not availed themselves of the aid available from***

*angels because they have not been taught regarding their function in spiritual warfare. They are "ministering spirits" and can minister for you as well as to you. You can ask God to dispatch angels to assist you in battle.* King David did this. He prayed... Let the angel of the Lord persecute them... Let the angel of the Lord chase them... (Psalms 35:5-6) Read the following Biblical accounts of angels participating in warring against the enemy: II Kings 19:35; II Chronicles 32:21; Isaiah 37:36; Revelation 12:7.

### **IMPORTANT WARNINGS**

Angels are holy beings with important ministries on behalf of believers. They are part of the spiritual forces of good as is the Trinity of God. But the Bible gives some warnings concerning angels:

#### **DO NOT WORSHIP THEM:**

You are not to worship angels:

**Let no man beguile you of your reward in a voluntary humility and worshipping of angels, intruding into those things which he hath not seen, vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind. (Colossians 2:18)**

**And I John saw these things and heard them. And when I had heard and seen, I fell down to worship before the feet of the angel which shewed me these things.**

**Then saith he unto me, See thou do it not: for I am thy fellow servant and of thy brethren the prophets, and of them which keep the sayings of this book: Worship God. (Revelation 22:8-9)**

#### **REJECT ANGELS PREACHING "ANOTHER GOSPEL":**

Some people have claimed to see angels who gave them a "new revelation" contrary to God's written Word. Entire religious movements have been founded on such false revelations. The Bible warns:

**But though we, or an angel from Heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. (Galatians 1:8)**

You are not to listen to a man, an angel, or any other being that would guide you contrary to God's Word. As you will learn later in this course, one of the main strategies of Satan is deception. The Bible warns:

**And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. (II Corinthians 11:14)**

**DO NOT PROVOKE THE ANGELS:**

Read the story of Balaam in Numbers 22, a prophet who was acting in disobedience to God. You will note that he was opposed by an angel of the Lord. When you are disobedient to God, the angels may actually hinder you. You will be fighting a battle, but it will not be warfare against the enemy. Be careful that you do not provoke the angels of God (Ecclesiastes 5:1-6).

**TACTICAL MANEUVERS**

During tactical maneuvers in a natural army, soldiers apply what they have learned to actual combat conditions. This part of the lesson provides opportunity for you to apply what you have learned and to study other material related to this lesson.

1. Study the appearance of the angel in Judges 13. Note that the angel returns to Heaven through worship which apparently opens the way through the "Satanic atmosphere" around us to permit angels to operate on our behalf. Review the story of Daniel and note that the hindrance by the prince of Persia (a Satanic power) was broken by prayer and fasting.
2. There is no Biblical support that a believer can command his angel to do whatever he desires, but you can ask God to dispatch them in your behalf. Think about a battle you are facing and then ask God to send His "ministering spirits" to work in that situation.
3. Read Psalms 78:36,40, and Ecclesiastes 5:6. Israel had a special angel caring for them until they provoked him in the wilderness. If God sends an angel to your aid and you provoke him by sin and unbelief, he may depart from you. It is well to take heed to the warning in Exodus 23:20-22. You may also entertain an angel and not be aware of it...See Hebrews 13:2.