

ANGELS AND THE  
PSEUDEPIGRAPHA



# ANGELS AND THE PSEUDEPIGRAPHA

IS PSEUDEPIGRAPHIC  
ANGELOLOGY  
BIBLICALLY  
ORTHODOX?

Bradley Maston

Angels and the Pseudepigrapha: Is Pseudepigraphic Angelology Biblically  
Orthodox?

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# Forward

Dr. Maston has made a major contribution to the dispensational community with this book. He has affirmed the value of the Jewish Pseudigraphic writings to us. For far too long we have relegated this corpus of documents to the same category as the Apocrypha. Partially this is because of the non-canonical nature of the Apocrypha and Rome's reliance upon them as canonical. Since 1546 the Roman Catholic Church has considered certain of these books to be inspired and on par with the Old Testament. These are, specifically, Tobit, Judith, Wisdom, Ecclesiasticus, Baruch, I and II Maccabees, and some supplements to Esther and Daniel. No other religious group except Rome considers any of these books to be a part of their Bible. The Jews who wrote them did not consider them to have any significant value.

Merrill F. Unger in reference to the Apocrypha has stated:

Certainly, a book that contains what is false in fact, erroneous in doctrine or unsound in morality, is unworthy of God and cannot have been inspired by Him. Tried under these criteria the Apocryphal books stand self-condemned.<sup>1</sup>

Since Dr. Unger has been one of the most important and influential teachers of the Bible within the dispensational community, his observations have been rightly carried forth for many decades. However, it has also been carried forth—mistakenly and unintended by him—to include the Pseudigraphia. They are an entirely different set of documents. These documents, many of which have been found in the Dead Sea Scrolls, have been shown to have

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<sup>1</sup> Merrill F. Unger, *Introductory Guide to the Old Testament*, p. 109.

great value, both to show Jewish theology in the intertestamental period and for the additional light they provide to the Scriptures.

They are not canonical but as a set of reference material, they shed much light on the biblical text and are in agreement with it, as Dr. Maston shows us through their treatment on the subject of Angelology. To add to the misunderstanding of these texts the liberal scholars in their criticism of the Bible use the Pseudepigrapha to substantiate doubts and attacks upon the uniqueness and reliability of Scripture. This attack on the Scripture and the Pseudepigrapha has led many in the dispensational community to avoid this body of texts and even cite them as dangerous. All of which is patently false.

From Rome's acceptance of them into their Bible and the liberals' use of them to attack the Bible, it has been easier to avoid them than to embrace them for their true value as a reference resource.

My prayer is this book will enlighten our community of dispensational scholars with a fresh perspective on a set of books that reveal much for us.

Daniel E. Woodhead, Ph.D.

President of Scofield Biblical Institute & Theological Seminary



Introduction

PART I

# Angelology in the Old Testament



## Part I: Angelology in the Old Testament

# CHAPTER 1

## Introduction

The topic of celestial beings, both angelic and demonic, is a topic of unending interest to humanity. The knowledge of spiritual beings is a common thread throughout all ancient religions, ideologies, and mythologies. People have, in various pagan practices, attempted to understand and manipulate these spiritual beings throughout human history. Whether under the labels of gods, ghosts, spirits, or most vaguely “forces” there can be no question that there are beings in this world that are indeed higher than man and exist in a different relationship to the physical world than humans. While the spiritually blind world struggles to understand these supernatural beings, the word of God is clear. The academic world has been drawn deeply into the secularist philosophy of materialism and thus denies or ignores these creatures. The real disappointment is the large-scale disregard for the topic of angelology within even conservative Christian academic circles. This is not to say that these celestial beings are denied but are simply underrepresented in their clearly prominent position in the biblical record. The Moody Handbook of Theology Makes the following observation:

The existence of angels is uniformly presented in Scripture. Thirty-four books of the Bible make reference to angels (seventeen in the Old Testament; seventeen in the New Testament). Critical to the belief in angels is the relationship of angels to Christ. Christ was helped by angels following his temptation (Matt. 4:11); He referred to the resurrected state as comparable to angels (Matt. 22:29–30) He taught that angels would regather the nation Israel at the time of His return (Matt. 25:31–32, 41). The Existence of angels is tied to the reliability of the testimony of Christ.<sup>2</sup>

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2. Enns, Paul P., *The Moody Handbook of Theology* (Chicago, IL: Moody Press, 1989). Pg. 288.

The existence of angels is the uniform position of Scripture is affirmed by the very lips of our Savior. Within the gospels alone there are not fewer than 52 references to angelic beings, 49 references to demons, 15 to the devil, and 15 to Satan. Many of the lessons given by Christ involved and included the work and service of celestial beings and their importance for believers.

It is also clear that the New Testament has a more developed angelology than the Old. This is in perfect keeping with the doctrine of progressive revelation (the interpretive principle which recognizes that God reveals doctrine in time). It is also impressive to see the assumptions of Jesus and the divinely inspired New Testament authors include information about angelology that seem not to rest solely upon the information of the Old Testament. Quite to the contrary, there is little to no purely didactic explanation of angels in Scripture. Like the existence and presence of God their existence is equally unquestioned. It is assumed by the biblical writers that the audience is aware of the existence and purpose of angels. This makes our understanding of angelology far less definitive than we may like.

That is where the central argument of this paper comes into focus. It has been assumed for years that the Pseudepigraphic works have been unauthoritative and unreliable for doctrine. While it is true that interest in these documents has borne much fruit in academic study of late, much of the work being done is from a perspective that has little or no respect for the biblical text as sacred and reliable. This being the unfortunate case, efforts to placate the secular academic community have caused many Bible-believing scholars to downplay the incredible accuracy of these documents when it comes to New Testament doctrine. These documents were active, known, and understood by the theologians of the first century world. While the central documents to the argument of this paper will be individually evaluated at the appropriate place it is important to recognize the value of the similarities between the expectations of these writings and orthodox Christian theology today. These works clearly anticipate a coming Messiah, a period of tribulation and judgment (as seen in the War Scroll), a future temple (as seen in the Temple Scroll), as well as an active spiritual world of angels and demons (The books of Enoch), and a far more thorough telling of the dramatic events of the Pentateuch (the Book of Jubilees). This may be used to question the authenticity of the New Testament when it affirms doctrines that seem to be introduced first in the Pseudepigrapha. The assumption being that revelation must be new to be true. This however, is not at all the case. It has long been understood that the Book of Revelation provides very little

original information that was not previously recorded in the Old Testament. As McGee notes:

As I have said, I approach the Book of Revelation with fear and trembling, not primarily because of a lack of competence on my part (although that may be self-evident), but many other factors enter into this feeling. First of all, there may be a lack of knowledge on the part of the readers. You see, the Book of Revelation is the sixty-sixth book of the Bible, and it comes last. This means that we need to know sixty-five other books before we get to this place. You need to have the background of a working knowledge of all the Bible that precedes it. You need to have a feel of the Scriptures as well as have the facts of the Scriptures in your mind.<sup>3</sup>

McGee, with his honest, humble, elegance, points out the reality that every reader of Revelation must comprehend: the eschatology of the New Testament only provides clarity and nuance to the existing eschatology of the Old Testament. Thus, it is no threat at all to see that the extra-biblical writings of the Jewish people may have great similarity that was finally revealed and confirmed in the New Testament canon. This shows the intellectual dishonesty in the secular community. If there is continuity between the scripture and tradition, then they assume that there is conspiracy and the information was stolen – they conclude that the New Testament authors simply copied the other sources. However, if there is no such connection to scripture or extra-biblical writing then they will conclude that it was written at a later date or is a fabrication. Complaints that the Bible is invalid because it is not well attested enough, and also too well attested, shows that the presupposition against biblical authority is their true motivation – not an objective evaluation of the text. The intellectual dishonesty of this has no place among the academic pursuits of believing Christians.

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3. McGee, J. Vernon, *1 Corinthians—Revelation*. Vol. V of *Thru the Bible*. Accordance electronic ed. Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1983. [https://accordance.bible/link/read/McGee-Thru\\_Bible#66216](https://accordance.bible/link/read/McGee-Thru_Bible#66216).

## Bibliology – The Pseudepigraphic Works are not Scripture

While not central to the argument of this paper it would be impossible to make any real progress in the discussion without understanding where authority lies. A cursory search on a major online book seller will yield as many as 5,000 results dealing with books regarding various ancient texts that were not included in the Bible as “Lost Books of the Bible”. This idea of lost books of the Bible is as historically disingenuous as it is theologically disingenuous. These works generally relate to the apocrypha, pseudepigraphic works, the gnostic writings, and others. These works, however, are never correctly called “lost books of the Bible” for two important reasons. First, they were not lost. While new works have been brought to light over time, most of these works were preserved in various ways throughout history and were known to those in their time, and written about as such. The second reason is that they were never commonly regarded as being authoritative revelation. Geisler well describes the historic position of the nature of the Bible and biblical revelation as follows:

One other element of the evangelical view of the inspiration of Scripture should be added here, though it is discussed elsewhere. This element is one of the distinguishing factors between the evangelical and Roman Catholic views of Scripture: The sixty-six canonical books of the Protestant canon alone are invested with divine authority. No other source equals or surpasses that of Scripture; the Bible, and the Bible alone, is a supremely authoritative book in matters of faith and practice.<sup>4</sup>

This especially important distinction must be made. While the quality, theology, and historical character of many of these Pseudepigraphical documents may be of great interest and value to the modern-day bible student, they will never be considered to be authoritatively the equal of the Holy Scripture. When considering canonicity, we look, again to Geisler:

Evangelicals believe that not only is the original text of the Bible faithfully and accurately reproduced in the standard English translations, but neither are there books missing from the original Bible. (This is true of both Old and New Testaments.) Evangelicals also hold that the canon (or

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4. Geisler, Norman L. *Systematic Theology: in One Volume*. Bethany House Publishers, 2011. Pg. 177.

normative collection) of Scripture, finished by the end of the first century, is closed; that is, we possess in the sixty-six books of the Bible all that God intended to be there, from both Old and New Testament times. Further, we maintain that God never intended any more books to be added to the Bible.<sup>5</sup>

In understanding this important distinction of Christian orthodoxy we can move forward. It is because of this abuse of the extra-biblical documents that many Christians have viewed them with an undue amount of suspicion and even fear. The dogma that having more written information from the biblical period somehow threatens the sanctity and reliability of Scripture is unfounded. Yet, this is the argument that challenged the orthodox faith on a popular level with the publication of The DaVinci Code by Dan Brown. In his excellent response in Breaking the DaVinci Code Darrel L. Bock replies to the absurd claims made by Brown:

One of the more interesting claims in *The Da Vinci Code* appears on page 231. It comes from Teabing, a character who is full of opinions about Christianity that are critical of the church and that possess conspiratorial implications. Here he claims that there were “more than *eighty* gospels” considered for the New Testament, but that only four were chosen. This may be the most misleading statement of “fact” in the entire novel.

Teabing’s statement is so misleading because there were not more than eighty gospel documents. For example, *The Nag Hammadi Library*, published in English in 1977, consisted of forty-five separate titles – and not all of them were gospels. In fact, it names five separate works as gospel: *Truth*, *Thomas*, *Philip*, *Egyptians*, and *Mary*. The collection of *The Gnostic Scriptures* by Bentley Layton has just short of forty works, three of which bear the title *gospel* and overlap with the Nag Hammadi list. In fact, most of these works were not gospels. The most generous count of extrabiblical documents appears in Harvard Professor Helmut Koester’s Introduction to the New Testament. That count stands at sixty, excluding the twenty-seven books in the New Testament. However, a vast majority of these works were not gospels.<sup>6</sup>

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5. Ibid. Pg. 383.

6. Bock, Darrell L. *Breaking the Da Vinci Code: Answers to the Questions Everyone's Asking*. Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 2004. Pg. 63–64.

While the gnostic gospels are not the concern of this study, it shows how any ancient document can be twisted and misused to create a pseudo-intellectual attack upon the reliability of the Scriptures. The existence of more information does nothing to draw the legitimacy of Scripture into question; quite to the contrary, points of similarity and difference only prove to strengthen our understanding of the biblical text and the world into which it was delivered.

With the absolute assertion in place that these ancient Jewish writings do not carry the authority of Scripture, nor are they inspired by God (2 Timothy 3:16), it is possible to move forward. The existence of other writings does not mean that those works are a threat to Scripture. It is an equally false assumption that the omission of such texts means that they are false. At this point these texts become valuable to weigh against the ultimate standard of the word of God. It is often assumed these ancient documents must be falsified, either in authorship or in content. These documents were not under the protective power of God in the same manner as Scripture, nor were they esteemed as such by their original audiences, they were preserved by a people who had a great literary tradition.

The assumption that the nation of Israel only had the 39 books of the Old Testament is entirely false. We now know that there was a rich literary tradition which caused them to preserve not only their scriptures, but other writings as well. For more information on the many books referenced in Scripture see figure 1. This pattern for writing, preserving, and rewriting their own history is little different from our own and should make the modern Bible student very comfortable with the possibility that books were preserved down through ages of time. With the Pentateuch being written by Moses there can be little doubt that other documents were consulted as the Lord directed Moses to write the Torah. This is the basis for the Toldot theory, well explained by Arnold Fruchtenbaum:

*Toldot* is a Hebrew word generally translated by the term “generations.” As mentioned, Moses was primarily a compiler of Genesis, and he compiled eleven family documents. Each family document is marked with a beginning statement: *These are the generations of*. Thus, the term *toldot* marks the beginning of a family document. Generally, two Hebrew words are found: *eleh toldot*, meaning *these are the generations of*. These two words act as the title of a new section – the title of what follows, not what precedes it. This is evident from the usage in Ruth 4:18 where the words clearly

function as a title to what follows. The basic meaning is “this is what became of.” This is what issued from the point just made; this is what became of someone in detail, which is relevant to the purpose of Genesis. For that reason, when a *toldot* is followed by a name, it is not always primarily concerned with the one named, but always concerned with what became of the one named. For example, when it states that *these are the generations of Terah*, what follows is primarily concerned with Abraham, not Terah, although it does show what became of Terah; what became of Terah was Abraham.<sup>7</sup>

The thought that each of the Toldot statements represent a set of documents passed down through the generations of Israelites during their time of captivity is the most probable explanation for how Moses found much of his information. Similarly, the book of Job was more than likely written during the time of Abraham. This likely date of composition means that it too was preserved down through generations before the Torah was penned. It is easily within the realm of possibility, if not the greatest likelihood, that writings from Enoch, Jasher, and others could have been preserved from various points in the biblical period.

The modern Bible scholar must also keep steadily in mind that all of preserved scripture is inspired but the closed canon of scripture by no means demands that God did not reveal other things to His Old Testament prophets which were not meant to be enshrined in Holy Scripture. To summarize this argument more directly: As the Pseudepigraphic works are not included in the canon of Scripture we cannot assume them to be true and fully reliable, yet neither can we off-handedly discount them as being false.

Book Title	Scripture Reference
Book of Jasher	Josh. 10:13; 2 Sam. 1:18; 2 Tim. 3:8
Book of the Wars of the Lord	Num. 21:14
Chronicles of the Kings of Israel	1 Kings 14:19; 16:20
Chronicles of the Kings of Judah	1 Kings 14:29
The Book of Shemaiah the Prophet - Visions of Iddo	2 Chron. 9:29; 12:15; 13:22
The Manner of the Kingdom	1 Sam. 10:25

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7. Fruchtenbaum, Arnold G. *Ariel's Bible Commentary: The Book of Genesis*. San Antonio, TX: Ariel Ministries, 2019. Pg. 6.

## Part I: Angelology in the Old Testament

Acts of Solomon	1 Kings 11:41
The Annals of King David	1 Chron. 27:24
The Book of Samuel the Seer	1 Chron. 29:29
The Book of Nathan the Prophet	1 Chron. 29:29; 2 Chron. 9:29
The book of Gad the Seer	1 Chron. 29:29
The Prophecy of Alijah (possibly 1 Kings 14:2-18)	2 Chron. 9:29
The Book of the Kings of Judah and Israel	2 Chron. 16:11; 27:7; 32:32
The Book of Jehu (possibly 1 Kings 16:1-7)	2 Chron. 20:34.
The Story of the Book of Kings	2 Chron. 24:27
The Acts of Uzziah	2 Chron. 26:22
The Vision of Isaiah	2 Chron. 32:32
The Acts of the Kings of Israel / The Acts and Prayers of Manasseh	2 Chron. 33:18
The Sayings of the Seers	2 Chron. 33:19
The Laments for Josiah	2 Chron. 35:25
The Chronicles of King Ahasuerus	Neh. 12:23; Esth. 2:23; 6:1; 10:2
Book of Enoch	John 7:38; 2 Peter 2:4; 3:13; Jude 1:4, 1:6, 1:13, 1:14-15
Book of Jasher	Josh. 10:13; 2 Sam. 1:18; 2 Tim. 3:8
The Assumption of Moses	2 Tim. 3:8; Jude 9
Martyrdom of Isaiah	Heb. 11:37

Table 1.1: Extra Biblical Texts Referenced in Scripture

These documents must be examined for their own merits in the strict comparison to Scripture. Where they contradict Scripture, they are wrong, where they agree they are right, where they supply information that neither contradicts nor is affirmed by Scripture we are able to consider them carefully as meaningful sources of information.

## The Angelic World

The Bible, as it has already been noted, takes angels to be among its most important characters. Supporting characters, yes, but important persons to the revealed will of God. Angels take the important roles of announcing and

executing the will of God, carrying messages for God, and declaring the praise of God. In the course of this dissertation the many purposes of celestial beings will be examined, but as has already been mentioned the Holy Bible largely assumes that the reader knows and understands the nature and character of angels. It assumes the reader has basic information about where they come from and what sorts of things that they are doing. Quite a variety of poignant observations about these critical issues can be found in the Bible, yet there are many questions that are impossible for which to find clear dogmatic answers because of the lack of information regarding angels and demons in the biblical text itself. It is from this perspective that the Pseudepigraphic works may be most helpful. Whatever else these amazing works of literature seek to do they often give vast amounts of detailed information about the nature, work, and abode of the angels that is absent from Scripture. This is vital information to the Bible scholar of today. This information which cannot be gleaned from Scripture is an added benefit.

It is the express purpose of this dissertation to evaluate whether we can gain a clearer view of the celestial world by the examination of the Pseudepigrapha. It is the author's belief that, while these works do not carry the divine authority of Scripture that they are of great value in expressing what was generally considered an orthodox angelology during the time in which the Bible was written. This dissertation sets out to demonstrate a biblical angelology of the Old Testament before examining several key books and passages from Pseudepigraphical works with a view to understanding how they compare to the Old Testament texts. The final test of this argument will be to examine the angelology of the New Testament to prove that the New Testament authors regarded the angelology of these works as being reliable, and thus worthy of our consideration as we grow to know and understand the spiritual world that is hidden from our sight, but made known to us through the revelation of God's holy word the Bible.

## Part I: Angelology in the Old Testament

## CHAPTER 2

# Angelology in the Book of Genesis

The major focus of this work is to chart the progression of revelation on the topic of angels through the Bible. The most reasonable method to approach the subject is to begin with Genesis. Job was probably written earlier, and gives a picture of a highly developed early Jewish angelology. However, the Toldot Theory that has been put forth by Fruchtenbaum, Waltke, and others has so much credibility and is so reasonable that it seems only right to regard the documents to which Moses had access were far older than Job. This, combined with the fact that the subject matter covered in Genesis precedes that of Job, and the primacy given to Genesis in every form of Old Testament study make it the most logical place to begin the discussion.

In the creation week angels are curiously absent. Later revelation will give a great deal more information about the relationship of the angels to this week. However, the text of Genesis 1 seems to invest no time in the topic of angels.

Celestial beings appear to be unremarkable to the author of the first and second Toldot except insofar as they are potentially a part of the greater scope of creation. The creation of the celestial beings finds the most promising textual evidence in Genesis 2:1–3:

And so the heavens and the earth were completed, and all their heavenly lights. By the seventh day God completed His work which He had done, and He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had done. Then God blessed the Seventh day and sanctified it, because on it He rested from all His work which God had created and made. (NASB2020)

Even this theory has its challenges, but it is observed that by the end of creation week God had created everything and rested from His creative work. The celestial beings had to be in existence by day four of creation in order to sing over the stars (Job 38:4,7). However, that supplies no more than a final point of angelic creation and does not preclude that the angels were created outside of direct relationship to the space-time continuum of earth. It seems that the summary statement of Genesis 2:1–3 may at least provide some information. Yet even Chafer offers up a humble recognition of the limitations of our knowledge considering the Genesis account and further revelation:

It is assumed from Colossians 1:16–17 that all angels were created simultaneously. In like manner, it is assumed that the creation of angels was completed at that time and that none will be added to their number. They are not subject to death or any form of extinction; therefore, they do not decrease as they do not increase. The plan by which the human family is secured through propagation has no counterpart among the angels. Each angel, being a direct creation of God, stands in immediate and personal relation to the Creator. Of certain of the human family as they appear in the next world, it is said by Christ, “They neither marry, nor are given in marriage, but are as the angels of God in heaven” (Matt. 22:28–30). Thus, it is concluded that there is no decrease or increase among these heavenly beings.

The existence of angels is assumed in the Scriptures, and the Scriptures form the only source of worthy information bearing on those beings who, aside from supernatural appearances, are not allowed to come into the sphere of human consciousness. As man is the highest creation of earthly spheres, so the angels are the highest creation of larger spheres described in Colossians 1:16–17, where it is written: “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: and he is before all things, and by him all things consist.” As the angels, in common with all other moral beings, were created by Christ and for Christ, so they abide forever unto the praise of His glory. Though some human beings and certain angels now withhold their worship of God, the greater part of the angels are before His throne in ceaseless adoration. It can be no small issue in the divine counsels that certain creatures fallen in sin

withhold their note of praise from the One to whom all honor is due. This repudiation could not go on forever. It is gratifying to read that, in His kingdom reign, Christ will put down all rule and authority, and that, at the close of this present age, He will, by the ministry of angels, gather out of human spheres all things that offend. Of the disposition of enmity in higher spheres it is said: “For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death” (1 Cor. 15:25–26), while of the disposition of enmity in the lower spheres it is written: “The Son of man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity; and shall cast them into a furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth. Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. Who hath ears to hear, let him hear” (Matt. 13:41–43).<sup>8</sup>

This perspective leads to a most interesting situation. What has been made known to the person who reads Scripture from a position of *tabula rasa* and lets the Bible speak for itself first encounters God, then man, and the first celestial being the reader is introduced to is the serpent in Genesis 3.

## The Serpent

The Serpent would not be easily identified as a celestial being apart from later revelation. When later revelation is considered (Revelation 12) there can be little question that the serpent is possessed by Satan. Yet, if only the immediate context is allowed to dictate the terms, we learn only of this being is the enemy of God and the enemy of Man. Sarna gives an enticing introduction to the serpent:

The serpent has always been a creature of mystery. With its venomous bite, it can inflict sudden and unexpected death. It shows no limbs, yet it is gracefully and silently agile. Its glassy eyes—lidless, unblinking, strangely lustrous—have a fixed and penetrating stare. Its longevity and the regular, recurrent sloughing of its skin impart an aura of youthfulness, vitality, and rejuvenation. Small wonder that the snake simultaneously aroused fascination and revulsion, awe and dread. Throughout the ancient world, it was endowed with divine or semidivine qualities; it was venerated as an

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8. Chafer, Lewis Sperry. *Systematic Theology*. Kregel/Accordance electronic edition, version 1.3. 8 vols. Dallas: Dallas Theological Seminary, 1976.

emblem of health, fertility, immortality, occult wisdom, and chaotic evil; and it was often worshipped. The serpent played a significant role in the mythology, the religious symbolism, and the cults of the ancient Near East. As noted in the Introduction to Genesis 1, biblical poetic texts such as Isaiah 27:1 demonstrate that there once existed in Israel popular compositions in which the serpent, a monster representing primeval chaos, challenged, to its own ruin, God's creative endeavors.<sup>19</sup>

Details from Job give reason to understand that this first expression of angelic majesty is the example of the first fallen angel – Satan. This becomes an area of special concern because the timing of the fall of Satan is something that is given very little attention by revelation. The difficulties of inserting the fall before the completion of the creation week are documented in the appendix on the gap theory. The challenges of putting the fall thereafter lessen the tension noticeably. However, there is one option that seems not to have been put forth: the idea that the Scripture has factually documented the fall of Satan in Genesis 3.

This theory allows scripture to be taken as it presents itself and solves many of the apparent difficulties that arise when Satan is thought to fall before this point. The believer would wonder why God would allow Satan access to His perfect creation. It is a further subject of great interest to think why God would allow Satan access to the totally naive Adam and Eve as they begin their time in their created paradise. Had Satan not fallen prior to this point the temptation Adam and Eve is the moment of rebellion. This is the iniquity discovered in him, and Genesis 3:15 is the earthly perspective on the judgment of Satan that is detailed from the heavenly perspective in Isaiah 14 and Ezekiel 28. The future studies will examine whether Isaiah 14 and Ezekiel 28 do indeed refer to Satan, but they do bring clarity to the probability that Genesis 3 details the fall of Satan as well as the fall of Man, and this case is only strengthened if those two passages are not dealing directly with the fall of Satan.

Regardless of the timing of the fall of Satan, Genesis 3 provides the reader with the first truly concrete information about the nature of celestial beings. This encounter provides information which the reader may easily take for granted. It will be productive to consider this passage in some detail:

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9. Sarna, Nahum M., *Genesis*. The JPS Torah Commentary. Accordance electronic ed. Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1989.

Now the serpent was more cunning than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said to the woman, “Has God indeed said, ‘You shall not eat of every tree of the garden?’”

And the woman said to the serpent, “We may eat the fruit of the trees of the garden; but of the fruit of the tree which *is* in the midst of the garden, God has said, “You shall not eat it, nor shall you touch it, lest you die.”

Then the serpent said to the woman, “You will not surely die. For God knows that in the day you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.” (Genesis 3:1–5 NKJV)

The first observation is the description of the serpent as more cunning than the beasts of the field. This may be the reason that Satan chose to indwell the serpent as his representative. However, it is very interesting that the word translated “cunning” (Hebrew – *arum*) is similar to the word translated “naked” (Hebrew – *arumeem*) in relationship to humanity. In the original Hebrew text these words would differ by only a single letter at the end of the word translated. It leads the reader to wonder if there was something in the serpent that, rather than being “cunning” was more vulnerable than other animal creations to the influence of the celestial beings.

The following observations about celestial beings are clear in any language. First, they have intelligence. This is displayed by the argumentation of the serpent. Second, it is obvious that the wills of the celestial beings are not divinely controlled. While autonomy is an absolute impossibility, there is a reality that the angelic beings must have been given the ability to defy the will of their Creator. The third observation is most insidious, but it involves the fact that celestial beings are imbued with the ability to lie. This capacity, also included in man, must not be overlooked in importance. Angelic and terrestrial beings alike are created as beings with the ability to be creative and to lie. This demands that both celestial beings and humans are created with the innate ability to question our Creator. Satan was the first to question the Creator and was able to inspire Adam and Eve to question God in the same ways.

It is also valuable to observe that this is the first possession in recorded history. The serpent most certainly is held accountable by the alteration of its biological future. The larger point is that higher (celestial) beings can, at least in some circumstances, fully override the will of a physical being and use that physical being as a vehicle for its own ends. It is noteworthy that the concept

of demonic possession is present in the earliest chapters of the Bible, albeit possession of an animal rather than a human.

## Satanic Destiny

More could be said regarding the finer nuances of the Genesis 3 account but the focus of this study demands progress to the sentence given to the serpent. The JPS Torah Commentary notes:

This curse seeks to explain the natural revulsion of humans for the serpent. Clearly, when it entered into conversation with the woman, it could not have been so regarded; indeed, it posed as her friend, solicitous of her interests. The imprecation may also carry antipagan undertones, as if to say that the serpent is neither a fertility symbol, as in Canaan, nor a protective emblem, as among Egyptian royalty, but a hostile object of aversion.<sup>10</sup>

Adam and Eve are questioned by God regarding their disobedience but the serpent is afforded no such opportunity. When the Lord turns His attention to the serpent it is only to deliver the divine sentence:

So the LORD God said to the serpent: “Because you have done this, You *are* cursed more than all cattle, And more than every beast of the field; On your belly you shall go, And you shall eat dust All the days of your life. And I will put enmity Between you and the woman, And between your seed and her Seed; He shall bruise your head, And you shall bruise His heel” (Genesis 3:14–15 NKJV).

This verse provides the cause: “Because you (the serpent) have done this.” This shows that the serpent, the tool which Satan possessed, was held accountable for his actions. The serpent is cursed above all cattle – this begins the description of the physical effects that would be borne by the descendants of the serpent. The result of this curse was that they shall go upon their belly. Dr. Henry Morris gives an excellent assessment of this important decree of God:

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10. Sarna, Nahum M., *Genesis*. The JPS Torah Commentary. Accordance electronic ed. Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1989.

The serpent, as an animal, was cursed “above all cattle, and above every beast of the field,” not because of direct culpability on its part, but rather as a perpetual reminder to man of the instrument of his fall and of the final destruction of Satan himself. Whatever may have been its beauty and posture before, it would henceforth glide on its belly and be an object of dread and loathing by all...

It should be noted also that all other animals were brought under the curse at this time, though none of them had “sinned.” The serpent had the “sentence of death” in its members. Each was a part of man’s dominion and it was by man’s sin that death came into the world, infecting everything in that dominion.<sup>11</sup>

The Moody Bible Commentary confirms an address to Satan through the direct address to the serpent:

In v. 15 God addressed the power behind the serpent, Satan, further underscoring the difference between His treatment of Satan and that of the couple by indicating that Satan’s final defeat will be brought about by one of the couple’s own descendants—yet one who is at the same time *more* than a mere descendant. This pronouncement in fact represents the first direct specific prediction concerning the work of the Messiah, and has appropriately been regarded from the earliest period of Christian interpretation as the *Protevangelium* (lit., “the first gospel”). Even before the NT was written, the messianic import of this verse was recognized by Jewish interpreters (as evident in the translation of the LXX), and it continued to be affirmed within the Jewish community for several centuries after the birth of Christianity (in the early Aramaic paraphrastic translations, known as the *targumim Pseudo-Jonathan*, *Neofiti*, and *Onqelos* as well as the rabbinic commentary *Genesis Rabbah* 23:5). This shows how entrenched this view was, and clearly this is the most “natural” and logical understanding of the passage. This passage bears out not only a reference to the final victory of Messiah, but also to His death in that He will be bruised on the heel. His divine nature may be implied by the use of He, the “seed” of the woman, who is portrayed as issuing the final “death blow” to Satan (He shall bruise you on the head), which is something that only God can and will do. God the Son will do this, as stated in Ps 110:6b

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11 Morris, Henry. *The Genesis Record: A Scientific and Devotional Commentary on the Book of Beginnings*. Baker Books. 1976. Pg.119.

## Part I: Angelology in the Old Testament

(lit., “He will crush [the] head”); Rm 16:20; 1Jn 3:8; Rv 20:10 (where Satan is thrown into the lake of fire under the authority—if not directly by—the enthroned Christ).<sup>12</sup>

Many commentators focus upon the seed of the woman but ignore the presence of the seed of the serpent and assume that this also is an indirect address to the final defeat of Satan himself. While the ultimate doom of Satan is foretold the theme of the “seeds” continues to be an important one in the book of Genesis. The Prophecy Study Bible gives a simple explanation:

The seed of the serpent includes demons and all humanity not following Christ. As a snake strikes at the heel of man while in the field, so Satan will wound mankind; but Christ shall crush the head of Satan, much like a man in the field grinding a snake under foot.<sup>13</sup>

On this topic Waltke notes:

The seed of the serpent is not literal, as in little snakes, for it has already been established that the serpent is only a masquerade for a heavenly spirit. Neither is the seed demons, for such an interpretation does not fit the context and Satan does not father demons. Rather, the seed of the serpent refers to natural humanity whom he has led into rebellion against God. Humanity is divided into two communities: the elect, who love God, and the reprobate, who love self (John 8:31–32, 44; 1 John 3:8). Each of the characters of Genesis will be either the seed of the woman that reproduces her spiritual propensity, or of the seed of the Serpent that reproduces his unbelief. The unspoken question to the reader is, “Whose seed are you?”<sup>14</sup>

Waltke’s approach has textual merit, and rightly identifies a major theme in the text of Genesis that sets the tone for the rest of the holy scriptures. However, it does show an interesting weakness in identifying the “seed of the woman” as having a positivity toward God. The major weakness of this assumption is that the woman and the man have both showed nothing but a

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12. *Genesis*. Edited by Rydelnik, Michael and Michael Vanlaningham. The Moody Bible Commentary. Chicago: Moody Publishers, 2014.

13. LaHaye, Tim. *Tim LaHaye Prophecy Study Bible*. AMG Publishers, 2001. Pg. 6.

14. Waltke, Bruce K., and Cathi J. Fredricks. *Genesis: A Commentary*. Zondervan, 2012. Pg. 94.

propensity to rebel from God. By attaching this to the woman as the marker of faithfulness seems odd. It seems a better conclusion that the future Messianic promise would come from her line, rather than as a reference to her personal faithfulness.

In spite of Waltke's objections there is no reason to exclude the spiritual world from this "seed of the serpent" prophecy, even though it is not the primary focus. There is a simple reality that the spiritual world, along with Satan and all of those who would identify with him by rejecting God, are ultimately choosing the side of their figurehead. This, of course, includes the reality that the celestial beings of the world have a volition and a choice to side with God or to side with Satan. As such they are not Satan's physical offspring, they are related to him in their belief, loyalty, and destiny (John 8:44).

Another point about the celestial beings from this passage is that they are subject to time and space. This prophecy would be meaningless in the biblical view of history if Satan does not have a concrete relationship to time and space. There is a time wherein the seed of the serpent is nipping at the heels of mankind, and there is an end where the head of Satan is crushed. The Celestial beings in general, and Satan specifically share a limited relationship in the time-space continuum much as humans do. Recognizing, of course, that his power and personal experience is vastly different from the human experience based upon his place as a fallen celestial being.

The final point derived from this passage is as follows: though Satan is a spiritual being, it is possible for God to judge him in a way that is understandable to humanity in terms of physical pain and death. It will not be until the end of the Bible that this final judgement is fully explained but it is made clear from the beginning that whether in rebellion or in faithfulness the world of celestial beings will be judged in the future.

## Genesis 3:24 – Guardians of Eden

In continuation with the theme in Genesis that affirms the angelic world, and the involvement of celestial beings in the execution of the plan of God, Genesis 3:24 gives the first mention of the Celestial being called a "Cherub." This creature is given no physical description in the first appearance. The author assumes that his readers are familiar with this type of being. It is important to note that the Cherub is not confused with an angel, though both are noted as being celestial beings. The terms used for angel are not used for

this creature of God. What is clear from the text is that there are two of them, and that they have flaming swords, with a purpose of guarding the path to the tree of life.

Cherubs are of immense interest to humans and discussed here. Easton's Bible Dictionary makes the following observations:

Cherub: plural cherubim, the name of certain symbolical figures frequently mentioned in Scripture. They are first mentioned in connection with the expulsion of our first parents from Eden (Gen. 3:24). There is no intimation given of their shape or form. They are next mentioned when Moses was commanded to provide furniture for the tabernacle (Ex. 25:17–20; 26:1, 31). God promised to commune with Moses “from between the cherubim” (25:22). This expression was afterwards used to denote the Divine abode and presence (Num. 7:89; 1 Sam. 4:4; Isa. 37:16; Ps. 80:1; 99:1). In Ezekiel's vision (10:1–20) they appear as living creatures supporting the throne of God. From Ezekiel's description of them (1;10; 41:18, 19), they appear to have been compound figures, unlike any real object in nature; artificial images possessing the features and properties of several animals. Two cherubim were placed on the mercy-seat of the ark; two of colossal size overshadowed it in Solomon's temple. Ezekiel (Ezek. 1:4–14) speaks of four; and this number of “living creatures” is mentioned in Rev. 4:6. Those on the ark are called the “cherubim of glory” (Heb. 9:5), i.e., of the Shechinah, or cloud of glory, for on them the visible glory of God rested. They were placed one at each end of the mercy-seat, with wings stretched upward, and their faces “toward each other and toward the mercy-seat.” They were anointed with holy oil, like the ark itself and the other sacred furniture.<sup>15</sup>

This resource continues to regard the Cherubim as largely “symbolical.” It does not seem to deny their existence entirely but to build their existence around their function. This is a position which the author of this paper firmly rejects. The Eerdmans Dictionary is even more objectionable:

Mythological winged creatures, borrowed by the Israelites from ancient Near Eastern traditions. The Hebrew term is likely related to Akk. *karību* or *karūbu* (“intercessor”) or *karibi*, *kuribi*, *karibūti* (“gatekeepers”), the

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15. Easton, M. G. *Easton's Bible Dictionary*. Accordance electronic ed., version 3.5. Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1897.

latter referring to the colossal mythological creatures which flanked the entrances of Mesopotamian palaces and temples.<sup>16</sup>

The secular presuppositions of this quote are obvious. The assumption that the similarity between Israelites and other near eastern traditions can indicate only that the Jews borrowed from others is false. The biblical text makes plain the fact that all people shared a common background through the family of Noah and would have a shared knowledge base. Thus, simply because they appear in the archaeological record of other Near Eastern Civilizations does not demand, or even strongly imply, that those ideas originated with those cultures. It is, rather, further evidence of a shared cultural, historical, and religious background between these people groups heading back to the time before the Lord's judgment at the Tower of Babel. This does prompt the question: Did the ancient near eastern cultures all share a memory and idea of what these creatures looked like or did the Egyptian and Assyrian versions appear without reference to the biblical cherubim? It would be impossible to be dogmatic but the Zondervan Handbook of Biblical Archaeology handles the issue as follows:

Cherubim-like figures are found in ancient Near East iconography on everything from monumental architecture in temples and palaces to reliefs and seals. They are variously depicted as creatures that are composites of human and animals. In Sumer the figures are of winged humans; in Egypt, Syria, and Israel the figures are of winged humans or a composite of a lion and a human (sphinx); in Assyria and Babylon, a winged bull and a human; and in Greece, a bird and a human (griffin). The composite character may represent attributes of God as displayed in examples of his creation. The human part represented human intellect and emotions, while the winged-animal part represented the power and speed. Combined these, traits were manifestly beyond both human and animal suggested an order above the earthly creation – the angelic.

In Genesis 3:24 the cherubim appear as guardians of God's creation, stationed at the east of Eden to prevent invasion from the outside (the place of exile) and thus preserve the sanctity of the garden with its tree of

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16. Ebeling, Jennie R. Freedman, David Noel, Allen C. Myers, and Astrid B. Beck, eds. *Eerdmans Dictionary of the Bible*. Accordance electronic ed., version 3.8. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2000.

life. Examples of this guardian function have already been noted from Egypt in relation to the pharaoh, but this is implied in the images of such creatures flanking the thrones of kings (such as the relief of Ahiiram, king of Byblos, seated on a cherub throne) or placed at the entrances to temples (such as at 'Ain Dara'). The tabernacle and the temple were entered from the east, and the cherubim were placed over the ark of the covenant (Exod. 25:18–22), the footstool of the Lord, guarding the divine presence.<sup>17</sup>

As this assessment points out the focus may be more on purpose than actual physical appearance. Doubtless, these creatures are actual, and of the highest celestial order, however the greater importance may be to understand how the symbolism and meaning of them relates to their ultimate spiritual reality and not simply to their physical appearance.

Ladd insists upon a sharp distinction between the cherubim of Mosaic writings and the tabernacle from the exilic writings of Daniel and thereafter. The following quote provides the basic idea:

And first of the two stands the consideration to which we have already directed attention. We are sharply to distinguish between the “living creatures” of Ezekiel’s vision and the cherubim which overshadowed the ark, adorned the curtains, and clung upon the walls of the tabernacle and temple. The latter were fashioned in enduring metal or wrought as tapestry by those who were acquainted with Egypt’s temples and palaces. The former passed, repeatedly shifting and fleeting, before one who was surrounded with Assyrian symbolism. The latter, in so far as they are ideal forms realized in wood, gold, and tapestry work, are historical, objective. The former, though they have some points of union with the latter, and thus in some of their elements of composition share in the real, still, as a whole are unhistorical, subjective, and never actualized in any known image or painting. As the former pass before the prophet in his inspired vision, they change and unfold new elements. They serve his purpose, and then vanish, except so far as they obtain for themselves a fixed form in the record of the vision.<sup>18</sup>

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17. Price, Randall. *Zondervan Handbook of Biblical Archaeology: A Book by Book Guide to Archaeological Discoveries Related to the Bible*. Zondervan, 2016.

18. Ladd, Rev. George T. “Cherubim.” *Bibliotheca Sacra* 33, no. 129 (Jan 1876): 31–39.

In this way Ladd seems to conclude that the Mosaic Cherubim were humanoid or perhaps influenced by the Sphinx of the Egyptian past, while the Cherubim Ezekiel describes are borrowed from the Assyrian culture. Again, these presuppositions seem curious among believers but scholars are working to resolve similarities between the biblical record and the various artifacts of other ancient cultures. The Hebrew prohibition against idolatry gives the reason why many other ANE cultures would have depictions of these creatures common in their archaeological record while the Hebrew culture would not. Thus, the only examples of them in art and statuary would be in the tragically lost remains of the various temples. While there is difficulty in describing these otherworldly creatures there appears to be no sound textual reason to doubt that the Cherubim described by Moses were like in form and function to the ones observed by Ezekiel and John. John Crawford gives a far more satisfactory conclusion in appropriate reverence of the text of Scripture:

It is scarcely possible, even upon the most cursory examination, to avoid the obvious conclusion, that the four living creatures of the Apocalypse (Rev. 4 and 5), the living creatures, or Cherubim, of Ezekiel (ch. 1 and 10), and the Seraphim of Isaiah (ch. 6), are one and the same. The same combination of animate forms, the lion, the ox, the man, and the eagle, obviously conduct us to this conclusion. The abundance of eyes in each, as well as the “Holy! holy! holy! “alike exclaimed by the living creatures and the Seraphim; together with their similar position of nearness to the throne, —all combine to indicate that these symbolic creatures are the same.<sup>19</sup>

Randall Price displays why the continuity between the image of the Cherubim was such an important part of continuing life and faith in Israel and why the people of Israel would have retained a concrete idea of what a Cherub would look like to one degree or another, and not allow that image to be lost from their popular memory and imagination:

Perhaps the most striking symbolism in the Genesis description is that found in Genesis 4:24 (sic) of the two cherubim posted at the east entrance to Eden, guarding access to the Tree of Life in the middle of the Garden. Any Israelite who read this description could not help but think

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19. Crawford, Rev. John. “The Cherubim.” *Bibliotheca Sacra* 36, no. 142 (April 1879): 225–240.

of the two cherubim overshadowing the Mercy Seat on the Ark of the Covenant (Exodus 25:18–22). Symbolic representations of the cherubim were also embroidered on the veil of the Tabernacle (Exodus 26:31), and carved into the walls, doors, paneling, and lavers of the First Temple (1 Kings 6:25–35; 7:29, 36). Also, Solomon made two 15-foot-high olivewood cherubim overlaid with gold to overshadow the Ark in the First Temple (1 Kings 6:23–28; 8:6–8). Cherubim will also adorn the interior of the Millennial Temple (Ezekiel 41:18–25). As with many of the other parallels between Eden and the Sanctuary, the only other references to the cherubim in the Old Testament outside of the Genesis account are those found in texts concerning the Sanctuary. Without the reference to the cherubim in Genesis, there would be no explanation for their later appearance in the Tabernacle and Temple.<sup>20</sup>

Thus, the reality of these celestial beings is unquestioned, and their appearance is most certainly like those described like Ezekiel and John. The flaming swords spinning of their own devices became a critical part of the Hebrew faith and collective memory. Dickason’s simple comments may be the most clearly faithful to the greater perspective of scripture:

God made the visible appearances of the cherubim to differ, as each occasion might best be served. However, certain basic descriptions may be traced through the Bible. The first biblical reference to angels is to the cherubim of Genesis 3:24 who were placed at the gate of the Garden of Eden after man was expelled. They were stationed with flaming swords to protect the way to the tree of life, lest sinful man should intrude into God’s presence or presume to take of the tree of life. They teach us that sin and paradise are incompatible. Sinful man cannot approach God without the righteousness granted to those who trust Christ.<sup>21</sup>

Other guesses may be made as to the appearance of these creatures but there is no question whether they exist from the biblical perspective. Josephus wrote in *Antiquities* 8.3.3: “No one can tell what they were like.” So, while their existence is beyond question, and their function of guarding the holiness of God is abundantly clear. The saint will have to content himself to wait to

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20. Price, Randall. *The Coming Last Days' Temple*. Harvest House, 1999. Pgs. 200–201.

21. Dickason, C. Fred. *Angels: Elect & Evil*. Moody Press, 1995.

behold these remarkable creatures with our own eyes following the rapture of the Church.

### Genesis 6:1–2 – The Sons of God and the Nephilim

Among the appearances of celestial beings on the scene of the biblical narrative the sons of God in the book of Genesis are easily the most controversial. The way in which this incident is interpreted tells a great deal about the presuppositions of the interpreter. The clear interpretation of the text is often at odds with the anti-supernatural/rationalistic assumptions of the modern interpreter, and this brings about the most textually unsatisfying conclusions. Yet, a natural interpretation of the text yields the simplest and best understanding despite of the difficulties of the materialistic mindset. The bulk of the discussion is over two simple verses:

“Now it came to pass, when men began to multiply on the face of the earth, and daughters were born to them, that the sons of God saw the daughters of men, that they *were* beautiful; and they took wives for themselves of all whom they chose” (Genesis 6:1–2 NKJV).

As the continuing drama of the ante-diluvian world unfolds the first note is that “men” multiply on the face of the earth. Regarding to this text Jamison, Fausset, and Brown put forth the anti-supernatural interpretation:

2. the sons of God saw the daughters of men — By the former is meant the family of Seth, who were professedly religious; by the latter, the descendants of apostate Cain. Mixed marriages between parties of opposite principles and practice were necessarily sources of extensive corruption. The women, religious themselves, would as wives and mothers exert an influence fatal to the existence of religion in their household, and consequently the people of that later age sank to the lowest depravity.<sup>22</sup>

The Moody Bible Commentary offers a non-supernatural interpretation of the text as follows:

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22. Jamieson, Robert, A. R. Fausset, and David Brown, *A Commentary, Critical and Explanatory on the Whole Bible*. 1871, Accordance electronic ed. Altamonte Springs: OakTree Software, 1996.

A fourth view, consistent with both the context and language of the passage, views men (the sons of God) as “taking” women (the daughters of men) in marriage (for which the expression “to take a wife/woman” is normally used; Gn 28:6; 34:9, 16; etc.). The expression “sons of God” should thus be understood, simply, as an idiomatic designation for *men*, reflecting the creation of man first by God, just as the expression “daughters of men” is clearly intended as an idiomatic designation for *women* (as in Gn 24:13, where the same expression refers to women generally, not wicked women). Likewise consistent with both this contextual understanding as well as its use in Nm 13:33 to denote *men* of large stature (such as Goliath), the term Nephilim in v. 4 should be understood as an alternative designation of the same group described in the next clause as mighty men (*gibborim*, lit., “proven warriors”), that is, men who because of their stature and military prowess were objects of infamy (*anshe ha-shem*, otherwise translated “men of renown”) and of great moment when they “fell” in battle (or caused others to do so). Furthermore, this view is consistent with the following statement expressed by God in response to the activity of vv. 1–2, that My Spirit shall not strive with man forever. Though there is some debate about the meaning of the verb “strive,” the Hebrew has “abide (*yadon*). “Abide” is supported by the LXX (*katameine*), the Vulgate (*permanebit*), and the Arabic translation of the Saadia ben Joseph Gaon (*yanghamidu*)—as well as by the similar semantic use of the same Hebrew root in 1Ch 21:27, in the noun “sheath” (i.e., that in which the sword “abides”). Whichever view one assigns to the verb, the point of the verse *in context* is essentially the same. That is, in response to the expanding human population, God dramatically limited the duration that the “breath” (Hb. *ruah*, otherwise translated here as “spirit”) which He breathed into man (see 2:7) would abide or remain within him in his depraved state. In other words, as an expression of His mercy and love—*not* judgment—God here (as in His “expulsion” of man from the garden) acted to *limit* the potential expression of human depravity (and hence to limit His potential judgment) by reducing the human lifespan from the multiple centuries attested in chap. 5 to about 120 years. There is no indication, moreover, that this reduction in lifespan was to be immediate—a steady decline in lifespan is evident throughout

Genesis (205 for Terah, 175 for Abraham, 180 for Isaac, 130 for Jacob), ending with the death of Joseph at 110 years (50:22).<sup>23</sup>

This interpretation is significant because, if the sons of God are men, God is punishing mankind for keeping his commandment unto them to “be fruitful and multiply.” This is an important point to the reading of the text because the multiplication and expansion of the human race is the first major point. This point is, of course, in keeping with the mandate with God had given humanity in Genesis 1:28:

Then God blessed them, and God said to them, “Be fruitful and multiply; fill the earth and subdue it; have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over every living thing that moves on the earth” (Genesis 1:28 NKJV).

This command towards human multiplication is a vital observation because it cannot be the multiplication itself that brings forth the judgment of God. Any idea about this text involving natural promulgation of the species would essentially cause the Lord to contradict His own commandment. It would also struggle to provide a clear understanding of the seed promise of Genesis 3:15. The seed of the Woman, which meets ultimate fulfillment in Jesus Christ, needs to consist of physical offspring of the woman, and the offspring of the serpent intimates not followers of the serpent, but rather the fallen angelic world who would choose to associate with the enemy of our souls.

“The sons of God” is a unique expression in scripture only used here and in the book of Job where it is unquestionably referring to celestial beings. The next question is: If they are fallen-angels why are they called “Sons of God”. It is this difficulty which caused McGee to misunderstand the sons of God:

This matter of “the sons of God” and “the daughters of men” is something that has caused no end of discussion. There are a great many good men who take the position that “the sons of God” were angels. I personally cannot accept that at all. Most of my teachers taught that the sons of God were angels, and I recognize that a great many of the present-

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23. *Genesis*. Edited by Rydelnik, Michael and Michael Vanlaningham. The Moody Bible Commentary. Chicago: Moody Publishers, 2014.

day expositors take that position. However, I cannot accept that view, because, if these were good angels, they would not commit this sin, and evil angels could never be designated as “sons of God.” Also, the offspring here were men; they were not monstrosities. I do not know why it is assumed by so many that the offspring were giants.<sup>24</sup>

This tension can be simply resolved by noting that these fallen angels are being distinguished from humanity and this expression describes their creation by divine fiat. An even clearer answer, however, is that some of these angels who had not yet fallen were tempted to fall by the states of affairs on the earth. Satan had fallen and been judged at Genesis 3. By this point it was not clear that the judgment pronounced by God would ever take place. Satan appears to have been successful – and now this new possibility of experience could easily tempt more of the angelic beings to change sides. The opportunity to interact sexually with the daughters of men, and thus have offspring, could have been the motivation which was needed to come to the earth and rule as Satan appeared to rule for the time being. While Satan had changed in his relationship to God, he had not been limited in his authority, power, or position upon the earth. At this time the defection against God appeared to be successful. The deception of God’s chosen stewards, mankind, had proven to effectively remove man from his designated position as mediatorial rulers of the earth– and Satan had become the god, or most powerful being, in this world.

From the perspective of the human women, it was an opportunity to achieve power and possibly immortality for their offspring. This makes the exchange attractive from the human perspective. This simple understanding of the text gives the much needed background for the statement which the LORD makes in Genesis 6:3–4:

And the LORD said, “My Spirit shall not strive with man forever, for he *is* indeed flesh; yet his days shall be one hundred and twenty years.” There were giants on the earth in those days, and also afterward, when the sons of God came in to the daughters of men and they bore *children* to them. Those *were* the mighty men who *were* of old, men of renown. (Genesis 6:3–4 NKJV)

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24. McGee, J. Vernon, *Genesis—Deuteronomy*. Vol. I of Thru the Bible. Accordance electronic ed. Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1981.

The challenge that the Lord would not strive with man forever would not be resolved by the flood if it were simply the result of normal rebellion with God...that rebellion commenced immediately after the flood. It seems quite clear from the context that the Lord is dealing with a specific problem that He would take steps to prohibit in the future.

The JPS Torah Commentary concurs with the natural and clear sense of this textual interpretation:

*2. the divine beings* The definite article points to a familiar and well-understood term.<sup>2</sup> The context in Job 1:6; 2:1; and 38:7 unmistakably proves the reference to be to the angelic host, the celestial entourage of God. This is a poetic image drawn from the analogy of human kings surrounded by their assemblage of courtiers. Occasionally, as in 1 Kings 22:19, “the host of heaven” is used to the same effect.<sup>25</sup>

While the JPS commentary is largely academic, and certainly not written by believers the natural sense of the text cannot be missed. The New Bible Commentary likewise explains:

*6:1–8 Human–spirit marriages and their aftermath*

In the ancient world, stories were often told of sexual intercourse between the gods and human beings; and the semi–divine offspring of such unions were held to have abnormal energy and other powers. In Mesopotamia and Canaan, divine–human marriage was celebrated in the sacred marriage rites that took place in the temples. These rites were supposed to ensure the fertility of the soil and ordinary marriages. They involved fathers dedicating their unmarried daughters for service in the temple. In practice these girls served as sacred prostitutes giving pleasure to priests and wealthy worshippers.

Vs 1–2,4 describe these practices. The *sons of God* refers to spirit beings (translated ‘angels’ in Jb. 1:6; 2:1, though they are not benevolent either here or in Job). Sometimes in the OT Israel (Dt. 14:1) or kings (2 Sa. 7:14) are called ‘sons of God’, but neither meaning is appropriate here. *The daughters of men* refers to ordinary human women. The *Nephilim* are the ancient supermen supposed to be the offspring of these spirit–human unions. Some Nephilim were in Canaan when Israel invaded (Nu. 13:33).

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25. Sarna, Nahum M., *Genesis*. The JPS Torah Commentary. Accordance electronic ed. Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1989.

This practice of sacred prostitution is, according to Genesis, both unnecessary (men were already increasing in number, v 1) and an abomination to God (5). Consequently, the normal span of human life was reduced to 120 years (3) and the Lord announced a plan to wipe out mankind and other living creatures (7).

Sacred prostitution is viewed here as the culminating sin in a series that began with Adam's eating the forbidden fruit and was continued by Cain's murder of his brother and Lamech's unbridled vengeance. Looking at human beings God concluded that they were incorrigibly wicked and that every human thought was bent towards evil. V 5 spells out the doctrine of human depravity with frightening bluntness, but similar views are expressed by psalmists, prophets, Jesus and Paul (Ps. 51:3–6; Je. 17:9–10; Mk. 7:15; Rom. 1:18–3:20). What is more, human sinfulness provokes a fierce reaction in God, a bitter indignation (*his heart was filled with pain*) akin to that felt by brothers after their sister's rape (Gn. 34:7), or that of a father after his son's death in battle (2 Sa. 19:2). God, therefore, made a decision to destroy his creation. Nevertheless, as with earlier decrees of judgment (3:15; 4:15), there was a glimmer of hope—*Noah found favour in the eyes of the LORD* (8).<sup>26</sup>

While a number of other suggestions have been made, the natural explanation of the text, as well as the context of the situation in the early chapters of the book of Genesis, demands that the sons of God be regarded as celestial beings as both Jude and Peter affirm (2 Peter 2:4; Jude 6).

With this understanding firmly in place new observations about celestial beings can be made. These spiritual beings find their source in fiat creation by God. They can only be described as direct creations of the LORD and cannot be rooted back to any other self-creation, nor birth from another kind of being. We can also observe that the celestial beings, like man, are created with a will that is entirely self-sourced. They are not automata, but rather can choose to disobey God. If these celestial beings fell after Satan then it becomes clear that they have the ability to defect against God even after that moment, or simply put, they retain the ability to choose to obey or disobey God, though it would seem, based upon continuing revelation, that their

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26. Wenham, G.J., *Genesis*. Edited by D. A. Carson, R. T. France, J. A. Motyer, and Gordon J. Wenham. New Bible Commentary: 21st Century Edition. Accordance electronic ed. Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1994.

choices are increasingly fixed as the great story of history continues to be revealed.

Another point about angelology clarified in this text is that, while Satan possessed the body of a serpent, these creatures can appear in bodies that are essentially anthropomorphic – to the point that they are able to take wives and co-habit with them sexually so as to produce offspring. While this may cause some to stumble in their understanding, it is clearly upheld by scripture as later angelic appearances involve them having bodies that can see, eat, drink, and fight. If these physical forms have all of the external organs of a human male, then there is no reason to question that they would also have the inner workings of a functional human body such as genitals and reproductive capability. This, of course, is something that we are not currently able to confirm but can only trust in the reliability of the text and come to an appreciation that there are certain questions which the text does not directly answer, but only leaves us to trust that, however they occurred, they did actually happen.

This text is important to the subject of this dissertation as the book of Enoch, which claims to be written in this exact period, speaks of celestial beings in largely the same terms. While we would not use an extra-biblical ancient text to definitively provide our interpretation for a text, it shows that these ideas of the book of Enoch and other Pseudepigraphical works are not in contradiction to the biblical record of the existence and abilities of celestial beings, but rather in keeping with the divine revelation that surrounds them.

## Genesis 19 – Sodom and Gomorrah

Chapter 18 of Genesis involves a conversation between Abraham and God who approached him in the person of the Angel of the LORD – or the pre-incarnate Christ. This account has much to teach about aspects of God's relationship with Abraham, with Israel, and with all of mankind. However, it is not in the direct purview of this study. Directly in the line of focus, however, is the information given in Genesis 19 concerning the two angels who accompanied the Angel of the LORD. However, the Angel of the LORD appears to have left these two angels and sent them along their way in the task of bringing judgment on Sodom and Gomorrah and bringing salvation to the household of Lot. The passage reads as follows:

<sup>1</sup> Now the two angels came to Sodom in the evening, and Lot was sitting in the gate of Sodom. When Lot saw *them*, he rose to meet them, and he bowed himself with his face toward the ground. <sup>2</sup> And he said, “Here now, my lords, please turn in to your servant’s house and spend the night, and wash your feet; then you may rise early and go on your way.”

And they said, “No, but we will spend the night in the open square.”

<sup>3</sup> But he insisted strongly; so they turned in to him and entered his house. Then he made them a feast, and baked unleavened bread, and they ate.

<sup>4</sup> Now before they lay down, the men of the city, the men of Sodom, both old and young, all the people from every quarter, surrounded the house. <sup>5</sup> And they called to Lot and said to him, “Where are the men who came to you tonight? Bring them out to us that we may know them *carnally*.” (Genesis 19:1–5 NKJV)

Lot, having gained a place of leadership in the town, sees these two angels, and seems to know them for what they are: messengers of God. The question must then be asked how these two could be recognized as supernatural beings. I argue that the men of Sodom also recognized them as being angelic in nature, and that this was the motivation for their vehement desire to rape them. Regardless of this, Lot surely knew that these were not ordinary men. His offer of hospitality was surely for the purpose of protecting them from the wickedness of the townsmen.

A most interesting observation about the nature of these angels is the reality that they are volitional beings. At first, they made a clear statement of their desire to stay in the town square for the night and Lot is able through strong insistence to change their minds. This is noteworthy because it shows that an angelic being has both individual will, and is willing to have their course altered by the pleading of men. This individual volitional ability and authority is displayed yet again at the conclusion of this account when Lot is able to convince the angel to spare the small city nearby where Lot and his family escape. This passage displays the angels eating and drinking – thus showing that whether or not the angels require physical sustenance, they are able to take food and drink and, presumably, enjoy it.

It is, of course, entirely possible that the men of Sodom are so degraded that they simply wish to have sexual intercourse with any stranger in town...such is the depravity of men. However, it is also interesting in the light of the Genesis 6 discussions about the possibility of sex with celestial

beings being that this was a significant part of their vehement desire to know these men sexually, and their willingness to employ violence to achieve that end. The words of Jude begin to make more sense in this interpretation:

...as Sodom and Gomorrah, and the cities around them in a similar manner to these, having given themselves over to sexual immorality and gone after **strange flesh**, are set forth as an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire. (Jude 7 NKJV)

While “strange flesh” may be an expression for the homosexuality it seems far more to the point that these evil men also recognized that supernatural character of these men. Thus, taking their sinful homosexual desire and exacerbating it because of the temptation offered by these supernatural beings in their midst. The continuation of the account sheds more light on the nature and ability of these celestial beings:

<sup>6</sup> So Lot went out to them through the doorway, shut the door behind him, <sup>7</sup> and said, “Please, my brethren, do not do so wickedly! <sup>8</sup> See now, I have two daughters who have not known a man; please, let me bring them out to you, and you may do to them as you wish; only do nothing to these men, since this is the reason they have come under the shadow of my roof.”

<sup>9</sup> And they said, “Stand back!” Then they said, “This one came in to stay *here*, and he keeps acting as a judge; now we will deal worse with you than with them.” So they pressed hard against the man Lot, and came near to break down the door. <sup>10</sup> But the men reached out their hands and pulled Lot into the house with them, and shut the door. <sup>11</sup> And they struck the men who *were* at the doorway of the house with blindness, both small and great, so that they became weary *trying* to find the door. (Genesis 19:6–11 NKJV)

The curious ability of the angels here being the ability to inflict blindness upon the men of the town. This is not a biblically unknown ability. A similar feat done by Paul to the sorcerer Elymas in Acts 13:8–11:

<sup>8</sup> But Elymas the sorcerer (for so his name is translated) withstood them, seeking to turn the proconsul away from the faith.

<sup>9</sup> Then Saul, who also *is called* Paul, filled with the Holy Spirit, looked intently at him <sup>10</sup> and said, “O full of all deceit and all fraud, *you* son of the devil, *you* enemy of all righteousness, will you not cease perverting the straight ways of the Lord?”

<sup>11</sup> And now, indeed, the hand of the Lord *is* upon you, and you shall be blind, not seeing the sun for a time.”

And immediately a dark mist fell on him, and he went around seeking someone to lead him by the hand. (Acts 13:8–11 NKJV)

This power to inflict blindness from the Lord shows that the elect angels have the authority to act in judgment in accordance with the task they were given by the Lord. This use of individual volition as well as a range of supernatural abilities is important to a biblical view of angelology as they are clearly acting freely in concord with the will and design of God to achieve His ends and purposes for their mission. Verses 12–13 give more insight:

<sup>12</sup> Then the men said to Lot, “Have you anyone else here? Son-in-law, your sons, your daughters, and whomever you have in the city—take *them* out of this place! <sup>13</sup> For we will destroy this place, because the outcry against them has grown great before the face of the LORD, and the LORD has sent us to destroy it.” (Genesis 19:12–13 NKJV)

The angels then take this moment to encourage Lot to take all his family members and flee as destruction was soon coming upon the city. This is, again, the messenger function which has already been seen and will be most common to these celestial beings as the Hebrew word used to describe them suggests.

The next point about these angels that jumps to the forefront of our attention is that the angels themselves are the ones who are bringing the coming judgment upon these cities. These are not messengers *warning* of the judgment of the LORD, these are the individuals who are going to carry out that judgment in the most violent and fantastic terms available. These angels will to bring down this destruction themselves, by the Lord’s command. They are clear that “we will destroy this place” and the “the LORD has sent us to destroy it.” Thus, these particular angels have the power to bring about the judgment of God. While it comes from God, by the will of God, these are the angelic agents with the power and the authority to exercise His will. This language is even more interesting when Genesis 19:24 supplies the

information that “the LORD rained brimstone and fire on Sodom and Gomorrah, from the LORD out of the heavens.” Elect angels are so fully obedient to the will of the Lord that what they see fit to do on earth can be directly credited to the LORD with no violation of the volition of the individual angelic being.

## Genesis 24: 7, 40 – An Angel goes ahead of Eliezer

The LORD God of heaven, who took me from my father’s house and from the land of my family, and who spoke to me and swore to me, saying, “To your descendants I give this land,’ He will send His angel before you, and you shall take a wife for my son from there.

Genesis 24:7

But he said to me, “The LORD, before whom I walk, will send His angel with you and prosper your way; and you shall take a wife for my son from my family and from my father’s house.

Genesis 24:40

Again, Moses gives a clear example of the types of missions and work that angel can do. In this case, the angelic messenger is preparing the way for Abraham’s servant. It is unclear how Abraham is assured of this angelic preparation for the servant’s mission; however, Abraham is absolutely confident that this celestial being will be doing his work. Clark notes the following:

Verse 7. *The Lord God, &c.* He expresses the strongest confidence in God, that the great designs for which he had brought him from his own kindred to propagate the true religion in the earth would be accomplished; and that therefore, when earthly instruments failed, heavenly ones should be employed. He shall send his angel, probably meaning the Angel of the Covenant, of whom see chap. xv. 7.<sup>27</sup>

The text states that God is invested in the affairs of Abraham and the completion of this mission is important to the plan of God to fulfill the eternal covenant made to Abraham. Thus the angelic forces will be involved by necessity. The JPS Torah Commentary by Sarna takes an approach that

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27. Clarke, Adam, *Adam Clarke’s Commentary on the Whole Bible*. Accordance electronic ed. Altamonte Springs: OakTree Software, 2004.

seems to view angels as a personification of a characteristic or promise of God:

*the God of heaven* The second part of the epithet of verse 3 is inappropriate because the present context is different. The emphasis is not God's sovereignty but His providence, here personified as an angel, a heavenly being.<sup>28</sup>

This view seems to suffer from a less than literal view of angelology from the perspective of an author who does not trust the scripture in the literal sense. Sarna argues, in an excursus of the same work, for the idea that angelology in the Jewish context was largely depended upon the time period it was written and thus not a matter of revelation, but of appropriation of surrounding angelic norms and expectation:

Several suggestions have been made to account for the presence of angelology in Israel. Some see a borrowing from Near Eastern mythology in which deities are surrounded by ministers semidivine, semihuman. In Ugaritic the messenger who goes back and forth between the gods is termed *ml'k*. It is hypothesized that Israel borrowed, refined, and monotheized the notion. Another view regards the angel as the personified extension of God's will, or the personification of His self-manifestation. A third theory sees the angel as a conceptual device to avoid anthropomorphism. He serves as a mediator between the transcendent God and His mundane world.

Angelology largely disappears with the advent of classical prophecy in the middle of the eighth century B.C.E., only to reappear in postexilic times in highly developed and complex forms.<sup>29</sup>

This secularized and rationalistic interpretation is to be expected but can only be accepted if the supernatural character of the holy text is ignored. One purpose of this paper is to show the way in which the recording of the angelic actions may change throughout the biblical text but the existence, and nature of these angelic encounters are remarkably uniform. For the secularist the

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28. Sarna, Nahum M., *Genesis*. The JPS Torah Commentary. Accordance electronic ed. Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1989.

29. *Ibid.*

temptation to make the wild logical leap is too great. This leap is that since the Jews were in a certain place, or exposed to certain cultures, that all of their ideas must have come from those cultures. However, the most reasonable and logical explanation is the Hebrew people always had an active and full angelology. While some details of their writing may have been affected by surrounding cultures and ideas, that in no way necessitates the creatures, events, words, and actions which they are writing about are borrowed from pagan mythologies.

The message of the angelic role in Genesis 24:1 is a very important one. God uses His angels to fulfill his will. Not the cold pagan determinism of modern philosophical theology, but rather God entrusts to angelic beings the duties surrounding the completion and execution of His will and plan. This portrays to the reader the great unseen spiritual world in which elect angels are going about the work of God, whether seen or unseen, in order to assure that His will is done and that all that He has promised is brought to fruition. This will later account for the great angelic actions in the end times. In the Day of the LORD, God makes His will known and done, and does this most frequently and notably by angelic agency.

### Genesis 28:10–15: Jacob's Ladder

Now Jacob went out from Beersheba and went toward Haran. <sup>11</sup> So he came to a certain place and stayed there all night, because the sun had set. And he took one of the stones of that place and put it at his head, and he lay down in that place to sleep. <sup>12</sup> Then he dreamed, and behold, a ladder *was* set up on the earth, and its top reached to heaven; and there the angels of God were ascending and descending on it.

<sup>13</sup> And behold, the LORD stood above it and said: “*I am* the LORD God of Abraham your father and the God of Isaac; the land on which you lie I will give to you and your descendants. <sup>14</sup> Also your descendants shall be as the dust of the earth; you shall spread abroad to the west and the east, to the north and the south; and in you and in your seed all the families of the earth shall be blessed. <sup>15</sup> Behold, *I am* with you and will keep you wherever you go, and will bring you back to this land; for I will not leave you until I have done what I have spoken to you.” (Genesis 28:10–15 NKJV)

This text is important for a number of reasons. Most valuable to this discussion is what it tells about the angelic persons. First, it must be observed that this ladder is not like a ladder as we might envision from a modern perspective. HALOT explains:

SamP. *sallam*: סלל + *ām*, Bauer-L. *Heb.* 504j :: 478e, Baumgartner ThZ 7:465f; MHeb.; Ph. סלמה (Jean-H. *Dictionnaire* 193), pl. (?) as MHeb.; JArm. סלל/למא, Sam. (Ben-H. 2:535b), Mnd. (Drower-M. *Dictionary* 322a) *sumbiltā* and \**sibla*, Syr. *sebeltā*; > Arb. *sullam*; SArb. *sallā/ūm*, Tigr. Amh. *māsala* (Leslau 37); ? < Akk. *simmiltu* (Landsberger ZA 41:230f; AHw. 1045) Pritchard *Pictures* 96, 306, 359: series of rising rows of stones, stepped ramp, flight of steps...<sup>30</sup>

Thus the picture that scripture offers is a more akin to a staircase that moves between the heavens and the earth. Jamison, Fausset and Brown likewise notes:

12. he dreamed . . . and behold a ladder — Some writers are of opinion that it was not a literal ladder that is meant, as it is impossible to conceive any imagery stranger and more unnatural than that of a ladder, whose base was on earth, while its top reached heaven, without having any thing on which to rest its upper extremity. They suppose that the little heap of stones, on which his head reclined for a pillow, being the miniature model of the object that appeared to his imagination, the latter was a gigantic mountain pile, whose sides, indented in the rock, gave it the appearance of a scaling ladder. There can be no doubt that this use of the original term was common among the early Hebrews; as JOSEPHUS, describing the town of Ptolemais (Acre), says it was bounded by a mountain, which, from its projecting sides, was called “the ladder,” and the stairs that led down to the city are, in the original, termed a ladder (Nehemiah 3:15) thought they were only a flight of steps cut in the side of the rock. But whether the image presented to the mental eye of Jacob were a common ladder, or such a mountain pile as has been described, the design of this vision was to afford comfort, encouragement, and confidence to the lonely fugitive, both in his present circumstances and as to his future prospects. His thoughts during the day must have been painful — he

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30. Koehler, Ludwig, Walter Baumgartner, and M. E. J. Richardson, eds. *The Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament*. Accordance electronic ed., version 3.6. Leiden: Brill, 2000.

would be his own self-accuser that he had brought exile and privation upon himself — and above all, that though he had obtained the forgiveness of his father, he had much reason to fear lest God might have forsaken him. Solitude affords time for reflection; and it was now that God began to bring Jacob under a course of religious instruction and training. To dispel his fears and allay the inward tumult of his mind, nothing was better fitted than the vision of the gigantic ladder, which reached from himself to heaven, and on which the angels were continually ascending and descending from God Himself on their benevolent errands (John 1:51).<sup>31</sup>

This cements a few important ideas. First and foremost, there is regular and steady transport of angels between the realms of the Heaven and the Earth. Our Daily Homily renders well the importance of this:

All men feel that earth and heaven touch at the horizons of the distant past and future; but we ought to feel that the present moment of time and this bit of the world's surface are linked with heaven. This is what the ladder meant for Jacob. The moorland waste, where he lay, and Laban's home, whither he journeyed, were as near God as his father's tent. Earth is linked with heaven.<sup>32</sup>

This important information of the involvement between God's heavenly realm and life here on earth is important to our understanding of a biblical worldview. Of yet more interest to this study is the understanding that celestial beings are the agents of that work. Not only the angels that have to do with the events recorded by scripture, but seemingly many other angels are moving between heaven and earth with their own business to look after. The holy writ only records a sliver of the movements and actions that occur in the unseen world, yet that does not mean that the only angelic action being taken is that which scripture has recorded for the reader. This will be important as we consider extra-biblical angelic accounts, while the Bible provides the only truly authoritative source for doctrine on the celestial

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31. Jamieson, Robert, A. R. Fausset, and David Brown, *A Commentary, Critical and Explanatory on the Whole Bible*. 1871, Accordance electronic ed. Altamonte Springs: OakTree Software, 1996.

32. Meyer, F. B., *Our Daily Homily*. Accordance electronic ed. Altamonte Springs: OakTree Software, 2008.

world, it does not insist that the only angelic actions are those portrayed within scripture.

Secondly, the angels are the source of the assurance. As the LORD stands at the top of this staircase and the angels of God are allowed free access from heaven to earth. The statement that these are “the angels of God” marks these celestial beings as being the holy angels of the Lord. They have access, and need access, to and from heaven in order to gain their orders and make their reports. The JPS Commentary confirms this notion:

*angels of God* They play no role in the dream. Their presence may reflect the notion of angelic beings who patrol the earth and report back to God.  
<sup>5</sup> It is also possible that the angelic activity may symbolize Jacob’s personal hopes and fears, his prayers for protection, which rise to heaven and receive a response.<sup>33</sup>

Thirdly, these are the beings who keep heaven apprised of every event upon the earth and bring God’s will to pass upon the earth. This also gives the firm impression that there are certain geographical points of contact upon the earth where angels can access heaven. Finally, it confirms our understanding that celestial beings, while different from humans in relationship to time and space, are not omnipresent. God alone is omnipresent and omnipotent, yet the angelic majesty, both fallen and elect, are limited by space, knowledge, and time.

## Genesis 32:1–2 – The Camp of the LORD

<sup>1</sup> So Jacob went on his way, and the angels of God met him. <sup>2</sup> When Jacob saw them, he said, “This *is* God’s camp.” And he called the name of that place Mahanaim. (Genesis 32:1–2 NKJV)

These two verses give more information about the role and movements of the celestial beings. As Jacob is on his way he mysteriously comes upon these angels. These are also noted as angels of God, making them elect angels who are doing God’s will upon the earth. Sarna notes the literary importance and structure of this angelic encounter:

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33. Sarna, Nahum M., *Genesis*. The JPS Torah Commentary. Accordance electronic ed. Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1989.

Just as Jacob's outward journey was marked by the appearance of angels (28:12), so is his return to his native land. In neither case are the angels assigned any role in the narrative, and in this instance there is not even an accompanying divine revelation. Perhaps their mere presence is intended to insinuate the notion of divine protection such as is formulated in Psalms 91:9–11: "Because you took the LORD—my refuge, / the Most High—as your haven, / no harm will befall you, / no disease touch your tent. / For He will order His angels / to guard you wherever you go."

A fuller story about Jacob and Mahanaim may have existed in popular tradition. At any rate, in their present form, the angelic appearances provide a literary framework for the Jacob and Laban cycle of stories, which constitutes a distinct unit within the larger biography of the patriarch.<sup>34</sup>

The obvious secular presuppositions of Sarna, aside, this does show the picture of angelic approval of the departure from and return to the promised land. Beyond that, however, this revelation would have been a stirring one for Jacob as he just finished a near deadly encounter with Laban. It would have taken little for Laban to use his military might to kill Jacob and take all of his family and his possessions back with him. However, that would not be permissible from the plan of heaven. Thus, while they were unaware of it they were always under the protection of a great number of angels.

In consideration of the word camp HALOT makes the observation:

מַחֲנֵה (ca. 200 times); SamP.<sup>M47</sup> *māni*, Sept. generally παρσεμβολή: חנה, Bauer-L. *Heb.* 491n: MHeb.; Ph. Yaud. OArm. (Jean-H. *Dictionnaire* 147): מַחֲנֵה, מַחֲנֵה (var. מַחֲנֵה, Bauer-L. *Heb.* 584c) Dt 23<sub>15</sub>, מַחֲנֵהוּ, מַחֲנֵהוּ sg. Am 4<sub>10</sub> (Bauer-L. *Heb.* 584c); pl. מַחֲנֵיִם Nu 13<sub>19</sub> † (→ 1) and מַחֲנֵוֹת (MHeb.) du. מַחֲנֵיִם/מַחֲנֵיִם (Bauer-L. *Heb.* 585e); masc. Gn 32<sub>9b</sub> 33<sub>8</sub> 50<sub>9</sub> 1C 12<sub>23</sub>; fem. Gn 32<sub>9a</sub> (corrupt ?) 2K 7<sub>7</sub> Ps 27<sub>3</sub> 1C 11<sub>15</sub>, → Albrecht ZAW 16:52 :: Rosenberg 28, 145; → מַחֲנֵיִם: —1. place for the camp Ex 29<sub>14</sub> Nu 1<sub>52</sub> 13<sub>19</sub> (:: → מַחֲנֵיִם, SamP. מַחֲנֵיִם and מַחֲנֵיִם<sup>M70</sup> *mābānēm*, is cj. מַחֲנֵיִם "fat towns" (meaning rich), Delekat, חבן, VT 14:26f), camp in time of war Dt 23<sub>10</sub> Ju 7<sub>10</sub>, nomadic camp Gn 32<sub>8</sub>; —2. the people and animals in a camp: nomads Gn 32<sub>8</sub> 2K 5<sub>15</sub>, encamped in siege Ezk 4<sub>2</sub>; —3. army outside the

34. Sarna, Nahum M., *Genesis*. The JPS Torah Commentary. Accordance electronic ed. Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1989.

camp (cf. *παρεμβολή*) Jos 8<sub>13</sub> 10<sub>5</sub> 11<sub>4</sub> Ju 4<sub>15</sub> and 16<sub>a-b</sub> (:: *רָכַב*) 8<sub>10-12</sub> 1S 17<sub>1.46</sub>; on the march 2K 3<sub>9</sub>, in battle “the front” 1K 22<sub>34</sub> and 2C 18<sub>33</sub> (? Sept., Vulg. *הַמְלָחָמָה*, → Rudolph 255) 1K 22<sub>36</sub> (Vulg. *exercitus*, cf. WRichter BBB 18<sup>2</sup> (1966):196ff); —4. *מִתְנַהֵם אֱלֹהִים* (*אֱלִי* sg. or pl. ?, “phantom army”, Gunkel) Gn 32<sub>3</sub>; 1C 12<sub>23</sub> (? superlative, → *אֱלִי* 3e); *יִּמְתַּנְּהוּ* 1C 9<sub>19</sub>. *יִּמְתַּנְּוּ* 2C 31<sub>2</sub> (→ Galling ATD; Rudolph 304); *מְחַלְתֵּי הַמַּחֲנֵי*; → *מְחַלְתֵּי*; —2C 22<sub>1</sub> rd. *לְמִלְחָמָה* (→ Rudolph 268); 2C 31<sub>2</sub> ? rd. *תְּצַרוֹת* Sept., → Rudolph 304).<sup>35</sup>

The picture in context is plain – this is not just an angelic campout – this is a military camp. The number of angels sent down to protect the seed of the promise was a number of such military significance that they had to make camp. This makes it clear that angels exist in military contexts as well as in military formations, when the Lord would provide. This is illustrative of the common title of God as “the LORD of Hosts”; these angelic armies are ever at the command of the Lord, for the Lord’s purpose.

## Conclusion

Genesis, the first book of the Bible in canonical order, gives a wealth of information about the celestial beings. The angelic rebellion is outlined and given context in the larger scope and narrative of creation. The existence of different types, or classifications, of angels is made clear. The nature of the angels and how they relate to time and space as well as to the plan of God. In keeping with the rule of first mention, Genesis gives the greatest amount of understanding and sets the tone for the rest of scripture. While other later books may have had fewer revelations regarding angels, they do not diminish their remarkable work and place in God’s plan as His agents who see God’s will be done.

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35. Koehler, Ludwig, Walter Baumgartner, and M. E. J. Richardson, eds. *The Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament*. Accordance electronic ed., version 3.6. Leiden: Brill, 2000.

## Angelology in the Book of Genesis

Genesis				
Reference	Summary	Action	Elect or Fallen	Angel of the LORD
2:1	Summary of Creation	Created	All	N
3:1–15	Satan Tempts Adam and Eve	Temptation	Fallen/Falling	N
3:24	Cherubim placed east of the Garden	Guard	Elect	N
6:1–2	Sons of God take Human Wives	Procreation	Fallen/Falling	N
16:9–16	Reassuring Hagar	Revelation	Elect	Y
18	3 Reveal God's plan to Abraham	Revelation	Elect	Y
19	2 angels save Lot; destroy Sodom	Judgment	Elect	N
21:17	Calls to Hagar	Revelation	Elect	N
22:11	AOL stops Abe from Killing Isaac	Revelation	Elect	Y
24:7, 40	God sends an angel before El.	Preparation	Elect	N
28:10–15	Jacob sees Angel on a staircase	Moving	Elect	N
32:1–2	Angels Meet Jacob "This is God's Camp"	Presence	Elect	N
32:22–32	Jacob wrestles with AOL.	Wrestling/Bless	Elect	Y (?)
48:16	Angel credited for deliverance	Redemption	Elect	?

## Part I: Angelology in the Old Testament

## CHAPTER 3

# Angelology in the Book of Job

While it may seem most natural to move directly from the Genesis information through the rest of the books of Moses in strict canonical order, there is a very important reason to progress next to the book of Job. Given the 'Toldot hypothesis' immense credibility it can be safely assumed that Moses was working with documents directly from the hands of the patriarchs. Thus the documents he was working with were among the most ancient in the world, and the most ancient utilized in the Lord's inspiration of Holy Scripture. The next document, in terms of literary source material, is the Book of Job. Tradition places this book as the earliest written in the canon. Easton's Bible Dictionary provides the leading academic opinions:

Job, Book of: A great diversity of opinion exists as to the authorship of this book. From internal evidence, such as the similarity of sentiment and language to those in the Psalms and Proverbs (see Ps. 88 and 89), the prevalence of the idea of "wisdom," and the style and character of the composition, it is supposed by some to have been written in the time of David and Solomon. Others argue that it was written by Job himself, or by Elihu, or Isaiah, or perhaps more probably by Moses, who was "learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, and mighty in words and deeds" (Acts 7:22). He had opportunities in Midian for obtaining the knowledge of the facts related. But the authorship is altogether uncertain.

As to the character of the book, it is a historical poem, one of the greatest and sublimest poems in all literature. Job was a historical person, and the localities and names were real and not fictitious. It is "one of the grandest portions of the inspired Scriptures, a heavenly-replenished storehouse of comfort and instruction, the patriarchal Bible, and a precious monument of primitive theology. It is to the Old Testament what

the Epistle to the Romans is to the New.” It is a didactic narrative in a dramatic form.<sup>36</sup>

Unger’s Bible dictionary gives similar options but favors a middle date:

Time and Composition Great disagreement prevails as to the composition. Critics date the composition of the book anywhere from patriarchal times (Ebrard) to as late as 400 BC (Eissfeldt; Volz) or even the third century BC (Cornill). Probably the most likely date is the Solomonic era, (Franz Delitzsch; Keil), because it bears evidence of the creative beginning period of Wisdom Literature. It comprehends ideas similar to parts of Proverbs (cf. Job. 15:8 and chap. 28 with Prov. 8).<sup>37</sup>

This argument is strange as the reasons for arguing for the Solomonic Era are exceedingly weak. To be sure, the particular composition date is not of the utmost importance and a theology of inerrancy could easily include an account of Job in any era. There is little in the text to demand a Patriarch Era composition that could not be addressed. As the following quote reveals the content and context are so universal that they could have occurred at any time:

As to the *date*.—The attempt to connect the work with a particular event, such as the Babylonian captivity, comes to little as we reflect that the burden of the poem is suggested by conditions which may be found in every age, and which lie upon a great soul almost as heavily in times of general prosperity as amid wide-spread calamity. On the other hand, the allusions to national deportations—to instance one of the indications of a date perhaps not earlier than the middle of the eighth century—point to a time when these disasters lay close to the sympathies and anxieties of the auditors, if not within their actual experience, since the dramatic artist uses the illustrations which most appeal. The attempt to fix a date by comparison of certain passages of Job with passages of similar import in other great Hebrew writers, overlooks the royal right, exercised by all these anointed of the Lord, to take whatever belonged to their message,

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36. Easton, M. G. *Easton’s Bible Dictionary*. Accordance electronic ed., version 3.5. Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1897.

37. Unger, Merrill F. R. K. Harrison, Howard F. Vos, and Cyril J. Barber, eds. *The New Unger’s Bible Dictionary*. Accordance electronic ed., version 1.4. Chicago: Moody Publishers, 2005.

wherever it might be found. The literary student is content to leave unanswered the question, whether our dramatist or the Deuteronomist first admired the heavenly bodies without worshiping them, or whether it was Job or Jeremiah who anticipated the other in cursing the day of his own birth.<sup>38</sup>

Dickinson's humility is refreshing and rare among theologians and shows that the reason that most choose their preferred dates is to fit with their theological presuppositions, or secularist desires to be admired by their peers in the atheistic community. Yet, it seems that the secular world is, as always, fixed on the least natural and most awkward proposals for the dating of Job. The weaknesses of this become rather plain in the assumptions. The idea that Job, or Moses (working with ancient documents) could not produce a high caliber or quality of literature is an unfair assumption. Furthermore, were it written within the context of the Solomonic Era one would expect to see a higher degree of life as reflected within the kingdom era. However, there is no reference to the Tabernacle, nor to the Temple. Furthermore, there is no textual reason to place Job within the later Jewish context. The text itself makes far more sense in the larger narrative of the working of the time in which Abraham was alive and many other God-fearing peoples still existed on the earth (such as Melchizedek and those who dwelt under his priesthood).

Hazleton argues far more convincingly than others for Mosaic authorship:

The Jewish traditions located the date when the book was written as coincident with the period when Moses was in the land of Midian. If this be true, and no adequate reason has ever been disclosed for disputing it, the author of the book is at once suggested; and it must be conceded that he is the one and only person capable of producing the work.

Among all the ancient Hebrew writers of whom we have any knowledge, there is not one to whom such a production can be credited, except the great lawgiver; and when we recall his wonderful career, and contemplate his wholly unique and exceptional intellectual equipment, we can readily understand why for centuries he was accepted as its author.

The name of David has been suggested in this connection; but David's inclinations and ambitions were in a different domain. He chose to devote

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38. Dickinson, Rev. Charles H. "The Drama of Job." *Bibliotheca Sacra* 57, no. 225 (Jan 1900): 67-94.

his pen to devotional literature; in which field he stands in a class wholly apart from and above all others. In the Twenty-third Psalm he has left the world the choicest gem of religious literature ever penned. But there is absolutely no ground for believing he wrote the Book of Job. It is as far removed from his chosen domain as the east is from the west.

It has also been surmised that Ezra may have been the author. What should have prompted such a suggestion it is difficult to conceive. All we know of him is as a chronicler of events. He prepared certain historic data which have been assigned their place in the sacred record, but there is not a line of original thought in his writings. It is also to be remembered that, in the time of these Jewish writers, the authorship of such a work could not have been left in doubt.

On the other hand, when we come to examine the subsequent writings of Moses, we find evidences of versatility, of literary finish, of dramatic art and skill, which shed a flood of light on our inquiry. The peculiar characteristics disclosed in the inimitable story of Joseph are too suggestive to be ignored or cast aside in support of the theory that some unknown exile wrote this book. This story is the work of a master. Not a word can be added or erased. No writer has ever essayed to criticize it, and no intelligent person can read it without feeling that it bespeaks a practiced hand. The Song of Miriam and the Song of Deliverance also furnish additional evidence of the literary accomplishments of the writer.<sup>39</sup>

The other major advantage to Mosaic authorship is that his special place in God's plan and his special access to God would surely allow him access to the information on the heavenly scene from the direct testimony of God. Whatever angle one takes upon the subject, the traditional view of the people who received this book remains the strongest. All other assumptions are made with the presupposition that the traditional answer could never be the correct one even when it is manifestly most clearly correct. While the debate may rage on, the matter will be considered settled for the purposes of this paper. Whether the author be Moses, Job, or some anonymous writer from the Patriarchal period, this book demands to be regarded as among the most ancient and most central of all biblical literature.

With this important issue managed, the importance of Job can be understood aright. This could well have been one of the central treasured

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39. Hazelton, Gerry W. "The Book of Job. — Who Wrote It?" *Bibliotheca Sacra* 71, no. 284 (Oct 1914): 572–580.

scriptures the children of Israel maintained during their time of slavery in Egypt. This would have been a most centrally important theological text to the Israelites at the time. The Hebrews became slaves in Egypt through no failure of their own, nor through any sin of their own. It was the redemptive plan of God to make them a great nation. And while it involved apparent Satanic victories, they were only temporary victories and would ultimately be useful to bless the faithful beyond any wealth or possession which the Patriarchs had known.

This historical placement also helps to explain the natural understanding of the angelic conflict which the Hebrew people would have had at their fingertips. Without the information in Job there is a decided mist surrounding the events of the fall, and particularly the character and person of the serpent. However, with the background provided in the book of Job it becomes clear that there is a spiritual enemy of God and of mankind, who holds great stature and power. This will be largely the subject of the analysis of the early chapters of Job, yet it is valuable to understand where these accounts stand in the unfolding revelation of God. This brings us to the text of Job.

### The Council of God: Job 1:6–12

<sup>6</sup> Now there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the LORD, and Satan also came among them. <sup>7</sup> And the LORD said to Satan, “From where do you come?”

So Satan answered the LORD and said, “From going to and fro on the earth, and from walking back and forth on it.”

<sup>8</sup> Then the LORD said to Satan, “Have you considered My servant Job, that *there is* none like him on the earth, a blameless and upright man, one who fears God and shuns evil?”

<sup>9</sup> So Satan answered the LORD and said, “Does Job fear God for nothing? <sup>10</sup> Have You not made a hedge around him, around his household, and around all that he has on every side? You have blessed the work of his hands, and his possessions have increased in the land. <sup>11</sup> But now, stretch out Your hand and touch all that he has, and he will surely curse You to Your face!”

<sup>12</sup> And the LORD said to Satan, “Behold, all that he has *is* in your power; only do not lay a hand on his *person*.”

So Satan went out from the presence of the LORD. (Job 1:6–12 NKJV)

Verse six of the opening chapter of Job is explosive in the amount it reveals about the ultimate reality of the unseen world. It is largely by simple description, yet the manner in which it describes the facts surrounding the Heavenly courts naturally assume that the reader knows these beings exist and they exist in a certain structured relationship to the LORD. The statement, there “was a day” gives clear indication that this is an event that does not characterize every moment on the heavenly scene, but that it is was an occasion of some kind. The continuation of this narrative will note that this happens with regularity. As was explained in the discussion of Genesis 6 – those who came to present themselves before the Lord were the Sons of God (the *Bene’HaElohim*). These are the elect or unfallen angels.

The purpose of their coming is to present themselves before the Lord. The Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament explains this concept well:

In another usage יָצַב לְפָנָי, means “to present oneself before.” Moses is commanded, “Present yourself before Pharaoh” (lit. “station yourself”) in Ex 8:20 [H 16]; 9:13. Deut 31:14 is instructive because God tells Moses and Joshua to “present themselves” at the tent of meeting, that he might commission him” i.e. install him for service. Similarly, in Josh 24:1 the elders of Israel, heads, judges, and officers are to present themselves before God as they anticipate taking the oath of leadership. Cf. 1 Sam 10:19; Jud 20:2. This note of service is more clearly revealed in Zech 6:5, “These are the four spirits of heaven, going forth after standing before the Lord of all the earth.” They are depicted as emissaries of God, accomplishing his work. This illuminates Job 1:6; 2:1 where “the sons of God came to present themselves before the Lord, and Satan also.” Satan’s malevolent “roaming about on the earth” need not detract from the high service which the sons of God rendered. Furthermore, we need not denigrate the service performed as being servile, but rather an honorable task. It is this idea which indubitably is behind the proverb, “Do you see a man skilled in his work? He will stand before kings; he will not stand before obscure men” (Prov 22:29). One who thus stands before kings implicitly makes himself available and ready for service. Cf. Milton’s memorable words in his sonnet on his blindness, “They also serve who only stand and wait.”<sup>40</sup>

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40. Gilchrist, Paul R. Harris, R. Laird, Gleason L. Archer, and Bruce K. Waltke, eds. *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament*. Accordance electronic ed., version 2.7. Chicago: Moody Press, 1980.

This description of this moment as a presentation of service before the sovereign God of all creation stands perfectly in harmony with the revelation of the angelic beings found in Genesis. With Cherubs that protect the holiness of God, and various angels out on assignment at any given time it aligns perfectly with what is revealed regarding the nature of the angelic relation to time space and their need to return to heaven and depart from it in order to exchange information and (presumably) receive orders. This scene also gives a great deal of credence to the Council of God – wherein the greatest celestial beings meet to discuss and decide what God will do. More will be written on this, however, in later chapters.

The next major feature of this passage is the added information that Satan came along with them. This information also betrays another handful of things that the author expects the reader to know and understand. One, that this “Satan” figure exists, and there is reason to assume that when this time of “standing before the LORD” came he would likely not be expected or invited. Put another way, while Satan is assumed in his existence, and knows about the meeting, there is some reason why the reader would not assume he would arrive to stand before the Lord in this time of presentation. Yet, the fact that he did come with the Sons of God is not an utter impossibility, just an important fact to note for the sake of the narrative.

To the identity of the Satan there is much discussion to be made. Lexicons make a distinction here and use Satan as a proper name in this instance. Mounce/Kohlenberger for example state:

שָׂטָן *śātān* 27x

n.m.[pr.] [8476]. (human) adversary, accuser, one who opposes, slanderer; (as a proper name) Satan, the spirit being who is an opponent of God and slanderer of his creation.<sup>41</sup>

This resource obviously places Satan as a personal name for the enemy of God. The concise Dictionary of Classical Hebrew likewise writes:

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41. Kohlenberger III, John R. and William D. Mounce. *Kohlenberger/Mounce Concise Hebrew-Aramaic Dictionary of the Old Testament*. Accordance electronic ed., version 3.3. Altamonte Springs: OakTree Software, 2012.

שָׁטָן<sup>27.0.5</sup> n.m. 1. supernatural adversary, i.e. celestial figure, a. Satan Jb 1<sup>6</sup>.  
 b. angel of Y. Nm 22<sup>22</sup>. 2. earthly adversary, military, political enemy 1 S  
 29<sup>4</sup> 1 K 5<sup>18</sup>, judicial opponent, accuser Ps 109<sup>6</sup>. → שָׁטָן *be an adversary*.<sup>42</sup>

BDB also keeps this pattern:

1. *adversary*, in gen., personal or national; (ל) שָׁטָן Nu 22:22 (JE), 1 S 29:4 (cf. Nes<sup>Marg. 15</sup>), 2 S 19:23, שָׁטָן Nu 22:32 (JE); ש' 1 K 5:18, 11:25; ל הַקָּיִם ש', subj. God 1 K 11:14, 11:23, cf. ψ 109:6 (|| שָׁטָן).
2. *superhuman adversary*, שָׁטָן :
  - a. of Job, one of אֱלֹהִים בְּנֵי Jb 1:6, 1:7, 1:7, 1:8, 1:9, 1:12, 1:12, 2:1, 2:2, 2:2, 2:3, 2:4, 2:6, 2:7.
  - b. of h. p. of Isr. bef. 'י, Zc 3:1, 3:2, 3:2; ὁ διάβολος.
  - c. as n. pr. ש' *Satan* 1 Ch 21:1 (interpr. 2 S 24:1), ὁ διάβολος (ἡ σατάν † 1 K 11:14, 11:23; Σατανᾶς Mt 4:10, Mk 1:13, Lk 10:18 + 33 t. NT).<sup>43</sup>

“Satan” is a name that reveals the character and mission of this creature. He is invited into the presence of God. As will be seen, he clearly has volition of his own and an agenda in his choice to be present at this time of presentation. The very nature of his name suggests that his role is not a faithful servant of God, but rather an opposing force. He is one who slanders, who accuses, one who stands now with the very identity of being the LORD’s adversary. Satan’s appearance becomes even more intriguing when there is clearly no balance of power in his relationship with God. God is the unquestioned Sovereign of this heavenly scene – and “the Satan” seems only to have the ability to make requests of the Lord. As scripture is revealed more will be made known regarding this celestial being but it seems quite clear that the readers are meant to be familiar with him and his purposes.

The next observation that can be made about Satan is that when he approaches the LORD he approaches “among” the Sons of God. The Hebrew expression here (בְּתוֹכָם) uses the prefix of the Hebrew letter *bet* to signify that he was in or among their number. He does not arrive after them, nor simply alongside them, but he arrives within them – in some way identified with the group. With full admission to the weakness of this

42. Clines, David J. A., ed. *The Concise Dictionary of Classical Hebrew*. Accordance electronic ed., version 2.5. Sheffield: Sheffield Phoenix Press, 2009.

43. Brown, Francis, S. R. Driver, and Charles A. Briggs, eds. *The Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew and English Lexicon*. Accordance electronic ed., version 4.5. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1906.

inference it is not without merit to note that the fact that he was able to approach with them seems natural to assume that he had been like them in their created order before becoming “the Adversary.”

Regarding this clear information The New Bible Commentary rather strangely gives the following interpretation:

Contrasted with these innocent family gatherings there is taking place in heaven a far more momentous gathering, that of the sons of God. They are God’s courtiers, the angels (*cf.* also Is. 6:1; Je. 23:18, 22), and among them is ‘the Satan’ (not just ‘Satan’). He is not the personal devil but one of the servants of God (the name means ‘adversary’, see the NIV mg.). The Satan is certainly Job’s adversary, but in this scene he is not an enemy of God; for everything he does is approved of by God, and he cannot act without God’s authorization. His normal task is to act as God’s eyes and ears on earth.

Job is someone God can boast about; there are few in the OT who are called by the dignified title *my servant* (*e.g.* 2 Sa. 7:5; Is. 42:1). The Satan does not doubt Job’s goodness; what he questions is whether Job is righteous for the sake of righteousness or for the sake of the reward that comes from being righteous.<sup>44</sup>

While this interpretation can surely be commended for its lack of assumptions from outside the text, it does not at all account for the reality that he is said to be “the Satan” in this scene wherein God is the only reasonable force to oppose. There is a marked naivety in the assumption that the one carrying the full-fledged title “the adversary” would merely be the adversary of Job as Job is not within this group of invited beings. It will be God who will suggest Job as a target; leaving no reason to believe that Satan had any reason to consider him prior to the LORD’s choice to offer Job up as an example. The Moody Bible Commentary provides a far more natural and reasonable interpretation:

Satan came into the court of heaven as one of the sons of God permitted to stand before God. From other Scriptures we know that angels, both unfallen and fallen (Satan in Jb 2), were allowed to appear before Yahweh

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44. Clines, David J.A., *Job*. Edited by D. A Carson, R. T France, J. A. Motyer, and Gordon J. Wenham. New Bible Commentary: 21st Century Edition. Accordance electronic ed. Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1994.

in heaven. In Zch 6:5, the prophet is told that his vision of the four chariots represents “the four spirits of heaven, going forth after standing before the Lord of all the earth.” While this reference does not identify angels by name, this is a legitimate interpretation. There is no question, however, about Lk 1:19, when Gabriel declared to Zacharias, “I am Gabriel, who stands in the presence of God.”

The expression “sons of God” is used of both godly people and godly angels who follow the true God. Here the expression is used of angels, based on Jb 38:7. In this particular heavenly audience Satan was also allowed to attend (Eph 2:2; 2Pt 2:4; Jd 9; Rv 12:7–9). The root verb for the Hebrew word *satan* has the potential meanings of “to oppose, to come in the way,” “to treat with enmity.” In the book of Job, this opposer or adversary always occurs with the definite article, hence, *hassatan*—“the opposer” or “the adversary.” In Rv 12:7–9; 20:2, it is another name for the fallen cherub that relates back to Gn 3; it is not a late postexilic concept or doctrine. Other occurrences of the title in the OT are in 1Ch 21:1 and Zch 3:1–2. Delitzsch notes, “But, the conception of Satan is indeed much older in its existence than the time of Solomon; the serpent of paradise must surely have appeared to the inquiring mind of Israel as the disguise of an evil spirit” (Franz Delitzsch, *Biblical Commentary on the Book of Job*, 3 vols., trans. F. Bolton [Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1949], 1:28).<sup>45</sup>

The point that the understanding of Satan – or a powerful fallen angel – is an expected character in the earliest biblical writings is a valuable insight. The desire to eliminate Satan from scripture is part of the same largely materialist movement that aligns with an over-amorous relationship with secular philosophy is simply incompatible with the biblical record. The attempts by various liberal and “progressive” theologians to minimize or eliminate the understanding of the greater spiritual conflict is simply a presupposition that the biblical worldview is false and that it must be brought up-to-date with modern materialists and the vagueness of modern philosophy and what happens to be in vogue from a recent set of western assumptions that could never be empirically or philosophically verified.

Verse 7 presents a moment of extreme drama. The Satan is noticed and asked a question which is asked of no other angel on the scene: “From where do you come?” When the omniscient LORD of all things asks a question, we

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45. Mayhew, Eugene J., *Job*. Edited by Michael Rydelnik and Michael Vanlaningham. The Moody Bible Commentary. Chicago: Moody Publishers, 2014.

can be assured it is not because he wants to know the answer. This question is clearly directed at the one who was not invited to this event – though he was clearly permitted to attend. He is not characterized as one of the Sons of God – but he is able to come in “among them.” He is allowed to enter, but is immediately questioned with an unfriendly greeting in any culture or time: “Where did YOU come from?” The adversarial nature of this character is obvious in everything about him. While not overly scholarly in tone or in target audience the beloved words of J. Vernon McGee seem to capture the biblical reality well:

This earth is the domain of Satan. He has not been in hell. He says that he has been going up and down—east, west, north, and south—on this earth. Remember that Scripture calls him “...the god of this world...” (2 Cor. 4:4) and “...the prince of the power of the air...” (Eph. 2:2). So that we know that he has great access and freedom on this earth today. We are warned by Peter, “Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour” (1 Peter 5:8). My friend, this is a warning, and this is exactly what we are told here in the Book of Job. Satan himself said that he has the freedom to go up and down this earth.<sup>46</sup>

The scene is clear. God must ask the Satan where he has been purposely to remind the heavenly scene that he is not where God created him to be. He is no longer at home in the heavenly throne room, though he can appear there; he spends his time on earth – roaming.

The act of pacing back and forth and to and fro...going in every direction gives the sense of an aimless desire for destruction. No longer directed by the ultimate and holy purposes of God he is like any wayward creature – left only to pace the meager measure of his jail cell until his moment of judgment comes. This image of Satan as a restless, wandering evil is key to understanding the biblical conception of Satan. He is not omniscient, nor omnipresent. He must go places to learn things, and it is a dreadful thing for anyone so unfortunate as to find himself in the Satan’s pathway. As this account will make clear, and the rest of the biblical record will confirm, while God limits the fallen angels’ destructive power there is nothing a human can do on their own to resist, repel, or defeat a fallen angel. The only hope of

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46. McGee, J. Vernon, *Joshua—Psalms*. Vol. II of *Thru the Bible*. Accordance electronic ed. Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1982.

man is to appeal to God. And as the account of Job makes clear...even that does not guarantee the Adversary will not be permitted to do what he dares ask of the LORD.

Of all the challenging verses in the Bible Job 1:8 may be the most painful. Before Satan can make a request or a comment, Job is offered up to Satan as an example of extreme righteousness and value. God offers Job up as an earthly king might offer up his champion – just as Goliath was presented as the powerhouse of Gath. The text of Job makes it clear that this honor is so rare and so amazing that all generations would rightly look upon Job as a unique pillar and champion of the faith but it was the beginning of an extremely unpleasant trial for Job. This is one of the major themes of Job, but it does give extraordinary clarity to the fact that the LORD is dictating the terms of the confrontation with His Adversary...Job is the occasion to prove, in principle, what the rest of human history would display: God wins and Satan Loses.

Satan then shows volition and the ability to reason with God and even challenge Him. The God of the universe declared Job righteous and Satan dares to challenge the LORD by making the claim: “Were God not to have blessed Job then Job would not continue to honor God.” Make no mistake, this is a statement of the utmost audacity – the Satan is claiming The LORD is not glorified by His creation, but rather He merely pays them off for loyalty. The next temptation of Satan is to make the LORD himself be the primary actor in Job’s destruction. However, the LORD refuses to stretch out His hand against his servant Job. Satan is told he can do his own dirty work and is given the precise limitations for his grant of authority for what he is allowed to take from Job.

The following limitations are made obvious through this passage. While the fallen angels have been allowed by God to rebel, Satan is clearly unable to take anything from Job apart from God’s express permission. It could well be that this limitation is only in place because Job has placed himself in the position to be protected by God because he rightly honors and worships God. However, the limitation exists regardless – it seems Satan can only harm one who belongs to the Lord by the Lord’s permission. Satan then flees and causes a great amount of damage and harm without any overt sign that Job can understand that it was Satan who did these things.

## Satan's Second Audience: Job 2:1–7

<sup>1</sup> Again there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the LORD, and Satan came also among them to present himself before the LORD. <sup>2</sup> And the LORD said to Satan, “From where do you come?”

Satan answered the LORD and said, “From going to and fro on the earth, and from walking back and forth on it.”

<sup>3</sup> Then the LORD said to Satan, “Have you considered My servant Job, that *there is* none like him on the earth, a blameless and upright man, one who fears God and shuns evil? And still he holds fast to his integrity, although you incited Me against him, to destroy him without cause.”

<sup>4</sup> So Satan answered the LORD and said, “Skin for skin! Yes, all that a man has he will give for his life. <sup>5</sup> But stretch out Your hand now, and touch his bone and his flesh, and he will surely curse You to Your face!”

<sup>6</sup> And the LORD said to Satan, “Behold, he *is* in your hand, but spare his life.”

<sup>7</sup> So Satan went out from the presence of the LORD, and struck Job with painful boils from the sole of his foot to the crown of his head. (Job 2:1–7 NKJV)

This second encounter between the LORD, the sons of God, and Satan begins much like the first. It is another presentation day, which seems important to note that for some reason unexplained by the text the Adversary waits for these moments to continue the challenge. It could well be that these are the limited opportunities in which the Satan is allowed access to the Lord. It could equally as likely be the fact that this is the most dramatic time to bring a challenge before God. This explanation makes sense when the greater motivations of the Adversary are considered in light of the complete revelation about his motives.

While the second account of the heavenly scene largely follows the pattern of the first in the opening verses it is apparent that the Lord is willing to point out the victory that has been won. The Adversary was allowed to take everything from Job, yet Job refused to curse God. The LORD's confidence in Job was fully justified before the entire audience of heaven. McGee, again, gets to the core of the dramatic idea, as well as the larger theme:

Now this shows us clearly that what the Lord allowed Satan to do with Job was done without a cause in Job. People are always saying, “Why does God let this happen to me?” Perhaps the answer from the Lord is, “There is no reason for it in you. I am not spanking you. I am not punishing you. I just want to bring you closer to Me.” That is what He did with Job. It was without a cause in Job.

Sometimes we point our finger at some believer and say that God is whipping him, which may not be true at all. It may be that God is testing him in a way He cannot test you or me, because He couldn’t trust us with that much trouble. Very frankly, I would never want to go through what Job had to suffer!

The Lord calls Satan’s attention to Job again. “Job is still serving Me. You said that if I would permit you to take everything away from Job, he would turn his back on Me—but he hasn’t done that. He has maintained his integrity.”<sup>47</sup>

The clear conclusion to the exchange is the LORD’s faith in Job is justified, and that the Adversary has lost this round. Where before he was confident that the loss of physical blessing would cause Job to curse God, the reality is that Job recognized that his relationship with the Lord was his most valuable and precious possession. However, another clear trait of the Satanic character comes plainly into view. He is not going to be dissuaded from his adversarial position and cause by a single loss. While the LORD’s point is proven, and the enemy has lost, the Adversary implies that the LORD rigged the test by not allowing him to touch the personal health of Job. The same enticement of Satan is utilized as Satan attempts to make God do evil to one who is faithful to Him. However, the Lord does not fall into this ploy. However, He permits the Adversary to take Job’s health, but forbids him to take Job’s life. This is a necessary constraint as the one who longs only to “steal, kill, and destroy” would take Job’s life happily and call the whole affair a worthwhile investment because he was able to take the life of one of God’s beloved children.

With the above information in mind the excellent article on Satan in the 1906 Jewish encyclopedia offers an excellent assessment of the existence of Satan, the extent of his powers and the place in the biblical text:

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47. McGee, J. Vernon, *Joshua—Psalms*. Vol. II of *Thru the Bible*. Accordance electronic ed. Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1982.

Term used in the Bible with the general connotation of "adversary," being applied (1) to an enemy in war (I Kings v. 18 [A. V. 4]; xi. 14, 23, 25), from which use is developed the concept of a traitor in battle (I Sam. xxix. 4); (2) to an accuser before the judgment-seat (Ps. cix. 6); and (3) to any opponent (II Sam. xix. 23 [A. V. 22]). The word is likewise used to denote an antagonist who puts obstacles in the way, as in Num. xxii. 32, where the angel of God is described as opposing Balaam in the guise of a satan or adversary; so that the concept of Satan as a distinct being was not then known. Such a view is found, however, in the prologue to the Book of Job, where Satan appears, together with other celestial beings or "sons of God," before the Deity, replying to the inquiry of God as to whence he had come, with the words: "From going to and fro in the earth, and from walking up and down in it" (Job i. 7). Both question and answer, as well as the dialogue which follows, characterize Satan as that member of the divine council who watches over human activity, but with the evil purpose of searching out men's sins and appearing as their accuser. He is, therefore, the celestial prosecutor, who sees only iniquity; for he persists in his evil opinion of Job even after the man of Uz has passed successfully through his first trial by surrendering to the will of God, whereupon Satan demands another test through physical suffering (*ib.* ii. 3-5).

Yet it is also evident from the prologue that Satan has no power of independent action, but requires the permission of God, which he may not transgress. He can not be regarded, therefore, as an opponent of the Deity; and the doctrine of monotheism is disturbed by his existence no more than by the presence of other beings before the face of God. This view is also retained in Zech. iii. 1-2, where Satan is described as the adversary of the high priest Joshua, and of the people of God whose representative the hierarch is; and he there opposes the "angel of the Lord," who bids him be silent in the name of God. In both of these passages Satan is a mere accuser who acts only according to the permission of the Deity; but in I Chron. xxi. 1 he appears as one who is able to provoke David to destroy Israel. The Chronicler (third century B.C.) regards Satan as an independent agent, a view which is the more striking since the source whence he drew his account (II Sam. xxiv. 1) speaks of God Himself as the one who moved David against the children of Israel. Since the older conception refers all events, whether good or bad, to God alone (I Sam. xvi. 14; I Kings xxii. 22; Isa. xlv. 7; etc.), it is possible that the Chronicler, and perhaps even Zechariah, were

influenced by Zoroastrianism, even though in the case of the prophet Jewish monism strongly opposed Iranian dualism (Stave, "Einfluss des Parsismus auf das Judenthum," pp. 253 *et seq.*). An immediate influence of the Babylonian concept of the "accuser, persecutor, and oppressor" (Schrader, "K. A. T." 3d ed., p. 463) is impossible, since traces of such an influence, if it had existed, would have appeared in the earlier portions of the Bible.<sup>48</sup>

The book of Job is, without question, one of the richest and most important texts for coming to a biblical understanding of the Adversary. His existence is without argument in these critical passages. His limitations are clear in that while he has full and complete access to wander about the earth, he is unable to touch those who are in a right relationship with God. The posture with which he approaches the Lord is obviously antagonistic as he takes the role of Adversary – not man's adversary, but the one who is opposed to the LORD. The importance of the earthly realm, and humanity in general, in this dispute and challenge between the LORD and Satan is also made extraordinarily clear by this text. The similarity and distinctions between the sons of God, and Satan are also assumptions of these passages.

## Rahab in the Book of Job

**Job 9:13** "God will not turn back his anger; beneath him bowed the helpers of **Rahab**.

**Job 26:12** By his power he stilled the sea; by his understanding he shattered **Rahab**.

Of the many surprising elements to the book of Job the references to Rahab are obscure, but important. There are also references to this creature in the Psalms as well as the Prophets. It is important not to confuse this Rahab with Rahab the well-known Canaanite prostitute who hid the Israelite spies in the book of Joshua. Rahab is a name for an ancient sea creature from ancient lore. Not dissimilar to Leviathan in its origin, it seems to be a symbol of more in the text. The word itself is "proud one" and is such a spiritual force that it

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<sup>48</sup> Jacobs, Joseph, Ludwig Blau. The Jewish Encyclopedia: The Unedited Text of the 1906 Jewish Encyclopedia. SATAN - [JewishEncyclopedia.com](http://JewishEncyclopedia.com) accessed July 14, 2021.

has helpers and needed to be shattered. The parallels begin to become increasingly plain the more information is collected about this creature. Unger describes it this way:

RA'HAB (Heb. *rakhan*, “insolence, pride, violence”). A symbolical or poetical name applied to Egypt. It suggests the character of the “sea monster” (Pss. 87:4; 89:10; Isa. 51:9).<sup>49</sup>

Eerdman’s as follows:

3. The primeval dragon of chaos (Heb. *rāhab*) defeated by Yahweh during creation (Job 9:13; 26:12; Ps. 89:10[MT 11]; Isa. 51:9). Yahweh’s battle with and victory over this mythological chaos beast represents one of four distinct creation traditions in the OT.<sup>50</sup>

Another well-known source observes:

The cohorts of Rahab cowered at his feet (9:13). Rahab<sup>115</sup> is not known from the ancient Near East or in the cognate languages but is, like the Tannin (7:12) and Leviathan (3:8; 41:1), a sea monster representing chaos, who was destroyed at creation (see sidebar on “The Cosmic Battle with Chaos” at 41:1). Rahab also occurs in the cosmogony in Job 26:12, where it is cut to pieces. In Psalm 89:10–11 and Isaiah 51:9–10 God cuts Rahab to pieces, pierces the monster (Heb. *tannîn*), and crushes it. Rahab is used parallel with the drying up of the sea and the waters of the deep (Heb. *ʾēbōm*) over which he rules. It is used for Egypt in Psalm 87:4 and Isaiah 30:7 in the sense of a political enemy.<sup>51</sup>

It is perplexing to the point of frustration to read such well researched sources who seem to allude to the obvious point without having the

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49. Unger, Merrill F. R. K. Harrison, Howard F. Vos, and Cyril J. Barber, eds. *The New Unger’s Bible Dictionary*. Accordance electronic ed., version 1.5. Chicago: Moody Publishers, 2005.

50. Shearing, Linda S. Freedman, David Noel, Allen C. Myers, and Astrid B. Beck, eds. *Eerdmans Dictionary of the Bible*. Accordance electronic ed., version 3.8. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2000.

51. Cornelius, Izak. “Job.” In *The Minor Prophets, Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Songs*, vol. 5 of *Zondervan Illustrated Bible Backgrounds Commentary: Old Testament*, edited by John H. Walton, 246–316. Accordance electronic edition, version 1.9. 5 vols. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2009.

intellectual courage to make the obvious observation. There is no cause to hide behind academically comfortable nonsense language such as suggesting that these early references to the fall of Satan are somehow “mythological” or that they are on loan from other ancient cultures. The simplest explanation is best. Rahab is easily understood in light of the clear biblical teaching regarding a serpent-like creature representing the primary fallen angel detailed in Genesis 3 who will be explained with perfect clarity by the end of this study.

## Conclusion

The final unimportance of the Adversary is also valuable to a biblical understanding of Satan in the biblical perspective. While these two important accounts reveal much about him, ultimately the flow and theme of Job never display the Lord declaring victory over the Adversary, nor does the account give any more substantial information about him. The end of the account of the book of Job shows the Adversary’s rebellious opposition of the Lord to be allowed only based upon the fact that the Lord uses his rebellion as a tool to more fully reveal Himself to His beloved image bearers – the redeemed of mankind.

Job				
Reference	Summary	Action	Elect or Fallen	Angel of the LORD
Job 1:6–2:8	The Sons of God Present and Satan Accuses	Presentation	Both	
Job 4:18	Discussed -	Being considered	Elect	
Job 38:4,7	Sing in the Creation week	Worship	Elect	no

## CHAPTER 4

# Angelology in the Rest of the Pentateuch

After the books of Genesis and Job the working and movements of angels become less frequently noticed. The earliest two books abound with angelic working and angelic visions. Thereafter angelic themes become much less frequent. This may have a great deal to do with the nature of the books of Exodus through Deuteronomy in that they concern themselves primarily with the laws and expectations which God had for His earthly people, Israel. The decline in frequency of angelic information actually gives the reader some very important information about the relationship of the angelic world to the human world. While the Holy One is in constant communion with celestial beings, and uses them regularly to do His bidding, Israel is not to try to contact, communicate with, or manipulate angels in any way. They are never given any authority to command angelic messengers, nor to call them down. The world of the celestial beings is recognized as being very important, but clearly off limits for human access.

This theme of separation between man and angels is to continue throughout the Bible and man is not given charge of any angelic or demonic being. The angelic world is doing their work as watchers, and fulfilling their purpose in God's plan, just as Satan and his fallen angels are going about his nefarious plans, but never is man beseeched, invited, or commanded, to initiate contact with the angelic world. This, of course has an excellent explanation as it safeguards men from worshipping angels and demons as any biblically ignorant human would undoubtedly do in the presence of angelic or demonic power and glory. Thus, the decline in angelic appearance does not in any way support the notion that the Hebrew understanding of celestial beings was in any way less developed earlier than it later became. Quite to the contrary, the earliest books give the most definitive appearances of angels and, as shall be displayed, the later appearances of angels seem to fall into the

earliest categories for their existence, appearance, and labors on this earth. With this understanding in mind, it comes to task of evaluating the pertinent passages.

### Exodus 14:19 – The Angel of God Moves

And the Angel of God, who went before the camp of Israel, moved and went behind them; and the pillar of cloud went from before them and stood behind them. (Exodus 14:19 NKJV)

The Angel of the LORD, or the Angel of YHWH, is unquestionably not a subject of angelology but of Christology, and/or theology proper, thus the Angel of the Lord passages are not strictly within the purview of this study. In checking dozens of translations, it is only the NKJV which chooses to capitalize the word “angel” in this verse giving the impression that this is the Angel of the Lord. However, there seems very little reason for this capitalization. First, the terminology clearly differs – there is a vast difference between (מַלְאָכֵי יְהוָה) and the more technically used (מַלְאָכֵי יְהוָה). The first large difference is the use of the covenant name of God rather than the use of the more generic term *Elohim*. The next major detail to note is that the Angel of the Lord is always conspicuously anarthrous in both the word *malach* as well as the Tetragrammaton. In this instance, it seems it should be treated not as a Christophany, but rather as a created angel of some kind. Clarke argues that this is an appearance of the Angel of the LORD as follows:

Verse 19. *The angel of God*. It has been thought by some that the angel, i.e., messenger, of the Lord, and the pillar of cloud, mean here the same thing. An angel might assume the appearance of a cloud; and even a material cloud thus particularly appointed might be called an angel or messenger of the Lord, for such is the literal import of the word מַלְאָכֵי *malach*, an angel. It is however most probable that the Angel of the covenant, the Lord Jesus, appeared on this occasion in behalf of the people; for as this deliverance was to be an illustrious type of the deliverance of man from the power and guilt of sin by his incarnation and death, it might have been deemed necessary, in the judgment of Divine wisdom, that he should

appear chief agent in this most important and momentous crisis.<sup>52</sup>

The strength of Clarke's argument is in the point of the magnitude of the need, and in the fact that this angel delivers the covenant people. However, it seems a great amount of assumption in light of the reality that Moses was clearly in the habit of referring to the Angel of the LORD with a high degree of intentionality and consistency. It would be strange to have this single instance where the clear description of this elect angel would be used with no explanation to refer to the second person of the Trinity. McGee states a similar belief with a similar lack of evidence when he writes:

In verse 19 the "angel of God" is mentioned. I believe the Angel of God was none other than the pre-incarnate Christ. It was God Himself who stood between the Egyptians and the Israelites. When a strong east wind came, it caused the sea to go back. A natural wind could never have made a wall of water on both sides.<sup>53</sup>

Again, while this idea is theologically attractive it begins a troublesome pattern of seeing the Angel of the LORD everywhere and very problematically attributing deity to angels that are not clearly worthy of that sacred title.

It must be addressed that the pillar of fire and cloud is clearly in view here, and it could be that the cloud is being described as a messenger from God – that is a miraculous example of God's presence, however, it would be an atypical expression for the presence of God. Thus, it seems completely reasonable to view this as an angel with a particular ability to either appear as a pillar and cloud or clothe himself as such. This provides important information that while angelic messengers may come with human-like appearance, it is also possible for them to appear as supernatural phenomena. This means that angelic actors are not confined to a uniform appearance before mankind, but can appear and interact with the earthly drama in a variety of forms and visually striking media.

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52. Clarke, Adam, *Adam Clarke's Commentary on the Whole Bible*. Accordance electronic ed. Altamonte Springs: OakTree Software, 2004.

53. McGee, J. Vernon, *Genesis—Deuteronomy*. Vol. I of Thru the Bible. Accordance electronic ed. Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1981.

This also enforces the protective nature of the elect angels involved in God's plan, limited by time and space, and regularly protecting God's people and plans through a variety of different supernatural means. As the angel of God here moves from leading Israel to protecting them as a rear guard blocking Pharaoh's army until they had passed through the parted sea. This passage clearly shows that Moses believed and understood consistently in his writings that angels were involved in the plan of God's redemption of Israel.

The Cherubim in the Tabernacle: Exodus 25:18–22; 26:1, 31; 36:8; Numbers 7:89

<sup>18</sup> And you shall make two cherubim of gold; of hammered work you shall make them at the two ends of the mercy seat. <sup>19</sup> Make one cherub at one end, and the other cherub at the other end; you shall make the cherubim at the two ends of it *of one piece* with the mercy seat. <sup>20</sup> And the cherubim shall stretch out *their* wings above, covering the mercy seat with their wings, and they shall face one another; the faces of the cherubim *shall be* toward the mercy seat. <sup>21</sup> You shall put the mercy seat on top of the ark, and in the ark you shall put the Testimony that I will give you. <sup>22</sup> And there I will meet with you, and I will speak with you from above the mercy seat, from between the two cherubim which *are* on the ark of the Testimony, about everything which I will give you in commandment to the children of Israel. (Exodus 25:18–22 NKJV)

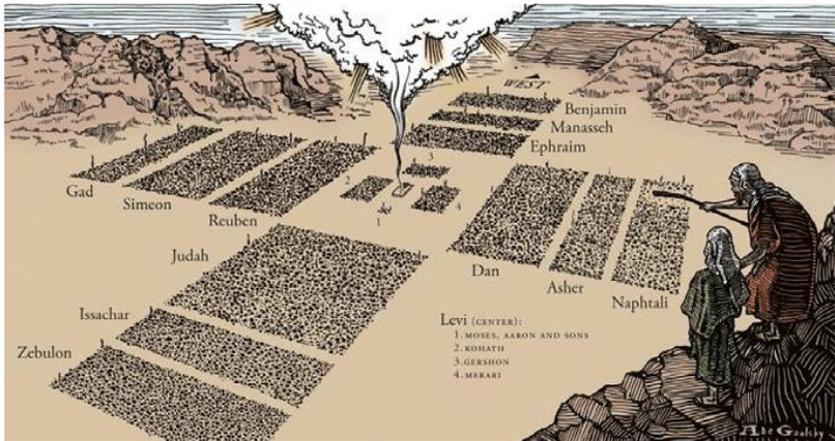
Moreover you shall make the tabernacle *with* ten curtains *of* fine woven linen and blue, purple, and scarlet *thread*; with artistic designs of cherubim you shall weave them. (Exodus 26:1 NKJV)

You shall make a veil woven of blue, purple, and scarlet *thread*, and fine woven linen. It shall be woven with an artistic design of cherubim. (Exodus 26:31 NKJV)

Then all the gifted artisans among them who worked on the tabernacle made ten curtains woven of fine linen, and of blue, purple, and scarlet thread; *with* artistic designs of cherubim they made them. (Exodus 36:8 NKJV)

Now when Moses went into the tabernacle of meeting to speak with Him, he heard the voice of One speaking to him from above the mercy seat that *was* on the ark of the Testimony, from between the two cherubim; thus He spoke to him. (Numbers 7:89 (NKJV)

Another clear sign of the highly developed angelology of the Exodus generation is the use of cherubim in the tabernacle. The Tabernacle is the chief meeting place between Israel and her God. The Tabernacle is the center of the camp during the long march to the promised land.



Source: [http://guildofbezalel.blogspot.com/2010\\_11\\_01\\_archive.html](http://guildofbezalel.blogspot.com/2010_11_01_archive.html)

This is meaningful formation indeed. Everything about the Law of Moses centers around the Tabernacle. The importance of the Tabernacle is well described in the following quote:

Typology of the Tabernacle and Furniture. The design of the Tabernacle is thus stated: “Let them construct a sanctuary for Me, that I may dwell among them” (Ex. 25:8). This sanctuary was styled “the tent of meeting” (Heb. *ohelmoeid*) between Jehovah and His people. The Lord said, “I will meet with you, to speak to you there” (29:42); “and I will dwell among the Sons of Israel and will be their God” (v. 45). Thus the Tabernacle and all that pertained to it were typical of the presence of God with His people. In accordance with this promise, the glory of Jehovah filled the Tabernacle, but His presence was manifested to the people in the pillar of cloud and fire above the sacred structure (40:34–38; Num. 9:15–23). The fiery cloud by day moved at God’s direction and thus prefigured His

guidance. The entire divine institution portrayed the approach of God's redeemed people to His presence.<sup>54</sup>

The role of the Tabernacle as both a place of spiritual significance as well as an illustrative tool could never be overstated. It was at the Tabernacle that sacrifices were to be made to atone for sin. It was at the tabernacle that the Levites were to approach the Living God. The Tabernacle was the place wherein the ark of covenant was kept and held in the Most Holy Place. Imagery of angels are the most common visual representations repeated throughout the Tabernacle's design, and later also in the temple.

These creatures adorn the tent curtains that enclose the Tabernacle as well as adorning the top of the mercy seat. Looking back to the first appearance of the cherubim in Genesis, we see it was these angelic beings that barred the return of anyone back into the garden of Eden in order to protect the tree of life. This position of cherubim as defenders of the holiness of God is then seen to reassert itself in the Tabernacle imagery. These specific celestial beings are used to symbolize the protection of God's holiness and, as will be seen in the unfolding of the Old Testament revelation on angelic majesties, that is precisely what these beings are seen to do throughout the biblical text.

Numbers 7:89 makes another point that God spoke to Moses in the Most Holy Place. The voice of the Lord emanated forth from the mercy seat – amidst the two praying cherubim. This shows that God's presence upon the earth was specially manifested in this place, and it was worthy of mention that the voice of God emanated forth from this place between the protectors of His holiness – the cherubim.

## Demons are Officially Introduced – Leviticus 17:7; Deuteronomy 32:17

7 They shall no more offer their sacrifices to demons, after whom they have played the harlot. This shall be a statute forever for them throughout their generations. (Leviticus 17:7 NKJV)

17 They sacrificed to demons, not to God,  
*To gods* they did not know,

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54. Unger, Merrill F. R. K. Harrison, Howard F. Vos, and Cyril J. Barber, eds. *The New Unger's Bible Dictionary*. Accordance electronic ed., version 1.4. Chicago: Moody Publishers, 2005.

To new *gods*, new arrivals  
 That your fathers did not fear.  
 Deuteronomy 32:17 (NKJV)

Leviticus 17:7 is a very important passage because it is the first appearance of the word and idea of demons. It may seem odd that it appears so late in the biblical account, yet the usage comes without any textual explanation. This demonstrates the fact that Moses expected his readers to know what this word meant with no extra explanation. It implies, as will become very important in the next section of this paper, that while demons were not directly mentioned in the earlier books that their presence and their nefarious plans and deeds were well known culturally. Their desires and purposes are also made clear in these two important verses.

Looking at the language specifically, lexicons have much to say about these beings. The Hebrew word translated “demons” in Leviticus 17:7 is (שְׁעִירִים). Consider the following definitions offered by major Hebrew lexicons:

MHeb. a type of demon: pl. שְׁעִירִים (י): the hairy one, a goat (buck) demon, satyr <sup>55</sup>

General remark: according to Snaith the שְׁ of Lv 17:7 2C 11<sub>15</sub> (on Dt 32<sub>2</sub> → IV \*שְׁעִיר) are rain deities or fertility deities, the Baals of the rainstorms; he suggests that the שְׁ of Is 13<sub>21</sub> 34<sub>14</sub> should also be interpreted thus (see VT 25 (1975) 118) but simple animals without any religious connection could also be intended (see p. 115).<sup>56</sup>

III. שְׁעִיר n. m. satyr, demon (with *be-goat's* form, or feet; NH *id.*; cf. Baud<sup>Stud.</sup> i. 136ff.; *hairy* demons We<sup>Skizzen</sup> iii. 135; Heid. 152 RS<sup>Sem.</sup> 113, 423; 2nd ed. 120, 441); abs. שְׁ Is 34:14 inhabiting desolate ruins, so pl. שְׁעִירִים 13:21; name for idols 2 Ch 11:15 and (שְׁעִירִים) Lv 17:7 (H); prob. also בְּמוֹת הַשְּׁ 2 K 23:8 (MT הַשְּׁעִירִים) Hoffm<sup>ZAW</sup> ii (1882), 175 SS Kmp Klo Kit Benz Bur.<sup>57</sup>

55. Koehler, Ludwig, Walter Baumgartner, and M. E. J. Richardson, eds. *The Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament*. Accordance electronic ed., version 3.6. Leiden: Brill, 2000.

56. Koehler, Ludwig, Walter Baumgartner, and M. E. J. Richardson, eds. *The Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament*. Accordance electronic ed., version 3.6. Leiden: Brill, 2000.

57. Brown, Francis, S. R. Driver, and Charles A. Briggs, eds. *The Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew and English Lexicon*. Accordance electronic ed., version 4.5. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1906.

שְׂעִיר *śā'iyr* 2x n.m. [8537; cf. 8547]. goat idol. → *goat*.<sup>58</sup>

שְׂעִיר II 4.0.3 n.m.—pl. שְׂעִירִים—goat-demon, satyr, living in desolate places  
Is 13<sub>21</sub>, images of deities Lv 17<sub>7</sub>.<sup>59</sup>

This demonstrates consistent agreement amongst the various major lexicons. The Septuagint, remarkably, translates demons only as “vain” with no reference to their nature. Nevertheless, these demons to whom the Israelites were enticed to sacrifice had some goat or satyr quality to them. While most translations bring this across as simply “demons”, the ESV goes so far as to translate this word as “goat demons.”

The next observation is that these demons demand sacrifice, and the Israelites did, at some point, comply. The demand for sacrifice is a clear statement of a desire to be regarded as deity. While God regularly expects sacrifice to be made to Him as early as Genesis 4, there is clearly no other being who is worthy of praise or propitiation through the act of sacrifice. The nature of the sacrifices are not entirely clear, yet the fact that these sacrifices are made to some other spiritual usurper is clearly condemned within the context of these two verses.

The next statement is equally interesting. God accuses Israel of playing the harlot. This evokes the imagery of marriage. God views sacrifice to these demons as a form of spiritual infidelity. This idolatry was comparable, in the human experience, to a woman who sells her sexual favors for monetary gain. This makes a connection with Exodus 34:15:

15 lest you make a covenant with the inhabitants of the land, and they play the **harlot** with their gods and make sacrifice to their gods, and *one of them* invites you and you eat of his sacrifice, 16 and you take of his daughters for your sons, and his daughters play the **harlot** with their gods and make your sons play the **harlot** with their gods. (Exodus 34:15 NKJV)

The connection of spiritual harlotry, the demons, and the gods of the people is a reasonable equation that is affirmed throughout the biblical text. The act of spiritual infidelity which the God of the Bible hates is not to nothing, but

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58. Kohlenberger III, John R. and William D. Mounce. *Kohlenberger/Mounce Concise Hebrew-Aramaic Dictionary of the Old Testament*. Accordance electronic ed., version 3.3. Altamonte Springs: OakTree Software, 2012.

59. Clines, David J. A., ed. *The Concise Dictionary of Classical Hebrew*. Accordance electronic ed., version 2.5. Sheffield: Sheffield Phoenix Press, 2009.

rather to some spiritual personality that is of great importance and to which mankind owes no spiritual allegiance or sacrificial debt. However, this shows the nature of these demonic creatures. They long to stand in the place of God and they desire the offerings that rightfully are only due to the God of Israel.

Warren Wiersbe offers the following insight on this passage:

The offering of food (vv. 1–7). The Jews didn't eat a great deal of meat because it was too costly to slaughter their animals. The law stated here prohibited them from killing their animals for food anywhere inside or outside the camp. Any animal used for food had to be brought to the altar and presented as a fellowship (peace) offering to the Lord.

This law accomplished several things. To begin with, it kept the people from secretly offering sacrifices to idols out in the fields. If they were discovered and questioned, they could claim that they were killing the animal only for a feast. But if that were the case, they should have taken the animal to the tabernacle altar. The blood of an animal must be offered only to the Lord and only at His altar.<sup>60</sup>

While this food-centric interpretation is interesting Jamieson, Fausset and Brown see the idolatrous, satyr worship as being a more viable interpretation:

7. they shall no more offer their sacrifices unto devils — literally, “goats.” The prohibition evidently alludes to the worship of the hirei-footed kind, such as Pan, Faunus, and Saturn, whose recognized symbol was a goat. This was a form of idolatry enthusiastically practised by the Egyptians, particularly in the nome or province of Mendes. Pan was supposed especially to preside over mountainous and desert regions, and it was while they were in the wilderness that the Israelites seem to have been powerfully influenced by a feeling to propitiate this idol. Moreover, the ceremonies observed in this idolatrous worship were extremely licentious and obscene, and the gross impurity of the rites gives great point and significance to the expression of Moses, “they have gone a-whoring.”<sup>61</sup>

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60. Wiersbe, Warren W., *Be Holy*. BE Series Commentary. Accordance electronic ed. Colorado Springs: David C. Cook, 2010.

61. Jamieson, Robert, A. R. Fausset, and David Brown, *A Commentary, Critical and Explanatory on the Whole Bible*. 1871, Accordance electronic ed. Altamonte Springs: OakTree Software, 1996.

The Moody Bible Commentary likewise puts forth:

First, the sanctity of the sacrificial blood is set forth, as God warned the Israelites about false worship and disregard for the blood (vv. 1–4). God’s people were expected to treat the blood with reverence (as a symbol of both life and redemption). Similarly, believers today who fail to treat Christ’s blood as holy also face a stern rebuke (cf. Heb 10:19–27). Only sacrifices that are offered exclusively to the one true, living God are acceptable. God’s people must present their offerings to God alone. All slaughtering (for offerings) was to be done at the tabernacle in order to prevent sacrifice to the false gods (an act of idolatry in violation of the first Commandment). Violators were to be cut off from the community (cf. 7:20–21). The purpose behind the bringing of the offerings to the tabernacle was to put a halt to sacrificing to any god but the Lord. Here there was an association with false gods described as goat demons (v. 7). Eventually, with the establishment of the temple, the site of slaughtering was focused on Jerusalem when prescribed festivals were in view. Additional regulations (cf. Dt 12:15–16, 20–28) allowed the Israelites to eat the meat of animals in a non-sacrificial manner in their cities. But sacrificial animals had to be slaughtered in Jerusalem.<sup>62</sup>

The word translated “demons” in Deuteronomy 32:17 differs from that used in Leviticus 17. It is the word (דִּמְוִי) and is defined by leading lexicographers as:

*šdām*; MHeb. דַּמְוִי, דִּמְוִי; JArm. ܕܡܘܝܐ, pl. ܕܡܘܝܐ: demon (male or female); Akk. *šēdu(m)* sg. vitality, spirit, demon (AHw. 1208; CAD S/2, 256: *šēdu* A): a) beneficial, protecting spirit; b) malevolent demon; pl. (rarely) *šēdu lā pādūtum / tu* “merciless demons” (AHw. 808b, under *pādū*), cf. AHw. 1208a under 4; Syr. *šē dā*; CPArm. *šyd* and *šd* demon; cf. (?) Mnd. *šdum* a spirit of the darkness, one of those ruling the underworld (Drower-Macuch *Dictionary* 449b); Egyptian the divine name *šd* as an element in *šdrp*’ Sadrapa, a god of healing > Σαδ/τροάπης, on which see F. Stolz *Strukturen*

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62. Jelinek, John, *Leviticus*. Edited by Michael Rydelnik and Michael Vanlaningham. The Moody Bible Commentary. Chicago: Moody Publishers, 2014.

*und Figuren im Kult von Jerusalem* (BZAW 118 (1970) 206f); Gese-Höfner-Rudolph RAAM 198ff; Pauly-W. *Kl. Real-Enz.* 4: 1566f.<sup>63</sup>

Undoubtedly Hebrew 𐤀𐤏 is to be connected with the Babylonian word *shēdu*, a demon either good or evil. In pagan religions the line between gods and demons is not a constant one. There are demons who are beneficent and gods who are malicious. Generally speaking though, a demon was conceived as being less powerful than a god. In Mesopotamian thought the *shēdu* was a supernatural protective power for whose presence the gods were invoked. Specifically, the function of *shēdu* may have been to represent the vitality of the individual, his sexual potency (Oppenheim, p. 201; see bibliography).<sup>64</sup>

𐤀𐤏 *šēd*: A masculine noun meaning a demon, a devil. The primary or typical translation of this noun is demon or demons. This noun was used to describe the recipient of a sacrifice (i.e., a sacrifice that was not directed or given to God [Deut. 32:17]). Certain sacrifices in which sons and daughters were sacrificed were also directed toward demons (Ps. 106:37). This word is also used to designate the recipients of forbidden sacrifices.<sup>65</sup>

The similarity between these two verses is so clear that it requires no explanation. Yet the usage of this word shows a distinct connection to false gods and not exclusively to satyrs. The usage of this word clearly conflates the two and makes plain the reality that sacrifices to any of these demonic sources are the same.

This verse in Deuteronomy however adds more information. These demons are not only lesser spiritual forces, but they are also described as being “new”. These false gods are not the true and original sources of life and recipients of human worship, adulation, and praise. Rather, these are recent additions – false “Johnny-come-lately” additions to the spiritual scene. This is in keeping with the larger biblical understanding that YHVH alone is the Creator and worthy of praise. These fallen angels are simply later

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63. Koehler, Ludwig, Walter Baumgartner, and M. E. J. Richardson, eds. *The Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament*. Accordance electronic ed., version 3.6. Leiden: Brill, 2000.

64. Hamilton, Victor P. Harris, R. Laird, Gleason L. Archer, and Bruce K. Waltke, eds. *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament*. Accordance electronic ed., version 2.7. Chicago: Moody Press, 1980.

65. Baker, Warren and Eugene Carpenter. *The Complete Word Study Dictionary: Old Testament*. Accordance electronic ed., version 1.2. Chattanooga: AMG Publishers, 2003.

additions. Created by God and rebellious to Him they seek to usurp the praise and adulation that rightfully belongs to the One True God. Wonderful insight is given in the following extended quote by Tigay:

17. This verse disparages the gods Israel worshiped. It does not argue that Israel worshiped nonexistent beings, mere statues, but that it worshiped nondivine beings, beings that lack effective power and are unworthy of worship.

*demons* Rather, “spirits.” *Shed* is used in Akkadian for minor protective spirits. The point is that the beings Israel worshiped are mere spirits, not gods. Compare Psalm 106:36–38.

*no-gods* Beings called “gods” (see the next colon) but undeservedly, pseudo-gods. Compare “non-sons,” “no-gods,” “no-folk” in verses 5 and 21.

*gods they had never known* See 11:28. Although the poem has just denied their divinity, it continues to use the word *’elohim* for these beings. This is due to the ambiguity of the word, discussed in the Comment to 3:24 and in Excursus 6. Possibly *’elohim* is used for “spirits” here, or else the word is used as if in quotation marks, meaning “so-called gods.”

*new ones* Compare Judges 5:8: “When they chose new gods, . . .” The term is dismissive: these are deities-come-lately. Unlike the Lord, who has acted on behalf of Israel since its beginning, these beings have no record of achievement or reliability. In the ancient world antiquity was a hallmark of authenticity, and these new beings lacked it. The Lord, in contrast, is “the ancient God” (33:27) whose benefactions to Israel are “from of old.”

*stirred not your fathers’ fears* The meaning of the verb *se’arum*, which the translation renders as “stirred fears,” is uncertain. The Septuagint renders it as “whom your fathers did not know,” synonymous with the second colon in the verse. This rendering can be supported by Arabic *sha’ara*, “know, be cognizant.” The Sifrei cites a view that *se’arum* should be interpreted as if it read *sha’um*, “[whom your fathers did not] turn to,” a verb used elsewhere for reliance on a deity.<sup>66</sup>

Of the utmost value to the interpreter is the recognition that the Bible never refutes that those beings the idolater worships are real. They are recognized

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66. Tigay, Jeffrey H., *Deuteronomy*. The JPS Torah Commentary. Accordance electronic ed. Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1996.

as actual spiritual personalities created by God with authority in the world. The worshippers of such demons rightly see their power and the results of their worship. Yet, they are not the appropriate objects of worship. The worship of these demonic forces is invalid. This fact is of great value in understanding the larger view of the unseen world of the celestial beings.

## Conclusion

It is true that there are fewer angelic references in the last four books of the Pentateuch. However, it is abundantly plain from the discussion above that this decline in angelic references is to be entirely expected given the nature of the change in character between the books. It is also worthwhile to note that the higher frequency of angelic encounters in Genesis is perfectly moderated by the understanding that the book of Genesis covers many generations, where the following books cover little more than a lifetime of events in the chronological sense. This difference in time also helps account for the change in apparent frequency of angelic appearances in relation to pure verse count. The appearance of language that introduces the demonic, or fallen, realm of the celestial beings becomes abundantly clear as the Pentateuch is read. The important point to notice, for the purposes of this paper is that the celestial beings, both angelic and demonic, are clearly put forth in the Pentateuch.

Exodus				
Reference	Summary	Action	Elect or Fallen	Angel of the LORD
3:2	AoJ appears in burning bush	Revelation	Elect	Y
14:19	A. of God goes before the camp	Presence	Elect	N
23:20–23	Angel sent before Israel	Protection	Elect	Y
25:18–22	Cherubim on the Ark	Memorial	Elect	N
26:1,31; 36:8	Cherubim on curtains	Memorial	Elect	N
32:34	Angel goes before	Protection	Elect	Y
33:2	Angel goes before	Protection	Elect	Y

Part I: Angelology in the Old Testament

Leviticus				
Reference	Summary	Action	Elect or Fallen	Angel of the LORD
17:7	Warning against offering sacrifices to demons	Receiving worship	Fallen	N

Numbers				
Reference	Summary	Action	Elect or Fallen	Angel of the LORD
7:89	Bat Kol from between Cherubim	Ark Reference	Elect	N
20:16	Angel brought Is. Out of Egypt	Exodus	Elect	N
22:22–35	AoJ instructs Balaam	Revelation	Elect	Y

Deuteronomy				
Reference	Summary	Action	Elect or Fallen	Angel of the LORD
32:17	Sacrificed to Demons	Receiving Worship	Fallen	N

## CHAPTER 5

# Angelology in the Historical Books

Moving forward into the books known to modern Christianity as the Historical Books and to the Jewish people as the Former Prophets and the Writings shows a much less frequent appearances of celestial beings. This is quite significant as it shows again the biblical reality that interaction with, or manipulation of celestial beings was never meant to be a common or regular human experience. However, the apparent shortage of these appearances is balanced out numerically when one considers that the Major Prophets (or Latter Prophets) are filled with Angelic reference, as are the Psalms which were written largely within the lifetime of David. This shows that the historical style and focus is not on the angelic world but upon the human events on the timeline. The noteworthy angelic appearances in the Books of Joshua and Judges all seem to firmly indicate that the Angel of Jehovah is the primary Actor in these books. As has already been discussed, the Angel of Jehovah is most frequently a Christophany and therefore does not fit into the discussion and study of angelology proper, but rather a direct revelation from the Second Person of the Trinity. Therefore, Christophanies do not fall into the scope of this study. Thus, the study of the section in Scripture begins with the books of First and Second Samuel.

### 1 Samuel 19:9–10

Now the distressing spirit from the LORD came upon Saul as he sat in his house with his spear in his hand. And David was playing *music* with *his* hand. <sup>10</sup> Then Saul sought to pin David to the wall with the spear, but he slipped away from Saul's presence; and he drove the spear into the wall. So David fled and escaped that night.

This passage is important because it shows the direct angelic influence upon Saul. Yet, there are features of this incident that may seem a bit perplexing until they are understood in the larger context of the scriptural revelation about the nature of the fallen angelic beings and their relationship to God. This spirit is said to be “distressing.” This translates the Hebrew word רָעָה *ra-ab* and generally stands in for bad, evil, or something causing injury or calamity. The diversity among translations shows the broad way in which this simple word is understood. The English Standard Version translates this as “harmful” – pointing to the effect the spirit is causing. By contrast, the New English Translation, The New International Version (2011) and the New American Standard 2020 translate the word faithfully as “evil”. This translation is to be preferred.

One can understand how the source of this spirit, being from the Lord, could be theologically challenging if the reader has an unbiblical perspective on celestial beings. The thought here is that God would and could only ever send a righteous angel because those are the angels who are in right relationship with Him. The solution, then, is to treat this as an elect angel with a task of harming or distressing Saul as reflected in the NKJV and the ESV. This, however, is wholly unnecessary to the task of understanding the passage. As the exposition of Job has already shown, both elect and non-elect (or fallen) angels still stand in the presence of God and in the council of God. They long to go about their rebellious plans and ways and take delight in attempting to do anything that would seem harmful to God’s greater glory or redemptive plan. They are also, while in rebellion, completely subject to the authority of the Living God. Thus, while fallen angels are misunderstood as having some kind of absolute autonomy it is simply not the case. These creatures are limited in how they may rebel against God, and can do what He ultimately allows them to do.

This brings a simple solution to the problem. Just as God allowed the Accuser to test Job by laying hold of his family and health, so God’s plan now allows this fallen angel to do its will by God’s permission. This evil spirit is then allowed to inflict Saul with insanity and make an attempt upon the life of David – the one through whose line is meant to bring forth the Seed, the Messiah. Thus, while this evil spirit is working to influence Saul to oppose God’s plan and glory, he can only do so by the permission of the LORD. Saul became a candidate for this kind of treatment by his own rejection of God and rebellion against Him. This is an example, much like what is displayed in the first chapter of the book of Romans, of the Lord lifting His

protective hand and decree against one who has continued forward in active rebellion against the Divine Will.

## 1 Samuel 29:9

<sup>9</sup>Then Achish answered and said to David, “I know that you *are* as good in my sight as an angel of God; nevertheless the princes of the Philistines have said, ‘He shall not go up with us to the battle.’”

This angelic reference is obviously not directed to any specific celestial being, but rather a point of comparison by the Philistine king Achish. This incident occurred during David’s exile among the Philistines due to the Satanically motivated persecution at the hands of the wicked King Saul. David, having taken up dwelling among his enemies has ingratiated himself to Achish. Achish uses ready reference to David’s God – Jehovah. In 1 Samuel 29:6 Achish makes it clear that he affirms and understands David’s worship of Jehovah by swearing by the Divine name in displaying his trust for David. This shows that, while Achish is most assuredly an idolater as a worshipper of Dagon, he is mindful of the God of the Israelites and has a respect for Him.

This brings us to the next major point about the biblical angelology. Achish compares David favorably to an angel of God. While all major translations agree, it is by no means a guarantee that Achish’s use of *Elohim* here is in reference to the God of Israel. Surely context allows for it, however, it wouldn’t be unreasonable at all to think that Achish would be comparing David to a messenger of the gods in keeping with his pagan worldview. However, this shows that Achish believes some things in common with the Israelite faith: that there are supernatural powers in the heavens and there are celestial beings that are sent to do work on earth as well as give messages from the hand of God or the gods. The lack of explanation despite the differences between Achish and David shows that the ANE world had a view on celestial beings that was concordant enough with the biblical view of angelology for this comparison to be meaningful to David. And Scripture takes no issue with the comparison.

The comparison shows also that the biblical perspective on angels is that they were reliable, and worth heeding. This comparison is, of course, hyperbolic in nature. To compare David to the highest and most trustworthy source of information that he can think of is a meaningful comparison only

if both parties agree that God indeed has angels at His command, and that they are worth sending on specific occasions. This confirmation that Achish had a view of the angelic world that is connected to the biblical view is important evidence that the true view of the celestial world was influenced by the biblical view and not the other way around.

## 2 Samuel 14:17–20

<sup>17</sup> Your maidservant said, “The word of my lord the king will now be comforting; for as the angel of God, so *is* my lord the king in discerning good and evil. And may the LORD your God be with you.” <sup>18</sup> Then the king answered and said to the woman, “Please do not hide from me anything that I ask you.” And the woman said, “Please, let my lord the king speak.” <sup>19</sup> So the king said, “*Is* the hand of Joab with you in all this?” And the woman answered and said, “*As* you live, my lord the king, no one can turn to the right hand or to the left from anything that my lord the king has spoken. For your servant Joab commanded me, and he put all these words in the mouth of your maidservant. <sup>20</sup> To bring about this change of affairs your servant Joab has done this thing; but my lord *is* wise, according to the wisdom of the angel of God, to know everything that *is* in the earth.”

Much like the previous passage, this is not a direct reference to a particular celestial personality, but rather a reference to the nature of the knowledge of King David. In this case the comparison is being made by a maidservant. Jamison, Fausset, and Brown supply the background:

And Joab sent to Tekoah, and fetched thence a wise woman — The king was strongly attached to Absalom; and having now got over his sorrow for the violent death of Amnon, he was desirous of again enjoying the society of his favorite son, who had now been three long years absent. But a dread of public opinion and a regard to the public interests made him hesitate about recalling or pardoning his guilty son; and Joab, whose discerning mind perceived this struggle between parental affection and royal duty, devised a plan for relieving the scruples, and, at the same time, gratifying the wishes, of his master. Having procured a countrywoman of superior intelligence and address, he directed her to seek an audience of the king, and by soliciting his royal interposition in the settlement of a

domestic grievance, convinced him that the life of a murderer might in some cases be saved. Tekoah was about twelve miles south of Jerusalem, and six south of Beth-lehem; and the design of bringing a woman from such a distance was to prevent either the petitioner being known, or the truth of her story easily investigated. Her speech was in the form of a parable — the circumstances — the language — the manner — well suited to the occasion, represented a case as like David's as it was policy to make it, so as not to be prematurely discovered. Having got the king pledged, she avowed it to be her design to satisfy the royal conscience, that in pardoning Absalom he was doing nothing more than he would have done in the case of a stranger, where there could be no imputation of partiality. The device succeeded; David traced its origin to Joab; and, secretly pleased at obtaining the judgment of that rough, but generally sound-thinking soldier, he commissioned him to repair to Geshur and bring home his exiled son.<sup>67</sup>

In verse 17, the wise woman compares David's ability to discern truth to that of an angel of God. This points out that not only were the angels of God understood to have volition, but also those that are identified as elect are able to make accurate and trustworthy moral judgements. It is this reality that makes the comparison meaningful.

In the verse 20 the wise woman gives a similar comparison, but in this case makes the clear statement that David's knowledge and wisdom are not only *like* that of the elect angels, but also that they are according to angelic revelation and knowledge. Whether this is meant as more flattery, or simply figurative speech is certainly open to discussion, yet the thrust of the passage demands the possibility and expectation that King David is receiving his revelation from angelic sources. This woman's expectation is that David acts, and will continue to act, based upon the divine revelation which she believes he has received through angelic agency.

## 2 Samuel 19:27

<sup>27</sup> And he has slandered your servant to my lord the king, but my lord the king *is* like the angel of God. Therefore do *what is* good in your eyes.

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<sup>67</sup> Jamieson, Robert, A. R. Fausset, and David Brown, *A Commentary, Critical and Explanatory on the Whole Bible*. 1871, Accordance electronic ed. Altamonte Springs: OakTree Software, 1996.

This repetition of the same idea enforces the clear expectation that to be compared to an angel of God was a high and noteworthy form of praise or flattery.

## 1 Kings 6:23–35

<sup>23</sup> Inside the inner sanctuary he made two cherubim *of* olive wood, *each* ten cubits high. <sup>24</sup> One wing of the cherub *was* five cubits, and the other wing of the cherub five cubits: ten cubits from the tip of one wing to the tip of the other. <sup>25</sup> And the other cherub *was* ten cubits; both cherubim *were* of the same size and shape. <sup>26</sup> The height of one cherub *was* ten cubits, and so *was* the other cherub. <sup>27</sup> Then he set the cherubim inside the inner room; and they stretched out the wings of the cherubim so that the wing of the one touched *one* wall, and the wing of the other cherub touched the other wall. And their wings touched each other in the middle of the room. <sup>28</sup> Also he overlaid the cherubim with gold.

<sup>29</sup> Then he carved all the walls of the temple all around, both the inner and outer *sanctuaries*, with carved figures of cherubim, palm trees, and open flowers. <sup>30</sup> And the floor of the temple he overlaid with gold, both the inner and outer *sanctuaries*.

<sup>31</sup> For the entrance of the inner sanctuary he made doors *of* olive wood; the lintel *and* doorposts *were* one-fifth *of the wall*. <sup>32</sup> The two doors *were of* olive wood; and he carved on them figures of cherubim, palm trees, and open flowers, and overlaid *them* with gold; and he spread gold on the cherubim and on the palm trees. <sup>33</sup> So for the door of the sanctuary he also made doorposts *of* olive wood, one-fourth *of the wall*. <sup>34</sup> And the two doors *were of* cypress wood; two panels *comprised* one folding door, and two panels *comprised* the other folding door. <sup>35</sup> Then he carved cherubim, palm trees, and open flowers *on them*, and overlaid *them* with gold applied evenly on the carved work.

The descriptions of the temple are, of course, all based upon the revelation of the Tabernacle. There can be no question that the original Tabernacle of Moses would have been available and in use throughout the life of David as well as in the early reign of Solomon. It was David who made the plans and preparations for the construction of the Temple, and it was the Lord who demanded that David give this task to his son, Solomon. Thus, the use of the iconography and the pictures would surely be based upon the images used

within the Tabernacle. This fact is of great import as we see the fallacious assumptions of the skeptics run rampant. Zondervan's Illustrated Bible Backgrounds Commentary displays the problem:

Cherubim (6:23–28). Winged sphinxes or cherub figures from religious and royal iconography in Egypt, Mesopotamia, and the Levant correspond nicely to the creatures described in the temple's Most Holy Place (see comment on 8:7). A wall relief at Mari depicts such creatures flanking a fertile tree of life, as a divine being summons the king.<sup>110</sup> Several of the north Syrian temples yielded stone cherubim that are reminiscent of the ones described in this passage. They crouch at the entrance of the temples in order, it would seem, to reinforce the fearful power of the deity and to demarcate the perimeter of his presence. The cherubim and the ark in the innermost part of the temple most likely represented the footstool of Yahweh.

Here as elsewhere, Solomon seems to have appropriated elements from surrounding cultures and put them in the service of Yahweh. The Israelites encountered God's strength and majesty through the iconography and artistic vocabulary that was widely known in their day. It would have evoked in the worshiper both reverence and a set of associations hearkening back to the *axis mundi*, the meeting point between heaven and earth, and even the perfect splendor of Eden itself.

He carved cherubim, palm trees and open flowers (6:29). The ornate carvings of flowers, vines, rosettes, and the palmette or tree of life combine to evoke images of paradise. These motifs are ubiquitous in ancient Near Eastern temples and are attested in the sacred architecture of the region as late as the seventh century A.D. Many of the temples in the ancient world were built within sacred groves as evidenced by pits and acorns in temple courtyards and lush vegetation in temple scenes depicted in a considerable number of Egyptian and Assyrian reliefs.

Israelite worshipers, regardless of status, would doubtless have a sense of wonder as they approached the temple, elevated as it was above a sacred grove built with perfect symmetry. It was the cosmic center of the universe, where Yahweh met his people.<sup>68</sup>

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68. Monson, John M. "1 Kings." In *1 & 2 Kings, 1 & 2 Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther*, vol. 3 of *Zondervan Illustrated Bible Backgrounds Commentary: Old Testament*, edited by John H. Walton, 1–110. Accordance electronic edition, version 1.9. 5 vols. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2009.

The absurd assumptions of work done by Christian secularists are breathtaking. The assumption is just naturally made that, due to similarities, that it is King Solomon who was “borrowing” these ideas from other cultures. Yet, no argument is ever made for this; it is always just the blind assumption of the secularist that it is the Hebrew people are borrowing from the various pagan cultures that surround them. This is, of course, fraught with error. First, each of these cultures sprang forth from some progenitor that was first given their national identity in Genesis 11 at the table of nations. They all would have carried a collective memory from what was passed down from Shem, Ham, and Japheth. From that point on it is beyond question that the ancient Hebrew people kept alive what these creatures looked like, and their relationship to the service of the Holy God. Moses, of course, directed the initial construction of the tabernacle that also included the imagery of the cherubim which, as was already noted, Solomon was in possession of to guide his building project.

Refutation of this type of anti-biblical thinking is truly at the heart of this entire work. The assumption that the Israelites in general, and the biblical authors specifically, were simply borrowing one pagan statue and symbol after another is wholly unfair to the biblical text. Furthermore, a sober study of the greater portion of the second temple literature will prove that the Jewish world had a concrete and entirely self-sustained angelology. Their angelology was not built upon the pagan imagination, but based block-by-block, brick-by-brick, and word-by-word on the authority of Scripture alone.

## 1 Kings 13:18

<sup>18</sup> He said to him, “I too *am* a prophet as you *are*, and an angel spoke to me by the word of the LORD, saying, ‘Bring him back with you to your house, that he may eat bread and drink water.’” (He was lying to him.)

This passage chronicles the claims of a false prophet who is lying to tempt a true prophet to disobey God. This false prophet makes a point of great importance in the context of his deception. First, he claims to be a prophet just as the true prophet is. Thus, he is not claiming to be a prophet of some other deity, he is not claiming to be a pagan prophet – he claims to be a true prophet of Jehovah. The next point is the manner of revelation. It was this deceiver’s lie that points out how it was expected that the prophets of this era received their revelation. This false prophet claims that an angel spoke to

him by the word of the Lord. This translation is difficult. The NET Bible gives the clearer translation that gets to the meaning of the text by conveying this: “And an angel has told me in a message from the Lord.” This clears up the clunky way in which the other major translations dealt with the text.

The lie of the false prophet is then believed by the true prophet. This indicates that this is indeed the standard expectation of the way in which the Lord was revealing information to His prophets. The use of angelic agency to bring messages directly from the mouth of the Lord is seen throughout the later prophets, but it is very meaningful to the modern reader to note that this manner of communication was expected even before the days of the writing prophets. Angels were used by God to convey His messages directly to designated human recipients.

## 1 Chronicles 21:1

<sup>1</sup>Now Satan stood up against Israel, and moved David to number Israel.

This verse is profound in its importance. It has already been noted that angelology is not a major theme of the Old Testament compared to the more prominent themes of Theology proper, Christology, and the like. Demonology is even less frequently in view, yet this text shows that while demons are not mentioned with regularity their existence and purpose were fully understood and accepted by the writers of scripture. This passage gives insight into the nature of these demons and the kind of work which they were set to accomplish.

The subject of this sentence is translated here as Satan. In the book of Job, the word *satan* is preceded by the article...giving this word a sense of being an office or an official designation of some kind. However, in this verse, *satan* appears without the definite article. The word *satan* of course means adversary, enemy, or accuser. However, in absence of the article this use can be translated in one of two ways. It could be that this accuser is totally non-designated as anyone in particular. This would lead to the interpretation that this is an unnamed fallen angel seeking to stand against Israel or perhaps some human adversary to Israel who influenced David. This is the position taken by the translators of the NET Bible explained in the following note:

The parallel text in 2 Sam 24:1 says, “The LORD’s anger again raged against Israel and he incited David against them, saying: ‘Go, count Israel

and Judah!” The version of the incident in the Book of 2 Samuel gives an underlying theological perspective, while the Chronicler simply describes what happened from a human perspective. Many interpreters and translations render the Hebrew שָׂטָן as a proper name here, “Satan” (NEB, NASB, NIV, NRSV). However, the Hebrew term שָׂטָן, which means “adversary,” is used here without the article. Elsewhere when it appears without the article, it refers to a personal or national adversary in the human sphere, the lone exception being Num 22:22, 32, where the angel of the Lord assumes the role of an adversary to Balaam. When referring elsewhere to the spiritual entity known in the NT as Satan, the noun has the article and is used as a title, “the Adversary” (see Job 1:6–9, 12; 2:1–4, 6–7; Zech 3:1–2). In light of usage elsewhere the adversary in 1 Chr 21:1 is likely a human enemy, probably a nearby nation whose hostility against Israel pressured David into numbering the people so he could assess his military strength. For compelling linguistic and literary arguments against taking the noun as a proper name here, see S. Japhet, *I & II Chronicles* (OTL), 374–75.<sup>69</sup>

While this line of thinking is interesting, it is far from compelling. Quite to the contrary the weight of historical interpretation and the special use of *satan* seems to side clearly with that interpretation taken by every other major translation. Merrill offers a more convincing case:

21:1 (|| 2 Sam 24:1) The theological quandary of Yahweh’s direct involvement in inciting David to undertake the census is softened somewhat by the Chronicler who introduces Satan (שָׂטָן, “adversary”) as the instigator of David’s sinful census rather than Yahweh (as in Samuel).<sup>69</sup> This is the only time in the Old Testament that “Satan” appears without the definite article, thus construing the term as a proper noun as is common in Second Temple Jewish and New Testament literature. The attack is “against Israel” and not David, but David becomes the vehicle through whom damage can be done to the nation. Sailhamer sees the vast differences in the twin accounts as inter-biblical interpretation by the Chronicler “that draws both on the terminology and themes of the biblical sources. The sense, as the Chronicler saw it, was that David had sinned and, as in the days of old and Solomon’s kingdom after him, Israel was

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69. Harris, W. Hall, eds. *The NET Bible Notes*. 2nd ed. Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2019.

threatened by invasion from their enemies because of the disobedience of their leaders.”<sup>70</sup>

With the understanding well in place that Satan is in view many important observations need to be made. First, the Scripture demands that there is one chief personal embodiment of rebellion against the Lord. This first of the fallen is mentioned in scripture by the simple name Satan, or Accuser, and he is known obviously to the original reader.

The next major point to note is that Satan is at enmity against God and therefore due to his rebellion against the Most High he also stands against Israel. This clarifies that the direction and goal of the fallen angels is to oppose those who are part of His plan. Put another way, anti-Semitism is always a major part of the Satanic scheme. It is always his goal to try and oppose or separate Israel from faithfulness to God’s promises, plan, and personality. He “stands up” to make this case. This is not secret, nor covert, this is his open intention and it is clearly known both to Israel, and before all the majesty of the Celestial court above.

The action of Satan is also made plain. While he “stands against” Israel, he *moves* David. Now, it must be noted that God holds David singularly responsible for his choice and action to submit to this Satanic influence. Yet we cannot say that Satan’s influence is minimal, or else it would not be mentioned in the text. Satan’s strategy to attack Israel is always his standing strategy against God. Just as his only venue of attack in the Garden of Eden was to make them question God’s word and character, so it is here. Satan exercised external influence upon David and enticed him to count up his own military resources so that he would rely upon his own power, ability, and might. Satan works by influencing the free will of man to place confidence anywhere but in God.

## 2 Chronicles 32:21

<sup>21</sup>Then the LORD sent an angel who cut down every mighty man of valor, leader, and captain in the camp of the king of Assyria. So he returned shamefaced to his own land. And when he had gone into the temple of his god, some of his own offspring struck him down with the sword there.

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70. Merrill, Eugene H., *A Commentary on 1 & 2 Chronicles*. Kregel Exegetical Library. Accordance electronic ed. Grand Rapids: Kregel Publications, 2015.

This final incident in the historical books is perhaps the most fantastic. The Lord, in defense of His chosen people Israel sends a celestial messenger down from his place in heaven to destroy all the warriors significant to the Assyrian army. This is such a unique case in scripture, or at least the lifting of the heavenly veil is so rare, that it deserves attention. This angel directly interfered by destroying individual men in the enemy camp; not just some, but every person of power and influence in their gathered forces. This shows that the angelic forces can, in God's plan and timing, interact meaningfully, powerfully, and violently with humans. This final instance supplies the understand that this type of event in the Pseudepigrapha is not unfounded, nor biblically unreasonable. It displays the reality that the fantastic angelic interactions with those who dwell upon the earth in the book of Revelation are grounded in biblical history and revealed angelic patterns.

### Conclusion

Again, the Holy Writ makes it absolutely plain that the message and revelation regarding angels is consistent from Genesis to Revelation. The larger scope of the extra-biblical writings will prove that this understanding of angels was ready and common in the world of ancient Israel and the biblical text stands as clear evidence this fact apart from any external evidence. The truth of the matter is that one must make wild assumptions in order to attack the simple reality of the biblical revelation regarding these celestial beings. The overused unsubstantiated claims that the Bible simply borrows from other cultures must be put to rest from both internal and external evidence...the Bible presents for itself an entirely consistent perspective on the existence, meaning, and purposes of the celestial beings, both fallen and elect.

Joshua				
Reference	Summary	Action	Elect or Fallen	Angel of the LORD
5:13–15	Commander of the Army of the Lord	Appearance	Elect or Fallen	?

Judges				
Reference	Summary	Action	Elect or Fallen	Angel of the LORD
2:1–4	AoJ Confirms covenant	Revelation	Elect	Y
5:23	"Curse Meroz" (AoJ)	Command	Elect	Y
6:11–21	Charge Gideon	Revelation	Elect	Y
13:3–6	AoJ Promises Birth of Samson	Revelation	Elect	Y

1 & 2 Samuel				
Reference	Summary	Action	Elect or Fallen	Angel of the LORD
1 Sam. 19:9	Saul plagued by a distressing Spirit	Influence	Fallen	N
1 Sam. 29:9	David compared to Angel	Comparison	Elect	N
2 Sam. 14:17,20	David compared to Angel	Comparison	Elect	N
2 Sam. 19:27	David compared to Angel	Comparison	Elect	N
2 Sam. 24:16–17	AoJ Destroying the People; relents	Judgment	Elect	Y

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1 & 2 Kings				
Reference	Summary	Action	Elect or Fallen	Angel of the LORD
1 Kngs 6	Temple decorated with Cherubs	Images	Elect	N
1 Kngs 13:18	False prophet lies claiming angelic message	n/a	n/a	N
1 Kngs 19:5, 7	AoJ Prepares food for Elijah	Encouragement	Elect	Y
2 Kngs 1:3, 15	AoJ gives Elijah directions	Revelation	Elect	Y
2 Kngs 19:35	AoJ kills Assyrians	Judgment	Elect	Y

1 & 2 Chronicles				
Reference	Summary	Action	Elect or Fallen	Angel of the LORD
1 Chr. 21:1	Satan moves David to number Israel	Influence	Fallen	N
1 Chr. 21:12-30	AoJ to Judge Is. For David's sin	Judgment	Elect	Y
2 Chr. 32:21	Destroying the camp of the Assyrians	Judgment	Elect	N

## CHAPTER 6

# Angelology in the Book of Psalms

The Book of Psalms offers a wealth of information to enhance the study of angelology. These poems which constitute the national hymnal of the nation of Israel open the door to a deeper understanding of how critically important an understanding of angels was to the Israelite mind in every age and in every time. The examination of Job and the Pentateuch already displayed that Israel had a functioning understanding of God's celestial beings, both holy and fallen. Angelology developed in scripture due to the process of revelation, but was not changed from the earliest mention of the angelic world. The Psalms, however, offer special insight into the Jewish understanding of the angelic world. As the national hymnal and prayer book these divinely inspired poetic works show how deeply the idea of angels and demons filled the religious landscape of Israel. It is thus invaluable to this study as, in contrast to the historical records that focused more on the bare events from an earthly viewpoint, the Psalms demonstrate authoritatively that angels and demons were always a factor in the Jewish understanding of the unseen world of spiritual things.

### Psalm 8:4–5

<sup>4</sup> What is man that You are mindful of him,  
And the son of man that You visit him?

<sup>5</sup> For You have made him a little lower than the angels,  
And You have crowned him with glory and honor.

This psalm considers the wonderful reality that God Almighty, the Creator of Heaven and earth, maintains an intense and personal interest in

His human creations. This meditation is important to every human who takes into account that God is not only mindful of him, but also that He sent His Son Jesus Christ to pay the penalty for our sin while we were yet at enmity with Him. The majesty of this reflection is amplified by the comparison that is made to the celestial beings in relationship to man. Man is said to be made “a little lower” than these. But what, precisely, does this designation mean?

The word “angels” interprets the Hebrew word *Elohim*, which is often used for false gods, for angels, or for Yahweh. This causes some interpretive difficulty. Did God make us a little lower than Himself? Or did he make us a little lower than the angels as the NKJV translates it. Warren Wiersbe prefers the first option:

God Crowns Us (vv. 5–9). Why does God pay attention to “frail creatures of dust”? Because He has made them in His own image and they are special! Instead of humans being “a little higher than animals,” as science believes, they are actually “a little lower than God.” The word *elohim* can mean angelic creatures (see Heb. 2:7), but here it definitely means “God.” The Lord crowned Adam and Eve and gave them dominion over the other creatures (Gen. 1:26–27). We are coregents of creation with the Lord! The angels are servants (Heb. 1:14), but we are kings, and one day, all who have trusted Christ will be like Him (1 John 3:1–3; Rom. 8:29).<sup>71</sup>

Allen Ross agrees:

In verses 5 and 6 we have a description of just what God intended for mere mortals. First, the clarification is made that humans are not divine or supernatural beings. The text affirms that the LORD made man “a little lower than God.” The word “God” in this verse (אֱלֹהִים) has caused a good deal of debate. The word was translated as “angels” in the Greek version, but the word by itself is not normally used of angels. In modern translations it has been rendered “divine beings” or “supernatural beings” or “heavenly beings.” These appear to be another way of saying “angels.” Since verse 6 refers to Genesis 1:26, to the “image of God” specifically, it

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71. Wiersbe, Warren W., *Be Worshipful*. BE Series Commentary. Accordance electronic ed. Colorado Springs: David C. Cook, 2010.

may be best to leave “God” as the translation. The Creator made man less than divine.<sup>72</sup>

John Wesley favors the angelic position:

Verse 5. *For*—Thou hast in Christ mercifully restored man to his primitive estate, wherein he was but one remove below the angels; from which he was fallen by sin. *Crowned*—Man, fallen and lost man: who is actually restored to glory and dominion in Christ his head and representative, who received this crown and dominion for man’s good, and in his stead; which he will in due time communicate to his members.<sup>73</sup>

Hilber contends for the view of the Celestial court being in view:

Lower than the heavenly beings (8:5). The Hebrew word translated “heavenly beings” (*‘elohim*) can also be translated “God” (NASB). Here it may refer to the entire class of those who inhabit the heavenly realm, also called the council of “divine beings,” which would include both God and those creatures commonly called “angels” (see comments on 29:1; 82:1). While Mesopotamian myth relegated humans to a servile status beneath the divine beings, Psalm 8 places human dignity nearly equal to the council of the heavenly realm. As such, humans are divine representatives to rule over the earth (vv. 6–8). Thus, Psalm 8 is the poetic commentary on the creation of man and woman in Genesis 1:26–27.<sup>74</sup>

While both perspectives are perfectly acceptable from the standpoint of biblical theology the Septuagint weighs in as a most ancient witness to the viewpoint that this usage of the word *Elohim* should be understood as angels:

ἡλάττωσας αὐτὸν βραχὺ τι παρ’ ἀγγέλους, δόξῃ καὶ τιμῇ ἐστεφάνωσας αὐτόν.” (Psalm 8:6 LXX)

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72. Ross, Allen P., *A Commentary on the Psalms: Volume 1 (1–41)*. Kregel Exegetical Library. Accordance electronic ed. Grand Rapids: Kregel Publications, 2011.

73. Wesley, John, *Wesley’s Notes on the Bible*. Accordance electronic ed. Altamonte Springs: OakTree Software, 1997.

74. Hilber, John W. “Psalms.” In *The Minor Prophets, Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Songs*, vol. 5 of *Zondervan Illustrated Bible Backgrounds Commentary: Old Testament*, edited by John H. Walton, 316–464. Accordance electronic edition, version 1.9. 5 vols. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2009.

The translators of the Septuagint offer clear evidence that those closest to the text understood this to be comparing man to the *angelous* or the angels. This understanding also fits best within the context. The point is not to glorify man in comparison to God; the very point of the Psalm is the incomparable nature of His glory. To follow the astonishment that God even notices man with a statement that man is but a “little lower” than God would be counterintuitive to the flow and purpose of the text. To point out, however, the fact that mankind is lower than the angels enforces the purpose of the Psalm: Why would God occupy His attention with man when we are lower even than the angels? This increases the poetic drama and makes the most contextual sense.

These objections considered, what does it mean that man is “a little lower” than angels? It is clear that angels exist in the heavenly courtroom. These *elohim* participate in the Divine Council and are qualified to participate in the discussion of earthly events at the highest possible level. They stand in the presence of the Lord God Almighty and they are blessed to sit in that position of power and authority. By comparison man is limited by his physical position on the earth. While effected by Heaven’s decrees, and given access to the King of Heaven, mankind is not presently involved in the nature of the discussions and decisions of that Celestial realm. Humanity is lower because humans sit and await the judgments and movements of Heaven and then act responsively.

Angels, by contrast, are often involved in the divine discussion. They stand in the presence of God and can both approach and be immediately answered by Him. While man has been “crowned with glory” by being made the stewards of the earth having been created in God’s image, our estate is below that of the angels in authority, in wisdom, in beauty, and in estate.

## Psalm 18:10

<sup>10</sup> And He rode upon a cherub, and flew;  
He flew upon the wings of the wind.

This passage is so striking and problematic that many commentators will not even attempt to discuss it. Yet, while it is challenging it is important to the focus of this paper. The descriptions of cherubim are striking, shocking and amazing on nearly every front. Whether these amazing beings are

protecting the garden of Eden or guarding the holiness of God in the very throne room of God, they are ever regarded as the very peak of God's creative work and majesty.

The act of riding these majestic creations shows God's absolute dominance over all things, and His absolute authority over every power and authority on heaven and upon the earth. The fact that God rode is another illusion to the incarnation of Jesus Christ, but the ultimate meaning of this passage is plain: that which is of the most magnificent and awe-filled reality from the human perspective and viewpoint is but a method of conveyance for the Almighty God of all Creation.

### Psalm 78:25

<sup>25</sup> Men ate angels' food;  
He sent them food to the full.

This reference cites the Exodus and God's provision for the people of Israel in the Manna. Manna is a miracle of God's provision that is one of the major miracles of all of scripture. One can view this verse some sort of figurative expression, yet it is so curious that it causes the critical mind to wonder: Do the angels eat

While this is a matter impossible to resolve based upon information available to us now, it is beyond question that the Holy Scriptures provide for the reader a constant reminder that we know only a sliver of all that the Lord will reveal to us in the unfolding ages to come. However, as was examined previously, angels were shown hospitality by both Abraham and Lot and this involved food preparation, and thus the strong implication of consumption is unavoidable. Thus, it is in nowise unreasonable to assume that not only do angels consume food, but that food was shared for a brief time with the people of Israel in the time of the Exodus.

### Psalms 78:49

<sup>49</sup> He cast on them the fierceness of His anger,  
Wrath, indignation, and trouble,  
By sending angels of destruction *among them*.

Psalm 78 details the Exodus and the plagues upon Egypt. It then gives a new perspective on the Exodus itself. The plagues of the Exodus were pronounced by Moses, but God was the one who brought the judgements. Yet this text shows that God did not bring the plagues upon Egypt through direct agency. Quite to the contrary, it seems that God utilized angelic agency for the execution of these judgments. The angels are, in this passage, sent by God and are called, in the Hebrew: מְלַאכֵי רָעִים. The subject, angels, is plural and is in construct with an adjectival use of the word *ra*. The NKJV translates this as “angels of destruction.” The ESV, NIV, and NASB2020 take a participial adjectival sense translating this “destroying angels”. The NET Bible removes the angelic persons altogether applying the whole phrase “messengers that bring destruction” as a description of God’s wrath. Disregarding the NET Bible as the outlier, the Septuagint translates this simply as “evil angels” which is, of course, most natural to the Hebrew.

One suspects that again the idea of God commanding the fallen angels was theologically uncomfortable to the translators and the translation tradition and thus inspired them to opt for the less natural rendering. However, the biblical text is far more comfortable with this picture than are its translators. This passage paints the same picture as the rest of scripture. Both good and evil angels are in heaven, and both must obey God’s commands. God has the capability to use whatever angel to accomplish whatever task pleases Him. In this case it seems that the trumpet blasts in heaven free bound angels and demonic forces, just as is demonstrated in Revelation 9–10.

### Psalm 80:1

Give ear, O Shepherd of Israel,  
You who lead Joseph like a flock;  
You who dwell *between* the cherubim, shine forth!

This is clearly a statement describing the Tabernacle and the Lord’s placement of angelic beings throughout. The Lord’s placement between the Cherubim are later to be witnessed by Isaiah and John, yet at this point the Tabernacle is likely the point to declare the heavenly truth of the nature of the Lord’s throne room.

Psalm 82

A Psalm of Asaph.

<sup>1</sup> God stands in the congregation of the mighty;

He judges among the gods.

<sup>2</sup> How long will you judge unjustly,

And show partiality to the wicked?

Selah

<sup>3</sup> Defend the poor and fatherless;

Do justice to the afflicted and needy.

<sup>4</sup> Deliver the poor and needy;

Free *them* from the hand of the wicked.

<sup>5</sup> They do not know, nor do they understand;

They walk about in darkness;

All the foundations of the earth are unstable.

<sup>6</sup> I said, “You *are* gods,

And all of you *are* children of the Most High.

<sup>7</sup> But you shall die like men,

And fall like one of the princes.”

<sup>8</sup> Arise, O God, judge the earth;

For You shall inherit all nations.

This passage is another door into the throne room of God. While some have argued for the interpretation that these “mighty” are the mighty among men – kings and princes – the clear and natural reading of the text is that the Lord is judging amongst his angelic court – the Sons of God. The evidence for this is in the language. The word translated “might” is *el*, a word most frequently used for celestial beings and not for men. The word “gods” is also not in reference to men. Jesus refers to this passage, which has caused some consternation in thinking that these were men (which will be discussed in the final section of this paper) but we must recognize that this psalm as given to the original audience could not be understood as less than the god’s of the nations – or the divine council.

These celestial beings are being judged for their mismanagement of God’s creation. They were meant to rule over the nations and principalities in full subjection to God, yet they failed to honor God and brought about nothing but injustice and unrest. Thus, their future judgment is proclaimed. Just as

men die and leave this world, so these angelic beings have a judgment ahead of them because of their failure to follow and revere the Lord God Almighty.

The final call of this passage exhorts God to come and take action, for mankind can do nothing to interfere or influence the actions of those angelic beings who were failing at their given assignments. This, again, makes sense in light of the angelic hosts being in view. This psalm reinforces the view that the Lord put celestial beings in place to rule over the nations. He gave them free will and will hold them eternally accountable for their actions. For the cause of their rebellion the Lake of Fire has been prepared.

### Psalm 89:5–8

- <sup>5</sup> And the heavens will praise Your wonders, O LORD;  
Your faithfulness also in the assembly of the saints.  
<sup>6</sup> For who in the heavens can be compared to the LORD?  
*Who* among the sons of the mighty can be likened to the LORD?  
<sup>7</sup> God is greatly to be feared in the assembly of the saints,  
And to be held in reverence by all *those* around Him.  
<sup>8</sup> O LORD God of hosts,  
Who *is* mighty like You, O LORD?  
Your faithfulness also surrounds You.

Psalm 89 confirms the reality that there are many in heaven. They are Sons of God, and they are mighty. However, none of these created beings are comparable to God. While they are created with power and authority and are active in the plan and reign of God, they are not “like” Him in the sense of being equal to Him in nature, authority, or character. They are still created beings, and while they would surely dazzle the human imagination, they are decidedly different from the Godhead. They are not to be compared to the Lord God, they are His creations, and they are fully accountable to Him.

### Psalm 91:11

- <sup>11</sup> For He shall give His angels charge over you,  
To keep you in all your ways.

This verse is clearly in the midst of a Messianic Psalm and is used by the Devil to tempt the Lord Jesus Christ. It shows, again, the nature of angels

who are given work to do here on the earth. In this case, it is pointing to the reality that Messiah will be under the protective guard of certain mighty angels. The Messiah's safety would be their business...much like personal guard of a high-ranking military officer or politician may have here on earth. Unbeknownst to the human author of this Psalm, the Messiah would be fully God, yet this gives more critical insight to the nature of God's plan and purpose for the angelic majesty.

Jesus Christ had no need of a defender. In His unlimited knowledge and power there was no force on Heaven or earth that could bring him to unwilling harm. Yet, the Lord used angels to protect Him. This is a powerful illustration about how God uses his creatures to do His will and fully reveal His character. While angelic protection was not necessary, it honored God that His angelic creatures would do His bidding. He does not need them, but chooses to use them. This reality provides great insight for those in the Church who serve Him today.

#### Psalm 99:1

<sup>1</sup>The LORD reigns;  
Let the peoples tremble!  
He dwells *between* the cherubim;  
Let the earth be moved!

This is another reference to the Tabernacle and Temple – and the heavenly reality displayed therein.

#### Psalm 103:20

<sup>20</sup>Bless the LORD, you His angels,  
Who excel in strength, who do His word,  
Heeding the voice of His word.

Here the angels of the Lord are said to increase in strength. They are able to become more mighty because they are correctly related to the LORD God, the source of all true power and might. Also, the elect angels (“His angels”) show how they became elect – by choosing to obey His word. This is another powerful point about the nature of the angelic world. God created all angels good, chose them and appointed them to their various purposes and avenues

of service. The Lord is, consequently, maximally glorified when things go as He designed; though He is also fully glorified in the punishment of those who choose to rebel and reject their elect status.

### Psalm 104:4

<sup>4</sup>Who makes His angels spirits,  
His ministers a flame of fire.

This verse, quoted in the book of Hebrews, gives the nature of the celestial beings. While humans and animals are defined in relationship to the material world and experience a largely static experience within it as physical beings, the angels are of an entirely different nature. While they are able to appear as physically present in bodies, as has been previously seen, they can interact with the physical world in every way a human being can, yet they are of a spiritual nature. This does not mean they are ghosts; it only means that they are not limited by the physical reality in the same way that humans are.

The two pictures bring remarkable clarity to what the Psalmist is revealing. The statement that they are spirits brings to mind, in the original language, the image of breath or wind. Thus, an angel is to be understood as airy or wind-like. They effect the world, and are most certainly present, every bit as much as wind is present and effects the world, but not limited by our human experience with being so strictly tied to the earth in such a profound way. They move differently throughout the world than humans do. This produces the image of the Angels ascending and descending the staircase which was revealed to Jacob. Angels do move about, and are limited in both time and space, however, they do not strictly share the physical limitations of humanity.

The next image is also effective. Like a “flame of fire” does not refer to the destructive power of fire, but to the nature of fire. When fire burns at the end of a stick or at a campfire it is beautiful, visible, and powerful. However, it has no discernable physical presence. One cannot grab fire or put fire in a jar. We can only interact with the source of fire or the thing that is burning. We can be burned by the fire, but we cannot physically manipulate it as we could other basic physical substances and materials. This passage is important because it displays the relationship of angels to the physical world, and their proper place in the spiritual world.

## Conclusion

The Book of Psalms is a significant source of information in every major area of theology. The area of angelology is no exception. From these inspired texts the reader is exposed to the reality, duty, and nature of the angelic world. It also clearly reinforces many of the most important features of the nature of angelic interaction with, and work in, the world. The Divine Council is described, and the nature in which the celestial beings can exercise individual will and bear the consequences of those choices is extraordinarily plain. The Psalms give a picture of celestial beings that reminds the reader of their important part and place in the plan of God.

Psalms				
Reference	Summary	Action	Elect or Fallen	Angel of the LORD
8:4-5	Man created lower	Created	Both	?
18:10	Jehovah rides a cherub	Transportation	Elect	N
34:7	AoJ camps around	Protection	Elect	Y
35:5-6	Angel of the Lord pursues	Judgment	Elect	Y
78:25	Mana is angel's food	Eating	Elect	N
78:49	Angels of destruction	Judgment	Unclear	N
80:1	Jehovah dwells between Cherubs	Ark reference	Elect	N
82	The divine council	CB's Judged	Both	N
89	Comparison to celestial beings	Comp. w/ God	Both	N
91:11	Angels have charge over Messiah	Protection	Elect	N
99:1	Jehovah dwells between cherubs	Ark reference	Elect	N
103:20	Worship/praise	Worship	Elect	N
104:4	Angels are spirits - compared to flames	Description	Elect	N

## Part I: Angelology in the Old Testament

# Angelology in the Major and Minor Prophets

The descriptions of angels in the Old Testament Prophets are striking. One would expect, as many secular scholars suggest, that the writing of the prophets was heavily influenced by the angelology of the ANE cultures around them; most of all, by that of Babylon and Persia. Yet, the biblical text shows the exact opposite of this to be the case. The prophets add very little to the concept, nature, and duty of angels. The things they reveal are important, to be sure. There is not, however, any new kinds of celestial beings being introduced. Occasionally the clarity surrounding these beings is increased, but by and large they differ very little from the angelic appearances that have appeared hitherto in Holy Scripture as the following analyses will show.

## Isaiah 6:1–7

<sup>1</sup> In the year that King Uzziah died, I saw the Lord sitting on a throne, high and lifted up, and the train of His *robe* filled the temple. <sup>2</sup> Above it stood seraphim; each one had six wings: with two he covered his face, with two he covered his feet, and with two he flew. <sup>3</sup> And one cried to another and said:

“Holy, holy, holy *is* the LORD of hosts;  
The whole earth *is* full of His glory!”

<sup>4</sup> And the posts of the door were shaken by the voice of him who cried out, and the house was filled with smoke.

<sup>5</sup> So I said:

“Woe *is* me, for I am undone!  
Because I *am* a man of unclean lips,  
And I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips;  
For my eyes have seen the King,  
The LORD of hosts.”

<sup>6</sup> Then one of the seraphim flew to me, having in his hand a live coal *which* he had taken with the tongs from the altar. <sup>7</sup> And he touched my mouth *with it*, and said:

“Behold, this has touched your lips;  
Your iniquity is taken away,  
And your sin purged.”

In this passage the reader encounters a newly titled celestial being. This new creature is called a *seraph* in the singular and *seraphim* in the plural. This title is peculiar to the writing of Isaiah. These creatures are remarkable flying creatures described by Isaiah as having six wings that are used to fly, as well as covering feet and face. These creatures are constantly repeating a refrain about the holiness of the Lord. A seraph is also the one who provides Isaiah with the living coal for his purification.

Eerdman’s Dictionary states:

Heavenly beings seen by Isaiah in his inaugural vision (Isa. 6:1–7), probably so called because they shone brightly like fire (from Heb. *šāp*, “to burn”). Seraphim have six wings: two for covering their faces, lest they look directly at God; two for covering their “feet” (a euphemism for the genitals, which speaks of modesty and warns against the Canaanite fertility cult); and two for flying. When Isaiah complains of his unclean lips, the seraphs purify him with a coal taken from the altar.

The seraphim were most likely serpentine in shape, as suggested by the “fiery (NRSV ‘poisonous’) serpents” sent to bite the Israelites when they complained in the wilderness (Num. 21:6; Deut. 8:15); here the name may refer to their shiny skins or to the burning pain associated with their bites. Moses is instructed to fashion a bronze serpent (*šāraṭ*) and mount it on a pole (Num. 21:8–9); it was still in the temple at the time of Isaiah’s

call (2 Kgs. 18:4). Isaiah twice refers to “flying fiery seraphs” or “serpents” (Isa. 14:29; 30:6), mythological creatures rather than the heavenly seraphim. Excavations have unearthed a number of scarab seals with winged serpents, some from the approximate time of Isaiah. In addition, winged serpents surround the throne of Pharaoh in Egyptian art (cf. Isa. 6, a vision of the heavenly king on his throne).<sup>75</sup>

Easton’s Bible Dictionary equates the serpentine allusion to the poison serpents which God used to punish the Israelites in the desert:

...mentioned in Isa. 6:2, 3, 6, 7. This word means fiery ones, an allusion, as is supposed, to their burning love. They are represented as “standing” above the King as he sat upon his throne, ready at once to minister unto him. Their form appears to have been human, with the addition of wings. (See ANGEL.) This word, in the original, is used elsewhere only of the “fiery serpents” (Num. 21:6, 8; Deut. 8:15; comp. Isa. 14:29; 30:6) sent by God as his instruments to inflict on the people the righteous penalty of sin.<sup>76</sup>

The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia has perhaps the best entry:

Ezekiel’s cherubim are clearly related to the seraphim in Isaiah’s inaugural vision (Isa 6). Like the cherubim, the seraphim are the attendants on God as He is seated upon a throne high and exalted; they are also winged creatures: with twain they cover their faces, and with twain they cover their feet, and with twain they fly. Like the Levites in the sanctuary below, they sing a hymn of adoration: “Holy, holy, holy, is Jehovah of hosts: the whole earth is full of his glory.” In the Book of Enoch, the cherubim, seraphim, and ophanim (wheels), and all the angels of power constitute the “host of God,” the guardians of His throne, the singers of praise ascribing blessedness to “the Lord of Spirits,” with the archangel Gabriel at their head (see 20:7; Ch.40; 61:10 f; 71:7). And so in the Jewish daily liturgy the seraphim, ophanim, and “living creatures” constitute the heavenly choir who, the elect ministers of the Living God, ready to do the

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75. Nelson, Jr, William B. Freedman, David Noel, Allen C. Myers, and Astrid B. Beck, eds. *Eerdmans Dictionary of the Bible*. Accordance electronic ed., version 3.8. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2000.

76. Easton, M. G. *Easton’s Bible Dictionary*. Accordance electronic ed., version 3.5. Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1897.

will of their maker with trembling, intone in sweet harmony the Thrice-holy. In the Talmud, the cherubim are represented as having the likeness of youths (with a fanciful etymology,  $\text{כְּ}$  plus  $\text{רִיב}$ , “like a youth”; *Sukka* 5b; *Hag* 13b), while, according to the Midrash, they have no definite shape, but appear indifferently as men or women, or as spirits and angelic beings (*Gen rabba* 21).<sup>77</sup>

While it is possible that Isaiah uses the word seraph to describe the creatures other biblical authors describe as cherubs, there does seem to be enough difference that these creatures are unique. It is fascinating to see the lengths to which people will go to try to make these creatures the same. God’s holy court does not always need to be the same, just as any earthly ruler may change the effects, personalities, and decoration of the royal court based upon the occasion. There truly is no struggle to explain this. It could be that those fortunate witnesses of the heavenly scene focused upon different beings, or that only certain types of celestial beings were present at the moment of their visit. This makes even more sense when the creation of the celestial beings by fiat is brought into focus. There is no reason to assume that the Lord doesn’t have various beings fulfilling the role of guarding and declaring His holiness at various times.

The specific identification of these amazing creatures aside, it is easy to draw the most important information from this account. These creatures have multiple sets of wings, and are fiery in appearance. They also use their wings to show reverence for the Lord by covering face and feet, showing the need for constant reverence in the presence of the Lord.

Their cry also shows their purpose. These beings were created by God to show Him reverence and declare His holiness. The holiness of God has to do with God’s separateness, or complete independence from, and uniqueness among all of His creatures. These angels were placed in heaven to remind all of creation that there is none like unto God and none will ever be like Him. This may be in response to the reality that the angels who rebelled against God thought themselves to be more like unto the LORD than not. Thus, desiring to rebel against Him they elevated themselves to the position of holiness that only He is qualified to occupy. These majestic creatures sit in testimony of the truth of God’s complete “otherness.”

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77. Carver, William Owen. Orr, James, ed. *International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*. Accordance electronic ed., version 2.5. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1915.

Isaiah 14:12–15

12 “How you are fallen from heaven,  
 O Lucifer, son of the morning!  
*How* you are cut down to the ground,  
 You who weakened the nations!  
 13 For you have said in your heart:  
 “I will ascend into heaven,  
 I will exalt my throne above the stars of God;  
 I will also sit on the mount of the congregation  
 On the farthest sides of the north;  
 14 I will ascend above the heights of the clouds,  
 I will be like the Most High.  
 15 Yet you shall be brought down to Sheol,  
 To the lowest depths of the Pit.

This passage is, of course, not without controversy. This is clearly part of an address to the king of Babylon; who would be a meaningful figure indeed to the original audience. It would also bring much comfort to Ezekiel’s readership. However, this prophecy also seems to reveal much more about the force which empowers Babylon – the Fallen One – Satan. One proponent of the view that this passage does not have Satan in view is Adam Clarke:

Verse 12. *O Lucifer, son of the morning.* The Versions in general agree in this translation, and render היככ *heilel* as signifying Lucifer, φωσφωρος, the morning star, whether Jupiter or Venus; as these are both bringers of the morning light, or morning stars, annually in their turn. And although the context speaks explicitly concerning Nebuchadnezzar, yet this has been, I know not why, applied to the chief of the fallen angels, who is most incongruously denominated Lucifer, (the bringer of light!) an epithet as common to him as those of Satan and Devil. That the Holy Spirit by his prophets should call this arch-enemy of God and man the light-bringer, would be strange indeed. But the truth is, the text speaks nothing at all concerning Satan nor his fall, nor the occasion of that fall, which many divines have with great confidence deduced from this text. O how necessary it is to understand the literal meaning of Scripture, that preposterous comments may be prevented! Besides, I doubt much whether our translation be correct. הקלל *heilel*, which we translate Lucifer,

comes from קלל *yalal*, yell, howl, or shriek, and should be translated, “Howl, son of the morning;” and so the Syriac has understood it; and for this meaning Michaelis contends: see his reasons in Parkhurst, under הלל *halal*.<sup>78</sup>

Rydelnik explains the opposing view:

Some have understood the words of 14:12–15 as an address to Satan, describing his fall. The support for this is found in Dn 10, where demons and angels are associated with nations, influencing the affairs of humanity. Hence, as the power behind Babylon, Satan’s fall is described as desiring to make himself like the Most High (v. 14). The difficulty with this interpretation, and what makes it unlikely, is that there is no change of address syntactically—it all appears to be addressed to the king of Babylon.<sup>79</sup>

Wiersbe explains further:

The prophet saw in this event something far deeper than the defeat of an empire. In the fall of the king of Babylon, he saw the defeat of Satan, the “prince of this world,” who seeks to energize and motivate the leaders of nations (John 12:31; Eph. 2:1–3). Daniel 10:20 indicates that Satan has assigned “princes” (fallen angels) to the various nations so that he can influence leaders to act contrary to the will of God.

This highest of God’s angels tried to usurp the throne of God and capture for himself the worship that belongs only to God (Matt. 4:8–10). The name “Lucifer” (“morning star”) indicates that Satan tries to imitate Jesus Christ, who is “the bright and morning star” (Rev. 22:16). “I will be like the Most High” reveals his basic strategy, for he is an imitator (Isa. 14:14; 2 Cor. 11:13–15). Like the king of Babylon, Satan will one day be humiliated and defeated. He will be cast out of heaven (Rev. 12) and finally cast into hell (20:10). Whether God is dealing with kings or angels,

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78. Clarke, Adam, *Adam Clarke’s Commentary on the Whole Bible*. Accordance electronic ed. Altamonte Springs: OakTree Software, 2004.

79. Rydelnik, Michael and James Spencer, *Isaiah*. Edited by Michael Rydelnik and Michael Vanlaningham. The Moody Bible Commentary. Chicago: Moody Publishers, 2014.

Proverbs 16:18 is still true: “Pride goes before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall” (NKJV).<sup>80</sup>

While it must be admitted that this passage is not referring to the head of the fallen angels so clearly as Ezekiel 28 it seems that Rydelnik and Wiersbe have a far stronger understanding based upon the content of the passage. This passage gives important information about the fall of Satan as well as possibly being the only passage to refer to the enemy by his proper name which he forfeits at his moment of rebellion (Hal’ail).

If indeed this passage is describing the fall of Satan it accurately describes Satan’s desire to usurp the place of Christ and rule over this Cosmos with unchecked and unquestioned authority. The most interesting thing about this passage is that the fallen one does not say he will BE the Most High, but that he will be *like* the Most High. This shows that perhaps there was a small limitation to the insanity of the Adversary. His desire to rule, not over all things, but only all things regarding this creation. This fact actually helps us understand the attack upon mankind. It seems clear that the evil one was jealous that the stewardship of the earth was given, not to him in all his glory, but to the earthly creations: mankind.

### Isaiah 37:16

<sup>16</sup> O LORD of hosts, God of Israel, *the One* who dwells *between* the cherubim, You *are* God, You alone, of all the kingdoms of the earth. You have made heaven and earth.

This, again, is an example of what is displayed in the Tabernacle and Temple, reflective of the Heavenly Court. It is interesting that Isaiah refers to the LORD in this way as he himself took note of the presence and actions of the seraphim. Yet, this shows that the cherubim could very well have been in heaven when Isaiah was; it was the seraphim that most interested him as it would be a seraph that purified him and qualified him for his divine mission.

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80. Wiersbe, Warren W., Be Comforted. BE Series Commentary. Accordance electronic ed. Colorado Springs: David C. Cook, 2010.

## Ezekiel 1

<sup>1</sup> Now it came to pass in the thirtieth year, in the fourth *month*, on the fifth *day* of the month, as I *was* among the captives by the River Chebar, *that* the heavens were opened and I saw visions of God. <sup>2</sup> On the fifth *day* of the month, which *was* in the fifth year of King Jehoiachin's captivity, <sup>3</sup> the word of the LORD came expressly to Ezekiel the priest, the son of Buzi, in the land of the Chaldeans by the River Chebar; and the hand of the LORD was upon him there.

<sup>4</sup> Then I looked, and behold, a whirlwind was coming out of the north, a great cloud with raging fire engulfing itself; and brightness *was* all around it and radiating out of its midst like the color of amber, out of the midst of the fire. <sup>5</sup> Also from within it *came* the likeness of four living creatures. And this *was* their appearance: they had the likeness of a man. <sup>6</sup> Each one had four faces, and each one had four wings. <sup>7</sup> Their legs *were* straight, and the soles of their feet *were* like the soles of calves' feet. They sparkled like the color of burnished bronze. <sup>8</sup> The hands of a man *were* under their wings on their four sides; and each of the four had faces and wings. <sup>9</sup> Their wings touched one another. *The creatures* did not turn when they went, but each one went straight forward.

<sup>10</sup> As for the likeness of their faces, *each* had the face of a man; each of the four had the face of a lion on the right side, each of the four had the face of an ox on the left side, and each of the four had the face of an eagle. <sup>11</sup> Thus *were* their faces. Their wings stretched upward; two *wings* of each one touched one another, and two covered their bodies. <sup>12</sup> And each one went straight forward; they went wherever the spirit wanted to go, and they did not turn when they went.

<sup>13</sup> As for the likeness of the living creatures, their appearance *was* like burning coals of fire, like the appearance of torches going back and forth among the living creatures. The fire was bright, and out of the fire went lightning. <sup>14</sup> And the living creatures ran back and forth, in appearance like a flash of lightning.

<sup>15</sup> Now as I looked at the living creatures, behold, a wheel *was* on the earth beside each living creature with its four faces. <sup>16</sup> The appearance of the wheels and their workings *was* like the color of beryl, and all four had the same likeness. The appearance of their workings *was*, as it were, a wheel in the middle of a wheel. <sup>17</sup> When they moved, they went toward any one of four directions; they did not turn aside when they went. <sup>18</sup> As

for their rims, they were so high they were awesome; and their rims *were* full of eyes, all around the four of them. <sup>19</sup> When the living creatures went, the wheels went beside them; and when the living creatures were lifted up from the earth, the wheels were lifted up. <sup>20</sup> Wherever the spirit wanted to go, they went, *because* there the spirit went; and the wheels were lifted together with them, for the spirit of the living creatures *was* in the wheels. <sup>21</sup> When those went, *these* went; when those stood, *these* stood; and when those were lifted up from the earth, the wheels were lifted up together with them, for the spirit of the living creatures *was* in the wheels.

<sup>22</sup> The likeness of the firmament above the heads of the living creatures *was* like the color of an awesome crystal, stretched out over their heads. <sup>23</sup> And under the firmament their wings *spread out* straight, one toward another. Each one had two which covered one side, and each one had two which covered the other side of the body. <sup>24</sup> When they went, I heard the noise of their wings, like the noise of many waters, like the voice of the Almighty, a tumult like the noise of an army; and when they stood still, they let down their wings. <sup>25</sup> A voice came from above the firmament that *was* over their heads; whenever they stood, they let down their wings.

<sup>26</sup> And above the firmament over their heads *was* the likeness of a throne, in appearance like a sapphire stone; on the likeness of the throne *was* a likeness with the appearance of a man high above it. <sup>27</sup> Also from the appearance of His waist and upward I saw, as it were, the color of amber with the appearance of fire all around within it; and from the appearance of His waist and downward I saw, as it were, the appearance of fire with brightness all around. <sup>28</sup> Like the appearance of a rainbow in a cloud on a rainy day, so *was* the appearance of the brightness all around it. This *was* the appearance of the likeness of the glory of the LORD.

So when I saw *it*, I fell on my face, and I heard a voice of One speaking.

Of all angelic encounters of scripture there is perhaps none so fantastic and amazing as those of Ezekiel. Twice the author encounters these amazing creatures, and twice they beguile the author's ability to describe in a way that will satisfy the reader. This is not owing to the shortcomings of the writer, nor of the divine writ, but it is simply indicative that there is no sufficient way to describe the amazing reality of the heavenly experience. For the saint of God, we must make observations that are possible from the information given and wait with bated breath to behold the glorious majesty of the

celestial beings with our own eyes in times yet to come. Zondervan's Illustrated Bible Background Commentary gives a typically secularized viewpoint:

Four living creatures (1:5). It seems that in the elaboration of his vision Ezekiel takes as a model the gigantic cherubic quadrupeds well known in Assyrian and Babylonian iconographic and glyptic art. These hybrid creatures protected the entrance into temples or palaces. The colossal Assyrian composite creatures unearthed during archaeological excavations provide a fitting example. They have been excavated at the site of ancient Nimrud, where they guarded the doorways to the palace of Ashurnasirpal II (883–859 B.C.). One of these is a winged bull with a human head and the other with a body of a lion.

Ezekiel constantly repeats the expression that it “looked like” (something), indicating his unwillingness to commit himself to the substantial identity of the seen with the compared. It looked like fire, living creatures, a human being, but that is not to say that these items were actually there. These buffer terms indicate that this is only a “vision.” An exact parallel is found in the dream report of a Hittite queen: “In a dream something like my father has risen again alive.”

Each of the four had the face of a man ... lion ... ox ... eagle (1:10). Two elements are combined here in order to convey universal power over which God reigns: the number four (see sidebar on “The Significance of the Number ‘Four’”) and the different faces. The head of the animal should in some way recall the qualities attributed to the divinity itself. The “lion” symbolizes royalty, strength, and courage both in the biblical and in the ancient Near Eastern world (Judg. 14:18; 2 Sam. 1:23; 17:10). The “eagle” was the swiftest and the most high-flying of birds (Deut. 28:49; Isa. 40:31; Jer. 48:40). The “ox” was the most frequent symbol of fertility. It was the emblematic animal of the Northwest Semitic storm god Adad, the one who brought rain and with it renewed fertility of the land. (Ps. 106:19–20). The “human” is the most dignified and noble of all, being created in the image of God and ruling over all the creatures (Gen. 1:28; Ps. 8).

Two-faced gods, so-called Janus figures, however, are more common in Mesopotamia (*ANEP*, nos. 685, 687, 693). The symbolism of a two faced-god is offered in the following late description of the Phoenician god El, here called Kronos by Sanchuniathon:

[The god Tauthos] devised for Kronos as insignia of royalty four eyes, before and behind [of which two were waking] and two quietly closed; and on his shoulders four wings, of which two were as flying and two as folded. And the symbol meant that Kronos could see when asleep and sleep while awake; and similarly in the case of the wings, that he flew while at rest and was at rest when flying.

The major difference between the prophet's vision and Mesopotamian parallels is that Ezekiel's creatures have four different faces; for that we have no known analogues.

All four rims were full of eyes (1:18). The eyes with which the rims of the wheels are inlaid may signify the constant divine watchfulness. "Rims full of eyes" are comparable to the many "eye stones" that adorned the tiaras of the Assyrians' divine statues: "twenty-six 'eyestones' for the tiara of the god Nabû."<sup>81</sup>

While these parallels to other ancient cultures are interesting indeed it is amazing that the assumption is always that the biblical authors borrowed from secular paganism. It seems also to imply that the vision was somehow fraudulent, and Ezekiel was somehow writing non-literally. Yet, there are other possible explanations.

First of all, for all the similarities Ezekiel, who surely had seen these foreign gods never makes the comparison. Why not? If it were these creatures he was seeing, or something even very much like them, why would he not appeal to things that were most familiar to the popular imagination? It is clear that the author in no way equates these creatures with pagan religions.

Secondly, even a cursory examination of extra biblical writings will show that the Israelites were well informed that there were other angelic beings about which little or nothing was known, so there is no reason to constantly accuse the Israelites of borrowing and copying.

Finally, Israel was a nation of great importance in the reigns of David and Solomon, thus it is just as well to think that these other nations drew either upon what had originated in Israel, or upon some larger shared memory that had been passed down from the Antediluvian era. One way or the other it never fails to surprise that the biblical text, even in the mind of many academically inclined believers, is always guilty until proved innocent.

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81. Bodi, Daniel. "Ezekiel." In *Isaiah, Jeremiah, Lamentations, Ezekiel, Daniel*, vol. 4 of *Zondervan Illustrated Bible Backgrounds Commentary: Old Testament*, edited by John H. Walton, 400–518. Accordance electronic edition, version 1.9. 5 vols. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2009.

The Moody Bible Commentary offers a more conservative take on the passage:

1:5. The figures resembling four living beings are later identified as cherubim (cf. 10:1). Angels in this category have special access to God (cf. 28:14, 16) and serve as guardians of His holiness and His throne chariot (Gn 3:22–24). On the ark of the covenant, gold images of cherubim, with outstretched wings, guarded the mercy seat where the glory of the Lord was enthroned (Ex 25:17–22; Nm 7:89; 1Sm 4:4; 2Sm 6:2, Pss 80:1; 99:1; Is 37:16). Since the earthly tabernacle and temple were a copy of the heavenly reality (Heb 8:5), Ezekiel’s vision was a glimpse of the actual throne chariot of God borne by cherubim.

These figures had the appearance or likeness of human form. The terms “resembling” “appeared,” and “were like” are used in Ezk 12 times to emphasize that the descriptions are impressionistic because the vision is so difficult to describe (cf. vv. 5, 10, 16, 22, 26; 2:8; 8:2; 10:1; 10:10, 21–22; 23:15).

1:6–7. The angelic beings had human form but should not be mistaken for mortals. Each of the four living beings had four faces and four wings, enabling them to move in all directions as needed. Their legs were straight, implying they were standing upright. Their feet were like a calf’s hoof, perhaps indicating agility (Ps 29:6; Mal 4:2), and were like burnished bronze, seeming highly polished and not like ordinary animal hooves.

1:8–9. They had wings on four sides, as well as human hands, giving them both supernatural and natural characteristics. Two of the four wings of each one were outstretched so that their wings touched one another, forming a connecting square. Having faces on four sides of their heads, they could simultaneously see in all directions. They were able to travel straight in any direction and could change direction but did not turn, indicating the supernatural movement.

1:10. The front of each cherub was the face of a man, and on the right side was the face of a lion. The left side was the face of a bull, and the face of an eagle was apparently in the back (cf. Rv 4:7). Perhaps these images represent intelligence, courage, strength, and speed.

1:11. Two of the four wings on each cherub were spread out above, and were touching a wing of a cherub on either side, forming a square with a cherub at each corner. The other two wings on each cherub were

covering their bodies in reverence as they served the Lord in His holy presence (cf. 1:23; Is 6:1–3).

1:12. The cherubim always moved straight forward, so they could go in any direction without turning. Their movement was directed by the spirit (e.g., Gn 1:2; 6:3; Ex 31:3; Ps 139:7), a reference to the Holy Spirit of God’s guidance of these beings (cf. Ezk 1:20; Ex 13:21–22; Nm 9:15–23; Mt 4:1).

1:13–14. In the midst of the living beings was something . . . like burning coals of fire . . . like torches. This image of lightening . . . flashing from the fire and the urgency of the cherubim running to and fro like bolts of lightning indicate the power and urgency of God’s message.<sup>82</sup>

This picture of the Chariot of God’s throne is important to the recipients of Ezekiel’s message because they would witness the destruction of Solomon’s temple and must be reminded that the Lord’s throne was in no way threatened by that catastrophe. The mobility would also serve to remind them of God’s omnipresence and though they are out of the land as a result of God’s judgment they are never out of His sight and presence.

### Ezekiel 9:3

<sup>3</sup>Now the glory of the God of Israel had gone up from the cherub, where it had been, to the threshold of the temple. And He called to the man clothed with linen, who *had* the writer’s inkhorn at his side;

McGee gives brilliant insight into the nature and meaning of the presence and purpose of the cherub in this passage:

“Six men came from the way of the higher gate.” These six men are angels—I see no other explanation for them. Angels are used by God in the judgment of this world. They are associated with the nation Israel and have nothing to do with the church. On the Day of Pentecost the Holy Spirit came—*not* angels—and when the Lord Jesus Christ comes to take the church out of the world, there will be no angels with Him. However, when He comes to the earth to establish His kingdom, He will send forth His angels. We read in Matthew 13:41, “The Son of man shall send forth

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82. Dyer, Charles H. and Eva Rydelnik, *Ezekiel*. Edited by Michael Rydelnik and Michael Vanlaningham. The Moody Bible Commentary. Chicago: Moody Publishers, 2014.

his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity.” Then in Matthew 16:27: “For the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father with his angels; and then he shall reward every man according to his works.” Finally, Paul wrote: “And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ” (2 Thess. 1:7–8). After the third chapter in Revelation, there is no mention of the church which had been previously mentioned frequently. Why? The church is gone from the earth, and *angels* have taken over the judgment upon the earth.

“And the glory of the God of Israel was gone up from the cherub.” That is, it had gone up from the Holy Place. The “cherub” were above the mercy seat. This is where the glory had been, but now it lifts up. The glory was a token of the presence of God, and it is now departing.<sup>83</sup>

As McGee remarks, the cherub here is to draw the readers eye to the Temple; it was from the Temple that the Shekinah Glory had been removed and the glory of the Lord would not return again until the Lord Jesus Christ would enter the second Temple as a babe. This usage of familiar Jewish speech pattern uses the Cherub as standing in for the whole of the Temple.

## Ezekiel 10; 11:22

<sup>1</sup> And I looked, and there in the firmament that was above the head of the cherubim, there appeared something like a sapphire stone, having the appearance of the likeness of a throne. <sup>2</sup> Then He spoke to the man clothed with linen, and said, “Go in among the wheels, under the cherub, fill your hands with coals of fire from among the cherubim, and scatter *them* over the city.” And he went in as I watched.

<sup>3</sup> Now the cherubim were standing on the south side of the temple when the man went in, and the cloud filled the inner court. <sup>4</sup> Then the glory of the LORD went up from the cherub, *and paused* over the threshold of the temple; and the house was filled with the cloud, and the court was full of the brightness of the LORD’S glory. <sup>5</sup> And the sound of the wings

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83. McGee, J. Vernon, *Proverbs—Malachi*. Vol. III of Thru the Bible. Accordance electronic ed. Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1982.

of the cherubim was heard *even* in the outer court, like the voice of Almighty God when He speaks.

<sup>6</sup> Then it happened, when He commanded the man clothed in linen, saying, “Take fire from among the wheels, from among the cherubim,” that he went in and stood beside the wheels. <sup>7</sup> And the cherub stretched out his hand from among the cherubim to the fire that *was* among the cherubim, and took *some of it* and put *it* into the hands of the *man* clothed with linen, who took *it* and went out. <sup>8</sup> The cherubim appeared to have the form of a man’s hand under their wings.

<sup>9</sup> And when I looked, there were four wheels by the cherubim, one wheel by one cherub and another wheel by each other cherub; the wheels appeared *to have* the color of a beryl stone. <sup>10</sup> *As for* their appearance, all four looked alike—as it were, a wheel in the middle of a wheel. <sup>11</sup> When they went, they went toward *any of* their four directions; they did not turn aside when they went, but followed in the direction the head was facing. They did not turn aside when they went. <sup>12</sup> And their whole body, with their back, their hands, their wings, and the wheels that the four had, *were* full of eyes all around. <sup>13</sup> As for the wheels, they were called in my hearing, “Wheel.”

<sup>14</sup> Each one had four faces: the first face *was* the face of a cherub, the second face the face of a man, the third the face of a lion, and the fourth the face of an eagle. <sup>15</sup> And the cherubim were lifted up. This *was* the living creature I saw by the River Chebar. <sup>16</sup> When the cherubim went, the wheels went beside them; and when the cherubim lifted their wings to mount up from the earth, the same wheels also did not turn from beside them. <sup>17</sup> When *the cherubim* stood still, *the wheels* stood still, and when *one* was lifted up, *the other* lifted itself up, for the spirit of the living creature *was* in them.

<sup>18</sup> Then the glory of the LORD departed from the threshold of the temple and stood over the cherubim. <sup>19</sup> And the cherubim lifted their wings and mounted up from the earth in my sight. When they went out, the wheels *were* beside them; and they stood at the door of the east gate of the LORD’S house, and the glory of the God of Israel *was* above them. <sup>20</sup> This *is* the living creature I saw under the God of Israel by the River Chebar, and I knew they *were* cherubim. <sup>21</sup> Each one had four faces and each one four wings, and the likeness of the hands of a man *was* under their wings. <sup>22</sup> And the likeness of their faces *was* the same *as* the faces

which I had seen by the River Chebar, their appearance and their persons. They each went straight forward.

<sup>22</sup> So the cherubim lifted up their wings, with the wheels beside them, and the glory of the God of Israel *was* high above them.

This experience largely mirrors that of the first chapter. It reinforces the use of the amazing Celestial beings to move the cherubim and the dramatic and painful reality of what happened when the Lord's glory was removed from the Temple. Verse 20 confirms that these cherubim were the same as those he had seen before; but here, they were not going to approach God at the Temple sight until He chooses to return His glory to it.

Ezekiel 28:11–19

<sup>11</sup> Moreover the word of the LORD came to me, saying, <sup>12</sup> “Son of man, take up a lamentation for the king of Tyre, and say to him, “Thus says the Lord GOD:

“You *were* the seal of perfection,  
Full of wisdom and perfect in beauty.  
<sup>13</sup> You were in Eden, the garden of God;  
Every precious stone *was* your covering:  
The sardius, topaz, and diamond,  
Beryl, onyx, and jasper,  
Sapphire, turquoise, and emerald with gold.  
The workmanship of your timbrels and pipes  
Was prepared for you on the day you were created.

<sup>14</sup> You *were* the anointed cherub who covers;  
I established you;  
You were on the holy mountain of God;  
You walked back and forth in the midst of fiery stones.  
<sup>15</sup> You *were* perfect in your ways from the day you were created,  
Till iniquity was found in you.

<sup>16</sup> By the abundance of your trading  
You became filled with violence within,  
And you sinned;  
Therefore I cast you as a profane thing  
Out of the mountain of God;

And I destroyed you, O covering cherub,  
From the midst of the fiery stones.  
17 Your heart was lifted up because of your beauty;  
You corrupted your wisdom for the sake of your splendor;  
I cast you to the ground,  
I laid you before kings,  
That they might gaze at you.  
18 You defiled your sanctuaries  
By the multitude of your iniquities,  
By the iniquity of your trading;  
Therefore I brought fire from your midst;  
It devoured you,  
And I turned you to ashes upon the earth  
In the sight of all who saw you.  
19 All who knew you among the peoples are astonished at you;  
You have become a horror,  
And *shall be* no more forever.” ’ ’ ”

This passage is also not without controversy. Some teach that this passage relates only to the earthly king, just as with the passage in Isaiah. This passage, however, is even more clearly relating to the Fallen One as no human could even be said to fulfill these words in even the most flagrant, non-literal and poetic sense. The subject of this lament is clearly addressing the spiritual force, power, or personality that is empowering the King of Tyre.

This initial point is a very important observation as it shows that the fallen angels did, indeed have charge and influence over the nations. Though they have fallen, they seem to retain the responsibility given to them by God. This complicates the narrative of the fallen angels yet more. Yet, rarely is something made more true by unnecessary over-simplification. These celestial beings that were given charge over the various nations may have also been elect at the time of their being assigned responsibility over those nations at Genesis 12. They consequently may have fallen to the power and authority of Satan at some later time and thus their entire will is subjected to Satan rather than to God. Satan seems to be personally involved in ruling both Tyre in this verse as well as Persia in the book of Daniel, which will be examined shortly.

This passage assures us that this cherub had a place, before his rebellion, in the garden of Eden. While some interpreters do great violence to the text

by attempting to claim that there was an Eden before Eden, there is not even the slightest scriptural justification of this. The minerals that adorned the Fallen One were present and described in Genesis 2. Satan had a place and a function in the ministry to planet earth prior to his rebellion and it was one of glory, beauty, power, and honor. This necessitates that the fall of Satan, if it happened in any way in respect to earthly chronology, had to happen after the creation week and not later than the events of Genesis 3.

The next major feature of this text that cannot be ignored is that the Fallen Angels, and Satan specifically, were created by God without any wickedness intrinsic to them. They were created good, holy, and upright. They were given tasks in keeping with their majesty and power, and were made to serve God in perfect and unbroken obedience. The fall of Satan is clearly caused by an act of his own will. Satan became obsessed with his own beauty and intelligence, presumably in relationship to other angels and the newly formed Adam, and thus decided to seize the creation from their control by temptation and deception.

The consequence and ultimate destiny of the Fallen One is also clearly foretold. This fallen cherub will be taken down and destroyed. Having first lost his original place and duty for which he was created, he awaits the ultimate execution of the judgment that has been handed down from the very mouth of God upon him. This makes clear that these fallen angelic hosts continue to exist eternally and are morally responsible for the ramifications of their decisions. Thus they can, and must, be punished for all of time future.

## Ezekiel 41:18–25

<sup>18</sup> And *it was* made with cherubim and palm trees, a palm tree between cherub and cherub. *Each* cherub had two faces, <sup>19</sup> so that the face of a man *was* toward a palm tree on one side, and the face of a young lion toward a palm tree on the other side; thus *it was* made throughout the temple all around. <sup>20</sup> From the floor to the space above the door, and on the wall of the sanctuary, cherubim and palm trees *were* carved.

<sup>21</sup> The doorposts of the temple *were* square, *as was* the front of the sanctuary; their appearance was similar. <sup>22</sup> The altar *was* of wood, three cubits high, and its length two cubits. Its corners, its length, and its sides *were* of wood; and he said to me, “This *is* the table that *is* before the LORD.”

<sup>23</sup>The temple and the sanctuary had two doors. <sup>24</sup>The doors had two panels *apiece*, two folding panels: two *panels* for one door and two panels for the other *door*.<sup>25</sup> Cherubim and palm trees *were* carved on the doors of the temple just as they *were* carved on the walls. A wooden canopy *was* on the front of the vestibule outside.

These verses reveal the nature of the Temple complex in the Messianic Kingdom. It is quite interesting to see such similar iconography in the Millennial Temple as existed in the Solomonic Temple. This is only odd because in the time of the Messianic Reign one may well expect that these Celestial beings will actually take those places, rather than needing to be artistically represented. Yet, it seems that even in the Messianic age these artistic representations will be commonplace and important to display the spiritual reality of what it means to live under the reign of the Messiah.

#### Daniel 6:22

<sup>22</sup> My God sent His angel and shut the lions' mouths, so that they have not hurt me, because I was found innocent before Him; and also, O king, I have done no wrong before you."

This simple passage again shows that the Lord uses His elect angels to do all manner of task. The Lord surely could have simply spoken a word and the lions would be rendered unable to open their mouths, or the Lord could have simply ended their lives altogether. A holy angel was given the task of coming down and entering into the lion's den with Daniel and personally shutting the Lion's mouth that Daniel would be protected according to God's great and mighty decree. This is another example that humans will often not realize the actions and influences of the angelic world, yet that world is constantly impacting and affecting the lives and events of the physical universe. The angels do not simply give messages, but rather also keep the mouths of lions closed tight. They interact with and effect the physical world, including being able to influence creatures that humans would be unable to affect.

#### Daniel 10:4–21

<sup>4</sup> Now on the twenty-fourth day of the first month, as I was by the side of the great river, that *is*, the Tigris, <sup>5</sup> I lifted my eyes and looked, and

behold, a certain man clothed in linen, whose waist *was* girded with gold of Uphaz! <sup>6</sup> His body *was* like beryl, his face like the appearance of lightning, his eyes like torches of fire, his arms and feet like burnished bronze in color, and the sound of his words like the voice of a multitude. <sup>7</sup> And I, Daniel, alone saw the vision, for the men who were with me did not see the vision; but a great terror fell upon them, so that they fled to hide themselves. <sup>8</sup> Therefore I was left alone when I saw this great vision, and no strength remained in me; for my vigor was turned to frailty in me, and I retained no strength. <sup>9</sup> Yet I heard the sound of his words; and while I heard the sound of his words I was in a deep sleep on my face, with my face to the ground.

<sup>10</sup> Suddenly, a hand touched me, which made me tremble on my knees and *on* the palms of my hands. <sup>11</sup> And he said to me, “O Daniel, man greatly beloved, understand the words that I speak to you, and stand upright, for I have now been sent to you.” While he was speaking this word to me, I stood trembling.

<sup>12</sup> Then he said to me, “Do not fear, Daniel, for from the first day that you set your heart to understand, and to humble yourself before your God, your words were heard; and I have come because of your words. <sup>13</sup> But the prince of the kingdom of Persia withstood me twenty-one days; and behold, Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me, for I had been left alone there with the kings of Persia. <sup>14</sup> Now I have come to make you understand what will happen to your people in the latter days, for the vision *refers to many days yet to come.*”

<sup>15</sup> When he had spoken such words to me, I turned my face toward the ground and became speechless. <sup>16</sup> And suddenly, *one* having the likeness of the sons of men touched my lips; then I opened my mouth and spoke, saying to him who stood before me, “My lord, because of the vision my sorrows have overwhelmed me, and I have retained no strength. <sup>17</sup> For how can this servant of my lord talk with you, my lord? As for me, no strength remains in me now, nor is any breath left in me.”

<sup>18</sup> Then again, *the one* having the likeness of a man touched me and strengthened me. <sup>19</sup> And he said, “O man greatly beloved, fear not! Peace *be* to you; be strong, yes, be strong!”

So when he spoke to me I was strengthened, and said, “Let my lord speak, for you have strengthened me.”

<sup>20</sup> Then he said, “Do you know why I have come to you? And now I must return to fight with the prince of Persia; and when I have gone

forth, indeed the prince of Greece will come. <sup>21</sup> But I will tell you what is noted in the Scripture of Truth. (No one upholds me against these, except Michael your prince.

Daniel gives yet more important information in the great spiritual battle that is ongoing. This unnamed angel has come to give Daniel information, affirming the basic linguistic meaning of the words translated “angel” in both Old and New Testaments. His function and purpose include the conveyance of spiritual information that a human could not ascertain by any natural means. However, it is equally important to note that this angel is giving information, but in order to do so has had to step away from his other task of being involved with world affairs.

These elect angels are clearly involved in warfare. It is vital to notice that Daniel was the prophet to receive this information about the coming dominations of the Persian and Greek empires. Thus, while they took their place exactly as the Lord had revealed to Daniel, both in the statue vision as well as chapter 7’s revelation of the beasts, they still are not unrestrained. It appears that the Prince of Persia and that of Greece are not references to any human figure, for no human figure could ever oppose an angel, much less detain an angel. This is more evidence for the biblical reality that the angelic authorities that control the nations of this world are opposed to the God of Israel, violently and vehemently. Ultimately, the “gods of the nations” who are in rebellion against the God of Israel are in alignment with the chief fallen angel, Satan. They are executing plans to defy the Lord’s authority and will; yet the elect angels are continually opposing them successfully and God’s will is accomplished to His glory.

The final point which this study will take from this important passage, due to length constraints, is the reality that Michael is specifically recognized as an angel associated with Israel. This, again, affirms the idea that each of the nations have an angelic overlord who exercises authority and influence over that nation or people group. This, of course, does not mean that every person in that people group is damned, but only that the governmental authorities and powers which the Lord has licensed will be in ready opposition against the Lord God and will seek to frustrate His plans. The presence of Michael – as the angelic authority over Israel – gives clear evidence that at least one of these high powered national angelic authorities has not fallen.

## Zechariah 1:7–11

<sup>7</sup> On the twenty-fourth day of the eleventh month, which is the month Shebat, in the second year of Darius, the word of the LORD came to Zechariah the son of Berechiah, the son of Iddo the prophet: <sup>8</sup> I saw by night, and behold, a man riding on a red horse, and it stood among the myrtle trees in the hollow; and behind him *were* horses: red, sorrel, and white. <sup>9</sup> Then I said, “My lord, what *are* these?” So the angel who talked with me said to me, “I will show you what they *are*.”

<sup>10</sup> And the man who stood among the myrtle trees answered and said, “These *are the ones* whom the LORD has sent to walk to and fro throughout the earth.”

<sup>11</sup> So they answered the Angel of the LORD, who stood among the myrtle trees, and said, “We have walked to and fro throughout the earth, and behold, all the earth is resting quietly.”

Zechariah is important to this discussion because it is plain that Zechariah’s interactions with angels are consistent in every way with those that came before him. As a post-exilic prophet we would look to his writings above all others to see if the time in exile had caused the Jewish people to assimilate pagan notions of the celestial world. Yet, the angelic world remains consistent in its description. The angel that explains the visions to Zechariah is consistent with the actions and purpose of angels since the book of Genesis. The angelic relationship to space and time also remains perfectly consistent with the rest of scripture and thus there is no cause to assume that there is any foreign influence on the Jewish conception of the unseen world.

In this passage, it is also revealed that angels are doing reconnaissance work. While the Lord is omnipotent and has no need for any being, human or angelic, to make known anything to Him there are still angels who are physically patrolling every corner of the world and reporting information back to heaven’s war room. This may seem perplexing from the human perspective that assumes that everything that is not like a human must be like the Lord. However, the biblical accounts make it clear that no angel is omniscient nor omnipresent. They must learn information, and it takes time for that information to move through the physical space of the planet. Thus, while they can to use familiar means to move that information, it supplies a clear picture of their design, nature, and function.

Zechariah 5:5–11

<sup>5</sup> Then the angel who talked with me came out and said to me, “Lift your eyes now, and see what this *is* that goes forth.”

<sup>6</sup> So I asked, “What *is* it?” And he said, “It *is* a basket that is going forth.”

He also said, “This *is* their resemblance throughout the earth: <sup>7</sup> Here *is* a lead disc lifted up, and this *is* a woman sitting inside the basket”; <sup>8</sup> then he said, “This *is* Wickedness!” And he thrust her down into the basket, and threw the lead cover over its mouth. <sup>9</sup> Then I raised my eyes and looked, and there *were* two women, coming with the wind in their wings; for they had wings like the wings of a stork, and they lifted up the basket between earth and heaven.

<sup>10</sup> So I said to the angel who talked with me, “Where are they carrying the basket?”

<sup>11</sup> And he said to me, “To build a house for it in the land of Shinar; when it is ready, *the basket* will be set there on its base.”

This final passage gives evidence that there is a larger variety of creatures in the spiritual world that we may understand. It is the natural human desire, as countless works and studies on the angelic world have betrayed, to try to simplify the world into one kind of angel. Yet this study has revealed that there is as much diversity in the angelic world as exists in the physical world. Why should it surprise the reader to think that the God who created elephants, emus, and a duck-billed platypus, should be content to have made only three or four varieties of celestial beings? It seems far more likely that the biblical account is so beguiling simply because modern interpreters long to shrink the unseen world into something easily summarized so that it can be comfortably ignored.

Both the woman in the basket, and the two women with stork’s wings are creatures of an entirely different nature than anything else revealed thus far in Scripture. These figures show the great variety in purpose and function. These stork-winged beings may be elect or fallen, and the information to discern the difference is lacking, but they are tending to an evil task of preparing the eschatological Babylon for the final phase in human history before Messiah’s return.

## Conclusion

The Prophets, both major and minor, confirm what has already been made abundantly clear – the biblical perspective on angels is consistent. Even in the most graphic later examples of biblical revelation information is added, however, nothing contradicts the oldest revelations of Angels. As the focus of this paper now turns to what the believer is to make of the angelology of certain key Pseudepigraphical works it becomes plain that biblical angelology is already clear and sufficient for these other works to be evaluated against a clear standard.

Isaiah				
Reference	Summary	Action	Elect or Fallen	Angel of the LORD
6:1–7	Seraphs worshiping, serving, bringing coal	Worship/serve	Elect	N
37:16	Jehovah dwells between Cherubs	Ark Reference	Elect	N
37:36	Angel of the Lord kills Assyrians	Judgment	Elect	Y
63:9	Angel of His presence saves	Salvation	Elect	U/K

Ezekiel				
Reference	Summary	Action	Elect or Fallen	Angel of the LORD
9:3	Reference to temple/ark	Ark Reference	Elect	N
10–11	Moving/working on earth and in heaven	Many	Elect	N
28:11–19	Description of Satan	Rebelling	Fallen	N
41:18–25	Images of Cherubs	Images	Elect	N

## Angelology in the Major and Minor Prophets

Daniel				
Reference	Summary	Action	Elect or Fallen	Angel of the LORD
3:28	Delivers Shadrach, Meshack, and Abednego	Protection	Elect	Y
6:22	Shuts lions mouths	Protection	Elect	U/K
10	Michael visits, Satan interferes	Explanation	Both	N

Zechariah				
Reference	Summary	Action	Elect or Fallen	Angel of the LORD
1-6	Angel explains what is seen	Revealing	Elect	Perhaps
1:7-11	For other angels on horseback	Reconnaissance	Elect	N
1:12-17	AoJ proclaims God's faithfulness to Jerusalem	Proclaiming	Elect	Y
3:1-3	AoJ cleanses and restores High Priest Joshua	Cleansing	Elect	Y
3:3	Satan opposes - is rebuked	Opposing	Fallen	N
5:5-11	The woman in the basket and women with wings	Prep for the end	Fallen (?)	N

## Part I: Angelology in the Old Testament

PART II

# Angelology in the Pseudepigrapha





## CHAPTER 8

# Introduction to the Pseudepigrapha

*What advantage then has the Jew, or what is the profit of circumcision? Much in every way! Chiefly because to them were committed the oracles of God.*  
(Romans 3:1–2 NKJV)

**Statement of Purpose:** The Pseudepigrapha is of critical value

For many Evangelical Christians today the Pseudepigrapha is entirely unknown, and to those who are familiar the Pseudepigrapha of the Old Testament it has been treated with a high degree of caution or even disdain. Sadly, this trend is not unwarranted. For the liberal scholar and the critic of the Bible the Pseudepigrapha is often used as a base camp to substantiate doubts and attacks upon the uniqueness and reliability of Scripture. As this paper will show those attacks are wholly unsubstantiated as there is no logical reason to question the authenticity of the biblical texts simply due to similarity with extra-biblical texts. On the contrary, the similarity strengthens and substantiates our understanding of the reliability, uniqueness, and authenticity of Scripture. Thus, the purpose of this paper is to give the reader a bit of background on the Pseudepigrapha and its usefulness to today's Bible student.

### A Definition of the Pseudepigrapha

One of the challenges that surrounds this body of literature is the very name, Pseudepigrapha. The name itself tells us that these documents have been written and attributed to people who did not write them. There is a great difficulty in this. The truth is that most of the works we simply do not

know who wrote them or whether or not they are authentic. However, their inauthenticity is not a foregone conclusion.

### Other Possible Interpretations

It has already been mentioned that this is not a unified corpus of literature, like the Scriptures. They are books that were written, passed down, scattered and collected over the years. This means that the merits of each must be measured individually. This brings the point of considering each of these works. As has been said, they cannot be considered as a group, but must be considered individually. Thus, we must entertain the options which are available in considering these works. I would like to consider four major options, realizing that any given work of the Pseudepigrapha may well fall into all four categories.

1 – *They are perfectly genuine* – The prescribed author could be genuine, in whole or in part. Israel had a tremendous and powerful literary tradition. The reality that the entire faith was contained and communicated through the written Torah meant that there would be a large literate community always around, ready to read, write, and preserve literary works from generation to generation.

2 – *They are malicious lies* – The next logical possibility is that they are malicious lies. Some of these books may have been written under demonic influence, and others by people who had a specific agenda they wished to pedal.

3 – *The work of lunatics* – There is no doubt that mental instability can bring about all sorts of religious delusion. Again, the possibility of demonic possession must also be considered in this option. It is possible that many of these works were written or influenced heavily by those who were mentally unstable and thus believed what they were writing to be revealed by God but were the result of mental illness.

4 – *They are fictions written by unknown authors to make sense of history* – This option is favored by many secular academics and is utilized with a particular agenda of trying to delegitimize the clear predictive accuracy of the Bible, most specifically the prophetic accuracy of Daniel. The thrust of this theory is that those who considered their history, in a desire to make sense of it would write their history as a prophetic symbolic work to highlight the plan of God.

Any of these four options may be the case for these works, or, more likely, some combination of the four. We must also understand that these works

were not under the protective and guiding hand of God and may have been handed down, reworked, and changed significantly from their original forms. While we may not be able to come to our conclusions with dogmatic certainty, we can understand and evaluate these various options as we would any other non-biblical text of any period. These books will contain truth, error, accuracy, and inaccuracy, just as we would assume when we read the more recognized works of Josephus, Herodotus, and the Church Fathers.

## Uses of the Pseudepigrapha

The fact that these works are not, and never were, considered a part of the canon of Scripture is of the utmost importance. There can be no serious case made that any of these works would be in any way the “*lost books of the Bible*.” The Bible, by its very nature and character cannot have lost books because it was God himself who guided the process of their writing, preservation, and recognition as the authoritative word of God. The ridiculous claim that there could be a “lost book” of the Bible is generally an attack by those secularists who do not believe that the Bible is a supernatural book to begin with. Specifically, that they are fallaciously using the term “Bible” on both sides of the equation as fits their anti-supernatural bias but with an utter lack of logical consistency. Nevertheless, it is important to be very clear: these books are not Holy Scripture, nor are they on par with Scripture, nor (with only a few exceptions) have they been viewed as scripture by any group of believers in Church History. (Enoch and the Catholic Apocrypha being the only notable exceptions to the last point).

Once we have made the clear designation that these books are not on par with Scripture we are free to treat them as we would treat any original source. It is not impossible that the Lord would have revealed things to certain individuals and chosen not to enshrine them in the Bible. Certainly, we would read the salvation experiences of the great saints of past and present alike and say with all confidence that, while their accounts do not belong in scripture, they are valid and profitable examples of all that the Lord has done in their lives and might do in the lives of any who will trust in Jesus Christ. Thus, it is no threat at all to the trustworthiness of the Bible to think that the Lord may have given some other believer in history a divine vision of the future, or brought them up into heaven as with Isaiah. We must, of course be extraordinarily cautious, and not allow their accounts to be authoritative. A survey of this type of literature will prove that many of these encounters and

experiences in no way contradict the biblical record, but rather affirm its accuracy.

Apart from this, we find that even if every word of these works were false they give us great insight into the literary heritage and background to the Bible. This provides us with a larger cultural context and ability to interpret and respond to the various figures of speech and usage of various words and contexts that we may never have apart from these works. Clearly, these works are worthy of consideration. At this point in history, when the widespread availability of the information allows us to dig deeper into the information that previous generations could only hope to rely upon the far-off advice of some “expert” whose reputation could be trusted.

## Conclusion

The Pseudepigrapha is of great value to the Bible student. With the right perspective we find that it provides confirmation of the high standard of the canon of Scripture, the consistency of the understanding of the Scripture down through History, and the right understanding of Messianic anticipation of the original recipients of the oracles of God; the Nation of Israel. While there is a sea of literature surrounding these works, it is my recommendation that one desiring to know more just read the works themselves. The examination of these works affirms the supremacy, reliability, and accuracy of God’s word: the Bible. Or as Proverbs 21:30 puts it: “There is no wisdom or understanding or counsel against the LORD.”

# Angelology in First Enoch

## Introductory Thoughts on the Nature of the Book of 1 Enoch

The reality of the angelic world is simply beyond question in the writ of Holy Scripture. Not even the most egregiously biased reader could question that from Genesis to Revelation the angels were created by God with purpose and meaning. The reality of the angelic world affects the entirety of human history as the various people groups wrote about their influence on human history either in terms of their collective memories passed down from the time of the tower of Babel, or in the worship and continued influence of the angelic realm on that of the terrestrial world. There can simply be no question that the angelic world is real. While Scripture is, of course, the sole and final authority on all things seen and unseen we must recognize that great benefits can be made by making insights from extra-biblical documents and sources about the unseen world. Again, these sources will never carry the weight of scripture, and thus can never be used to interpret Scripture. However, we find that scripture can be used to interpret such documents and histories. It is critical at the outset to note that, while interesting observations can be made from the various works of the world, ancient and modern, only the Bible can serve to be our final and authoritative information source. We must, therefore, recognize our epistemological method when considering any document or piece of evidence, and the issue of the Pseudepigrapha is of no exception.

There are, however, some critical points for us to consider and understand when considering the Jewish Pseudepigrapha that contrast starkly from other ancient sources. Those distinctions have primarily to do with source. When considering ancient Babylonian, Persian or Greek beliefs we must recognize that they were affected very little by the continuing revelation of God; thus, making them more thoroughly unreliable and contaminated by human thought, storytelling, exaggeration, and even demonic influence. The

Pseudepigraphical works, in stark contrast, came forth from Israel. They were not co-opted nor were they adapted from the works of other people groups; they were distinctly Jewish and preserved linguistically in the languages in which Israel did her most common fair. This means that these documents, however they originated, came within the context of a people who knew, and were entrusted with the oracles of God (Romans 3:2). In order for these books to remain relevant, even if they were not regarded as scripture, meant that they had to at least appear to be consistent with the message and revelation of Scripture. Thus, we may question that specific angelic majesties are accurately named and notated, but we cannot question whether angels have names, responsibilities, and positions of authority within the heavenly realm, and with great earthly consequence.

Another significant factor in this discussion has to do with the rather uncomfortable misnomer: Pseudepigrapha. The name itself implies that every document (and thus every word of every document) is written by an unknown author and then falsely ascribed to some other, more well-known person. The fact that this practice occurred in the ancient world (and the modern world) is absolutely beyond question. As long as men are writing, there will be those who write with dishonest intent, and a desire to deceive. This, however, is an unfair judgment to render on such a large and varied source of documents handed down from a group of people that had a remarkable textual tradition of preservation and reverence for those figures to whom many of the works were attributed. Much of this misconception is fueled by the false premise that were these books genuine that they would have some place in scripture. This, however, is a logical fallacy. Just because a person is included in Scripture (such as Enoch in Genesis 5:21–24) does not mean that anything they wrote would be included in Holy Scripture. Furthermore, it does not follow that if someone such as Moses or Paul, who wrote a great deal of the Holy Writ, wrote something else that their other writings would also be included in divine scripture. Paul, in fact, gives evidence that he did write other letters that were not included in Scripture – and this was certainly by divine intent. It is the belief of this author that these two irrational fears have caused traditional biblical Christians to cast unnecessary doubt and dispersion upon these ancient works and thus lose out on the great contribution that they make to the Bible student's understanding of the ancient Hebrew world and mindset. Certainly not a word of these works is to be included or ranked among scripture, however there are many things that, though not inspired, are trustworthy, helpful,

informative, and accurate. Thus, the discussion ought never to be over whether these documents should carry the weight of Scripture, but only whether their contents is reliable and consistent with scripture, or if they are entirely spurious.

There is a great reality which the Bible interpreter must understand: Scripture includes everything that God wants us to know but it does not contain everything that God ever revealed. One need only recognize the countless unnamed prophets of the Divided Kingdom period of biblical history. While they were never given the honor of writing a book of the Bible, they were nevertheless entrusted with revelation from the Lord in keeping with their place and office in Israel. The same could be said of the various people gifted as prophets in the New Testament period before the cessation of that gift with the completion of the New Testament scriptures. Thus, the fact that these ancient writings are not included in Scripture only assures us that they are not divinely protected from inaccuracy. This means that they can be mistaken, but it would be false to assume that they *are* mistaken on that basis alone. It must be noted that much of this sensitivity has arisen from the grievous error of the Catholic Church which included certain documents that were never regarded as scripture by Jews or the Church in the Bible in order to justify certain unjust and extra biblical practices such as the sale of indulgences and others. This collection, known popularly as “The Apocrypha” was thus brought into contention and instead of being a set of helpful, interesting, yet uninspired set of documents it is now largely reviled by conservative Christian scholarship. This is a great loss indeed, as they also provide important information and perspective on the events and peoples who lived in the time between the testaments, and provide interesting insight into the actual revelation of the Bible.

Critically important to our understanding of this reality is the understanding that the Jewish people were highly literate and conscientious about the transmission and preservation of their documents, sacred or otherwise. They kept these many works with apparent faith in their authenticity and value, and the fact that the culture that produced them viewed them as being genuine should be very important in our assessment of them. The fact that they were preserved in this way must at least open the modern reader up to the possibility that these documents could, in whole or in part, be authentic, or preserved from some unknown source that was authentic. The idea that Enoch, Moses, or Isaiah may have written something other than what Scripture preserves is in no way a wild act of imagination; in

fact, it makes great sense that they would have written more than Scripture preserves. It is also perfectly reasonable to assume that such men, used of the Lord, and noteworthy in their generations would have had others preserve their extra-biblical literary efforts.

With these introductory thoughts in mind, attention may be given to the specific purpose of this paper. The wealth of extra-biblical Jewish texts which have come to light is extensive. Those preserved in the Mishnah, the Talmud, the Pseudepigrapha, the Dead Sea Scrolls, and the Apocrypha comprise an absolutely immense amount of literature, and an evaluation of all of them, even on a limited subject or scope, would involve reams and reams of paper and would exceed the scope of this paper. Thus, the limitations of this discussion will be set surrounding chiefly the contributions of the book of 1 Enoch and the book of Jubilees to the field of angelology. Consideration has been made of the biblical revelation regarding angels. These being the most ancient angelic records and those closest to the attributed author of Enoch, who “walked with God and was no more.” After this discussion of biblical angelology, a look at certain key passages provides a unique opportunity for comparison and contrast regarding those specific texts and instances wherein the existence, office, and function of angels can be considered. Simply put, the thesis of this paper would be as follows: While the books of Enoch and Jubilees are by no means divinely inspired scripture they contribute meaningfully to our understanding of the angelic world.

## The Book of Enoch

The first book of Enoch is a remarkable book that is truly captivating to any reader with the slightest interest in the content matter. While the authorship of this document is certainly in question, it has been regarded as being authoritative by a number of faith communities; it clearly has not been accepted as a canonical work of scripture by the larger group of Christians or Jews from the earliest records to which we have access. To introduce this book, we look to E. Isaac:

The Ethiopic Book of Enoch (Henok), also known as 1 Enoch, is the oldest of the three Pseudepigrapha attributed to Enoch, the seventh descendant of Adam and Eve, the first man and woman. According to Genesis 5:24, “Enoch walked with God. Then he vanished because God took him.” This tradition of Enoch’s spiritual relocation gave rise to many

haggadic stories, including one that Enoch, son of Jared, when he was taken away by God saw the secrets of the mysteries of the universe, the future of the world, and the predetermined course of human history.<sup>84</sup>

As the above makes clear, this book is purportedly an account of what God revealed to Enoch, who was very important to God's plan. This special and mysterious placement of Enoch in the plan of God, and his particular placement within the antediluvian period make him an obvious candidate of great interest throughout the ancient and modern environments of the faith. This peculiar personality, who is only given a very limited amount of space in Scripture, is sure to bring about questions and the book of Enoch comes forward to answer some of the questions. Whether this book is a total forgery, or if it is a text with roots in some authentic sources or texts, is quite difficult to say with certainty. It does, however, become a critically valuable text in the ideas and understanding of the Jewish people regarding their own beliefs and sacred texts.

Other mysteries of this ancient book surround the language. All options: Hebrew, Aramaic, and Ethiopic are all considered as possibilities for the original language, however the only complete version is found in Ethiopic. When it comes to the consideration of the original language we turn again to Isaac:

Some scholars believe that the original language of 1 Enoch is Hebrew; others, however, think it is Aramaic; still others contend that the book, like Daniel, was composed partly in Hebrew and partly in Aramaic. Recently there have been attempts either to counter or to substantiate entirely the Aramaic origin of the Ethiopic text. Neither theory provides wholly convincing arguments which may be accepted without reservation.<sup>85</sup>

While it is yet impossible to find out which is correct there can be little question that whatever other editions have come into play, and what ways in which this document comes down to us it is surely of ancient Jewish origins, and was considered to be important by the Jews.

The structure of this book is easy to follow. The first five chapters serve as an introduction which give an overview of the author's viewpoint of the

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84. Charlesworth, James H. (Ed.) The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha. Volume One. Pg. 5.

85. Ibid. Pg. 6

relationship of human history to the ultimate, overarching plan of God. Chapters six through thirty-six will be most pertinent to the discussion point of this paper as they concern fallen angels and the relationships which they held with human women. Chapters thirty-seven to seventy-one are most concerned with eschatological issues and the Messiah. Chapters seventy-two to eighty-two discuss the issue of the solar year as well as various end times astrological phenomenon. The fourth major section of the book deals with the visions that are given in a dream and consist of chapter ninety-one to one-hundred-four. This collection is marked by its inclusion of the prophecy of weeks which is given to us in Holy Scripture only in the book of Daniel. With this conclusion in mind, the balance of the paper will consider various passages with the goal of comparing and contrasting them with the words of scripture and a view towards understanding how this highly developed angelology relates to what can be confirmed in Holy Scripture.

### Discussion and Analysis of the Pertinent Passages:

#### *1 Enoch 7:1–2*<sup>86</sup>

Charles:

1 It happened after the sons of men had multiplied in those days, that daughters were born to them, elegant and beautiful. 2 And when the angels, the sons of heaven, beheld them, they became enamored of them, saying to each other, Come, let us select for ourselves wives from the progeny of men, and let us beget children.<sup>87</sup>

Charlesworth:

**“1Enoch 7:1** And they took wives unto themselves, and everyone (respectively) chose one woman for himself, and they began to go unto them. And they taught them magical medicine, incantations, the cutting of roots, and taught them (about) plants. **1Enoch 7:2** And the women became pregnant and gave birth to great giants whose heights were three hundred cubits.” (1Enoch 7:1–2 PSEUD-CW)

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86. For each passage the three major translations will be provided: Charles, Charlesworth, and Hermenia

87. Enoch. *The Book of Enoch* (p. 12). Start Publishing LLC. Kindle Edition.

Hermeria:

7:1 These and all the others with them took for themselves wives from among them such as they chose.[22] And they began to go in to them, and to defile themselves through them, and to teach them sorcery and charms, and to reveal to them the cutting of roots and plants. 2 And they conceived from them and bore to them great giants. And the giants begot Nephilim, and to the Nephilim were born †Elioud†. And they were growing in accordance with their greatness.<sup>88</sup>

This passage clearly places the setting of this work in the time period of the biblical account of the life of Enoch as recorded in Genesis 6–7. This is the time preceding the flood and is giving reason for the flood. An interesting clarification is made here in this book, which is not made in the biblical text. While the biblical text uses the phrase “Sons of God” for the angels, and this is quite clear given its only other usage in the book of Job for the angelic hosts, the book of Enoch is more specific. They are here called the angels, and the sons of heaven. The statement that they are angels is a clear identifying marker of these creatures as angelic, heavenly beings. We can make no mistake that the author of the book of Enoch believed these to be angelic beings, and in no way thought of them as humans under any circumstances.

The second title for these persons here is “sons of heaven.” This has a fascinating feature in that it wasn’t until the second temple period that we begin to see the use of “heaven” as a euphemism for God. This was owing to the change in understanding of the commandment not to take the Lord’s name in vain that occurred within the post-exilic Hebrew community. This trend is very clearly seen in the New Testament. Matthew will constantly translate our Lord’s word “the kingdom of God” as “the kingdom of Heaven” to avoid offending his Jewish audience. Mark, Luke, and John have no such sensitivity because of the uniquely Jewish nature of this second temple idiom. It was at this point that the Jews ceased to speak the name of the Lord (YHWH) and began replacing the personal name of their God with the word Adonai. This interesting feature presents one of two options. Either this book (or section of the book) was composed in the second temple period, or it was redacted and corrected by a later edition to avoid offense.

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88. Nickelsburg, George W.E.; VanderKam, James C., 1 Enoch (pp. 24–25). Fortress Press. Kindle Edition.

The second possibility is less likely because, while the Hebrew scribes ceased to pronounce the name of God, they never ceased to write it in their religious texts.

This text also clarifies the intent of these angelic beings. While there is no evidence after the Antediluvian period of angelic beings having any congress with human men or women (though the men of Sodom and Gomorrah would have tried) that does not affect the reality that it was successfully done prior to the flood of Noah. This passage makes very clear that these angelic beings, being enticed by the beauty of human, women had two goals. First, to take them as wives. Second, to bear children. This could not be clearer in the text here, though it is more an implication in the biblical text. This arrangement, of course, makes perfect sense. In coupling with human women, the angelic creatures would have the opportunity to have progeny – something their kind were not created to have. Not only this, but they would then be able to take part in the existence of those who bear the image of God (humanity). From the standpoint of the human women, the sheer power and beauty of these creatures would be enough to generate interest, but the opportunity to couple with undying beings may have offered the chance to restore deathless life to their progeny.

This passage is a perfect starting place for this discussion of the angelology of the book of 1 Enoch. We see that it does not subvert or contradict biblical doctrine, it only provides more information. Whether that information is accurate or inaccurate is another matter entirely; the purpose of this paper is to point out the nature of the information contained in 1 Enoch.

### *1 Enoch 7:9–12; 8:1*

9 These are the names of their chiefs: Samyaza, who was their leader, Urakabameel, Akibeel, Tamiel, Ramuel, Danel, Azkeel, Saraknyal, Asael, Armers, Batraal, Anane, Zavebe, Samsaveel, Ertael, Turel, Yomyael, Arazyal. These were the prefects of the two hundred angels, and the remainder were all with them.) 10 Then they took wives, each choosing for himself; whom they began to approach, and with whom they cohabited; teaching them sorcery, incantations, and the dividing of roots and trees. 11 And the women conceiving brought forth giants, 12 Whose stature was each three hundred cubits. These devoured all which the labor of men produced; until it became impossible to feed them... 8:1 Moreover Azazyel taught men to make swords, knives, shields, breastplates, the

fabrication of mirrors, and the workmanship of bracelets and ornaments, the use of paint, the beautifying of the eyebrows, the use of stones of every valuable and select kind, and all sorts of dyes, so that the world became altered.<sup>89</sup>

This passage brings about insights that cannot be found anywhere in biblical angelology, except by very stretched implication. The first thing that we find is the use of the words “chiefs” and “leader”. This brings to the fore some very important ideas about the angelic world. While the Bible has a special designation “Archangel” that is used only of Michael and there is little other information in Scripture to designate the ordering and command chain of the heavenly hosts. While this implication can surely be made from scripture, 1 Enoch spells it out with clarity. This book paints a picture of the angelic world having been created with a highly developed authority structure and chain of command.

The next observation to make about this text is that it gives us something the Bible gives us only a few names for angels; among them, only Hallel (Satan), Gabriel, and Michael. These three are supplemented in the apocryphal work of Tobit with the addition of Raphael. In 1 Enoch, however, we see an absolute litany of names given out. Scripture is, of course, clear that all angels have names, and those names were given to them by God. However, very few of the names are given to us as we are not meant to worship, manipulate, or interact with those angelic majesties. This book shows no such bashfulness, and however these names were ascertained the author believed them to be the identifying labels for several individual and powerful angels.

Another important detail here is that the fallen angels are given credit for bringing knowledge to men. While the biblical account credits various men with making discoveries, the book of Enoch cites angels as the source of this information. This is an interesting detail as it shows that the cohabitation of angels with men was thought, not just to be sexual in nature, but that they were taking part in the society itself, bringing forth great discoveries and teaching humans how to best master and manipulate the environment around them. This highlights the level of angelic sin and human sin. The angels were sinning in trying to lead people away from reliance upon the Lord. Humanity

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89. Enoch. The Book of Enoch (p. 13). Start Publishing LLC. Kindle Edition.

became even more sinful as they looked to the many things provided by the angelic hosts and all the more neglected the God of the universe. Thus, the Book of Enoch concludes that the cleansing of the earth had to come because of angelic corruption as a primary motivation: “Restore the earth, which the angels have corrupted; and announce life to it, that I may revive it.”<sup>90</sup>

*1 Enoch 10:15 (Charles) 11 (Charlesworth & VanderKam)*

Charles:

15 To Michael likewise the Lord said, Go and announce his crime to Samyaza, and to the others who are with him, who have been associated with women, that they might be polluted with all their impurity. And when all their sons shall be slain, when they shall see the perdition of their beloved, bind them for seventy generations underneath the earth, even to the day of judgment, and of consummation, until the judgment, the effect of which will last forever, be completed.<sup>91</sup>

Charlesworth:

And to Michael God said, “Make known to Semyaza and the others who are with him, who fornicated with the women, that they will die together with them in all their defilement.” (1Enoch 10:11 PSEUD-CW)

Hermenia:

11 And to Michael he said, “Go, Michael, bind Shemihazah and the others with him, who have mated with the daughters of men, so that they were defiled by them in their uncleanness.”<sup>92</sup>

This telling quote reveals a biblically familiar angel: Michael. In this passage Michael is announcing this crime – giving that responsiveness to the betrayal of the fallen ones in terrestrial time and its celestial counter-effect. This brings important words into the discussion having to do with the abomination of the angels violating their natural domain to couple with

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90. Enoch. The Book of Enoch (p. 15). Start Publishing LLC. Kindle Edition.

91. Ibid. (p. 16).

92. Nickelsburg, George W. E.; VanderKam, James C., 1 Enoch (p. 29). Fortress Press. Kindle Edition.

humans. The association with women is the crime and the results are pollution and impurity. It is a fascinating feature of the Law of Moses that is often perplexing to modern readers, that there is a great focus upon purity in almost every sense. Animals must not be improperly bred, and cloth must not be of mixed fibers. It seems that God has limits and standards based upon the fact that He made these things to be purely what they are, and not to be “improved” by mixing; at least not in the realm of approaching the Holy One. This new picture of impurity being the result of the angelic rebellion is a new feature of the existing struggle and discussion. It gives a picture of the book of Enoch’s view of holiness and how it can be profaned.

The next statement of value is the dawning revelation that punishment for this disobedience will fall upon the sons themselves. They will not be allowed to live and continue in perpetual disobedience, but rather they will be destroyed. Part of the punishment of the fallen angels is seeing the destruction of their sons, and the other part is their confinement in the earth. This sentence also seems to have a time limit upon it and is reflected in the writing of Peter, Jude, and Revelation in the New Testament. Such language is also alluded to in the gospels, and thus this idea, while not contained directly in the Old Testament, is affirmed in the New Testament. The extent of this imprisonment is said to end in the day of judgement, after which a permanent place is given to them. This is another idea confirmed by the New Testament book of Revelation which points towards a release of these imprisoned angels before they ultimately find their permanent place in the Lake of Fire.

### *1 Enoch 15:8*

Charles:

8 Now the giants, who have been born of spirit and of flesh, shall be called upon earth evil spirits, and on earth shall be their habitation. Evil spirits shall proceed from their flesh, because they were created from above; from the holy Watchers was their beginning and primary foundation. Evil spirits shall they be upon earth, and the spirits of the wicked shall they be called. The habitation of the spirits of heaven shall be in heaven; but upon earth shall be the habitation of terrestrial spirits, who are born on earth.<sup>93</sup>

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93. Enoch. The Book of Enoch (p. 21). Start Publishing LLC. Kindle Edition.

Charlesworth:

But now the giants who are born from the (union of) the spirits and the flesh shall be called evil spirits upon the earth, because their dwelling shall be upon the earth and inside the earth. (1Enoch 15:8 PSEUD-CW)

Hermenia:

But now the giants who were begotten by the spirits and flesh— they will call them evil spirits on the earth, for their dwelling will be on the earth.<sup>94</sup>

This passage provides a connection to the offspring of the fallen angels – the Nephilim. The translation “giants” is perhaps questionable, but no improvements upon this translation come to mind. Whatever the case, the nature of these beings is made clear – they are not natural in their humanity or in their spirituality. They are born of both spiritual and fleshly means. The discussion of spiritual bodies and carnal bodies of St. Paul in 1 Corinthians 15 comes readily to mind. The interesting effect that evil spirits shall proceed from their flesh suggests that their progeny would also be fixed in this certain state – the state of evil. It appears that the Nephilim are necessarily evil, from the perspective of Enoch, and whatever children they may bear will have that same fixed evil standing before the Lord.

“The Watchers” is another term for angels used occasionally in scripture but often in Pseudepigraphical literature to describe angels. It shows that the angels, while important to God’s plan and working on planet earth had a primary function of watching, of beholding the Lord. They are created witnesses of His character and His doing. Thus, their choice to be involved in the action apart from God’s direct will becomes deeply perverse and maximally destructive. Another fascinating feature of the Book of Enoch is it makes the cause of the flood not the sinful choices of men, but a result of the rebellion of the angelic beings. This is a departure from the biblical declaration that the judgment came upon the earth because of the sin of men, and not exclusively because of this angelic perversion.

The next major point of interest brought to light in this passage is the domain of the Nephilim. While their demonic fathers were spiritual in nature and could thus ascend to the throne room of God, this mixed-up progeny are, as man, confined to the earth, and cannot, seemingly, depart from the physical domain. It shows the frustrated attempt of the demons to cohabit

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94. Nickelsburg, George W.E.; VanderKam, James C., 1 Enoch (p. 37). Fortress Press. Kindle Edition.

with the daughters of men was a failure. In a desire to mix with one another to get the best of both angel and humanity they were left with the worst of each. They were in a fixed wicked disposition. While seemingly of great capacity, that capacity could only be wicked in its direction, and they were unable to exercise the full spiritual nature of their fathers, nor the full humanity of their mothers. They were confined to this worldly existence with no apparent hope of redemption.

*1 Enoch 18:13–16 (Charles) 18:12–16 (Charlesworth) 18:6–10 (VanderKam)*

Charles:

13 And in the columns of heaven I beheld fires, which descended without number, but neither on high, nor into the deep. Over these fountains also I perceived a place which had neither the firmament of heaven above it, nor the solid ground underneath it; neither was there water above it; nor anything on wing; but the spot was desolate. 14 And there I beheld seven stars, like great blazing mountains, and like spirits entreating me. 15 Then the angel said, This place, until the consummation of heaven and earth, will be the prison of the stars, and the host of heaven. 16 The stars which roll over fire are those which transgressed the commandment of God before their time arrived; for they came not in their proper season. Therefore was He offended with them, and bound them, until the period of the consummation.<sup>95</sup>

Charlesworth

<sup>12</sup> And on top of that pit I saw a place without the heavenly firmament above it or earthly foundation under it or water. There was nothing on it—not even birds—but it was a desolate and terrible place. <sup>13</sup> And I saw there the seven stars (which) were like great, burning mountains. <sup>14</sup> (then) the angel said (to me), “This place is the (ultimate) end of heaven and earth: it is the prison house for the stars and the powers of heaven. <sup>15</sup> And the stars which roll over upon the fire, they are the ones which have transgressed the commandments of God from the beginning of their rising because they did not arrive punctually. <sup>16</sup> And he was wroth with

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95. Enoch. The Book of Enoch (pp. 23–24). Start Publishing LLC. Kindle Edition.

them and bound them until the time of the completion of their sin in the year of mystery.” (1Enoch 18:12–16 PSEUD-CW)

Hermenias (Enoch 18:6–10):

6 I came and saw a place that was burning night and day, where (there were) seven mountains of precious stones—three lying to the east and three to the south. 7/ And of those to the east, (one was) of colored stone, and one was of pearl, and one was of <jasper>.[54] And those to the south were of flame-colored stone. 8/ And the middle one of them reached to heaven like the throne of God—of antimony; and the top of the throne was of lapis lazuli. 9/ And I saw a burning fire. 10 And beyond these mountains is a place, the edge of the great earth; there the heavens come to an end. 11/ And I saw a great chasm among pillars of heavenly fire. And I saw in it pillars of fire descending; and they were immeasurable toward the depth and toward the height.[55]<sup>96</sup>

This passage gives information about the ascent and heavenly vision of Enoch. There are very clear parallels with the similar experiences of Isaiah, Ezekiel, John, and others. The point of interest in this discussion is in a new role given to angels that would not be a biblical feature of these visions until the book of Zechariah. Enoch is given an angelic guide who has a purpose of explaining and interpreting things for his human guest. This will be a feature of both Zechariah and John. While we see angels explaining the plan of God in the book of Genesis, the idea of the human as a watcher in the larger plan of God is a bit of a jarring change in order, and noteworthy whenever it may be mentioned.

Another important point is the repetition of the equation between angels and stars. While this could be overlooked, it is valuable to note that the relationship between stars and angels is impossible to deny in the biblical text. This also shows that certain stars are to be imprisoned in the place which Enoch is allowed to behold in this vision. It is important to note that this place of imprisonment is by no means an eternal situation, but that the situation will change at the “consummation of heaven and earth.” Clearly, apocalyptic language is being used here that harmonizes well with the previous observations from both the book of Enoch as well as with the biblical texts.

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96. Nickelsburg, George W.E.; VanderKam, James C., 1 Enoch (p. 39). Fortress Press. Kindle Edition.

Unique to this passage is the issue of timing. It seems that part of the rebellion and transgression of these angels was related to disobeying the timing of the Lord. That is to say, these fallen angels failed largely because of their choice to ignore the timing of God and reach for things promised before the time came for them to be received. The specific interest of that point to the current discussion is that the angelic host also has a strict relationship to time. While it may not be identical to that of humanity, it becomes clear that the angelic hosts can act ahead of time and can desire something that has been promised ahead of its time, and can be imprisoned for periods of time.

### *1 Enoch 19:1–3*

Charles:

1 Then Uriel said, Here the angels, who cohabited with women, appointed their leaders; 2 And being numerous in appearance made men profane, and caused them to err; so that they sacrificed to devils as to gods. For in the great day there shall be a judgment, with which they shall be judged, until they are consumed; and their wives also shall be judged, who led astray the angels of heaven that they might salute them. 3 And I, Enoch, I alone saw the likeness of the end of all things. Nor did any human being see it, as I saw it.<sup>97</sup>

Charlesworth:

1 And Uriel said to me, “Here shall stand in many different appearances the spirits of the angels which have united themselves with women. They have defiled the people and will lead them into error so that they will offer sacrifices to the demons as unto gods, until the great day of judgment in which they shall be judged till they are finished. 2 And their women whom the angels have led astray will be peaceful ones.” 3 (So) I, Enoch, I saw the vision of the end of everything alone; and none among human beings will see as I have seen. (1Enoch 19:1–3 PSEUD-CW)

Hermenia (asserts that 18:12–16 belongs between 9:2 and 9:3):

19:1 And Uriel said to me, “There stand the angels who mingled with the women. And their spirits—having assumed many forms—bring destruction on men and lead them astray to sacrifice to demons as to gods

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97. Enoch. The Book of Enoch (p. 24). Start Publishing LLC. Kindle Edition.

until the day of the great judgment, in which they will be judged with finality. 2/ And the wives of the transgressing angels will become sirens.” 18:12 Beyond this chasm I saw a place where there was neither firmament of heaven above, nor firmly founded earth beneath it. Neither was there water on it, nor bird; but the place was desolate and fearful. 13/ There I saw seven stars like great burning mountains. 14 To me, when I inquired about them, the angel said, “This place is the end of heaven and earth; this has become a prison for the stars and the hosts of heaven. 15/ The stars that are rolling over in the fire, these are they that transgressed the command of the Lord in the beginning of their rising, for they did not come out in their appointed times. 16/ And he was angry with them and bound them until the time of the consummation of their sins—ten thousand years.” 19:3 I, Enoch, alone saw the visions, the extremities of all things. And no one among humans has seen as I saw.<sup>98</sup>

Uriel is another named angel known to the book of Enoch who seems to be charged with describing the situation. This passage is most remarkable. It begins with the repetition of the nature of the crimes of these fallen angels, and the resultant error, but also brings in new information about the nature of the resultant sins of men. These demons also set themselves up as objects of worship among men. They demanded sacrifices and the worship of men. It seems that each of the demons desired to exact worship out of the sons of men, placing themselves as idols and objects of worship to their own destruction.

Another curious feature of this passage is the proclamation that the women would also be judged. Up to this point the attractive nature of the women has been presented as an unintended motivation that caused the demons to fall, but in this passage, it appears that the women are also held responsible for their choice to couple with the fallen angels. This assumes that they should have, by some means, known better than to become involved with the angelic beings in this manner. The most surprising expression here is that the women led the angels astray. This suggests a remarkable amount of influence exercised by these women to influence and sway even over the wills of the angels of heaven giving insight into the words of Paul in 1 Corinthians 11:10: “For this reason the woman ought to have a symbol of authority on her head, because of the angels.” It is also interesting

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98. Nickelsburg, George W.E.; VanderKam, James C., 1 Enoch (pp. 39–40). Fortress Press. Kindle Edition.

to note that Tertullian wrote that this consideration was to be made in regard to the fallen angels and the potential for tempting them into sexual immorality.<sup>99</sup>

*1 Enoch 20:1–7*

Charles:

1 These are the names of the angels who watch. 2 Uriel, one of the holy angels, who presides over clamor and terror. 3 Raphael, one of the holy angels, who presides over the spirits of men. 4 Raguel, one of the holy angels, who inflicts punishment on the world and the luminaries. 5 Michael, one of the holy angels, who, presiding over human virtue, commands the nations. 6 Sarakiel, one of the holy angels, who presides over the spirits of the children of men that transgress. 7 Gabriel, one of the holy angels, who presides over Ikisat, over paradise, and over the cherubim.<sup>100</sup>

Charlesworth:

**1** And these are names of the holy angels who watch: **2** Suru'el, one of the holy angels—for (he is) of eternity and of trembling. **3** Raphael, one of the holy angels, for (he is) of the spirits of man. **4** Raguel, one of the holy angels who take vengeance for the world and for the luminaries. **5** Michael, one of the holy angels, for (he is) obedient in his benevolence over the people and the nations. **6** Saraqa'el, one of the holy angels who are (set) over the spirits of mankind who sin in the spirit. **20:7** Gabriel, one of the holy angels who oversee the garden of Eden, and the serpents, and the cherubim. (1Enoch 20:1–7 PSEUD-CW)

Hermenia:

20:1 These are the names of the holy angels who watch. 2 Uriel, one of the holy angels, who is in charge of the world and Tartarus. 3 Raphael, one of the holy angels, who is in charge of the spirits of men. 4 Reuel, one of the holy angels, who takes vengeance on the world of the luminaries. 5 Michael, one of the holy angels, who has been put in charge of the good

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99. Bercot, David W. ed. A Dictionary of Early Christian Beliefs. Hedrickson Publishers, Inc. Pg. 19.

100. Enoch. The Book of Enoch (pp. 24–25). Start Publishing LLC. Kindle Edition.

ones of the people. 6 Sariel, one of the holy angels, who is in charge of the spirits who sin against the spirit. 7 Gabriel, one of the holy angels, who is in charge of paradise and the serpents and the cherubim. 8 Remiel, one of the holy angels, whom God has put in charge of them that rise. The names of the seven archangels.<sup>101</sup>

In this passage there are three major points to occupy the reader's interest. First, the angels are again highlighted as watchers. Second, we see that only the holy angels maintain office and function. Third, we see what these angels oversee. These three major points are noteworthy in light of the reality that the names are familiar ones. Uriel has already been of use to the Lord in this revelation. Raphael, as has been noted, is familiar from the apocryphal work of Tobit. Michael is known in the Bible as the Archangel. The other notation in this passage is the mention of Gabriel who is given a special role in the announcement of the Messiah in the gospels. This is important, in that it means no angels introduced or mentioned in the New Testament are unique to the New Testament revelation.

They watch. The note that they watch is an interesting point; not only that they view, but part of that function is to oversee things. This is an expansion over the previous sense of the "watchers" in that they are not just viewing with the intent to see but viewing with the intent to oversee what is happening. This will be further discussed in the third point of this verse, but it is valuable to note that the designation as watchers does not necessarily contradict the idea of mission and authority in their own personal behavior before the Lord.

They are labeled as "holy." This means that from this point forward there must be a distinction between the angelic hosts: the demons versus Holy angels. Holy means "set apart." This is an ultimate characteristic of God and God alone; thus, the Holy angels are those who remained separated, set apart, from all those unholy angels who pursued their own pleasure and desire by responding to the temptation of the daughters of men. This statement and delineation of angels as holy shows that the fall of other angels caused a permanent rift and distinction between the angels who made good decisions and those who made poor decisions.

They have very specific stewardships and tasks. In this passage alone the various scopes of authority are named. These domains range from humans

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101. Nickelsburg, George W.E.; VanderKam, James C., 1 Enoch (pp. 40–41). Fortress Press. Kindle Edition.

to the angelic realm. The idea that Uriel is master over clamor and terror is fascinating in that his stewardship would have little meaning apart from the fall and introduction of sin, yet it shows that some of the stewardships may have been reactively assigned within the context of the book of Enoch.

These three features of this verse are totally in keeping with the trend of the Book of Enoch to elaborate upon the biblical revelation with incredible care and specificity. It seems not to contradict the biblical revelation under any circumstances, but only provide clarifying information about the nature, duties, and purpose of the angelic majesties. That, by itself lends interesting credence to the discussion of the book's authenticity. Clearly the writer (whosoever that may be) believed themselves to be receiving divine revelation. The fact that this revelation is in harmony with scripture either shows that the revelation is genuine or is the fabrication of someone who is deeply submitted to the biblical text and revelation of angels.

*1 Enoch 21:6 (Charles) 21:9 (Charlesworth and Hermenia)*

Charles:

6 Uriel, one of the holy angels who was with me, answered and said: Enoch, why are you alarmed and amazed at this terrific place, at the sight of this place of suffering? This, he said, is the prison of the angels; and here they are kept for ever.<sup>102</sup>

Charlesworth:

Then Ura'el, (one) of the holy angels who was with me, responded and said to me, "Enoch, why are you afraid like this?" (I answered and said), (1Enoch 21:9 PSEUD-CW)

Hermenia:

9 Then Uriel answered me, one of the holy angels who was with me, and said to me, "Enoch, why are you so frightened and shaken?" And I replied, "Because of this terrible place and because of the fearful sight."<sup>103</sup>

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102. Enoch. *The Book of Enoch* (p. 25). Start Publishing LLC. Kindle Edition.

103. Nickelsburg, George W.E.; VanderKam, James C., *1 Enoch* (pp. 41–42). Fortress Press. Kindle Edition.

Uriel again takes up the role of explaining things to Enoch and seems to sense that this scene is somehow unexpected, or alarming to Enoch. Enoch perceives this place of torment and suffering and is troubled thereby, understandably so. Uriel, previously described as the angel who presides over clamor and terror would be the appropriate angel to explain the place of imprisonment and torment for the fallen angels who violated their angelic estate. The statement is made that the angels are kept in this place forever, which does not hold with New Testament revelation, unless some limited definition of “for ever” (sic) were to be utilized. This could be reasonable in light of the earlier passages that seemed to discuss a change of destiny at the end leading to their final judgment and placement.

### *1 Enoch 22:3–7*

Charles:

3 Then Raphael, one of the holy angels who were with me, answered and said, These are the delightful places where the spirits, the souls of the dead, will be collected; for there were they formed; and here will be collected all the souls of the sons of men. 4 These places, in which they dwell, shall they occupy until the day of judgment, and until their appointed period. 5 Their appointed period will be long, even until the great judgment. And I saw the spirits of the sons of men who were dead; and their voices reached to heaven, while they were accusing. 6 Then I inquired of Raphael, an angel who was with me, and said, Whose spirit is that, the voice of which reaches to heaven, and accuses? 7 He answered, saying, This is the spirit of Abel who was slain by Cain his brother; and who will accuse that brother, until his seed be destroyed from the face of the earth; 8 Until his seed perish from the seed of the human race.<sup>104</sup>

Charlesworth:

“3 At that moment, Rufael, one of the holy angels, who was with me, responded to me; and he said to me, “These beautiful corners (are here) in order that the spirits of the souls of the dead should assemble into them—they are created so that the souls of the children of the people should gather here. 4 They prepared these places in order to put them (i.e.

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104. Enoch. *The Book of Enoch* (p. 26). Start Publishing LLC. Kindle Edition.

the souls of the people) there until the day of their judgment and the appointed time of the great judgment upon them.” 5 I saw the spirits of the children of the people who were dead, and their voices were reaching unto heaven until this very moment. 6 I asked Rufael, the angel who was with me, and said to him, “This spirit, the voice of which is reaching (into heaven) like this and is making suit, whose (spirit) is it?” 7 And he answered me, saying, “This is the spirit which had left Abel, whom Cain, his brother, had killed; it (continues to) sue him until all of (Cain’s) seed is exterminated from the face of the earth, and his seed has disintegrated from among the seed of the people.”” (1Enoch 22:3–7 PSEUD-CW)

Hermenia:

3 Then Raphael answered me, one of the holy angels who was with me, and said to me, “These hollow places (are intended) that the spirits of the souls of the dead might be gathered into them. For this very (purpose) they were created, (that) here the souls of all human beings should be gathered. 4/ And look, these are the pits for the place of their confinement. Thus they were made until the day (on) which they will be judged, and until the time of the day of the end of the great judgment that will be exacted from them.” 5 There I saw the spirit of a dead man making suit, and his lamentation went up to heaven and cried and made suit. 6 Then I asked Raphael, the watcher and holy one who was with me, and said to him, “This spirit that makes suit—whose is it—that thus his lamentation goes up and makes suit unto heaven?” 7 And he answered me and said, “This is the spirit that went forth from Abel, whom Cain his brother murdered. And Abel makes accusation against him until his posterity perishes from the face of the earth, and his posterity is obliterated from the posterity of men.”<sup>105</sup>

Raphael was previously described as having a stewardship over the souls of men. As the narrative unfolds it becomes clear that Raphael is given the job of overseeing and protecting those righteous souls who have died. This develops an important theme that is reasonably mysterious in Scripture, that is the subject of Sheol, and the place of the righteous dead. However, the focus of this paper is strictly on the angelology of 1 Enoch so that issue must be overlooked for the moment. The point of this is that the theology of 1

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105. Nickelsburg, George W.E.; VanderKam, James C., 1 Enoch (pp. 42–43). Fortress Press. Kindle Edition.

Enoch portrays Raphael as a sort of caretaking angel for the souls of the righteous dead. Thus, he is also given the role of tour guide for this portion of Enoch's heavenly tour. Another fascinating feature of this containment is the discontentment of Abel who awaits the final judgment to be avenged upon his brother, Cain. This means that the angels are caring for those who still await final satisfaction.

### *1 Enoch 31:5*

5 Then holy Raphael, an angel who was with me, answered and said, This is the tree of knowledge, of which your ancient father and your aged mother ate, who were before you; and who, obtaining knowledge, their eyes being opened, and knowing themselves to be naked, were expelled from the garden.<sup>106</sup>

This revelation is most interesting because it shows that angels in the book of Enoch are able to take Enoch to a place where mankind has been forbidden. The tree of knowledge would have still existed, along with the rest of the garden of Eden, in the antediluvian period. However, it would have been guarded by an angel with a flaming sword. This special access which Enoch is granted in the presence of Raphael shows that angels can be used to disclose even places that the Lord had otherwise forbidden men to tread.

### *1 Enoch 46:1–3*

Charles:

1 There I beheld the Ancient of days, whose head was like white wool, and with him another, whose countenance resembled that of man. His countenance was full of grace, like that of one of the holy angels. Then I inquired of one of the angels, who went with me, and who showed me every secret thing, concerning this Son of man; who he was; whence he was and why he accompanied the Ancient of days. 2 He answered and said to me, This is the Son of man, to whom righteousness belongs; with whom righteousness has dwelt; and who will reveal all the treasures of that which is concealed: for the Lord of spirits has chosen him; and his portion has surpassed all before the Lord of spirits in everlasting

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106. Enoch. *The Book of Enoch* (p. 30). Start Publishing LLC. Kindle Edition.

uprightness. 3 This Son of man, whom you behold, shall raise up kings and the mighty from their dwelling places, and the powerful from their thrones; shall loosen the bridles of the powerful, and break in pieces the teeth of sinners.<sup>107</sup>

Charlesworth:

1 At that place, I saw the One to whom belongs the time before time. And his head was white like wool, and there was with him another individual, whose face was like that of a human being. His countenance was full of grace like that of one among the holy angels. 2 And I asked the one—from among the angels—who was going with me, and who had revealed to me all the secrets regarding the One who was born of human beings, “Who is this, and from whence is he who is going as the prototype of the Before-Time?” 3 And he answered me and said to me, “This is the Son of Man, to whom belongs righteousness, and with whom righteousness dwells. And he will open all the hidden storerooms; for the Lord of the Spirits has chosen him, and he is destined to be victorious before the Lord of the Spirits in eternal uprightness.” (1Enoch 46:1–3 PSEUD-CW)

Hermenia:

1 There I saw one who had a head of days, and his head was like white wool. And with him was another, whose face was like the appearance of a man; and his face was full of graciousness like one of the holy angels. 2 And I asked the angel of peace, who went with me and showed me all the hidden things, about that son of man—who he was and whence he was (and) why he went with the Head of Days. 3 And he answered me and said to me, “This is the son of man who has righteousness, and righteousness dwells with him. and all the treasures of what is hidden he will reveal; For the Lord of Spirits has chosen him, and his lot has prevailed through truth in the presence of the Lord of Spirits forever.<sup>108</sup>

This passage displays one of the reasons why this book has been held close by the Ethiopic church. This is a messianic statement which seems very clearly, from the New Testament perspective, to display Jesus Christ in all of His glory before the incarnation. Regarding the subject of angelology this

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107. Ibid. (p. 38).

108. Nickelsburg, George W.E.; VanderKam, James C., 1 Enoch (pp. 59–60). Fortress Press. Kindle Edition.

passage tells us that the glorified Messiah's face is most reasonably likened to the face of an angel. This passage also displays the position and function of angelic sources as tools of God to reveal things to mankind.

*1 Enoch 53:6 (Charles) 54:6 (Charlesworth and Hermenia)*

Charles:

6 Michael and Gabriel, Raphael and Phanuel shall be strengthened in that day, and shall then cast them into a furnace of blazing fire, that the Lord of spirits may be avenged of them for their crimes; because they became ministers of Satan, and seduced those who dwell upon earth.<sup>109</sup>

Charlesworth:

Then Michael, Raphael, Gabriel, and Phanuel themselves shall seize them on that great day of judgment and cast them into the furnace (of fire) that is burning that day, so that the Lord of the Spirits may take vengeance on them on account of their oppressive deeds which (they performed) as messengers of Satan, leading astray those who dwell upon the earth. (1Enoch 54:6 PSEUD-CW)

Hermenia:

6 And Michael and Raphael and Gabriel and Phanuel will take hold of them on that great day, and throw them on that day into the burning furnace, that the Lord of Spirits may take vengeance on them, for their unrighteousness in becoming servants of Satan, and leading astray those who dwell on the earth."<sup>110</sup>

These verses explain the further eschatological function of the Angelic hosts. These four angels are strengthened by the Lord and given the task of executing judgment upon those angels who chose to follow Satan in the fall. This is the continuing function of angels to exercise authority over one another to bring about the divine punishment decreed by God. This, of course, is reminiscent of the assignment of Michael in Revelation 19 binding and casting Satan into the pit.

The location of the final judgment is a furnace of blazing fire. The image of a furnace would have been familiar to a second temple audience as it was

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109. Enoch. The Book of Enoch (p. 43). Start Publishing LLC. Kindle Edition.

110. Nickelsburg, George W.E.; VanderKam, James C., 1 Enoch (p. 68). Fortress Press. Kindle Edition.

the place of testing for Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego. However, there is also some interest in the fact that Enoch would not have seen, likely, lake nor ocean, therefore a furnace may be the readiest image for him to draw upon. In any sense, this furnace of fire clearly corresponds to the Lake of Fire prepared for the Devil and his angels described in the Book of Revelation.

The final point of interest in these verses is the mention of Satan, the Accuser, and the reality that those fallen angels who followed him sought to seduce those who dwell upon the earth. This is an interesting introduction of the phrase that refers to the book of Revelation for those who reject God and endure the Tribulation period. That connection would be most difficult to assert so it must be left as a point of interest in passing. Yet, this makes clear that 1 Enoch understands that the ongoing purpose of the demonic world and the Satanic agenda has very much to do with deceiving men.

*1 Enoch 60:1–4 (Charles) 61:1–4 (Charlesworth and Hermenia)*

Charles:

1 In those days I beheld long ropes given to those angels; who took to their wings, and fled, advancing towards the north. 2 And I inquired of the angel, saying, Wherefore have they taken those long ropes, and gone forth? He said, They are gone forth to measure. 3 The angel, who proceeded with me, said, These are the measures of the righteous; and cords shall the righteous bring, that they may trust in the name of the Lord of spirits for ever and ever. 4 The elect shall begin to dwell with the elect.<sup>111</sup>

Charlesworth:

**1** I saw in those days that long ropes were given to those angels; and hoisting up their own (respective) portions (of the ropes), they soared going in the direction of the northeast. **2** And I asked the angel, saying unto him, “Why have those (angels) hoisted these ropes and gone off?” And he said unto me, “They have gone in order to make measurements.” **3** The angel who was going with me also said unto me, “These (angels) are the ones who shall bring the measuring ropes of the righteous ones as well as their binding cords in order that they might lean upon the name of

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111. Enoch. The Book of Enoch (pp. 48–49). Start Publishing LLC. Kindle Edition.

the Lord of the Spirits forever and ever. Then the elect ones shall begin to walk with the elect ones. 4 These are the measurements which shall be given to faith and which shall strengthen righteousness.” (1Enoch 61:1–4 PSEUD-CW)

Hermenias:

1 And I saw in those days, long cords were given to those angels, and they took for themselves wings and flew and went toward the North. 2 And I asked the angel, “Why did these take the cords and go?” And he said to me, “They went so that they may measure.” 3 And the angel who went with me said to me, “These will bring the measurements of the righteous, and the ropes of the righteous to the righteous; so that they may rely on the name of the Lord of Spirits forever and ever. 4 And the chosen will begin to dwell with the chosen; and these are the measurements that will be given to faith, and they will strengthen righteousness.<sup>112</sup>

The primary contribution of these verses is in the realm of appearance. While the biblical text does allow for winged angels, such as the cherubim that kneel upon the ark and the four living creatures, the bulk of the angels are not described as having wings in the biblical accounts. Yet, this passage takes for granted that at least angels which Enoch beholds here are winged. They use these wings for flight to go and complete the task of the Lord. While such physical descriptions are not frequently offered, those that are given become quite precious. It seems entirely possible that the writer of 1 Enoch wrote under the extra-biblical assumption that every angel was also winged, though that would seem to run contrary to the rest of Scripture regarding the appearance of common angels (Genesis 18:2; 19:1; Zechariah 1:8–9; et.al.)

*1 Enoch 65:1–4 (Charles) 66:1–2 (Charlesworth and Hermenias)*

Charles:

1 After this he showed me the angels of punishment, who were prepared to come, and to open all the mighty waters under the earth: 2 That they may be for judgment, and for the destruction of all those who remain and

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112. Nickelsburg, George W.E.; VanderKam, James C., 1 Enoch (p. 77). Fortress Press. Kindle Edition.

dwell upon the earth. 3 And the Lord of spirits commanded the angels who went forth, not to take up the men and preserve them. 4 For those angels presiding over all the mighty waters. Then I went out from the presence of Enoch.<sup>113</sup>

Charlesworth:

1 After this he showed me the angels of punishment who are prepared to come and release all the powers of the waters which are underground to become judgment and destruction unto all who live and dwell upon the earth. 2 But the Lord of the Spirits gave an order to the angels who were on duty that they should not raise the (water) enclosures but guard (them)—for they were the angels who were in charge of the waters. Then I left from the presence of Enoch. <sup>114</sup>

Hermenia:

1 And after this, he showed me the angels of punishment, who are ready to go forth and let loose all the power of the water that is beneath the earth, that it might be for the judgment and destruction of all who reside and dwell on the earth. 2 And the Lord of Spirits commanded the angels who were going forth, that they not raise their hands, but that they keep watch; for these angels were in charge of the power of the waters. 3 And I went forth from the presence of Enoch.<sup>115</sup>

The above two passages do well to be studied together as they both bring forth a new description of angelic beings. Angels of wrath and angels of punishment. Both phrases seem to indicate the same basic function. These are angels that have a function given to them by God for the purpose of bringing about and expressing His wrath, punishment, and judgment. These angels are also equated with the elemental forces of presiding over mighty waters, which corresponds with the revelation given by the first chapter of the Book of Hebrews. Yet, the pertinent facts are in the function of these angels as agents of God's wrath and the method of that destruction and judgment will be by utilizing great waters. This is clearly an allusion to the flood of Noah's day.

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113. Ibid. (p. 54).

114. 1Enoch 63:1 PSEUD-CW.

115. Nickelsburg, George W.E.; VanderKam, James C., 1 Enoch (pp. 85–86). Fortress Press. Kindle Edition.

*1 Enoch 92:16 (Charles) 91:15 (Charlesworth) 91:9 (Hermenia)*

Charles:

16 And after this, on the seventh day of the tenth week, there shall be an everlasting judgment, which shall be executed upon the Watchers; and a spacious eternal heaven shall spring forth in the midst of the angels.<sup>116</sup>

Charlesworth:

Then, after this matter, on the tenth week in the seventh part, there shall be the eternal judgment; and it shall be executed by the angels of the eternal heaven—the great (judgment) which emanates from all of the angels. **16** The first heaven shall depart and pass away; a new heaven shall appear; and all the powers of heaven shall shine forever sevenfold. (1Enoch 91:15–16 PSEUD-CW)

Hermenia:

After this, in the seventh week, there will arise a perverse generation, and many will be its deeds, and all its deeds will be perverse.<sup>117</sup>

The final passage from Enoch this paper will consider concerns the reality that the scope of the book of Enoch truly makes the human drama of the Bible secondary to the Angelic drama. This is an error often perpetrated by those who find themselves over-interested in the angelic world. The entire human world can be thus be misinterpreted as a secondary part of the larger angelic conflict. This is clearly not the case, yet 1 Enoch falls into this very category in prioritizing the judgment of the fallen angels, as well as detailing their punishment. While the angelic world will be judged, and the demonic forces will all meet their ultimate end answering to their Creator, the primary focus of the biblical account is not the angelic conflict, but the redemption story of humanity and of planet earth.

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116. Enoch. The Book of Enoch (p. 96). Start Publishing LLC. Kindle Edition.

117. Nickelsburg, George W.E.; VanderKam, James C., 1 Enoch (p. 140). Fortress Press. Kindle Edition.

## Conclusion

Comparison of the Book of 1 Enoch and the scripture on the topic of angelology brings about some interesting and important observations, both about biblical angelology and about the nature of this rather mysterious book. When it comes to biblical angelology it becomes apparent that the biblical record of what angels are, how they function and operate, and how they are arranged in terms of their authority was well known from the Bible itself. The authoritative revelation is surely consistent, and the similarities between the Pseudepigrapha and the biblical accounts serve to affirm the biblical conception of the angelic world to be accurate and in keeping with modern biblical understanding of the angelic world. This is meaningful to any who may wonder whether the angels were thought by the biblical authors to be some sort of symbol or figure. It is clear from examining both biblical and extra-biblical literature that the understanding of angels and belief in their function was entirely literal and largely in lockstep with biblical orthodoxy.

The book of 1 Enoch also appears to be consistent with what the biblical Enoch would have known in terms of the history and expectation of what was immediately ahead for him. There are some features which are clearly written or redacted by a more recent author, but if it is a complete fabrication then it is a remarkable one indeed. The things which Enoch is said to see and encounter, and the specific nature of the angelic world preceding the flood are all well described in this book. This book, whether it is authentic or not, also lends great credence to the understanding that the Sons of God are angels who took daughters of men as wives. While some will denigrate this view for the supernatural elements, it is quite clear that it was a dominant view of the people who received and kept those very scriptures.

For the most part, 1 Enoch seems to supply information that the biblical authors did not see fit to include, by function of divine inspiration. Yet, it is clear that the author was not in any way driving some agenda of trying to change the scope or function of angels, it simply provides more complete information. It is clear from scripture that the angels have names and individual identities, so Enoch provides the names of several others not named in scripture. Angels in Scripture clearly function in hierarchy, and 1 Enoch provides more information about the way in which these angels are arranged and relate one to another. Angels in scripture clearly have both missions and stewardships, and the book of 1 Enoch provides more examples of missions, functions, and stewardships that fit that biblical model.

While this book is of the utmost interest to the Bible student, it must be clearly noted that it is painfully obvious why this book falls short of the standard of holy scripture. It drips with man's curiosity regarding the angelic world. It also smacks heavily of the secular and worldly ideas that the physical world is merely a pawn in the angelic drama, rather than the exact opposite being clearly the case in the biblical record of angels. This, however, does not mean that certain parts of it may not be authentic as they were passed down. This book was not written under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit and thus not protected by God in the same way. Yet, it would be less reasonable to assert that some or even much of what is preserved in the book of 1 Enoch was not born out of some source material that came originally from the man who walked with God and was no more.

## CHAPTER 10

# Angelology in the Book of Jubilees

### Introduction to the Book of Jubilees

The book of Jubilees is an extraordinary work of an author who believes that the Jubilee is the method of God's structure of time. For the modern reader it supplies some vital information about how the Jewish people may have counted those Jubilees from the beginning. The idea of a Jubilee is quite simple, but important to the Law of Moses. Eerdmans Dictionary Explains:

The 50th year in a series of seven Sabbatical Years. The Year of Jubilee (from Heb. *yobel*, "ram's horn") is the last layer in the extension of the sabbath principle that begins with the day of rest every seventh day, extended in the Sabbatical Year fallow every seventh year, to the Jubilee. It begins in the middle of the seventh sabbatical year (every 49th year) on the tenth day of the seventh month (the Day of Atonement), and extends, presumably, into the seventh month of the 50th year, thus overlapping by just over half a year with the regular Sabbatical Year. A ram's horn was to be sounded throughout the land and the Jubilee proclaimed, during which land was to be restored to its original inherited line of ownership, and Israelite debt-slaves freed to return to their own land. The Jubilee Year, like the Sabbatical Year, was also to be a year of "rest" for the land, in which sowing, reaping, and harvesting were prohibited. The redemption price of land or slave was to be pro-rated according to the number of years left until the next Jubilee. These Jubilee laws are detailed exclusively in Lev. 25, not being mentioned in the parallel legislation of Deut. 15:1–15 or the Covenant Code in Exod. 21:2–4; 23:10–12. Conversely, no mention is made in Lev. 25 of the cancellation of debts mandated in Deut. 15 (perhaps because this cancellation was predicated upon the charging of interest, whereas interest is prohibited outright in Lev. 25:35–

38), though later tradition consistently connects these provisions. Nor does Lev. 25 mention the seventh-year release of debt-slaves (though the method prescribed in vv. 47–53 for the calculation of redemption price necessarily assumes it — the calculation only working when the Jubilee should happen to intervene within the normal six-year period of servitude), perhaps secondarily edited out to emphasize a political point about release from Babylonian Exile after 50 years of captivity.

The Jubilee legislation in Lev. 25 deals primarily with issues of social welfare — exhortations regarding helping the poor: providing food in the Sabbatical Years, loaning money without interest, taking them in as hired workers, redeeming them and their land. The Jubilee itself is styled as only a last resort when all other help had failed. The issues at hand were debt and debt slavery, inheritance and land tenure, kinship responsibilities and redemption, and equitable distribution of farmland (i.e., the principal means of production in agrarian societies; houses within walled cities were exempt; Lev. 25:29–30). The theological underpinning of such legislation is found in the concept that God owns all of the land and the people as well, having redeemed them from slavery in Egypt. Thus the people could not be permanently enslaved to others nor the land sold permanently. It could only be leased temporarily — the use of it sold for a limited period of time until the next Jubilee when it would be restored to the inherited line. This would prevent a few wealthy landowners from accumulating all of the land and enslaving the general population.

Aside from a few other incidental references (Lev. 27:16–25; Num. 36:4; Ezek. 46:16–18) plus Josephus *Ant.* 3.12.3, no specific mention of the Jubilee is made outside of Lev. 25, though the descriptions in Isa. 37:30 (= 2 Kgs. 19:29); 49:8–9; 61:1–2; Jer. 34:8–22; Neh. 5:1–13 may well also reflect a Jubilee tradition. There is no evidence that the Jubilee as legislated here was ever practiced, aside from fallow provisions (which were also part of the Sabbatical Year laws) during the Second Temple period (1 Macc. 6:48–54). Some scholars would see the entire Jubilee tradition as merely utopian construct or an invention of the restoration period, used to justify the usurpation of land by the returnees. Yet one wonders how effective such an appeal to “law” could be unless it already held some familiarity and respect among the people. Later tradition did, however, connect the Jubilee release of debt-slaves and restoration of property with release from the Babylonian captivity and subsequent restoration of Israel from exile (cf. Isa. 61:1–2), still later eschatologized in the Dead Sea Scrolls (11QMelch 2:1–9) and the NT

(Luke 4:16–21). The book of Jubilees uses the 50-year Jubilee cycle as a normative organizing principle for history.<sup>118</sup>

Thus, the author of Jubilees uses the assumption that the first day of Creation began the first Jubilee. He thus organizes his perspective of history using the concept of history as a rolling succession of Jubilees. VanderKam introduces the author in this way:

The book of Jubilees is a narrative work by a Jewish author who composed it in Hebrew around the middle of the second century bce. In it he reframed and rewrote the book of Genesis and the first parts of the book of Exodus. His second edition, as it were, of the stories from creation to Sinai has the distinction of being the oldest sustained commentary on the Genesis–Exodus narratives. It was probably written before there was a separated community of the Dead Sea Scrolls, but it was influential for that group and eventually for some other Jewish and Christian writers.<sup>119</sup>

This work is comprised of 50 chapters which are separated into two major sections. The first section being comprised of only the first chapter, and the second section being the balance of the book. In this way, the first section is a sort of introduction that supplies the needed information to understand the explanation the angel gives to Moses, giving him information from Creation to Mt. Sinai. It can be clearly seen how this book would supply the information every reader of Genesis naturally wonders: where did Moses get this information? There have been plenty of adequate theories from the Tolodot theory to the thought that God Himself revealed these things to Moses as they shared fellowship. But this book expressly assigns that work to angelic agency. This point and more make Jubilees the second major Pseudepigraphical subject of this study.

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118. Knauth, Robin J. DeWitt. Freedman, David Noel, Allen C. Myers, and Astrid B. Beck, eds. *Eerdmans Dictionary of the Bible*. Accordance electronic ed., version 3.8. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2000.

119. VanderKam, James C. . *Jubilees (Hermeneia)* . Fortress Press. Kindle Edition.

## Discussion and Analysis of the Pertinent Passages

### *Jubilees 1:27–29*

Charlesworth:

27 \*And he said to the angel of the presence, “Write for Moses from the first creation until my sanctuary is built in their midst forever and ever. 28 \*And the LORD will appear in the sight of all. And everyone will know that I am the God of Israel and the father of all the children of Jacob and king upon Mount Zion forever and ever. And Zion and Jerusalem will be holy.” 29 \*And the angel of the presence, who went before the camp of Israel, took the tablets of the division of years from the time of the creation of the law and testimony according to their weeks (of years), according to the jubilees, year by year throughout the full number of jubilees, from [the day of creation until] the day of the new creation when the heaven and earth and all of their creatures shall be renewed according to the powers of heaven and according to the whole nature of earth, until the sanctuary of the LORD is created in Jerusalem upon Mount Zion. And all of the lights will be renewed for healing and peace and blessing for all of the elect of Israel and in order that it might be thus from that day and unto all the days of the earth.<sup>120</sup>

Hermenia:

27/ Then he told the Angel of the Presence to dictate to Moses [6] (starting) from the beginning of the creation until the time when “my temple is built among them throughout the ages of eternity. 28/ The Lord will appear in the sight of all, and all will know that I am the God of Israel, the Father of all Jacob’s children, and King on Mount Zion for the ages of eternity. Then Zion and Jerusalem will be holy.” 29/ The Angel of the Presence, who was going along in front of the Israelite camp, took the tablets (that told) of the divisions of the years from the time the law and the testimony were created—for the weeks of their jubilees, year by year in their full number, and their jubilees from [the time of the first creation until] [7] the time of the new creation when the heavens, the earth, and all their creatures will be renewed like the powers of the sky and like all the

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120. (*Jubilees 1:27–29 PSEUD-CW*).

creatures of the earth, until the time when the temple of the Lord will be created in Jerusalem on Mount Zion. All the luminaries will be renewed for (the purpose of) healing, health, and blessing for all the elect ones of Israel and so that it may remain this way from that time throughout all the days of the earth.<sup>121</sup>

These verses support a biblical view of angelology. The interesting figure of “the Angel of the Presence” is a bit of a conundrum, not appearing anywhere in the Hebrew Bible. Yet, this character is assumed to be familiar by the author of the Book of Jubilees. VanderKam has done excellent research on this topic and his conclusions are sound:

The Lord now turns to the Angel of the Presence, who makes his first appearance in the book. By definition, such an angel would be nearby, so God needed only to turn to him when he finished with Moses. No further words of description for the angel figure here, though in v. 29 some helpful details about him are divulged. The title does not appear in the HB, but Isa 63:9 seems to come closest to it: (“lit., “and the angel of his presence saved them”). The expression is problematic, and the LXX reads differently (“no angel but God himself saves them”), yet it is present in 1QIsa and thus is an old Hebrew reading. The exact title appears in several texts from the Qumran caves, whether in the singular (1QSb iv:25; 3Q7 5 3) or plural (1QSb iv:26; 1QH xiv:13; cf. Tob 12:15). Jubilees itself provides evidence for the supreme status of angels in this class. In 2:2 they are listed as the first of the angels to be created, and in 2:18 the angels of the presence with the angels of holiness are singled out from the other classes of angels and given the privilege of keeping the Sabbath with the Lord in heaven and on earth. Jubilees 15:27 says they were created circumcise.<sup>122</sup>

This Angel of the Presence appears to be a special class of angel and brings to our minds the statement of Gabriel to Zechariah in Luke 1:19: “And the angel answered and said to him, “I am Gabriel, who stands in the presence of God, and was sent to speak to you and bring you these glad tidings.” It seems that this special class of angels may even be equated with the place and

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121. VanderKam, James C. . Jubilees (Hermeneia) (pp. 11–12). Fortress Press. Kindle Edition.

122 VanderKam, James C. Jubilees: A Commentary on The Book of Jubilees. Edited by Sidnie White Crawford, Fortress Press, 2018. Pg. 162.

fall of Satan before His fall and may easily be equated with the biblical designation “archangel.”

The next noticeable fact from these verses is the function of the Angel of the Presence as an instrument of revelation. In fact, the rest of the book is going to be brought through this angel’s telling of the events to Moses, and Moses’ consequent recording of each of the events (Acts 7:38). While this event is nowhere recorded in Scripture, the function of an angel being used to bring and provide revelation is a regular and biblical function throughout the Old Testament scripture. Thus, while the angelic designation is not found in the biblical text, the similarity of title and function displays the basic angelic orthodoxy of the most well founded Pseudepigraphic authors.

### *Jubilees 2:1*

Charlesworth:

And the angel of the presence spoke to Moses by the word of the LORD, saying, “Write the whole account of creation, that in six days the LORD God completed all his work and all that he created. And he observed a sabbath the seventh day, and he sanctified it for all ages. And he set it (as) a sign for all his works.” (Jubilees 2:1 PSEUD-CW)

Hermenia:

2:1/ On the Lord’s orders the Angel of the Presence said to Moses, Write all the words about the creation—how on the sixth day the Lord God completed all his works, everything that he had created, and kept Sabbath on the seventh day. He sanctified it for all ages and set it as a sign for all his works. 2/ For on the first day he created the heavens that are above, the earth, the waters, and all the spirits who serve before him, namely, the angels of the presence; the angels of holiness; the angels of the spirits of fire; the angels of the winds that blow; the angels of the spirits of the clouds for darkness, ice, hoar-frost, dew,[8] snow,[9] hail, and frost; the angels of the thunder; and for the angels of the winds [ ];[10] and the angels of the spirits for cold and heat, for winter and summer, and for all the spirits of his creatures that [he made] in the heavens and that (he made) on the earth,[11]and in every (place). [There were also] the depths, darkness and dawn, light and evening that he prepared through his knowledge. 3/ Then we saw his works and blessed him regarding all his

works; we offered praise before him because he had made seven great works on the first day.<sup>123</sup>

These verses confirm the literal seven twenty-four hour days of creation week as being the natural and accepted understanding of the Jewish people of their own scriptures from the very beginning. However, it provides additional information to answer questions which interpreters have ever had thereafter: “When were the celestial being created?” The author of Jubilees asserts that these angels were created on day one of the creation week. This passage also provides information about what the author believes the angels were created to do, both to influence and manipulate earthly elements. The following categories of angels can be observed:

- Angels of the Presence
- Angels of Holiness
- Angels of Spirits of Fire
- Angels of the Winds that Blow
- Angels of Clouds of Darkness
- Angels for Precipitation
- Angels of Cold and Heat
- Angels of Winter and Summer

This betrays the non-biblical perspective that angels are the cause that moves every force under heaven. Weather, seasons, and every other factor out of human control would be assigned to angelic control. While the biblical account does not enforce the idea that celestial beings are the cause of every meteorological phenomenon, there are significant phenomena that are brought about by angelic agency, such as Sodom and Gomorrah. Thus, while the angelology of Jubilees exceeds the boundaries of biblical revelation it does not contradict, only supplies guess-work for the gaps. It must be noted that the information it supplies is also consistent with the idea that different angels are created with different forms, abilities, and functions within the greater plan of God. Revelation 9:13–14 supply a similar perspective: “Then the sixth angel sounded: And I heard a voice from the four horns of the golden altar which is before God, <sup>14</sup> saying to the sixth angel who had the trumpet, ‘Release the four angels who are bound at the great river Euphrates.’” (Rev.

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123. VanderKam, James C. . Jubilees (Hermeneia) (pp. 12–13). Fortress Press. Kindle Edition.

9:13–14, NKJV). It is clear that the idea of angels affecting and being involved with natural phenomena is an idea that is grounded in biblical thinking.

One final note about this passage: it confirms the revelation of Job 38:7 that the newly created angels sang out at the creation event. This is another example of a biblically orthodox expression of the purpose of celestial beings – to witness God’s works and to glorify Him for all of the greatness of His creative acts. This highlights the importance of the term “the Watchers”. This term is more frequently used in the extra-biblical writings, yet it does clarify that the Jewish theologians of this period understood a large point of the creation of the celestial beings was to witness what God would do and glorify Him.

### *Jubilees 2:18*

Hermenia

18/ He told us—all the angels of the presence and all the angels of holiness, these two kinds—to keep Sabbath with him in heaven and on earth.<sup>124</sup>

### *Jubilees 3:17–22*

Charlesworth:

Jubilees 3:17 At the end of seven years which he completed there, seven years exactly, in the second month on the seventeenth day, the serpent came and drew near to the woman. And the serpent said to the woman, “The LORD commanded you, saying, ‘You shall not eat from any tree which is in the garden.’” Jubilees 3:18 And she said to him, “The LORD said, ‘Eat from all of the fruit of the trees which are in the garden.’ But the LORD said to us, ‘You shall not eat from the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, and you shall not touch it lest you die.’” Jubilees 3:19 And the serpent said to the woman, “It is not (true) that you shall surely die because the LORD knows that on the day you eat of it your eyes will become opened and you will become like gods, and you will know good and evil.”

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124. VanderKam, James C. . *Jubilees (Hermeneia)* (p. 14). Fortress Press. Kindle Edition.

Jubilees 3:20 And the woman saw the tree that it was pleasant and it was pleasing to the eye and its fruit was good to eat and she took some of it and she ate. Jubilees 3:21 And she first covered her shame with a fig leaf, and then she gave it to Adam and he ate and his eyes were opened and he saw that he was naked. Jubilees 3:22 And he took a fig leaf and sewed it and made an apron for himself. And he covered his shame. (Jubilees 3:17–22 PSEUD-CW)<sup>125</sup>

### Hermenia

17/ When the conclusion of the seven years which he had completed there arrived—seven years exactly—in the second month, on the seventeenth, the serpent came and approached the woman. The serpent said to the woman: “Is it from all the fruit of the trees in the garden (that) the Lord has commanded you: ‘Do not eat from it?’” 18/ She said to him: “From all the fruit of the tree(s) that are in the garden the Lord told us: ‘Eat.’ But from the fruit of the tree that is in the middle of the garden he told us: ‘Do not eat from it and do not touch it so that you may not die.’” 19/ Then the serpent said to the woman: “You will not really die because the Lord knows that when you eat from it your eyes will be opened, you will become like gods, and you will know good and evil.” 20/ The woman saw that the tree was delightful and pleasing to the eye and (that) its fruit was good to eat. So she took some of it and ate (it). 21/ She first covered her shame with fig leaves and then gave it to Adam. He ate (it), his eyes were opened, and he saw that he was naked. 22/ He took fig leaves and sewed (them); (thus) he made himself an apron and covered his shame.<sup>126</sup>

These verses are a loose quotation from Genesis chapter 3. There is the strange alteration of the order of things occurring contrary to the biblical text. In the book of Jubilees Eve eats, covers herself, then gives to Adam. Whereas the biblical account indicates strongly that they ate together, and then found covering together after the moment of disobedience.

Most importantly to the purpose of this study, this account affirms the ability of the fallen celestial beings to possess and inhabit other forms. It agrees fully with the text of scripture about the nature of some rebel angelic being that caused Eve to question the goodness and trustworthiness of the provision and commands of God.

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125. [https://accordance.bible/link/read/PSEUD-CW#Jubilees\\_3:17](https://accordance.bible/link/read/PSEUD-CW#Jubilees_3:17).

126. VanderKam, James C. . Jubilees (Hermeneia) (pp. 18–19). Fortress Press. Kindle Edition.

*Jubilees 4:15*

Charlesworth:

And in the second week of the tenth jubilee, Mahalalel took for himself a wife, Dinah, the daughter of Baraki'el, the daughter of his father's brother, as a wife. And she bore a son for him in the third week in the sixth year. And he called him Jared because in his days the angels of the LORD, who were called Watchers, came down to the earth in order to teach the sons of man, and perform judgment and uprightness upon the earth. (Jubilees 4:15 PSEUD-CW)

Hermenia:

15/ During the second week of the tenth jubilee [449–455] Malalael married Dinah, the daughter of Barakiel, the daughter of his father's brother.[25] She gave birth to a son for him in the third week, in its sixth year [461]. He named him Jared because during his lifetime the angels of the Lord who were called Watchers descended to earth to teach humanity and to do what is just and upright upon the earth.<sup>127</sup>

This passage affirms that there was a time when the angelic beings known as “the Watchers” came down with the purpose of teaching humanity. The difference between this and the other accounts is that the substance of their instruction was meant to be good and positive, whereas Enoch describes this interference in an entirely negative light. VanderKam elucidates the difference and the explanation:

By way of the son's name – Jared (a name sharing the consonants of a Hebrew verb meaning “went down”) – the author introduces the story of the angels who descended, here called Watchers as in 1 Enoch 6:2. The same play on the meaning of Jared's name occurs in 1 Enoch 6:6, where, however, the angels go down to the earth for a different reason than the one given in Jubilees (the writer mentions the story at this point but will develop it in chap. 5) The statement about the meaning of Jared's name is exceptionally important: his father so named him “because during his lifetime the angels of the Lord who were called Watchers descended to earth to teach humanity and to do what is just and upright upon the earth.”

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127. Ibid. (p. 21).

For Jubilees, in distinction from the traditions represented in 1 Enoch, the angels' descent was a positive event – they came on a teaching mission and to model righteous behavior. Only at a later time – and upon the earth – did problems arise. So, the angels did not become sinful in their heavenly home prior to their descent (as they probably did according to 1 Enoch 6:2; 12:4; 15:3; 16:3); that happened only after they had left it. The reputation of heaven thus remains intact.<sup>128</sup>

This interpretation hits squarely at the theological truth with regard to why the Lord would allow such diabolical interference, as well as giving a chronological explanation for the number of fallen angels who seek to destroy the seed-line of the Messiah and the salvific promise of Genesis 3:15. This text makes the Watchers out to be a positive figure until such time as they are corrupted by the beauty of the daughters of the sons of men and the desire to interact with them sexually, making a progeny for themselves upon the earth.

*Jubilees 4:21–22*

Charlesworth:

**Jubilees 4:21** And he was therefore with the angels of God six jubilees of years. And they showed him everything which is on earth and in the heavens, the dominion of the sun. And he wrote everything, **22** and bore witness to the Watchers, the ones who sinned with the daughters of men because they began to mingle themselves with the daughters of men so that they might be polluted. And Enoch bore witness against all of them.” (Jubilees 4:21–22 PSEUD-CW)

Hermenia:

21/ He was, moreover, with God’s angels for six jubilees of years. They showed him everything on earth and in the heavens—the dominion of the sun—and he wrote down everything. 22/ He testified to the Watchers who had sinned with the daughters of men because these had begun to

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128. VanderKam, James C. *Jubilees: A Commentary on The Book of Jubilees*. Edited by Sidnie White Crawford, Fortress Press, 2018. Pgs. 248–249.

mix with earthly women [26] so that they became defiled. Enoch testified against all of them.<sup>129</sup>

These verses account for the experience of Enoch and are a statement that the author of Jubilees regarded the Enochian account as reliable and authoritative. The time that Enoch spent with the angels is said to be 294 years (6 jubilees of 49 years each). This would give Enoch time after the event to write down his revelations before he “was no more.” This affirms the idea that there is an angelic realm that is, by divine agency, accessible to at least one person. Those years were allegedly spent by Enoch learning about the hierarchy of celestial beings and their various sins and destinies in the unseen spiritual world. This premise goes beyond what is contained in the text of the Old Testament, but it is also in keeping with the revelation contained in Jacob’s ladder vision, as well as the visions of Isaiah and Ezekiel.

### *Jubilees 5:6*

Charlesworth:

And against his angels whom he had sent to the earth he was very angry. He commanded that they be uprooted from all their dominion. And he told us to bind them in the depths of the earth, and behold, they are bound in the midst of them, and they are isolated. (Jubilees 5:6 PSEUD-CW)

Hermenia:

6/ Against his angels whom he had sent to the earth he was angry enough to uproot them from all their (positions of) authority. He told us to tie them up in the depths of the earth; now they are tied within them and are alone.<sup>130</sup>

This verse explains the penalty of those angels who violated their given estate in order to couple with human women. The Lord’s wrath was laid about them in two major ways. Firstly, they were relieved of all of their proper God-given authority. Secondly, they were bound in the depths of the earth and are in a state of punishment and isolation there. This idea is affirmed by both Peter and Jude in the New Testament:

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129. VanderKam, James C. . Jubilees (Hermeneia) (pp. 22–23). Fortress Press. Kindle Edition.

130. Ibid. (p. 25).

For if God did not spare the angels who sinned, but cast *them* down to hell and delivered *them* into chains of darkness, to be reserved for judgment; <sup>5</sup> and did not spare the ancient world, but saved Noah, *one of eight people*, a preacher of righteousness, bringing in the flood on the world of the ungodly; <sup>6</sup> and turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah into ashes, condemned *them* to destruction, making *them* an example to those who afterward would live ungodly; <sup>7</sup> and delivered righteous Lot, *who was* oppressed by the filthy conduct of the wicked <sup>8</sup> (for that righteous man, dwelling among them, tormented *his* righteous soul from day to day by seeing and hearing *their* lawless deeds)— <sup>9</sup> *then* the Lord knows how to deliver the godly out of temptations and to reserve the unjust under punishment for the day of judgment, <sup>10</sup> and especially those who walk according to the flesh in the lust of uncleanness and despise authority. *They are* presumptuous, self-willed. They are not afraid to speak evil of dignitaries, <sup>11</sup> whereas angels, who are greater in power and might, do not bring a reviling accusation against them before the Lord. (2 Pet. 2:4–11 NKJV)

**6** And the angels who did not keep their proper domain, but left their own abode, He has reserved in everlasting chains under darkness for the judgment of the great day; **7** as Sodom and Gomorrah, and the cities around them in a similar manner to these, having given themselves over to sexual immorality and gone after strange flesh, are set forth as an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire.” (Jude 1:6–7 NKJV)

### *Jubilees 7:21–25*

Charlesworth:

\*For on account of these three the Flood came upon the earth. For (it was) because of the fornication which the Watchers, apart from the mandate of their authority, fornicated with the daughters of men and took for themselves wives from all whom they chose and made a beginning of impurity. <sup>22</sup> \*And they begot sons, the Naphidim, and all of them were dissimilar. And each one ate his fellow. The giants killed the Naphil, and the Naphil killed the Elyo, and the Elyo mankind, and man his neighbor. <sup>23</sup> \*And everyone sold himself in order that he might do injustice and pour out much blood, and the earth was full of injustice. <sup>24</sup> And afterward, they sinned against beasts, and birds and everything which moves or walks

upon the earth. And they poured out much blood upon the earth. And all the thoughts and desires of men were always contemplating vanity and evil. <sup>25</sup> And the LORD blotted out everything from the face of the earth on account of the evil of their deeds. And on account of the blood which they poured out in the midst of the land, he blotted out everything. (Jubilees 7:21–25 PSEUD-CW)

#### Hermenias

21/ For it was on account of these three things that the flood was on the earth, since (it was) due to fornication that the Watchers had illicit intercourse—apart from the mandate of their authority—with women. When they married of them whomever they chose they committed the first (acts) of impurity. 22/ They fathered (as their) sons the Nephilim. All of them were dissimilar (from one another) and would devour one another: the giant killed the Naphil; the Naphil killed the Elyo; the Elyo humanity; and people their fellows. 23/ When everyone sold himself to commit injustice and to shed innocent blood, the earth was filled with injustice. 24/ After them all the animals, birds, and whatever moves about and whatever walks on the earth. Much blood was shed on the earth. All the thoughts and wishes of humanity were (devoted to) thinking up what was useless and wicked all the time. 25/ Then the Lord obliterated all from the surface of the earth because of their actions and because of the blood that they had shed in the earth.<sup>131</sup>

While the biblical account in Genesis places the reason for the flood squarely at the feet of the sinfulness of man and the constant wickedness of his every thought, the book of Jubilees makes the central purpose of the flood the intercourse between the Watchers and mankind. These acts are noted as being “impure” and their unholy offspring are noted for cannibalism and continual violence and injustice. This was the cause, according to the book of Jubilees, and of all of the injustice to follow as well as the influence which caused the wickedness of thought and action among men. This explains the Genesis 6–9 account clearly in keeping with the rest of scripture.

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131. VanderKam, James C. . Jubilees (Hermeneia) (pp. 34–35). Fortress Press. Kindle Edition.

*Jubilees 10:1–8*

Charlesworth:

Jubilees 10:1 In the third week of that jubilee the polluted demons began to lead astray the children of Noah's sons and to lead them to folly and to destroy them. Jubilees 10:2 And the sons of Noah came to Noah, their father, and they told him about the demons who were leading astray and blinding and killing his grandchildren.

Jubilees 10:3 And he prayed before the LORD his God and he said, "God of the spirits which are in all flesh, who has acted mercifully with me and saved me and my sons from the water of the Flood and did not let me perish as you did the children of perdition, because Great was your grace upon me, and great was your mercy upon my soul. Let your grace be lifted up upon my sons, and do not let the evil spirits rule over them, lest they destroy them from the earth. But bless me and my sons. Jubilees 10:4 And let us grow and increase and fill the earth. Jubilees 10:5 And you know that which your Watchers, the fathers of these spirits, did in my days and also these spirits who are alive. Shut them up and take them to the place of judgment. And do not let them cause corruption among the sons of your servant, O my God, because they are cruel and were created to destroy. Jubilees 10:6 And let them not rule over the spirits of the living because you alone know their judgment, and do not let them have power over the children of the righteous henceforth and forever."

Jubilees 10:7 And the LORD our God spoke to us so that we might bind all of them. Jubilees 10:8 And the chief of the spirits, Mastema, came and he said, "O Lord, Creator, leave some of them before me, and let them obey my voice. And let them do everything which I tell them, because if some of them are not left for me, I will not be able to exercise the authority of my will among the children of men because they are (intended) to corrupt and lead astray before my judgment because the evil of the sons of men is great." (Jubilees 10:1–8 PSEUD-CW)<sup>132</sup>

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132. [https://accordance.bible/link/read/PSEUD-CW#Jubilees\\_10:1](https://accordance.bible/link/read/PSEUD-CW#Jubilees_10:1).

Hermenia:

10:1/ During the third week of this jubilee [1583–89] impure demons began to mislead Noah’s grandchildren, to make them act foolishly, and to destroy them. 2/ Then Noah’s sons came to their father Noah and told him about the demons who were misleading, blinding, and killing his grandchildren. 3/ He prayed before the Lord his God and said, “God of the spirits which are in all animate beings—you who have shown kindness to me, saved me and my sons from the floodwaters, and did not make me perish as you did to the people (meant for) destruction—because your mercy for me has been large and your kindness to me has been great: may your mercy be lifted over the children of your children; and may the wicked spirits not rule them in order to destroy them from the earth. 4/ Now you bless me and my children so that we may increase, become numerous, and fill the earth. 5/ You know how your Watchers, the fathers of these spirits, have acted during my lifetime. As for these spirits who have remained alive, shut them up and hold them captive in the place of judgment. May they not cause destruction among your servant’s sons, my God, for they are depraved and were created for the purpose of destroying. 6/ May they not rule the spirits of the living for you alone know their punishment; and may they not have power over the sons of the righteous from now and forevermore.” 7/ Then our God told us to imprison each one. 8/ When Mastema, the leader of the spirits, came, he said, “Lord Creator, leave some of them before me; let them listen to me and do everything that I tell them, because if none of them is left for me I shall not be able to exercise the authority of my will among humanity. For they are meant for (the purposes of) destroying and misleading before my punishment because the evil of humanity is great.”<sup>133</sup>

These verses continue to explain the demonic desire and intent: to pervert and destroy humanity. The captivity of those fallen angels which violated their domain is stated, yet there is a continuing threat that would seek to do harm to men. These Watchers, previously sent to earth to teach and instruct, now have the sole intention of continuing their spiritual depravity and destroying the humans who were made in the image of God. Their power, wisdom, and authority all make it possible for them to dominate the offspring of mankind. Then a new character is introduced to the drama – Mastema.

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133. VanderKam, James C., *Jubilees (Hermenia)* (pp. 42–43). Fortress Press. Kindle Edition.

VanderKam notes:

The scene that follows in vv. 8–11 is unexpected and one of the most bizarre in Second Temple literature. Just when it seems as if Noah through God had averted the crisis and solved the problem, a new character arrives on the scene, Mastema. Ethopic Jubilees calls him either by this name alone or by the title “the prince of Mastema.” As Eschel observes, this is the first indication that there is a hierarchy among the evil spirits/demons because Mastema is designated “the leader of the spirits.” In Jubilees he will become the chief opponent of the chosen line and thus of Israel, with the Angel of the Presence who dictates the book to Moses serving as his counterpart; here he is the head of the demons or evil spirits and is opposed by the full contingent of the angels of the presence. Mastema is unhappy with the divine solution because it will prevent him from carrying out his appointed tasks. Like Noah, Mastema addresses God directly about it and uses the title “Lord Creator.” So, at the beginning of his speech he acknowledges the superiority of God and that he must consult with him to bring about a change; he cannot countermand a divine order on his own authority. His prayer, also like Noah’s, is petitionary in nature, but unlike Noah he makes no appeal to God’s past mercies. Instead of praising the Creator, he uses an imperative form – “leave some of them before me.” Noah resorted to imperatives when requesting a blessing in v. 4 and telling God what he wanted done to the spirits in v. 5; otherwise he uses more gentle jussives in v. 3 (“may your mercy be lifted over the children of your children”), in v. 5 (“May they not cause destruction”), and again in v. 6 (“May they not rule...and may they not have power”). Though he is under God’s ultimate control, Mastema speaks from a position of relative authority because he expects the spirits to be completely obedient to him. This is not the occasion when he receives his appointment as leader of the spirits; the writer does not divulge when that happened. Mastema simply demands that some of them remain at his disposal without specifying how many he wants.<sup>134</sup>

As VanderKam points out, this is an important passage for displaying a demonic hierarchy. There is no question that any of these demons, if released, would remain entirely under his authority and command. This is, of course,

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134. VanderKam, James C. *Jubilees: A Commentary on The Book of Jubilees*. Edited by Sidnie White Crawford, Fortress Press, 2018. Pgs. 404–405.

in keeping with the rest of biblical teaching on fallen angels, yet it also shows that the fallen angels who followed Satan are subject to him as Matthew 25:41 (“The Devil and his angels”).

This point also supports the orthodox biblical position found in the book of Job and elsewhere that the rebellious, fallen angels cannot act with absolute freedom. They are also limited in what they are able to do by the decree of Almighty God. Thus Mastema (the Satan) cannot force God to do anything but must make request of Him. Even if that request may be insistent or demanding, the reality is that it is not within Satan’s power to resist the final and ultimate decree of God. He must make a plea here not to have his side stripped of the various angelic resources.

This gives an interesting explanation for the imprisoned vs. free demons in the world. The common explanation is that not all fallen angels defiled their domain through sexual congress with human women. However, this text explains that Mastema was able to successfully protest for the release of some untold number of them to continue to be on his side and complete his wicked plan.

### *Jubilees 15:31–32*

Charlesworth:

Jubilees 15:31 And he sanctified them and gathered them from all of the sons of man because (there are) many nations and many people, and they all belong to him, but over all of them he caused spirits to rule so that they might lead them astray from following him. Jubilees 15:32 But over Israel he did not cause any angel or spirit to rule because he alone is their ruler and he will protect them and he will seek for them at the hand of his angels and at the hand of his spirits and at the hand of all of his authorities so that he might guard them and bless them and they might be his and he might be theirs henceforth and forever. (Jubilees 15:31–32 PSEUD-CW)<sup>135</sup>

Hermania:

31/ He sanctified them and gathered (them) from all humanity. For there are many nations and many peoples and all belong to him. He made spirits rule over all in order to lead them astray from following him. 32/ But over

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135. [https://accordance.bible/link/read/PSEUD-CW#Jubilees\\_15:31](https://accordance.bible/link/read/PSEUD-CW#Jubilees_15:31).

Israel he made no angel or spirit rule because he alone is their ruler. He will guard them and require them for himself from his angels, his spirits, and everyone, and all his powers so that he may guard them and bless them and so that they may be his and he theirs from now and forever.<sup>136</sup>

*Jubilees 18:9–13*

Charlesworth:

And I stood before him and before Prince Mastema. And the LORD said, “Speak to him. Do not let his hand descend upon the child. And do not let him do anything to him because I know that he is one who fears the LORD.” 10 And I called out to him from heaven and I said to him, “Abraham, Abraham.” And he was terrified and said, “Here I am.” 11 And I said to him, “Do not put forth your hand against the child and do not do anything to him because now I know that you are one who fears the LORD and you did not deny your firstborn son to me.”

Jubilees 18:12 And Prince Mastema was shamed. And Abraham lifted up his eyes and saw a ram was caught in the thicket by his horns. And Abraham went and took the ram and offered it up for a burnt offering instead of his son. 13 And Abraham called that place “The LORD has seen,” so that it is said “in the mountain the LORD has seen.” It is Mount Zion. (Jubilees 18:9–13 PSEUD-CW)<sup>137</sup>

Hermenia:

9/ Then I stood in front of him and in front of the prince of Mastema.[73] The Lord said, “Tell him not to let his hand go down on the child and not to do anything to him because I have shown that he is one who fears the Lord.” 10/ So I called to him from heaven and said to him, “Abraham, Abraham!” He was startled and said, “Yes?” 11/ I said to him, “Do not lay your hands on the child and do not do anything to him because I have now shown that you are one who fears the Lord. You have not refused me your son, your firstborn.” 12/ The prince of Mastema was put to shame. Then Abraham looked up and saw a ram caught by its horns.[74] Abraham went and took the ram. He offered it as a sacrifice instead of his

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136. VanderKam, James C. . Jubilees (Hermeneia) (p. 61). Fortress Press. Kindle Edition.

137. [https://accordance.bible/link/read/PSEUD-CW#Jubilees\\_18:9](https://accordance.bible/link/read/PSEUD-CW#Jubilees_18:9).

son. 13/ Abraham named that place “The Lord Saw” so that it is named “The Lord Saw.” It is Mount Zion.<sup>138</sup>

This passage adds a thrilling element of spiritual warfare to the already dramatic account of the offering of Isaac, known to Judaism as the *Akedah*. It also provides an interesting perspective on the nature of the sparing of Isaac. Again, Mastema, the name which Jubilees uses to refer to the Devil, is present at the event. The speaker who stood in front of Mastema is the Angel of the Presence who is dictating all these things to Moses. They sit in characteristic opposition to one another. This Angel of the Presence is the one, in this account, who speaks the words attributed to the Lord in the Genesis account.

One noteworthy point about this retelling of the Genesis account is that it shows that Mastema was put to shame by the events that took place here. It appears as if there are many reasons in which this event could shame Mastema. He could have wished for the destruction of the Messianic line, or that he hoped to see more of the death and destruction of man which he celebrates and longs for. However, the soundest perspective is that Mastema did not believe that Abraham would be faithful unto the point of offering up his only son – the child of promise – Isaac. Yet, Abraham was willing to give up that which was most precious and adored of him proving that man is capable of true faithfulness to God above all things, including himself.

### *Jubilees 19:28*

Charlesworth:

And may the spirit of Mastema not rule over you or over your seed in order to remove you from following the LORD who is your God henceforth and forever (Jubilees 19:28 PSEUD-CW)<sup>139</sup>

Hermenia:

28/ May the spirits of Mastema not rule over you and your descendants to remove you from following the Lord who is your God from now and forever.<sup>140</sup>

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138. VanderKam, James C. . Jubilees (Hermeneia) (p. 69). Fortress Press. Kindle Edition.

139. [https://accordance.bible/link/read/PSEUD-CW#Jubilees\\_19:28](https://accordance.bible/link/read/PSEUD-CW#Jubilees_19:28).

140. VanderKam, James C. . Jubilees (Hermeneia) (p. 73). Fortress Press. Kindle Edition.

This verse reiterates the sentiment of Noah's prayer in chapter ten of Jubilees. However, it is a worthwhile issue to mention that the Enemy of God and mankind would seek to rule over humans as God's chosen stewards of the earth. The desire of Mastema is to rule man, and should he succeed then they would be removed from following the LORD – for all of eternity. This shows that the ancient Jewish author of this book was in no way confused about the existence and purpose of the enemy of God known as Mastema here, but throughout the rest of the Bible as the Accuser, the Adversary, and the Enemy.

*Jubilees 22:16–24*

Charlesworth:

Jubilees 22:16 And you also, my son, Jacob, remember my words, and keep the commandments of Abraham, your father. Separate yourself from the gentiles, and do not eat with them, and do not perform deeds like theirs. And do not become associates of theirs. Because their deeds are defiled, and all of their ways are contaminated, and despicable, and abominable.

Jubilees 22:17 They slaughter their sacrifices to the dead, and to the demons they bow down. And they eat in tombs. And all their deeds are worthless and vain.

Jubilees 22:18 And they have no heart to perceive, and they have no eyes to see what their deeds are, and where they wander astray, saying to the tree 'you are my god,' and to a stone 'you are my lord, and you are my savior'; and they have no heart.

Jubilees 22:19 But (as for) you, my son, Jacob, may God Most High help you, and the God of heaven bless you. And may he turn you from their defilement, and from all their errors.

Jubilees 22:20 Be careful, my son, Jacob, that you do not take a wife from any of the seed of the daughters of Canaan, because all of his seed is (destined) for uprooting from the earth;

Jubilees 22:21 because through the sin of Ham, Canaan sinned, and all of his seed will be blotted out from the earth, and all his remnant, and there is none of his who will be saved.

Jubilees 22:22 And for all of those who worship idols and for the hated ones, there is no hope in the land of the living; because they will go down into Sheol. And in the place of judgment they will walk, and they will have no memory upon the earth. Just as the sons of Sodom were taken from the earth, so (too) all of those who worship idols shall be taken away.

Jubilees 22:23 Do not fear, my son, Jacob, and do not be in terror, O son of Abraham. The Most High God shall protect you from destruction, and from all the ways of error he will deliver you.

Jubilees 22:24 This house I have built for myself so that I might cause my name to dwell upon it in the land. It has been given to you and to your seed forever. And it will be called the house of Abraham and will be given to you and to your seed forever because you will build my house, and you will raise up my name before God forever. Your seed and your name will remain in all the earth's generations. (Jubilees 22:16–24 PSEUD-CW)<sup>141</sup>

#### Hermenia

16/ “Now you, my son Jacob, remember what I say and keep the commandments of your father Abraham. Separate from the nations, and do not eat with them. Do not act as they do, and do not become their companion, for their actions are something that is impure, and all their ways are defiled and something abominable and detestable. 17/ They offer their sacrifices to the dead, and they worship demons. They eat in tombs, and everything they do is empty and worthless. 18/ They have no mind to think, and their eyes do not see what they do and how they err in saying to (a piece of) wood, ‘You are my god’; or to a stone, ‘You are my lord; you are my deliverer.’ They have no mind.”<sup>142</sup>

The importance of this passage for the current discussion is the issue of the worship of demons. While the Old Testament has a lesser focus upon demonology than the New, this study has demonstrated an understanding of

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141. [https://accordance.bible/link/read/PSEUD-CW#Jubilees\\_22:16](https://accordance.bible/link/read/PSEUD-CW#Jubilees_22:16).

142. VanderKam, James C. . Jubilees (Hermeneia) (p. 81). Fortress Press. Kindle Edition.

demons as well as their involvement in the deception of the nations. The worship of demons in this passage is well explained by VanderKam:

The ways of the nations that are to be avoided include the religious exercises that are the focus of vv. 17–18. The writer had seized the opportunity to disdain idols and idolaters before (e.g., 12:1–8; 20:7–8), but here he prefaces his criticisms with references to deviant rites of which the nations are guilty. Abraham charges them with sacrificing to the dead, a subject mentioned elsewhere in ancient Jewish literature. Psalm 106:28 says of the Israelites in the wilderness that “they attach themselves to the Baal of Peor, / and ate sacrifices offered to the dead.” Apparently they were imitating their Moabite and Midianite hosts in doing so (see Num. 25:1–5, esp. v. 2: “These invited the people to the sacrifices of their gods, and the people ate and owed down to their gods”). Ben Sira refers to offering food on a grave and follows it with words that make it seem as if it was sacrificed to gods: “Of what use to an idol is a sacrifice? For it can neither eat nor smell” (30:18–19; here v. 19). Jubilees also charges the nations with worshipping demons. In the book the demons or evil spirits who came from the pre-flood giants here responsible for causing all sorts of ills in society. They dominate the people’s thoughts and misguide them (12:20). According to 15:31, God made such spirits rule the nations “to lead them astray from following him,” and he regards Israel from their influence (v. 32). Just after mentioning images that people worship, the author wrote that depraved spirits led people to commit sins and impurities (11:4). God predicts Moses that Israelites will sacrifice their children to demons (1:11). The HB accuses Israel of making offerings to demons: “They made him jealous with strange gods, / with abhorrent things they provoked him. / They sacrifices to demons, not God, / to deities they had never known, / to new ones recently arrived, / whom your ancestors had not feared” (Deut 32:16–17; see also Lev. 17:7).<sup>143</sup>

This passage, likewise, portrays biblically consistent understanding of the issue and question of demonic activity and purpose. The demons long to garner support and worship for themselves, and people in rebellion against God comply with that demonic desire.

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143. VanderKam, James C. *Jubilees: A Commentary on The Book of Jubilees*. Vol. 2. Edited by Sidnie White Crawford, Fortress Press, 2018. Pgs. 663–664.

## Conclusion

These two major pseudepigraphal works (1 Enoch and Jubilees) put forth much information that is unconfirmed by Scripture. In many ways they go beyond what is written and seek to fill in the many spaces that God's holy silence has left us in the word. While they dogmatically assert things that scripture will neither confirm nor deny, they do show a marked agreement with the nature of celestial beings, as well as their tasks and behaviors. This gives the reader a greater confidence in believing that the Pseudepigraphical conception of fallen angels and their ministry is largely, though not perfectly, reliable. The concept of demons as fallen angels who are doing the work of the primary fallen angel seems to be consistent throughout both scripture and these Pseudepigraphic writings and thus cannot be lightly dismissed in helping us to interpret and understand the unseen world. While these are affirmed by the Old Testament Scriptures, the observations about the Devil and his angels will be made clearer in light of New Testament revelation.

PART III  
Angelology in the New  
Testament



## Part III: Angelology in the New Testament

## CHAPTER 11

# Angelology in the New Testament

There is an obvious shift in angelology and demonology between the Old and New Testaments. Almost immediately the reader is confronted with regular demonic possession, and personal and regular mentions of Satan or the Devil. This has caused some difficulty as people have sought to find several naturalistic explanations for the apparent increase in demonic presence and activity. Some have sought to explain this phenomenon by suggesting that these increased demonic activities were simply personifying illnesses and sicknesses that they could not understand or cure, others claim that the demonizations were the result of mental illness, but this is really a subcategory of the first theory. Similar to this, there is the idea that people were ignorant and suggestible and thus imagined that they were demonized. There are several problems with these various naturalistic theories. After they have been rebutted it still remains to explain the change of appearance, frequency, and action in the perspective on angels and demons between the Old and New Testaments, and what role the Pseudepigraphic writings played in that transition.

### Debunking Naturalistic Theories

#### *The Sickness Theory*

Each of these naturalistic explanations really play on the same principle. The underlying idea is that people who lived during the biblical accounts were stupid, uneducated, and unable to understand the world around them. The arrogance of this assumption aside, it must be made plain that the core idea hidden in this false argument is that the philosophy of Materialism is correct, and supernaturalism is incorrect. No argument can be made for this position

for it involves the unverifiable presuppositions that are not being examined in the accusation of ignorance. Thus, this theory assumes that people of the first century were unable to distinguish between sickness and demonization, thus attributing all sickness to demons.

The Bible provides its own defense against these false accusations, particularly through the writings of Dr. Luke who, in his gospel, sets out an orderly account of the events of the life of Christ. Being a medical doctor, he would have been well versed in maladies and sicknesses, as well as the treatments developed by cutting-edge medical knowledge of his day. Luke, in recording the miracles of Christ, does not confuse sickness and demonization at all. Luke 4 displays this well:

Luke 4:31 Then He went down to Capernaum, a city of Galilee, and was teaching them on the Sabbaths. Luke 4:32 And they were astonished at His teaching, for His word was with authority. Luke 4:33 Now in the synagogue there was a man who had a spirit of an unclean demon. And he cried out with a loud voice, Luke 4:34 saying, “Let us alone! What have we to do with You, Jesus of Nazareth? Did You come to destroy us? I know who You are—the Holy One of God!”

Luke 4:35 But Jesus rebuked him, saying, “Be quiet, and come out of him!” And when the demon had thrown him in their midst, it came out of him and did not hurt him. Luke 4:36 Then they were all amazed and spoke among themselves, saying, “What a word this is! For with authority and power He commands the unclean spirits, and they come out.” Luke 4:37 And the report about Him went out into every place in the surrounding region.

Luke 4:38 Now He arose from the synagogue and entered Simon’s house. But Simon’s wife’s mother was sick with a high fever, and they made request of Him concerning her. Luke 4:39 So He stood over her and rebuked the fever, and it left her. And immediately she arose and served them.” (Luke 4:31–39 NKJV)

These two miracles were done by the Lord on the same day. The first was a case of demonic possession. The demon was rebuked by Jesus and thrown out of the demonized man in the midst of many witnesses. The people rightly marveled because Jesus was able to cast out demons on the basis of His own authority as the Son of God. In stark contrast to this, the case of Peter’s mother-in-law was a case of a natural fever that had beset the woman. There

is no mention of demonization, but the sickness is healed by Jesus by His word as well. Many other passages could be cited in the gospels to prove this point further but this one simple example shows that the people of the ancient world clearly understood the reality of demonization as well as the reality of physical sickness and Jesus Christ had authority to remedy both situations.

### *The Mental Illness Theory*

The idea of mental illness, certainly a field in which much progress has been made, is still a difficult one to diagnose. For all the labels and prescriptions of modern psychology little actual progress has been made to help cure those struggling with what we now call mental illness. Tragically, most naturalistic treatments and medications do very little to overcome the problems of mental illness which are largely the function of secular thinking and materialistic worldview.

While it can be demonstrated that mental illness exists, the causes are unknown and varied. Yet, they bear little resemblance to the demonizations recorded in the Bible. This also is clarified in the passage quoted above from Luke 4. The demonized man was communicating clearly, as the demons who afflicted him spoke through him. While their message was diabolical it showed that they had knowledge of who Jesus is, and the destiny which He had to destroy them. When the Lord Jesus commanded this demon to come out of the man he was free from their influence and control, he was put back in his right mind.

### *The Accommodationist Theory*

This theory is most absurd, but it concludes that Jesus knew that all of the beliefs about devils and demons was quite ridiculous. Yet, unable to change their primitive and deluded minds, he accommodated their incorrect spiritual viewpoint. William Barclay championed this view in every Satanic and demonic incident of scripture, but one extended quote should suffice to demonstrate the position:

As to the origin of the demons, different views were held. Some held that they had been there since the beginning of the world. Some held that they were the spirits of wicked, malignant people who had died, and who even after their death still carried on their evil work. Most commonly of all, they were connected with the strange old story in Genesis 6:1–8. That

story tells how the sinning angels came to earth and seduced mortal women. The demons were held to be the descendants of the children produced by that evil union.

To these demons, all illness was ascribed. They were held to be responsible not only for diseases like epilepsy and mental illness, but also for physical illness. The Egyptians held that the body had thirty-six different parts, and that every one could be occupied by a demon. one of their favourite ways of gaining an entry into people's bodies was to lurk beside them while they ate, and so to settle on their food.

It may seem fantastic to us; but the ancient peoples believed implicitly in demons. If people gained the idea that they were possessed by demons, they would easily go on to produce all the symptoms of demon-possession. They could genuinely convince themselves that there were demons inside them. To this day, people can think themselves into having a pain or into the idea that they are ill; that could happen even more easily in days when there was much of what we would call superstition, and when people's knowledge was much more primitive than it is now. Even if there are no such things as demons, people could be cured only by the assumption that, for them at least, the demons were very real indeed.

### THE DEFEAT OF THE DEMONS

WHEN Jesus came to the other side of the lake, he was confronted by two demon-possessed men, who dwelt in the tombs, for the tombs were the natural place for the demons to inhabit. These men were so fierce that they were a danger to passers-by, and the prudent traveler would give them a very wide berth indeed.

W. M. Thomson in *The Land and the Book* tells us that he himself, in the nineteenth century, saw men who were exactly like these two demon-possessed men in the tombs at Gadara:

There are some very similar cases at the present day-furious and dangerous maniacs, who wander about the mountains and sleep in caves and tombs. In their worst paroxysms they are quite unmanageable, and prodigiously strong . . . And it is one of the most common traits of this madness that the victims refuse to wear clothes. I have often seen them absolutely naked in the crowded streets of Beirut and Sidon. There are also cases in which they run wildly about the country and frighten the whole neighbourhood.

Apart from anything else, Jesus showed a most unusual courage in stopping to speak to these two men at all.

If we really want the details of this story, we have to go to Mark. Mark's narrative (Mark 5:1–19) is much longer, and what Matthew gives us is only a summary. This is a miracle story which has caused much discussion, and the discussion has centered round the destruction of the herd of pigs. Many have found it strange and have considered it heartless that Jesus should destroy a herd of animals like this. But it is almost certain that Jesus did not in fact deliberately destroy the pigs.

We must try to visualize what happened. The men were shouting and shrieking (Mark 5:7; Luke 8:28). We must remember that they were completely convinced that they were occupied by demons. Now it was normal and orthodox belief, shared by everyone, that when the Messiah and the time of judgment came, the demons would be destroyed. That is what the men meant when they asked Jesus why he had come to torture them before the proper time. They were so convinced that they were possessed by demons that nothing could have rid them of that conviction other than visible demonstration that the demons had gone out of them.

Something had to be done which to them would be unanswerable proof. Almost certainly what happened was that their shouting and shrieking alarmed the herd of pigs; and in their terror the pigs took flight and plunged into the lake. Water was fatal to demons. Thereupon Jesus seized the chance which had come to him. 'Look,' he said. 'Look at these swine; they are gone into the depths of the lake and your demons are gone with them forever.' Jesus knew that in no other way could he ever convince these two men that they were in fact cured. If that is so, Jesus did not deliberately destroy the herd of swine. He used their stampede to help two poor sufferers believe in their cure.<sup>144</sup>

The length of this quote, it is hoped, is fair to the author. However, the arguments that are made are most atrocious when they are thought out in their entirety. The assumption that Jesus Christ was simply unwilling to confront something that is untrue, but rather simply accommodate the supposed inaccuracies of the beliefs of those whom He came to teach is untenable. This makes Jesus out to be a fool, who believes false things; or a liar, who accommodates the theological errors of others. Yet, this was

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144. Barclay, William, *The Gospel of Matthew*, Volume 1. *The New Daily Study Bible*. 3d; Accordance electronic ed. Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2001.

principally and characteristically not the way in which Jesus taught. He was always prepared to confront any unbiblical teaching, however dearly it was held by those around Him. He did not accommodate the belief that the Messiah would be merely human and regularly defended His divinity to the point of death. The very idea that Jesus would simply accommodate falsehood lowers him, not only to be less than the Lord, but reduces Him to a sham-miracle worker who plays upon the ignorance of others. In this way such theories as this are entirely untenable, and truly heretical to the very core.

## Reasons for the Change

### *The Difference in Focus between Old and New Testaments*

The Old Testament has a broad scope and focus, occasionally dwelling on a person who is important primarily in terms of the national narrative such as Joshua or King David. The New Testament focuses upon Jesus as the promised individual of the Old Testament anticipation. It is more personally concerned with the King-Messiah than with the larger scope of surrounding events. Salvation depends not at all upon the belief in Joshua, David, or Solomon. Jesus, however, is presented in an entirely different manner as the Son of God. The focus on one nation changes to the focus on a single Person – Jesus Christ. As a result of this difference in focus it is more than reasonable to assume that individual demons, and Satan himself, would manifest themselves clearly in opposition to the Son of God.

### *The Purpose of the New Testament*

The purpose of the New Testament, demonstrates that Jesus is, in fact, the Messiah (Christ) – the Son of God. This means that it is important to the reader to understand that He has absolute authority over the entire spiritual realm. There is no being or spirit which can overpower or deny Him on the very basis of who He is at the essence of His being. This means that it would be meaningless to focus upon demonization in the Old Testament because there was little to nothing that could be done to combat it, save to end the life of the one demonized. Making excessive mention of this in the Old Testament context does little or nothing for the narrative. However, in the New Testament context we see Jesus is being presented as the Savior, and the one over Whom the powers of darkness have no authority. Rather, the

New Testament displays that every spiritual authority, elect or fallen, responds to Jesus Christ in instant obedience.

### *The Perspective of the New Testament*

The perspective of the NT is also quite different. The Old Testament is concerned with a Nation, and the New Testament was all written after God's earthly people had rejected the Messiah. This means that the accounts of the life of Christ were all written with the church very much in mind. This is not to say that the accounts of the gospels are directly applicable to the church, but it is to point out that each of the gospel accounts was written that the readers would both know, understand, and trust in Jesus Christ as the promised Savior. Thus, the perspective of the New Testament never has the concept of individual belief in Jesus at the forefront. Where the Old Testament prophets addressed leaders as individuals, but more commonly addressed entire nations through the function of the rule of those kings, the New Testament is written to convince individuals about Christ and His sacrifice so they may join the (then) newly formed body of Christ – the Church – by placing their faith in Jesus Christ alone for salvation.

### The Light entered the World<sup>145</sup>

The very entrance of Christ into the world caused a change in the spiritual landscape on planet earth. John 1:5 says: "And the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it." When the Light of Christ Jesus entered into the world the larger network of fallen angels gathered round to suppress the Light. In military terms, the person and purpose of Jesus Christ became the only battlefront worthy of attention. Thus, there was an increase in demonic activity during the life and ministry of Christ in the land of Israel. The powers of darkness were doing anything that they could to oppose Him in His mission. After His resurrection we see demonic activity going rather quickly back to what might be regarded as more "normal levels."

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145. Dr. Arnold Fruchtenbaum. Lectures on the Book of Acts recorded for Tyndale Theological Seminary c. 2002.

## Contribution of the Pseudepigrapha

To the question of what role the Pseudepigrapha, the Rabbinic writings, and the apocryphal writings play in our understanding in the demonology is yet to be discussed. A sober view of all Jewish writing of great antiquity shows the true cultural and historical background of the Jewish people. While less a focus of the biblical text the background of angels and demons was a crucial element of their biblical worldview and cannot be correctly understood apart from that reality. These writings provide the understanding that the spiritual world of angels, both elect and fallen, were central to the biblical understanding of what was going on around them. They understood, as was seen in the survey of Old Testament angelology earlier in this paper, that there was a chief fallen angel, and that many other angels fell along with him and were opposed to the plan and purposes of Jehovah-God in the world.

Just as a person could not be expected to understand an isolated edition of the New York Post apart from understanding the various historical, political, and cultural background in which it was written, it is impossible to gain a full and thorough understanding of the Old or New Testament world apart from the writings that are extant from that time. The continued study of these important works shows that they are not an aberration or departure from biblical angelology, but rather it reveals the cultural expectations and understanding of the unseen world that form the backdrop for the biblical text which never contradicts the reality of these things, though it does not always place them at the center of the given narrative. Put another way, absence of evidence in the Old Testament text is not evidence of absence in the Old Testament world of a clear understanding of the celestial beings. Quite to the contrary, as the first major section of this paper set out to prove, the reality is that the Old Testament text has abundant references to the importance of these celestial beings going back to the very first chapters of the Pentateuch.

## CHAPTER 12

# Angelology in the Gospels

The previous chapter sought to introduce and explain the apparent differences in the way in which the New Testament interacts with celestial beings. This chapter sets out to discuss the specifics of the interactions of the Lord with angels and demons with a view to evaluating them against the angelology of the Old Testament as well as that of the Pseudepigraphic writings that were examined in the second section of this paper. There can be no question that the presence of angels, and particularly of demons, comes in a much higher frequency than in the Old Testament. The reason for this has already been discussed, but the method of this examination will be to examine key passages, rather than examining every instance exhaustively. The major categories of this study will be: the personality of Satan and demons, the rebellious state of Satan and demons, the nature of the Lord's authority over Satan and demons, the ultimate destiny of Satan and demons, and, lastly, the actions of elect angels in the Gospels.

### The Personality of Satan and the Demons

One thing that is easy to observe in the issue of celestial beings across the Old Testament, Pseudepigrapha, and New Testament alike is that all such beings are not impersonal forces, nor personifications of the principles of good and evil. They are real beings that have all the elements of personhood. They have limitations in time and space, though they do not share the same limitations as humans. They have intellect, will, and emotions. They are ultimately under the authority of God who created them and are not able to duplicate His omniscience, omnipresence, or omnipotence. This is very important to our understanding of the nature and character of these creatures of God.

An obvious place to start in the discussion of these fallen angels is in the temptation of Jesus Christ. This text, described in greater and lesser degrees by all three synoptic gospel writers, brings the chief Fallen Angel into view. Mark makes a rather short discussion of this temptation (Mark 1:13), but Matthew and Luke give more full accounts:

1 Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. 2 And when He had fasted forty days and forty nights, afterward He was hungry. 3 Now when the tempter came to Him, he said, "If You are the Son of God, command that these stones become bread." 4 But He answered and said, "It is written, 'Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God.'" 5 Then the devil took Him up into the holy city, set Him on the pinnacle of the temple, 6 and said to Him, "If You are the Son of God, throw Yourself down. For it is written: 'He shall give His angels charge over you,' and, 'In their hands they shall bear you up, Lest you dash your foot against a stone.'" 7 Jesus said to him, "It is written again, 'You shall not tempt the LORD your God.'" 8 Again, the devil took Him up on an exceedingly high mountain, and showed Him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory. 9 And he said to Him, "All these things I will give You if You will fall down and worship me." 10 Then Jesus said to him, "Away with you, Satan! For it is written, 'You shall worship the LORD your God, and Him only you shall serve.'" 11 Then the devil left Him, and behold, angels came and ministered to Him. (Matthew 4:1–11 NKJV)

1 Then Jesus, being filled with the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led by the Spirit into the wilderness, 2 being tempted for forty days by the devil. And in those days He ate nothing, and afterward, when they had ended, He was hungry. 3 And the devil said to Him, "If You are the Son of God, command this stone to become bread." 4 But Jesus answered him, saying, "It is written, 'Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word of God.'" 5 Then the devil, taking Him up on a high mountain, showed Him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time. 6 And the devil said to Him, "All this authority I will give You, and their glory; for this has been delivered to me, and I give it to whomever I wish. 7 Therefore, if You will worship before me, all will be Yours." 8 And Jesus answered and said to him, "Get behind Me, Satan! For it is written, 'You shall worship the LORD your God, and Him only you shall

serve.’ ” 9 Then he brought Him to Jerusalem, set Him on the pinnacle of the temple, and said to Him, “If You are the Son of God, throw Yourself down from here. 10 For it is written: “He shall give His angels charge over you, To keep you,’ 11 and, “In their hands they shall bear you up, Lest you dash your foot against a stone.’ ” 12 And Jesus answered and said to him, “It has been said, ‘You shall not tempt the LORD your God.’ ” 13 Now when the devil had ended every temptation, he departed from Him until an opportune time. (Luke 4:1–13 NKJV)

These two parallel accounts have a marked difference in the order of the temptations. Matthew’s account orders them: The temptation of making bread from stones, the temptation of throwing himself down from the temple, and the offer of all the kingdoms of the world. Luke, however, orders the temptations: The temptation of making bread from stones, the offer of all the kingdoms of the world, the temptation of throwing himself down. This difference is easily accounted for by the authors two different purposes in writing their gospels. Luke is writing to give a clear, chronological, telling of the events of the life of Christ (Luke 1:3). Matthew, however, is writing to present Jesus as the Messiah. Thus, Luke presents the chronological order of events, where Matthew makes the offer of the kingdoms of the earth the pinnacle to make the final temptation an illustration of the Kingdom promise to Israel.

These passages both display the personality of the Devil. He is known in both accounts by his title: The Devil. This translates the Greek word *diabolos* and is defined by Vincent as follows:

The Devil (τοῦ διαβόλου). The word means *calumniator, slanderer*. It is sometimes applied to men, as to Judas (John 6:70); in 1 Timothy 3:11 (*slanderers*); and in 2 Timothy 3:3, and Titus 2:3 (*false accusers*). In such cases never with the article. *The Devil*, Satan, the God of this world (ὁ διάβολος), is always with the article and never plural. This should be distinguished from another word, also wrongly rendered *devil* in the A.V. — δαίμων, and its more common neuter form δαιμόνιον, both of which should be translated *demon*, meaning the unclean spirits which possessed men, and were cast out by Christ and his apostles. The Rev., unfortunately, and against the protest of the American revisers, retains *devil* for both words, except in Acts 17:18, where it renders as A.V. *gods*.<sup>146</sup>

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146. Vincent, Marvin R., *Word Studies in the New Testament*. Accordance electronic ed. 2004.

This title for the leading fallen angel highlights both his personality as well as his purpose as a slanderer of God and His divine purposes. A force could not be an accuser, nor some abstraction, but accusations and slander must come from a personality. Thus, the New Testament Satanology begins with a clear statement of this being's personality and purpose.

Satan shows himself to be personally about the task of tempting Jesus Christ. Commentators have regularly noted that this was a repetition of the temptation which Satan, acting as the Serpent, tempted Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden. The similarities between the two temptations are striking. As John wrote in 1 John they characterize the three major temptations of man: the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life. For Eve, these were embodied by the forbidden fruit being: "the tree was good for food, that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree desirable to make one wise," (Genesis 3:6 NKJV). In the temptation of Christ, the lust of the flesh was tempted by suggesting Jesus use His divine power for selfish gain, turning stones into bread. The lust of the eyes was tempted by showing the kingdoms of the world, made available without having to endure the cross. The pride of life was tempted by the encouragement to throw Himself down from the Temple thus forcing God to declare His position and worth.

The temptations were also quite different in the fact that Adam and Eve were tempted from a position of sinlessness in the felicity of the Garden of Eden. The temptation of Christ was amidst a world that had been brutally scarred by the sin and rebellion of both man and the fallen angels. The chief difference in this temptation was in the object of the temptation. Christ, in His impeccable perfection, could not be deceived by the wiles of the Devil. We see the intellect and will of the Devil in this passage by his desire and ability to utilize and twist the word of God to suit his own evil ends. Christ defends His position by appealing to the true heart of Scripture and related to the holy plan and character of God the Father. This passage is a key explanation of the cunning of the Devil. Nolland comments on the brilliant nature of this third and final temptation of Christ:

As "again" has marked the second appeal to Scripture in v. 7, now it marks the second time that the devil takes Jesus to a new place. "To a very high mountain" is probably a Matthean touch (Luke has only "took him up"). Some scholars claim an echo of Moses' viewing of the land from Mount Pisgah (Dt. 3:27; 34:1-4), but that would involve some rather curious ironic inversions,<sup>47</sup> and the language links are not strong. Matthew also

sets the Sermon of chaps. 5–7 on a mountain (5:1; 8:1) — a scene which he echoes in 15:29 — and he provides a mountain setting for Jesus’ final words to his disciples (28:16). The mountain location clearly underlines the importance of the event and is likely to establish some connection between the episodes which have been distinguished in this way, but at this point perhaps nothing more precise is intended. The only other “high mountain” (not “very high”) is in 17:1: the “supernaturalism” of the events taking place in these respective locations may link them. The steady rise in altitude — from wilderness, to temple pinnacle, to a mountaintop from which all the kingdoms of the world are visible — is appropriate to the role of the third temptation as climax.

Where the previous two temptations urge on Jesus a perversion of his calling as the Son of God, in this final temptation the stakes are higher: to comply would involve the abandonment of Jesus’ calling as the Son (not now: “if you are the Son of God”) and the transfer of his allegiance to the devil. Matthew may be thinking in terms of direct Satan worship, but he may also envision a more indirect form of Satan worship: if Jesus was to take as his goal to possess “all the kingdoms of the world and their glory,” then he would need “to pursue his task in the ways of the world . . . , to gain glory for himself in this world by compromise with the forces that control it . . . and to become indebted to Satan in the manner that every successful man of the world is.” Indeed, it is likely that this final temptation brings into the open what is to be understood as already the ultimate goal of the earlier two.

The world offered here to Jesus is identified, as Matthew’s story continues, as a place of stumbling blocks (18:7) and in need of light (5:14) and of the gospel (26:13). “The kingdoms of the world,” as in the devil’s gift, stands in antithesis to “the kingdom of heaven,” as in God’s gift. Jesus will assess the devil’s offer in the light of the warning which he will later give others: “What will it profit a person to gain the whole world and forfeit his own self?” (16:26). Despite this theoretical formulation in 16:26, the whole world is not on offer to other humans as it is to Jesus in 4:8, and so the scale of the offer makes its own implied assertion about the uniqueness of Jesus.

The glory of all the kingdoms of the world as offered to Jesus is to be contrasted with the heavenly glory that will be his to manifest at his future coming. It is likely that Matthew enjoys the irony of expressing the

devil's call for worship of himself in language reminiscent of that used to describe the reverence paid to Jesus himself by the wise men (2:11).

Partly guided by the shared mountain setting, quite a number of scholars have pointed to 28:18 as indicating that it is in the post resurrection context, after the accomplishment of his ministry and Passion, that God gives Jesus the positive counterpart to the Satanic counterfeit offered in 4:8–9. But Matthew fails to provide the vocabulary links which could have made this clear, and nowhere else does he connect any kind of change of status or function with the resurrection (or ascension). Matthew does clearly locate a major change of function at the parousia, which makes it less likely that the resurrection/ascension could also play such a decisive role. It is true that mission to the Gentiles represents a significant development at this point (28:19), and “with you always” (v. 20) has to be understood in a manner that is qualitatively different from the way in which Jesus has been present during his ministry, but “all authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me” (v. 20) can only with considerable difficulty be taken as referring to a fresh post-Passion acquisition once we recognize the echo of 11:25–27, where Jesus addressed his Father as “Lord of heaven and earth” and maintained that “everything has been handed over to me by my Father.” It is likely, then, that Jesus is to be understood as faced at this point of temptation with the option of exercising his ministry on the basis of one or other of the two kinds of authority which were being made available to him, the one derived from God, the other derived from Satan.<sup>147</sup>

Satan has a distinct personality, intelligence, emotion and will. One of the finest examples of this is in Matthew 8:

28 When He had come to the other side, to the country of the Gergesenes, there met Him two demon-possessed men, coming out of the tombs, exceedingly fierce, so that no one could pass that way. 29 And suddenly they cried out, saying, “What have we to do with You, Jesus, You Son of God? Have You come here to torment us before the time?” 30 Now a good way off from them there was a herd of many swine feeding. 31 So the demons begged Him, saying, “If You cast us out, permit us to go away

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147. Nolland, John, *The Gospel of Matthew: A Commentary on the Greek Text*. New International Greek Testament Commentary. Accordance electronic ed. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2005.

into the herd of swine.” 32 And He said to them, “Go.” So when they had come out, they went into the herd of swine. And suddenly the whole herd of swine ran violently down the steep place into the sea, and perished in the water. (Matthew 8:28–32 NKJV)

The legion of demons which made these two men their victims provide a vivid picture of the personality of the demons. First, they recognize Jesus, and know His divinity without any question. Secondly, they recognize that Jesus will ultimately be the One to carry out the judgement that has been pronounced against them. Finally, they show a passionate desire to forestall that end for as long as may be possible. These demons demonstrate creativity and will by proposing an alternate solution to being imprisoned in the Abyss with the other disobedient spirits. They ask to be allowed to go among the herd of swine that they see nearby. This request is granted by Jesus and the herd of swine come to an end in the sea, at the direction of the demonic host that beset them.

These two accounts, naturally interpreted, come to the undeniable conclusion that the Devil and his host of fallen angels all have the distinct marks of personhood. Not being eternal, they experience time as it comes, one moment after another. They are limited by space and cannot be in multiple places at once, but can only occupy a single host, or set of hosts, in keeping with the limitations of space. Additionally, they display a keen interest in self-preservation and the forwarding of their own desire and agenda. As in the Old Testament, and as in the books of Enoch and Jubilees, these celestial beings are clearly displayed as having a unique and individual sense of personhood.

## The Rebellious State of Satan and the Demons

To the inaccurate allegation that Satan and his angels were in some way created evil, the gospels clearly enforce the narrative of the Old Testament and the Pseudepigraphic literature. The unholy angelic forces were not created evil but made a choice to defy the living God and seek their own designs and desires. For this reason, the Lord makes the constant choice not to allow them to give testimony on His behalf (Mark 1:34). The Lord will not receive their testimony not because it is untrue, but because they are unqualified by their disobedience to make known His holy identity.

Another testimony to their rebellious state is found in the nature of their mission. They seek always to harm, destroy, and dehumanize their victims. Whether they are causing blindness, epileptic fits, or madness, it is their goal to harm and destroy people who are made in the very image of God. Their rebellion is made evident by the fact that they are rebuked by the Lord, and they resist His command. Though they are unable to resist Him, they are clearly fixed in their rebellion. It is also of great import to notice that no offer of repentance is ever offered to Satan or any demon. They are beyond the hope of salvation because of their rebellion against the Lord.

One final passage supporting this point is found in Luke 10:18. Jesus tells His disciples: "I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven." This describes the fall of Satan and explains how his judgment included a loss of his position in Heaven. Having no more position in Heaven he continues as a rebellious force on earth, living as "the god of this world" and attempting to fulfill evil purposes before the final judgment of the Lord is brought to bear.

### The Nature of the Lord's Authority over Satan and the Demons

The gospels also display the unquestioned authority of the Lord over both Satan and the demons. There are only a few examples wherein the demons can demonstrate even the slightest resistance (cf. Matt. 8:28–32). The truth of the matter is that these demons are completely under the authority and control of Jesus Christ. Mark 9:14–29 gives an example:

14 And when He came to the disciples, He saw a great multitude around them, and scribes disputing with them. 15 Immediately, when they saw Him, all the people were greatly amazed, and running to Him, greeted Him. 16 And He asked the scribes, "What are you discussing with them?" 17 Then one of the crowd answered and said, "Teacher, I brought Your son, who has a mute spirit. 18 And wherever it seizes him, it throws him down; he foams at the mouth, gnashes his teeth, and becomes rigid. So I spoke to Your disciples, that they should cast it out, but they could not." 19 He answered him and said, "O faithless generation, how long shall I be with you? How long shall I bear with you? Bring him to Me." 20 Then they brought him to Him. And when he saw Him, immediately the spirit convulsed him, and he fell on the ground and wallowed, foaming at the mouth. 21 So He asked his father, "How long has this been happening to him?" And he said, "From childhood. 22 And often he has

thrown him both into the fire and into the water to destroy him. But if You can do anything, have compassion on us and help us.” 23 Jesus said to him, “If you can believe, all things are possible to him who believes.” 24 Immediately the father of the child cried out and said with tears, “Lord, I believe; help my unbelief!” 25 When Jesus saw that the people came running together, He rebuked the unclean spirit, saying to it, “Deaf and dumb spirit, I command you, come out of him and enter him no more!” 26 Then the spirit cried out, convulsed him greatly, and came out of him. And he became as one dead, so that many said, “He is dead.” 27 But Jesus took him by the hand and lifted him up, and he arose. 28 And when He had come into the house, His disciples asked Him privately, “Why could we not cast it out?” 29 So He said to them, “This kind can come out by nothing but prayer and fasting.” (Mark 9:14–29 NKJV)

Coming down the mountain from the transfiguration event Jesus encounters a demonic situation which the disciples were not able to remedy. This is fascinating because the Lord Himself had given them the authority to cast out demons (Mk. 6:7) yet there were some demons that even this delegated authority was not powerful enough to exorcise. The problem, according to the Lord’s summation, is that there was a faith problem involved in the situation. More to the point of this discussion, the demon could not be cast out by the disciples, yet he responded to the Lord’s command. The questions which Jesus asks the boy’s father brings about some interest as He asks the father the history of the lad’s affliction. This affliction had been going on since he was a child. The Lord drew attention to how long this demon had taken up residence in the young boy. The father then replies to Jesus with a most profound statement, paraphrased: “If you can believe, all things are possible to him who believes.” This is a statement, not of the power of faith, but of the power of placing faith on Him for whom all things are possible. This is a subtle claim to deity and challenges the man to rightly orient himself to the Lord and His power.

The demon is then commanded out of the boy and it is able to torture the boy extremely as he is forced to obey, leaving the boy appearing to be deceased. However, he is raised up when Jesus takes Him by the hand. When asked why they could not cast out this demon, the disciples are given the response “This kind can come out by nothing but prayer and fasting.” There are textual variants that do not include the fasting, yet the important point is the use of the word “kind” which translates the Greek word *γένος* which is

defined by Newman as: “γένος, οὐς ἢ (γίνομαι) family, race, nation, people; offspring, descendants; sort, kind.”<sup>148</sup>

While this single usage is not enough to upset the evidence that angels are not able to reproduce after the fashion of humans, it does show that there are different types or classes of demons. And those different types have varying powers and can only be dealt with in certain ways. While this observation is of little interest to almost every commentary, it should be a significant addition to the understanding of New Testament demonology.

## The Ultimate Destiny of Satan and the Demons

The destiny of Satan and his angels is given in large part in the Old Testament. Their destiny is also mentioned, as has been seen, in the Pseudepigrapha. Jesus is equally clear about the ultimate destiny of the Devil and the demons. Clarity appears in Matthew 8:29 when the legion of demons asks Jesus: “What have we to do with You, Jesus, You Son of God? Have you come here to torment us before the time?” (NKJV). The demons are aware of several important facts:

- 1) Jesus is the Son of God
- 2) Their punishment will be eternal torment
- 3) Jesus will be the one inflicting the torment
- 4) There is a set time for that punishment to begin

Each of these important facts show that the demonology of the New Testament is consistent concerning the future of the fallen angels.

Another key passage to consider is Matthew 25:31–46. In chapters 24–25 of Matthew the Lord’s most complete teaching on the end times is given. When it comes to the critical issue of the judgment of the nations the Lord teaches as follows:

<sup>31</sup> When the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him, then He will sit on the throne of His glory. <sup>32</sup> All the nations will be gathered before Him, and He will separate them one from another, as a shepherd divides *his* sheep from the goats. <sup>33</sup> And He will set the sheep on His right hand, but the goats on the left. <sup>34</sup> Then the King will say to those on His right hand, “Come, you blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: <sup>35</sup> for I was hungry

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148. Newman Jr., Barclay M., ed. A Concise Greek-English Dictionary of the New Testament. Revised; Accordance electronic ed., version 1.2. Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 2010.

and you gave Me food; I was thirsty and you gave Me drink; I was a stranger and you took Me in;<sup>36</sup> I *was* naked and you clothed Me; I was sick and you visited Me; I was in prison and you came to Me.”<sup>37</sup> Then the righteous will answer Him, saying, “Lord, when did we see You hungry and feed *You*, or thirsty and give *You* drink?<sup>38</sup> When did we see You a stranger and take *You* in, or naked and clothe *You*?<sup>39</sup> Or when did we see You sick, or in prison, and come to You?”<sup>40</sup> And the King will answer and say to them, “Assuredly, I say to you, inasmuch as you did *it* to one of the least of these My brethren, you did *it* to Me.”<sup>41</sup> Then He will also say to those on the left hand, “Depart from Me, you cursed, into the everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels:<sup>42</sup> for I was hungry and you gave Me no food; I was thirsty and you gave Me no drink;<sup>43</sup> I was a stranger and you did not take Me in, naked and you did not clothe Me, sick and in prison and you did not visit Me.”<sup>44</sup> Then they also will answer Him, saying, “Lord, when did we see You hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and did not minister to You?”<sup>45</sup> Then He will answer them, saying, “Assuredly, I say to you, inasmuch as you did not do *it* to one of the least of these, you did not do *it* to Me.”<sup>46</sup> And these will go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into eternal life. (Matthew 25:31–46 NKJV)

These verses give information about how the Lord will judge the nations upon his return at the Second Coming. Those who cared for the Jews because of their faith in Christ will be allowed to enter into the Kingdom of the Messiah. Those who refused to help the Jewish people are sent to everlasting punishment. The nature and place of this punishment are the point of interest here. Verse 41 points out that there is a place to which those who were disobedient to God are to go. This is not a mystical state of being, but an actual place. Furthermore, it is a place of everlasting fire – giving this a dramatic picture of torturous burning and everlasting thirst and pain. Next, the place IS prepared. It has been prepared for the purpose of punishing “the devil and his angels.” This statement again, displays several important facts.

- 1) There is a head of the fallen angels (the Devil)
- 2) The demons are fallen angels
- 3) The place of their torment is already prepared
- 4) The Devil and the demons are not yet there in their place of eternal judgment

## The Actions of Elect Angels in the Gospels

Elect angels are also very active in the Gospel accounts. They fulfill many roles. They announce and are present at the birth of Christ as well as at the Resurrection. They are also active throughout the earthly ministry of Jesus. A look at some of the major angelic events shows a complete constancy of angelology from Genesis to this point that is also largely consistent with Pseudepigraphical angelology.

### *Announcing John the Baptist (Luke 1:5–25)*

5 There was in the days of Herod, the king of Judea, a certain priest named Zacharias, of the division of Abijah. His wife was of the daughters of Aaron, and her name was Elizabeth. 6 And they were both righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless. 7 But they had no child, because Elizabeth was barren, and they were both well advanced in years. 8 So it was, that while he was serving as priest before God in the order of his division, 9 according to the custom of the priesthood, his lot fell to burn incense when he went into the temple of the Lord. 10 And the whole multitude of the people was praying outside at the hour of incense. 11 Then an angel of the Lord appeared to him, standing on the right side of the altar of incense. 12 And when Zacharias saw him, he was troubled, and fear fell upon him. 13 But the angel said to him, “Do not be afraid, Zacharias, for your prayer is heard; and your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you shall call his name John. 14 And you will have joy and gladness, and many will rejoice at his birth. 15 For he will be great in the sight of the Lord, and shall drink neither wine nor strong drink. He will also be filled with the Holy Spirit, even from his mother’s womb. 16 And he will turn many of the children of Israel to the Lord their God. 17 He will also go before Him in the spirit and power of Elijah, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just, to make ready a people prepared for the Lord.” 18 And Zacharias said to the angel, “How shall I know this? For I am an old man, and my wife is well advanced in years.” 19 And the angel answered and said to him, “I am Gabriel, who stands in the presence of God, and was sent to speak to you and bring you these glad tidings. 20 But behold, you will be mute and not able to speak until the day these things take place, because you did not believe my words which

will be fulfilled in their own time.” 21 And the people waited for Zacharias, and marveled that he lingered so long in the temple. 22 But when he came out, he could not speak to them; and they perceived that he had seen a vision in the temple, for he beckoned to them and remained speechless. 23 So it was, as soon as the days of his service were completed, that he departed to his own house. 24 Now after those days his wife Elizabeth conceived; and she hid herself five months, saying, 25 “Thus the Lord has dealt with me, in the days when He looked on me, to take away my reproach among people.” (Luke 1:5–25 NKJV)

This passage concerns angels in one of their most common biblical roles – that of a messenger. These are the chosen messengers of God – taking His word from the throne room of heaven down to men on earth. The most interesting points in this passage come from Zechariah’s choice to ask for a sign of this wondrous promise. This angel is named Gabriel. There can be no doubt that this is the same angel Gabriel who ministered to Daniel (Daniel 8:16; 9:21). This gives us confirmation that the angels have names, and certain angels are notable in their standing before God. Thus, Gabriel also stands as an angel of the Presence.

The next point to be made is that the angels have the authority to cast judgment. Even this minor disciplinary judgment that is dealt out to Zechariah for his request of a sign is rather extraordinary. Zechariah, at Gabriel’s command, loses the ability to speak for the next nine-months. This is a sign; though not the sign that Zechariah had likely desired. Nevertheless, it is a point to note that the angels have authority to do great works upon the earth in keeping with the plan and design of God.

### *Announcing Jesus to Mary (Luke 1:26–38)*

26 Now in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a city of Galilee named Nazareth, 27 to a virgin betrothed to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin’s name was Mary. 28 And having come in, the angel said to her, “Rejoice, highly favored one, the Lord is with you; blessed are you among women!” 29 But when she saw him, she was troubled at his saying, and considered what manner of greeting this was. 30 Then the angel said to her, “Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. 31 And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bring forth a Son, and shall call His name JESUS. 32 He

will be great, and will be called the Son of the Highest; and the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David. 33 And He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of His kingdom there will be no end.” 34 Then Mary said to the angel, “How can this be, since I do not know a man?” 35 And the angel answered and said to her, “The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Highest will overshadow you; therefore, also, that Holy One who is to be born will be called the Son of God. 36 Now indeed, Elizabeth your relative has also conceived a son in her old age; and this is now the sixth month for her who was called barren. 37 For with God nothing will be impossible.” 38 Then Mary said, “Behold the maidservant of the Lord! Let it be to me according to your word.” And the angel departed from her. (Luke 1:26–38 NKJV)

Gabriel is again chosen to deliver a special message of the Lord to Mary. The content of this message is Mary has been chosen to bear the Christ – the Messiah – the Chosen Holy One of God. News of this import would need to come from a credible source, and so Gabriel is the most appropriate angel for the task. Gabriel delivers his message and makes special note that God has already named this coming Child – that they should call Him Jesus. He is patient and answers Mary’s questions and gives her yet more information about her cousin Elizabeth that could not be known so that she can affirm the content of his message.

### *Announcing Jesus to Joseph (Matthew 1:18–25)*

18 Now the birth of Jesus Christ was as follows: After His mother Mary was betrothed to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Spirit. 19 Then Joseph her husband, being a just man, and not wanting to make her a public example, was minded to put her away secretly. 20 But while he thought about these things, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, “Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take to you Mary your wife, for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit. 21 And she will bring forth a Son, and you shall call His name JESUS, for He will save His people from their sins.” 22 So all this was done that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the Lord through the prophet, saying: 23 “Behold, the virgin shall be with child, and bear a Son, and they shall call His name Immanuel,” which is translated, “God with us.” 24 Then Joseph, being aroused from sleep, did

as the angel of the Lord commanded him and took to him his wife, 25 and did not know her till she had brought forth her firstborn Son. And he called His name JESUS. (Matthew 1:18–25 NKJV)

The identity of this angel is not given, but it is an angel of the Lord, that is, one of the elect (unfallen) angels. This angel approaches Joseph and speaks to him in the context of a dream. Why this one angelic announcement in all the nativity narratives is in a dream is unknown, but it shows us more about the abilities of the celestial beings. Angels possess the ability to interfere with the dreams of men. Of course, men had been given prophetic dreams throughout scripture, but it is interesting to think that the Lord may have used angelic agency to bring about those dreams. It is unclear how this angel can appear within the dreaming mind of Joseph but the result is unquestionable. The angel interacted with Joseph's mind while he was sleeping.

### *Announcing Jesus to the Shepherds (Luke 2:8–20)*

8 Now there were in the same country shepherds living out in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. 9 And behold, an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were greatly afraid. 10 Then the angel said to them, “Do not be afraid, for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy which will be to all people. 11 For there is born to you this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. 12 And this will be the sign to you: You will find a Babe wrapped in swaddling cloths, lying in a manger.” 13 And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying: 14 “Glory to God in the highest, And on earth peace, goodwill toward men!” 15 So it was, when the angels had gone away from them into heaven, that the shepherds said to one another, “Let us now go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has come to pass, which the Lord has made known to us.” 16 And they came with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the Babe lying in a manger. 17 Now when they had seen Him, they made widely known the saying which was told them concerning this Child. 18 And all those who heard it marveled at those things which were told them by the shepherds. 19 But Mary kept all these things and pondered them in her heart. 20 Then the shepherds returned, glorifying

and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen, as it was told them. (Luke 2:8–20 NKJV)

The most fantastic appearance in the nativity accounts, without question, is that of the angelic host that appeared to the shepherds in the fields. It seems only appropriate to have the entrance of the Son of God into the world heralded by angelic chorus, but what an unexpected choice of time and place to declare it. Why not bring this angelic host to appear over the city of Bethlehem or Jerusalem? The Lord, in His infinite wisdom, chose only a few poor shepherds to see this most remarkable proclamation of all that God was doing that very night. The angels revealed to the shepherds what had happened, where to look, and what they would find when they arrived. The angels also act as heralds of the meaning of the coming of the Christ-child to earth showing they have great insight into the plan of God.

*Ministering to Jesus after the Temptation (Matthew 4:11; Mark 1:13)*

Then the devil left Him, and behold, angels came and ministered to Him. (Matthew 4:11 NKJV)

After the temptation which Jesus endured at the hands of the devil, angels were able to come and minister to Christ. It is not told what this ministry to the Son of God looked like at this time. It could be that they brought Him such physical necessities as food and water. More likely, however, they encouraged and strengthened him as He returned to the city and began His public ministry.

*Announcing the Resurrection (Matthew 28:2–8; Mark 16:2–8; Luke 24:1–8)*

2 And behold, there was a great earthquake; for an angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and came and rolled back the stone from the door, and sat on it. 3 His countenance was like lightning, and his clothing as white as snow. 4 And the guards shook for fear of him, and became like dead men. 5 But the angel answered and said to the women, “Do not be afraid, for I know that you seek Jesus who was crucified. 6 He is not

here; for He is risen, as He said. Come, see the place where the Lord lay. 7 And go quickly and tell His disciples that He is risen from the dead, and indeed He is going before you into Galilee; there you will see Him. Behold, I have told you.” 8 So they went out quickly from the tomb with fear and great joy, and ran to bring His disciples word. (Matthew 28:2–8 NKJV)

2 Very early in the morning, on the first day of the week, they came to the tomb when the sun had risen. 3 And they said among themselves, “Who will roll away the stone from the door of the tomb for us?” 4 But when they looked up, they saw that the stone had been rolled away—for it was very large. 5 And entering the tomb, they saw a young man clothed in a long white robe sitting on the right side; and they were alarmed. 6 But he said to them, “Do not be alarmed. You seek Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified. He is risen! He is not here. See the place where they laid Him. 7 But go, tell His disciples—and Peter—that He is going before you into Galilee; there you will see Him, as He said to you.” 8 So they went out quickly and fled from the tomb, for they trembled and were amazed. And they said nothing to anyone, for they were afraid. (Mark 16:2–8 NKJV)

1 Now on the first day of the week, very early in the morning, they, and certain other women with them, came to the tomb bringing the spices which they had prepared. 2 But they found the stone rolled away from the tomb. 3 Then they went in and did not find the body of the Lord Jesus. 4 And it happened, as they were greatly perplexed about this, that behold, two men stood by them in shining garments. 5 Then, as they were afraid and bowed their faces to the earth, they said to them, “Why do you seek the living among the dead? 6 He is not here, but is risen! Remember how He spoke to you when He was still in Galilee, 7 saying, “The Son of Man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, and be crucified, and the third day rise again.’” 8 And they remembered His words. (Luke 24:1–8 NKJV)

These angels declaring Christ’s resurrection also are primarily doing the work of revealing and explaining supernatural and important events to the disciples. Among the unique things that occur are the soldiers who are frightened into unconsciousness by their presence, the rolling back of the stone that blocked the passage, and the explanations that were given to the women. Thus, these angels were entrusted to make certain that those who

were meant to see the empty tomb would know exactly the significance of those events. It could not be risked that they would come up with their own naturalistic ideas and interpretations. They had to know that it was a supernatural affair.

## Conclusion

The Gospels are an inexhaustible fount of revelation and information regarding the angelic world. The demonic workings are both portrayed and explained in light of the Lord Jesus Christ and His mission here on earth in His first coming. It is also clear that the angelology of the Pseudepigrapha is markedly similar, yet not the same. The Pseudepigraphal works show an over-interest in the names of angels and their individual personalities and doings. To whatever degree these observations are correct is immaterial. The gospels take a balanced view of the angels and the demons alike. They are not denied or ignored, neither are they the focus and subject of too much attention. They are perfectly in keeping with the rest of the biblical warning which is not to attempt to interfere with the angelic world or gain its notice in any way. Scripture exhorts mankind to allow God to oversee those things spiritual and unseen by man. Neither the angels nor the demons are ours to manipulate or control.

Matthew				
Reference	Summary	Action	Elect or Fallen	Angel of the LORD
1:20–25	announces Christ's birth to Joseph	Announcement	Elect	N
2:13	Tells Joseph to flee to Egypt	Revelation	Elect	N
2:19	Tells Joseph to Return	Revelation	Elect	N
4:1–11	Satan Tempts Jesus	Temptation	Fallen	N
4:11	Angels minister to Jesus after the temptation	Service	Elect	N
4:24	Jesus casts out demons	Expelled	Fallen	N
7:22	Casting out demons used as false evidence	Expelled	Fallen	N
8:31–34	Cast out, beg to be sent into herd of swine	Expelled	Fallen	N
9:33–34	Demon Caused Muteness, cast out	Causing Muteness	Fallen	N
10:1	Power given to cast out unclean spirits	Under Authority	Fallen	N
12:22–30	Jesus accused of being demonized	Non	Fallen	N
12:43–45	Unclean spirits return to an exorcised person	Possession	Fallen	N
13:39	Sower of false believers in the tribulation	Deception	Fallen	N
13:41–49	Gathering the false believers	Sorting	elect	N
16:23	Peter compared to Satan	Comparison	Fallen	N
16:27	Jesus will return with angels	Returning	Elect	N
17:18	Jesus expels demon	Expelled	Fallen	N
18:10	Children's angels see the face of the father	Protection	Elect	N
18:14–21	Dem. Caused Seizures, expelled, "fasting and prayer"	Expelled	fallen	N
22:30	Elect angels don't marry	Not Marrying	Elect	N
24:31	Sent to gather the elect at the end of the Tribulation	Gathering	Elect	N
25:31	Jesus Returns with angels	Returning	Elect	N
25:41	Hell is everlasting - prepared for devil & his angels	Judged	Fallen	N
26:53	12 legions of angels could be provided	Potential	Elect	N
28:2–5	Angel appears, removes stone, explains resurrection	Reveals	Elect	N

Part III: Angelology in the New Testament

Mark				
Reference	Summary	Action	Elect or Fallen	Angel of the LORD
1:13	Satan tempts angels minister	Tempt/serve	both	N
1:34	Demons expelled - silenced	Expelled	fallen	N
3:15	Authority to exorcise given to disciples	Authority	fallen	N
3:20-17	Jesus accused of being demonized	-	fallen	N
5:12	Legion requests to be sent to swine	Expelled	fallen	N
6:13	The 12 Cast out demons	Expelled	fallen	N
7:26-30	Expelled from a girl from a distance	Expelled	fallen	N
8:30	Returns with Holy Angels	Return	Elect	N
9:38	Non-disciples cast out demons in Jesus' name	Expelled	fallen	N
12:25	Elect angels do not marry	Not marrying	elect	N
13:27	Gather the elect (end of Trib)	Gathering	Elect	N
13:32	Angels don't know the day or the hour	Unknowing	Elect	N
16:9	7 demons out of Magdalene	Expelled	fallen	N
16:17	Disciples will cast our demons	Expelled	fallen	N

Luke				
Reference	Summary	Action	Elect or Fallen	Angel of the LORD
1:11-25	Gabriel appears to Zechariah,	Revelation	Elect	N
1:26-38	Gabriel appears to Mary	Revelation	Elect	N
2:8-14	Angels appear to Shepherds	Revelation	Elect	N
4:1-13	Satan Tempts Jesus	Temptation	Fallen	N
4:31-37	Jesus expels Demon	Expelled	Fallen	N
4:41	Many demons exorcised, testify, silenced	Expelled	Fallen	N
7:33	John the Baptist accused of being demonized	Possession	Fallen	N
8:2	Madeline freed from seven demons	Expelled	Fallen	N
8:12	Devil removes the word	Deception	Fallen	N
8:27-38	Demons exorcised from a man	Expelled	Fallen	N
9:1	Disciples given authority over demons	Authority	Fallen	N
9:26	Angels return with Christ	Return	Elect	N
9:42	Demon gives seizures - expelled	Expelled	Fallen	N
9:49	Others cast out demons in Jesus' Name	Expelled	Fallen	N
10:17	Demons are subject to Jesus' name	Expelled	Fallen	N
11:14	Mute demon expelled	Expelled	Fallen	N
11:15-20	Jesus accused of casting out demons satanically	-	Fallen	N
12:8-9	Believers confessed/denied before angels	Witnesses	Elect	N
15:10	Angels rejoice over sinners who repent	Rejoicing	Elect	N
16:22	Angels carry Lazarus to Abraham's Bosom	Carry dead saints to their abode	Elect	N
20:36	Saints in the Resurrection equal to angels	Spiritual, unmarried	Elect	N

Part III: Angelology in the New Testament

John				
Reference	Summary	Action	Elect or Fallen	Angel of the LORD
1:51	Angels ascend/descend on Jesus	Ascend/Descend	Elect	N
5:4	Angel stirs the pool	Brings Healing	Elect	N
6:70	Judas compared to the devil	Comparison	Fallen	N
7:20	Jesus accused of being demonized	Possession	Fallen	N
8:44	Devil is father of the unbelieving	Identification	Fallen	N
8:48–59	Jesus accused of being demonized	Possession	Fallen	N
10:20–21	Jesus accused of being demonized	Possession	Fallen	N
12:29	Bat Kol thought to be an angel	Speaking	Elect	N
13:2	Devil put betrayal into Judas' heart	Influence	Fallen	N
13:27	Satan enters Judas	Possession	Fallen	N
20:12	Two angels sit in the tomb	Presence	Elect	N

## CHAPTER 13

# Angelology in the Book of Acts

The book of Acts is a record of the early Church as it takes shape. This is a process of immense transition as the primary focus from Genesis through the Gospels is the Nation of Israel. Now the abrupt shift from a national entity to a small faith-based community is theologically so jarring that the body of Christ at large still has not recovered. There is another important change as we head into the new Church Age in regards to angelology. While the personal focus still involves the record of angelic agency, it reduces to a more natural frequency. Thus, there are significant passages concerning the celestial beings but there are fewer of them as the greater movement of the book is charting the early church and particularly documenting and defending the ministries of Peter and Paul. Among the appearances of celestial beings in the book of Acts, twelve concern elect angels and only four appearances concern fallen angels. Thus, this chapter will concern itself first with the contributions to the angelology of the elect angels; and secondly, to turn the focus to Satan and demons.

### Elect Angels in the Book of Acts

#### *Angels at the Ascension (Acts 1:9–11)*

9 Now when He had spoken these things, while they watched, He was taken up, and a cloud received Him out of their sight. 10 And while they looked steadfastly toward heaven as He went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel, 11 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 NKJV)

These two men in white apparel have long been believed and taught by the church to be celestial beings. They are not equated with any of the other angels surrounding the resurrection account, but they do have much in common. Gempf weighs in simply and directly: “The two men dressed in white are clearly angels (see the similar description in Lk. 24:4, 23).”<sup>149</sup> Adam Clark, likewise, renders this interpretation as needing no argument: “Doubtless, angels in human shape.”<sup>150</sup> Barnes gives the matter more consideration than most:

Two men. From the raiment of these “men” and the nature of their message, it seems clear that they were angelic beings, who were sent to meet and comfort the disciples on this occasion. They appeared in human form, and Luke describes them as they appeared. Angels are not unfrequently called men. Luke 24:4, “Two men stood by them in shining garments,” etc. Comp. John 20:12; Matt. 28:5. As two angels are mentioned only as addressing the apostles after the resurrection of Jesus, (John 20:12; Luke 24:4) it is no unnatural supposition that these were the same who had been designated to the honourable office of bearing witness to his resurrection, and of giving them all the information about that resurrection, and of his ascension, which their circumstances needed.<sup>151</sup>

It is safe to take these beings as angelic messengers for a handful of reasons. Their appearance at this time and place smacks of the supernatural. Additionally, their garments are noteworthy simply because of their uniqueness. Finally, their message is perfectly fitted to the situation and absolutely involves divine revelation which is, as has been noted, a chief function of angels.

The physical form of these angels is, consistent with the entire biblical angelology of the biblical text, the form of male humans. While there are

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149. Gempf, Conrad, Acts. Edited by D. A. Carson, R. T. France, J. A. Motyer, and Gordon J. Wenham. New Bible Commentary: 21st Century Edition. Accordance electronic ed. Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1994.

150. Clarke, Adam, Adam Clarke’s Commentary on the Whole Bible. Accordance electronic ed. Altamonte Springs: OakTree Software, 2004.

151. Barnes, Albert, Barnes’ Notes on the New Testament. Accordance electronic ed. Altamonte Springs: OakTree Software, 2006.

striking features to these angels that set them apart as supernatural, it is interesting that commentators will say that these angels are “appearing in human form.” It seems, given the great number of appearances of angels in human form, that there are many angels whose form is similar to, or the same as, a human’s form. This involves un-winged angelic beings who appear and seemingly disappear as they are needed in accordance with the divine plan. They reveal the information that is necessary and then seem to disappear from the sense experience of the apostles.

Continuing forward in the book of Acts one of the primary actions of celestial beings is to affect major change in physical situations. Angels are found opening closed jail cells, directing humans, bringing judgment, and continuing in their usual work of giving revelation from the Lord God. Each of these occurrences are important and need to be evaluated.

### *Opening Jail Cells*

19 But at night an angel of the Lord opened the prison doors and brought them out, and said, 20 “Go, stand in the temple and speak to the people all the words of this life.” (Acts 5:19–20 NKJV)

7 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. 8 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.” 9 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. 10 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. 11 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 12:7–11 NKJV)

Both of these miraculous occurrences are of tremendous interest. In each case the Lord could simply command the door to open by sheer power of His will. Yet, the Lord chooses to use angelic agency in both cases to open the door and lead Peter (and John in the first instance) out of their captivity.

The angelic messengers also give different instruction in each case. In the first case, the apostles are instructed to teach in the temple. In the second case Peter is instructed to flee the city. Peter seems to have been in a dreamlike state so it is impossible to tell whether a witness to this event would perceive the angel at all, and may just see Peter appearing to sleepwalk out of his captivity. This angel, we see, interacted with Peter on a physical level, first striking him, next guiding him by the hand.

These accounts are important to point out that while the angels may have a different relationship with the physical world than humanity, they can interact meaningfully with the physical world with little or no stress to their person. It was no problem for the angel to strike Peter with enough force to wake him. It was also possible for the angel to take Peter by the hand and lead him to the point where he would be able to manage the rest of the escape without such a high degree of angelic involvement. This, again, is in keeping with angelology as far back as the book of Genesis and Job, confirming the contention that biblical angelology is not externally affected or influenced, but rather consistent from end to end. Similarly, the angelology of the Pseudepigraphal writers is only rationally understood as being the result of the authors of those works being deeply steeped in the biblical, classically Jewish, idea of what angels are, not influenced by external features or factors borrowed from other ancient near eastern cultures. Rather, quite to the contrary, the similarity between Jewish angelology and other ANE angelology is because they have a common history and collective memory of biblical angelology before the divisions of the world into the Table of Nations and the judgement at the tower of Babel (Genesis 10–11).

### *Directing Humans*

Now an angel of the Lord spoke to Philip, saying, “Arise and go toward the south along the road which goes down from Jerusalem to Gaza.” This is desert. (Acts 8:26 NKJV)

1 There was a certain man in Caesarea called Cornelius, a centurion of what was called the Italian Regiment, 2 a devout man and one who feared God with all his household, who gave alms generously to the people, and prayed to God always. 3 About the ninth hour of the day he saw clearly in a vision an angel of God coming in and saying to him, “Cornelius!” 4 And when he observed him, he was afraid, and said, “What is it, lord?” So

he said to him, “Your prayers and your alms have come up for a memorial before God. 5 Now send men to Joppa, and send for Simon whose surname is Peter. 6 He is lodging with Simon, a tanner, whose house is by the sea. He will tell you what you must do.” 7 And when the angel who spoke to him had departed, Cornelius called two of his household servants and a devout soldier from among those who waited on him continually. 8 So when he had explained all these things to them, he sent them to Joppa. (Acts 10:1–8 NKJV)

These two examples are very close in nature to the angels simply giving pure revelation. Yet, they have the unique distinguishing feature of giving very specific instructions from the Lord that are to be obeyed. In the case of Philip, the angel tells him exactly where to go to meet his upcoming divine appointment with the Ethiopian official. Similarly, the angel who appears to Cornelius appears to him in a vision – suggesting that the angel was not physically present but only visible to Cornelius to give his message and orders. The angel tells Cornelius exactly what to do to hear the good news. Rather than simply letting the angel give the gospel message, Cornelius must send men to a specific place in order to get a specific person, Peter. This is for the benefit of the entire church, as no one short of Peter could open the door to the Gentiles to be saved by grace, through faith, without a complete rift in the Church. God used this angel to affect the next major step in the growth and development of the universal Church.

### *Bringing Judgment*

21 So on a set day Herod, arrayed in royal apparel, sat on his throne and gave an oration to them. 22 And the people kept shouting, “The voice of a god and not of a man!” 23 Then immediately an angel of the Lord struck him, because he did not give glory to God. And he was eaten by worms and died. (Acts 12:21–23 NKJV)

This is a unique instance in the book of Acts where an angel is given credit for striking down Herod. The occasion for this judgment was because the people attributed deity to Herod and he failed to glorify God, but instead received the undue praise. The remarkable thing about this is the speed with which the judgment is given. The angel strikes him “immediately” as he fails to give glory to God. This extreme individual judgment comes down upon

the unwitting ruler. However, as Revelation will confirm, this is a biblically consistent thing for angels to do in reference to the judgment of Sodom and Gomorrah through the judgments doled out by angels in the book of Enoch.

### *Revelation of God's Word and Will*

23 For there stood by me this night an angel of the God to whom I belong and whom I serve, 24 saying, “Do not be afraid, Paul; you must be brought before Caesar; and indeed God has granted you all those who sail with you.’ 25 Therefore take heart, men, for I believe God that it will be just as it was told me. 26 However, we must run aground on a certain island.” (Acts 27:23–26 NKJV)

Many of the passages discussed thus far have included the crucial factor of giving a message or bringing new revelation. This passage, however, is especially pertinent because the angel involved is revealing the future. Speaking on behalf of God, this angel assures Paul that he will survive to stand before Caesar and that nobody else on the ship shall die. This prophecy came with instructions to run aground at a certain place. Theoretically, had the ship’s captain disobeyed, the angel revealed that Paul alone would be preserved and everybody else on the ship would perish. This is another example of the fact that angels are subject to space and time, yet can, by the will of God foretell the future in both actualities and possibilities.

### *Satan and the Fallen Angels*

As has been previously noted, the level of demonic activity seems to return to normal levels surrounding the book of Acts. This gives great credence to Dr. Arnold Fruchtenbaum’s theory that the entrance of the Light of Christ Jesus into the world caused a reaction of the entire demonic network from around the world to try to come around and blot out the Spiritual Light of Christ.<sup>152</sup> Whether or not this is the case, the reality that there are fewer demonic possessions mentioned in the book of Acts is plain to see. One of the more colorful incidents regarding demons is found in Acts 19:

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152. Fruchtenbaum, Arnold. Lectures on the Book of Acts recorded for Tyndale seminary. Cir. 2002.

11 Now God worked unusual miracles by the hands of Paul, 12 so that even handkerchiefs or aprons were brought from his body to the sick, and the diseases left them and the evil spirits went out of them. 13 Then some of the itinerant Jewish exorcists took it upon themselves to call the name of the Lord Jesus over those who had evil spirits, saying, “We exorcise you by the Jesus whom Paul preaches.” 14 Also there were seven sons of Sceva, a Jewish chief priest, who did so. 15 And the evil spirit answered and said, “Jesus I know, and Paul I know; but who are you?” 16 Then the man in whom the evil spirit was leaped on them, overpowered them, and prevailed against them, so that they fled out of that house naked and wounded. 17 This became known both to all Jews and Greeks dwelling in Ephesus; and fear fell on them all, and the name of the Lord Jesus was magnified. 18 And many who had believed came confessing and telling their deeds. 19 Also, many of those who had practiced magic brought their books together and burned them in the sight of all. And they counted up the value of them, and it totaled fifty thousand pieces of silver. 20 So the word of the Lord grew mightily and prevailed. (Acts 19:11–20 NKJV)

This passage has two major demonic references and serves very specific thematic goals of the book of Acts. The first is the working of “unusual miracles.” When Paul would wipe his sweat off on a rag it was able to miraculously heal people as well as cast out evil spirits or demons. This is one of many parallels given between the ministry of Peter and the ministry of Paul in the book of Acts. Peter’s unusual miracles involved his shadow:

12 And through the hands of the apostles many signs and wonders were done among the people. And they were all with one accord in Solomon’s Porch. 13 Yet none of the rest dared join them, but the people esteemed them highly. 14 And believers were increasingly added to the Lord, multitudes of both men and women, 15 so that they brought the sick out into the streets and laid them on beds and couches, that at least the shadow of Peter passing by might fall on some of them. 16 Also a multitude gathered from the surrounding cities to Jerusalem, bringing sick people and those who were tormented by unclean spirits, and they were all healed. (Acts 5:12–16 NKJV)

In both the case of Peter and Paul there is a miracle having to do with their simple presence bringing about both healing and the expulsion of demons.

The primary thematic purpose of recording these miracles is to provide a solid defense for the ministry of Paul. These parallels show that anything which Peter did as an accepted authority, Paul also did. The logical conclusion being that Paul's apostleship is legitimate and his writings are justified as being regarded as Scripture.

The interesting point for our study of demonology is that these demons seem to react simply to the physical presence of each of these men who were chosen by God to be in such high office in the Church. Their spiritual authority extended even to things that are removed from their being proper, and they were so spiritually effective that unclean spirits could not exist under Peter's shadow or in the presence of Paul's sweat. It is an extreme picture for the purpose of historically supporting the authority of the apostles, but it is important to see that even the bare physical realities can cause these fallen angels to leave a locality.

The story of the seven sons of Sceva provides the counterbalance. While Paul himself was endowed with a very special spiritual gift and remarkable spiritual authority, the name of Paul carried no power at all. The seven sons of Sceva were Jewish exorcists, doing exorcisms in the classic Jewish style. They were using a new formula by commanding the demons out using the name of Jesus, in whom they presumably did not believe. Apparently, because they had no personal relationship with Jesus Christ, their attempt to use His Name as a magic word was entirely ineffective, and the demon possessed man gave them a good thrashing.

The only other mention of Satan in the book of Acts that this paper will discuss is found in Acts 5:3. In this passage Ananias and Saphira agree to try to deceive the Lord by claiming to give the whole price of their recently sold property, while secretly holding some back for themselves. Peter accuses Ananias of allowing Satan to fill his heart. This picture of Satan filling Ananias' heart seems to be euphemistic for doing something that was in the character of Satan rather than in keeping with the types of behaviors of one filled with the Holy Spirit. While demon possession of believers is impossible, and it is clear from this passage that Ananias is not demon possessed, this passage shows how a believer who walks according to the flesh can be said to be filled with Satanic deeds and motivations.

Conclusion

The angelology of the book of Acts is perfectly in keeping with the angelology of the Old Testament and also in line with the books of 1 Enoch and Jubilees. The progression of holy scripture becomes increasingly clearer in its illustration of the truth that these angels and demons alike are individuals, are personalities, and are subject to the power and authority of Christ as well as His specially designated agents, the Apostles.

Acts				
Reference	Summary	Action	Elect or Fallen	Angel of the LORD
1:9-11	Angel (assumed) explains the 2nd coming	Revelation	Elect	N
5:3	Satan fills Ananias' heart	Influence	Fallen	N
5:19-20	Angel opens doors - releasing Peter & John	Releasing	Elect	N
6:15	Stephens face compared to an Angel	Comparison	Elect	N
7:30	The burning bush = an angel	Revelation	Elect	?
7:53	Angels delivered the Law of Moses	Revelation	Elect	N
8:26	Angel directs Philip	Revelation	Elect	N
10:1-8	Angel appears to Cornelius	Revelation	Elect	N
10:38	Jesus freed those oppressed by the devil	Oppression	Fallen	N
11:13	Angel stood in Cornelius's house	Revelation	Elect	N
12:7-11	Angel releases Peter from prison	Releasing	Elect	N
12:15	Peter thought to be "his angel"	Confusion	Elect	N
12:23	Angel strikes down Herod	Judgment	Elect	N
13:10	Bar-Jesus called a son of the devil	Identification	Fallen	N
19:11-20	Seven Sons of Sceva	Possession	Fallen	N
23:8-9	Sadducees do not believe in Angels	Existence	Any	N
26:18	Believers moved from Satan's power to God's	Authority	Fallen	N
27:23-26	Angel reveals the fate of the voyage	Revelation	Elect	N



## CHAPTER 14

# Angelology in the Epistles

The biblical epistles are an entirely different style than has been encountered in this study thus far. While most of the Bible consists of narrative and poetry, the epistles are not simply illustrative but give the believer doctrine directly in propositional statements. This makes their meaning and interpretation much easier to derive than other portions of scripture that simply give a narration of events happen without necessarily rendering any judgment whatsoever on the meaning of those events. This is what makes certain doctrines most clear. The angelic focus of the epistles is most commonly on the fallen angels in general, and Satan (the chief fallen angel) specifically. This makes reasonable sense. As the believer is not meant to command, or seek contact with any angelic beings, elect or fallen, there is no formulae given to reach out to them. However, there is no question, from the full biblical perspective, that Satan and his fallen angels will always be making targets of the saints who belong to God; be that physical Israel as God's earthly chosen people, or the Church as God's heavenly chosen people. Most of the information given is to prepare the saint for the spiritual battle in which the believer has been placed as active participant from the moment of their salvation going forward. The following major themes regarding angels will be considered: angels as "watchers", the goals and tactics of fallen angels, and how the believer is to rightly relate to the angelic world.

### Angels as "Watchers"

This is one of the most compelling and interesting points when considering New Testament angelology against the Pseudepigraphic writings. While the extra-biblical writing far more frequently refers to the celestial

beings as “watchers,” it is not until the epistles that we see that doctrine most fully illustrated and explained. To be sure, the concept is entirely present in Genesis 6 as well as the Book of Job and elsewhere, but the New Testament authors take this concept of the angelic hosts “watching” to a higher degree of clarity and show that the biblical authors were all quite familiar with these Pseudepigraphic documents. Four verses from the epistles make this point:

“For I think that God has displayed us, the apostles, last, as men condemned to death; for we have been made a spectacle to the world, both to angels and to men.” (1 Corinthians 4:9 NKJV)

“For this reason the woman ought to have a symbol of authority on her head, because of the angels.” (1 Corinthians 11:10 NKJV)

“And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifested in the flesh, Justified in the Spirit, Seen by angels, Preached among the Gentiles, Believed on in the world, Received up in glory.” (1 Timothy 3:16 NKJV)

“To them it was revealed that, not to themselves, but to us they were ministering the things which now have been reported to you through those who have preached the gospel to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven—things which angels desire to look into.” (1 Peter 1:12 NKJV)

In each of the preceding passages the angels are viewed largely as watchers, or witnesses of what God is doing. In 1 Corinthians 4:9 Paul points out that the apostles are bound for great hardship and that the angels and men alike look upon that spectacle. This shows that the angels are interested in the affairs of men and, in particular what God has done in the mystery of the Church, the Body and Bride of Christ. The second passage, 1 Cor. 11:10, is the controversial passage having to do with head-coverings. While there is discussion about the application of this, the motivation and importance of the passage has far more to do with those angelic watchers who are somehow affected by the lack of propriety shown by the women in the Corinthian church. This means that angels both watch and are affected. Although it is generally thought that the angels can no longer fall, or perhaps that demons can no longer cohabit with human women, this passage at least gives us reason for pause in understanding the deeper spiritual reality. Regarding this verse, Dr. Woodhead comments:

Paul offered a third reason why womanly non-conformance to Scripture in the Church should not exist. Angels are spectators of the Church (4:9; Ephesians 3:10; 1 Timothy 5:21; Psalm 103:20–21). For a woman to

exercise her freedom to participate in the Church without the head covering (the sign of her authority) would be to bring the wisdom of God into disrepute (Ephesians 3:10).<sup>153</sup>

The passage 1 Timothy 3:16 again highlights the primary action of angels in the fact that they witnessed the resurrection of Jesus Christ. The passage 1 Peter 1:12 rounds this message out perfectly in pointing out that those things which had been revealed in the times of Christ and the apostles were the anticipation of all creation since the fall. The angels desired to see clearly what would happen. This is a large part of their role as watcher: to witness of all of God's goodness and the power of His plan.

## The Goals and Tactics of Fallen Angels

The Epistles mostly concern instruction to Church-Age believers on how to live the Christian life. In this context the issues of the Enemy of the Christian soul is never far from view. The core of the New Testament believer's relationship to the demonic world is to be aware and informed as to the character and nature of Satanic and Demonic attack with the goal of not being deceived by Satanic lies or destruction. To this end, the role of the Christian is largely defensive. Never seeking to attack, but rather to defend his own mind, his own life, from the attacks which Satan would make upon those born again of God. There are many passages to this intent that reveal what the Devil's schemes are, but it must be noted, no new schemes or plans are added beyond the basic revelation of the Old Testament. This familiarity with the diabolical world is one of the main reasons we can assume that both the biblical text as well as the Pseudepigrapha were useful in informing the New Testament view of demonology. Consider the following passages:

### *1 Corinthians 7:5: Satan Tempts Believers*

“Do not deprive one another except with consent for a time, that you may give yourselves to fasting and prayer; and come together again so that Satan does not tempt you because of your lack of self-control.” (1 Corinthians 7:5 NKJV)

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153. Woodhead, Daniel E. *The Book of 1 Corinthians: Practical Christian Truth for Iniquitous Times*. Scofield Seminary Press. Modesto, CA. 2012. Pg. 133.

1 Corinthians 7 is a passage about proper Christian conduct within marriage as it refers to sexuality. The choice to deny one another sexually within the context of a marriage relationship opens the door for temptation. Satan's most common way of affecting believers is to tempt them at their area of greatest weakness. So, if ungratified sexual desire opens up a problem for an existing lack of self-control then Satan, and the hoard of demons he leads, can recognize that weakness and capitalize on it to make common temptations more treacherous. Regarding the goals of Satan, this means that he has a goal of causing believers to fall into sin.

### *1 Corinthians 10:20–21: Sacrificing to Idols Is Sacrificing to Demons*

“20 Rather, that the things which the Gentiles sacrifice they sacrifice to demons and not to God, and I do not want you to have fellowship with demons. 21 You cannot drink the cup of the Lord and the cup of demons; you cannot partake of the Lord's table and of the table of demons.” (1 Corinthians 10:20–21 NKJV)

In this passage the Scriptures disclose the reality that sacrificing to, and worshipping, idols is not simply an empty or misguided practice. Rather, the things which are sacrificed to the idols are actually sacrificed to demons. Demons have a desire, then, to usurp the worship and sacrifice which is due only to the Lord God Almighty. This goal of gathering up the worship of men can find its outlet in many ways. As a result, the unbeliever is brought into deeper fellowship with the demon whom he worships. For believers this is a direct denial of our position and identity in Christ. The demons desire that Christians would think demon-worship is of no spiritual consequence and ignore the horrifying effects of this kind of sin upon the believer's fellowship with the Lord.

### *2 Corinthians 2:10–11: Satan Hopes to Outwit Believers*

“10 Now whom you forgive anything, I also forgive. For if indeed I have forgiven anything, I have forgiven that one for your sakes in the presence of Christ, 11 lest Satan should take advantage of us; for we are not ignorant of his devices.” (2 Corinthians 2:10–11 NKJV)

In this section Paul is reminding the Corinthians to be merciful with the one whose sin was judged publicly, because the sin was committed publicly. Yet, the interesting portion of this passage relative to this discussion is the revelation that a lack of gracious forgiveness in the local fellowship is an

opportunity for Satan to take advantage of believers. A body that is characterized by graceless and ruthless legalism without a recognition of grace, forgiveness, and growth is truly being taken advantage of by Satan. This is a great warning to the church at all times, for the most devastating attacks that cause rifts and problems in a church are usually not from without, but rather from within. When believers lose sight of God's grace and devour each other with self-righteous and judgmental contempt then Satan's goal of bringing divisions in the body is more than half done.

### *2 Corinthians 11:14: Satan Masquerades as an Angel of Light*

“14 And no wonder! For Satan himself transforms himself into an angel of light. 15 Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also transform themselves into ministers of righteousness, whose end will be according to their works.” (2 Corinthians 11:14–15 NKJV)

This passage also tips the hand of the believers' enemy. His ability to transform himself into an angel of light gives great insight into his ability. It is noted that there is no way in which a person could perceive that Satan was not showing his true form. This is the most likely explanation for many near death experiences where non-believers experience warmth, peace, comfort, and light. Satan wants to assure them that they need make no change to their faith or life so that he can be assured they are bound for eternity with him upon their final breath.

This has an application for the church as well, as those who are satanically motivated – those servants of Satan who are deceived and deceiving others – will do likewise upon his example. When Satan seeks to deceive the church, it will not be with those who are neck-deep in public sins. The most dangerous ministers in the church are those that appear in every way to be ministers of righteousness who lead people with great cunning and deceit away from the word of God. In recent years it can be clearly stated that Rob Bell is just such a person. After establishing himself as an orthodox Christian leader he began to slowly spring the trap, deceiving thousands into the belief that faith in Christ is not necessary for salvation, and that God will ultimately save everyone. Peter Hyatt of Lookout Mountain Presbyterian Church in Denver was another example of this kind of deception. Believers do not need to be concerned as much with atheistic enemies of the church, but rather with those that follow Satan's lead and pose as being good upstanding ministers but hide a heart of deceit regarding the true and pure doctrine of the word of God. (Galatians 1:8–9; 2 Peter 2:1; 1 John 2:18–19)

### *Ephesians 2:2: He Is The Prince of the Power of the Air – Deceiving Unbelievers*

“in which you once walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience,” (Ephesians 2:2 NKJV)

This verse gives information about Satan’s role regarding unbelievers. Ephesians 2:1–3 concerns the position of every person apart from Christ. They are enslaved to the world, the flesh, and the prince of the power of the air. This is a unique title for Satan. Wiersbe comments:

The Devil is “the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience.” This does not mean that Satan is personally at work in the life of each unbeliever, since Satan as a created being is limited in space. Unlike God, who is omnipresent, Satan cannot be in all places at one time. But because of his demonic associates (Eph. 6:11–12) and his power over the world system (John 12:31), Satan influences the lives of all unbelievers, and also seeks to influence believers. He wants to make people “children of disobedience” (Eph. 2:2; 5:6). He himself was disobedient to God, so he wants others to disobey Him too.

One of Satan’s chief tools for getting people to disobey God is lies. He is a liar (John 8:44), and it was his lie at the beginning of human history, “Ye shall not surely die,” that plunged the human race into sin. The unsaved multitudes in today’s world system disobey God because they believe the lies of Satan. When a person believes and practices a lie, he becomes a child of disobedience.

The flesh is the third force that encourages the unbeliever to disobey God. By the flesh Paul does not mean the body, because of itself, the body is not sinful. The flesh refers to that fallen nature that we were born with, that wants to control the body and the mind and make us disobey God. An evangelist friend of mine once announced as his topic, “Why Your Dog Does What It Does,” and, of course, many dog lovers came out to hear him. What he had to say was obvious, but too often overlooked: “A dog behaves like a dog because he has a dog’s nature.” If somehow you could transplant into the dog the nature of the cat, his behavior would change radically. Why does a sinner behave like a sinner? Because he has

the nature of a sinner (Ps. 51:5; 58:3). This sinful nature the Bible calls “the flesh.”

Is it any wonder that the unsaved person is disobedient to God? He is controlled by the world, the flesh, and the Devil, the three great enemies of God! And he cannot change his own nature or, of himself, overcome the world and the Devil. He needs outside help, and that help can come only from God.<sup>154</sup>

*Ephesians 6:11: We Are not to Be Unaware of His “Wiles”*

“Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.” (Ephesians 6:11 NKJV)

The armor will be considered in the next section regarding how believers are to interact with the world of celestial beings. The point of interest for the current area of interest is the concept of the “wiles of the devil.” The Greek word translated “wiles” is *methodia* from whence comes our English word “method.” Zodhiates defines this word as follows:

μεθοδεία *methodéia*; gen. *methodéias*, fem. noun from *methodeúō* (n.f.), to work by method. Method, the following or pursuing of an orderly and technical procedure in the handling of a subject. In the NT, connected with evil doing, a device, artifice, art, artificial method, craft or wile (Eph. 4:14; 6:11; Sept.: 2 Sam. 19:27, the verb *methodeúō*).<sup>155</sup>

In keeping with this definition and a greater understanding of the word the ESV, NASB2020, and NET all translate this word as “schemes.” This means that Satan is not acting willy-nilly. Rather, he has a set procedure and an orderly technique for waging war against the body of believers. The details of the armor which are provided in Ephesians show the nature of that method. His systematic attacks against the doctrine of salvation, the doctrine of imputed righteousness, the truth (Bibliology), and finally by creating difficulty in the basic context of daily affairs in the life of the believer. This systematic attack has worked on countless occasions, so why would Satan change his method?

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154. Wiersbe, Warren W., *Be Rich*. BE Series Commentary. Accordance electronic ed. Colorado Springs: David C. Cook, 2010.

155. Zodhiates, Spiros, ed. *The Complete Word Study Dictionary: New Testament*. Revised, Accordance electronic ed., version 1.3. Chattanooga: AMG Publishers, 1993.

### *1 Thessalonians 2:18: Satan Hinders the Ministry*

“Therefore we wanted to come to you—even I, Paul, time and again—but Satan hindered us.” (1 Thessalonians 2:18 NKJV)

Truly, this is one of the passages that leaves commentators with more questions. It is unknown how Satan hindered Paul and his band. Yet we are told that Satan was the acting agent of disruption in the desires of the apostle Paul. At other times “the Spirit” forbid them to go where they had planned, but in this instance, Paul is certain that the interference is entirely at the initiation and will of Satan. In this endeavor Satan was also successful.

This means that Satan (and his fallen angels) will make overt attacks to distract or destroy ministry and missionary efforts. They will also, furthermore, be successful in their work to slow or stop various ministry efforts. This war which wages on will include victories and losses on both sides. It must be recognized, however, that though Satan was able to hinder Paul from seeing the believers in Thessalonica at that certain time, it brought forth the occasion of adding another Holy Epistle to Scripture. The temporary frustration of Paul’s short-term plans for ministry brought about a letter of eternal value to the church down through the ages.

### *2 Thessalonians 2:9: Antichrist Empowered by Satan*

“9 The coming of the lawless one is according to the working of Satan, with all power, signs, and lying wonders, 10 and with all unrighteous deception among those who perish, because they did not receive the love of the truth, that they might be saved.” (2 Thessalonians 2:9–10 NKJV)

The lawless one here refers to the coming Antichrist. This Antichrist relies upon Satan for his every bit of power for signs and deceiving miracles. Satan must always have a candidate for the Antichrist, or several, alive upon the earth. This is because, not knowing the day or the hour of the Rapture, he needs to always be prepared to put the endgame of his plan into play. Thus, some degree of Satan’s limited attention and energy must always be preoccupied with maintaining a list of candidates to be the eschatological Antichrist. Once the Tribulation does begin it will be through the Antichrist that Satan will be able to make his greatest successes at creating the world that he envisioned in his rebellion against the Lord.

While this is very specific to the Tribulation, and the Bible is abundantly clear about Satan’s plan for the end, it can be noted that this is also a standard operating procedure for Satan. He is constantly working to deceive the world, and particularly manipulating world leaders who oversee the various nations

to do his wicked will, to think his way, to ultimately succumb to his diabolical plans and forward his agenda of preparing a one world government in preparation of his plan. Thus, it can always be assumed that Satan is working towards a unified world government, a unified world financial system, and unified world police force. This has been his scheme since the tower of Babel and the future will prove that he accomplishes much of his wicked desire.

### *1 Timothy 3:6–7: The Devil Is Puffed Up and Condemned*

“6 not a novice, lest being puffed up with pride he fall into the same condemnation as the devil. 7 Moreover he must have a good testimony among those who are outside, lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the devil.” (1 Timothy 3:6–7 NKJV)

This passage is important to note that Paul is familiar with the nature of the fall of the devil. There was pride and arrogance in his heart, as Isaiah 14 and Ezekiel 28 so clearly explained. This is further evidence that Paul would have known this information, which is also preserved with even greater clarity in the Pseudepigrapha. Satan’s central sin was pride. There was a moment when that pride was discovered in him, and finally there was a moment in time when Satan fell from his favored and powerful position.

### *1 Timothy 4:1: People Will Worship Demons and Demonic Doctrines*

“Now the Spirit expressly says that in latter times some will depart from the faith, giving heed to deceiving spirits and doctrines of demons,” (1 Timothy 4:1 NKJV)

The Holy Spirit’s direct revelation is explicit in this case. The closer time comes to the end, the more it will be seen that people listen to deceiving spirits, and the teachings of those fallen angels. There can be no question as to the observable truth of this. As the grotesque philosophies of secularism, materialism, and atheism ravage the souls of humanity the resultant wickedness of moral depravity, communism, and nihilism become more freely accepted. The societies of the world are left increasingly with a depressed, vile, hopeless view of existence where people can hardly decide if it is even worth procreating, or to continue living at all. This tragic state is a direct fulfillment of this prophecy that many are departing from the revealed biblical faith of Christianity and heeding instead the dark-hearted deceptions of the wicked one.

## *2 Timothy 2:24–26: Snares of the Devil*

“24 And a servant of the Lord must not quarrel but be gentle to all, able to teach, patient, 25 in humility correcting those who are in opposition, if God perhaps will grant them repentance, so that they may know the truth, 26 and that they may come to their senses and escape the snare of the devil, having been taken captive by him to do his will.” (2 Timothy 2:24–26 NKJV)

Here the devil has two verbs directly assigned to him. First, he is setting snares. Second, he is taking people captive to do his will. Unbelievers are again said to be caught in a Satanic snare – a trap. C. S. Lewis, through the literary vehicle of diabolical ventriloquism puts it this way in The Screwtape Letters:

You begin to see the point? Thanks to processes which we set at work in them centuries ago, they find it all but impossible to believe in the unfamiliar while the familiar is before their eyes. Keep pressing home on him the ordinariness of things. Above all, do not attempt to use science (I mean, the real sciences) as a defence against Christianity. They will positively encourage him to think about realities he can't touch and see. There have been sad cases among the modern physicists. If he must dabble in science, keep him on economics and sociology; don't let him get away from that invaluable “real life.” But the best of all is to let him read no science but to give him a grand general idea that he knows it all and that everything he happens to have picked up in casual talk and reading is “the results of modern investigation.” Do remember you are there to fuddle him. From the way some of you young fiends talk, anyone would suppose it was our job to teach!<sup>156</sup>

These snares can be escaped if a person will only “come to their senses.” That is to say, Satanic deception is based upon a person being deprived of their ability to reason correctly and in their right mind. The goal of this deception is to subjugate the unbeliever entirely to his will. He will use any deceptive means necessary to con, to fool, to deceive the unbeliever into doing his will as a slave and a victim.

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156. Lewis, C. S., *The Screwtape Letters* (p. 4). Harper One. Kindle Edition.

### *1 Peter 5:8: the Devil Prowls*

“Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour.” (1 Peter 5:8 NKJV)

Of all the pictures of the Devil in the New Testament epistles this one may be the most dramatic. Satan is here described as “your adversary.” The reality is, because the believer belongs to God, and Satan opposes God; thus, Satan has become our adversary. This adversary has intents and designs to do harm to a believer, and to the church at large. He is then compared to a roaring lion. This terrifying imagery is lost upon the modern audience who may see a lion lazily resting in a zoo. However, the first century world was quite different. One could be walking along at night and hear the terrifying cry of a hungry male lion and know that if that lion should happen upon your path your life will come to a quick and violent end.

The devil is compared to a lion and must be understood to be large, powerful, aggressive and bloodthirsty. It is so much so that every believer must be aware of his existence and be sober and vigilant at every moment because of his unrelenting, ever-hungering hatred of all things that belong to God. So often this picture is played out too lightly. People say petty, foolish things such as “The Devil is a lion, but Jesus pulled his teeth out!” Andrew Womack, in like foolish fashion, said “The Devil isn’t a true lion; he just walks around roaring like one trying to intimidate the Body of Christ; the truth is, he’s had his teeth pulled, and all he can do now is gum you.” Not only does such insane talk revile angelic majesties which believers have no business to criticize, it is patently false. While the forces of darkness can do nothing to affect the salvation of a believer in Christ Jesus, Satan is given a great deal of power, might, wisdom, and ability. It is the act of vilest foolishness when Christians try to minimize the power of the “god of this world” and underestimate a being the like of which we cannot compare in the least degree. Satan is not a clown to be mocked, he is an adversary far beyond the power and skill of any believer. Thus, we must cling to the perfect provision and protection of Jesus Christ and not allow arrogance and bombast to deceive us into becoming easy targets for the enemy of our souls.

### How the Believer is to Relate to the Celestial Beings

The powers and abilities of the diabolical beings having been considered; the believer’s interaction with those authorities must be considered. The Christian world has gone wildly into sin by obsession with Satan; such as

Frank Peretti's ridiculous "devil behind every bush" heresy. Statements about "binding Satan" or "banishing Satan", none of which can be found in scripture, and none of which should the believer expect God to honor, are unscriptural and ineffective. Fortunately, the believer is not without instruction. Quite to the contrary, the New Testament epistles are a virtual handbook on how to deal with the powers of darkness.

### *Romans 8:38–39: Celestial Beings Cannot Affect the Believer's Salvation*

38 For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, 39 nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. (Romans 8:38–39 NKJV)

The first and most important thing for the person who has trusted in Jesus Christ to understand is the message of these verses. While the powers of the angelic beings are great, and the power of Satan and his demons are terrifying to any mortal person in his right mind, Satan has no authority, power, ability, or control over a saint's eternal destiny. There is nothing that any demon or even Satan himself can do to interfere with the permanent, perfect, gift of salvation by grace through faith in Jesus Christ. God's love for us in Christ Jesus is eternal, permanent, unbreakable, and irrevocable. This is the truth: while countless believers have died painful deaths at the hands of Satanic works and influences, not one of those martyrs was even for a moment in danger of losing the eternal life and position that was given by the Lord God based on the shed blood of Jesus Christ. John Wesley writes eloquently on the importance of this verse to every believer regarding understanding and interacting with the spiritual world:

Verse 38. I am persuaded—This is inferred from the thirty-fourth verse, in an admirable order:—Neither death" shall hurt us; For "Christ is dead;" "Nor life;" "is risen" Nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers; nor things present, nor things to come;" "is at the right hand of God;" "Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature;" "maketh intercession for us." Neither death—Terrible as it is to natural men; a violent death in particular, ver. 36. Nor life—With all the affliction and distress it can bring, ver. 35; or a

long, easy life; or all living men. Nor angels—Whether good (if it were possible they should attempt it) or bad, with all their wisdom and strength. Nor principalities, nor powers?—Not even those of the highest rank, or the most eminent power. Nor things present—Which may befall us during our pilgrimage; or the whole world, till it passeth away. Nor things to come—Which may occur either when our time on earth is past, or when time itself is at an end, as the final judgment, the general conflagration, the everlasting fire. Nor height, nor depth?—The former sentence respected the differences of times; this, the differences of places. How many great and various things are contained in these words, we do not, need not, cannot know yet. The height—In St. Paul’s sublime style, is put for heaven. The depth—For the great abyss: that is, neither the heights, I will not say of walls, mountains, seas, but, of heaven itself, can move us; nor the abyss itself, the very thought of which might astonish the boldest creature. Nor any creature—Nothing beneath the Almighty; visible enemies he does not even deign to name. Shall be able—Either by force, ver. 35; or by any legal claim, ver. 33, &c. To separate us from the love of God in Christ—Which will surely save, protect, deliver us who believe in, and through, and from, them all.<sup>157</sup>

*Galatians 1:8: Angels Cannot Change the Gospel*

“But even if we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel to you than what we have preached to you, let him be accursed.” (Galatians 1:8 NKJV)

This can easily be dismissed as some form of hyperbole; however, it is making a powerful statement. Throughout scripture, as has been made devastatingly plain, angels are one of God’s chief agents of divine revelation. The appearance of an angel is always a striking and upsetting intrusion into a person’s life and most always comes with some major revelation. Angels are, after all, God’s messengers. Not only are they God’s messengers they are among the most reliable. A human prophet can be a deceiver or just mistaken but an angelic encounter is something that we struggle to understand. Paul is pointing out the permanence of the Gospel. So confident is he in this good news of salvation by grace through faith alone in Christ alone, that he can promise that even an angelic messenger who attempts to contradict the clear and pure message of God’s amazing grace gospel would be nothing but a

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157. Wesley, John, Wesley’s Notes on the Bible. Accordance electronic ed. Altamonte Springs: Oak Tree Software, 1997.

deception. Paul is, in effect, placing the gospel above any power or authority to refute or contradict. Extending this point to the very far reaches of its reasonable meaning, we must say the way a person can be safeguarded against demonic interference is to have an ironclad understanding of and respect for the Bible. When someone is truly mature and built up in the word (cf. Ephesians 4:11–16) then even a supernatural experience cannot hope to shake that Christian.

*Ephesians 4:26–27: Not to Give Him a Foothold*

“26 “Be angry, and do not sin”: do not let the sun go down on your wrath, 27 nor give place to the devil.” (Ephesians 4:26–27 NKJV)

The lack of self-control, specifically tied to extreme anger and unforgiveness is a great threat to the believer. When a believer is controlled by anger or wrath, we are told they are giving “place to the devil.” The ESV, NET, and NASB 2020 all translate this “place” as opportunity. The Greek word is *topos* and is defined by Kittel as:

τόπος. A. Usage in Greek Literature: 1. Simple Use in Common Speech: a. Territory, Land; b. District, Town, Dwelling-Place; c. A General Term for Place; 2. Special Meanings: a. Sanctuary; b. In Place of, Opportunity; c. Rhetorical Usage; d. Place in a Writing; 3. τόπος in Philosophical, Scientific and Cosmological Usage. B. Old Testament Usage: 1. General; 2. Linguistic Peculiarities: a. Basis; b. Place Where; c. This Place; d. מקום with Possessive Pronoun; 3. Meanings of מקום in Comparison with the Greek τόπος: a. Land, Locality; b. Town, Dwelling-Place; c. Other Places; 4. מקום as the Promised Land; 5. מקום as a Term for Holy Places: a. Original Canaanite Shrines; b. Zion and the Temple in Jerusalem; c. This Place in the Prophets; d. Post-Exilic Usage; 6. Places in Creation. C. Later Jewish Usage: 1. Rabbinic Writings; 2. Philo. D. New Testament Usage: 1. τόπος as a General Term for Place; 2. Special Senses: a. Temple; b. The Right Place For, Opportunity; c. Place of Scripture. E. The Post-Apostolic Fathers.<sup>158</sup>

While “opportunity” is a fine translation to get at the meaning, the picture provided by the Greek is far more graphic. To be controlled by one’s anger

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158. Köster. Kittel, Gerhard and Geoffrey W. Bromiley, eds. Theological Dictionary of the New Testament. Accordance electronic ed., version 3.1. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1964.

is to give up precious territory, land, or space on the battle ground of the soul to the enemy. If this verse were to be translated less literally than the NKJV then the next most favorable translation would be the NIV which translates *topos* as “foothold.” The principle is that when a person allows their temper to go uncontrolled and unchecked the result is that Satan has a point of leverage and control in that believer’s life. Anger, and all-powerful emotions, must be brought under the self-control of the Holy Spirit empowered life.

*Ephesians 6:10–20: The Full Armor of God*

10 Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. 11 Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. 12 For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places. 13 Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. 14 Stand therefore, having girded your waist with truth, having put on the breastplate of righteousness, 15 and having shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace; 16 above all, taking the shield of faith with which you will be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one. 17 And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God; 18 praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, being watchful to this end with all perseverance and supplication for all the saints— 19 and for me, that utterance may be given to me, that I may open my mouth boldly to make known the mystery of the gospel, 20 for which I am an ambassador in chains; that in it I may speak boldly, as I ought to speak.” (Ephesians 6:10–20 NKJV)

This passage is central in the biblical understanding of Spiritual warfare. As was mentioned in the previous section, the devil has a method to attack believers. That method is defeated entirely by the spiritual armor which the Lord provides. First, it is noted that the battle is not a physical or earthly battle. While much Christian blood has been spilled over the centuries, that is not where the true conflict was found nor where the real battle was fought. The true battle is against the spiritual forces of Satan and his demons. They are many and powerful. They make their war largely and chiefly on the frontline of the faith – that is to say, the content of what the Christian

believes. Thus, the belt of truth is the first thing the Christian should put on. The protective elements of the belt, as well as its purpose in holding all the armor together, make this the first thing that the diabolical forces will attack. Truth is established by the word of God (John 17:3) and is always the first place of Satanic attack. Going all the way back to the garden, what is the first attack of the serpent? “Did God really say?” This simple attack on the truth of the word of God is always at the heart of the Satanic agenda. Harold Lindsell’s classic work The Battle for the Bible perfectly describes this ongoing war for the reliability of the Bible must be fought and refought in every generation and in every life.<sup>159</sup>

The next place of attack is on worthiness of the saint. The remedy for this is a robust understanding of the imputed righteousness of Christ. While the Accuser of the brethren actively tries to discourage the saint based upon his failures past and present, it is only the imputed perfect righteousness of Christ that can defend against these darts of discouragement. The believer who is stuck in the snare of pondering his own failures and sins is not preoccupied with the perfect work of Jesus Christ, and thus is already defeated and unable to act.

The next place of vulnerability is in the stance of the believer. The Roman army was famous for the use of the *caligae* sandals which were fixed with iron cleats that dug into the ground. Because of this impressively reliable footwear the Roman soldier could not be easily pushed back. This sure footing is the gospel of peace, not simply the concept or feeling of peace, not a mere absence of conflict, but the true peace that the believer has with God because of the work of Jesus Christ (Romans 5:1). The believer who is unsure of his position in Christ is sure to stumble, fall and become a casualty in the spiritual battle.

The shield of faith (Greek – “The shield of The Faith”) the definite article before the word Faith denotes specificity. This is not simply the act of believing but is the articular noun - meaning the contents of the faith. This means clinging to the biblical truth which will act as a shield. The shields of the first century were covered in heavy leather that were soaked in water prior to a volley of flaming arrows. The shield would stop the arrow and the wet leather would extinguish the fire so that it could not continue to do damage and deprive the soldier of his shield in coming volleys. It is with learned and memorized teachings from Scripture, they block the dart and extinguish the flame so that deceptions and lies cannot cause further damage.

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159. Lindsell, Harold. The Battle for the Bible. Zondervan. Grand Rapids, MI.

The next attack is on the doctrine of Salvation. This doctrine is always first and foremost amongst heretics, adding works and developing a horrifying “Jesus plus” perversion of the gospel. The biblically simple and obvious message of salvation by grace alone through faith alone is most attacked by heretics and hated by the world. Furthermore, the biblically obvious doctrine of the eternal security of the saint is equally constantly under assault. Why? Because it is a primary issue under demonic attack.

Finally, the sword of the Spirit is the word of God. This single and only offensive weapon is abundantly clear in its meaning. Learning to use the word of God, as a soldier wields a sword is no mean task. It takes discipline, training, and continued conscious effort. A soldier in the Roman army would carry the *machira* sword mentioned by name in this passage. It was a short sword that was sharp on both edges. While this blade was not as large and intimidating as other weapons of the day, it was an instrument of deadly precision that could find the chinks and weak points in any suit of armor. These swords were razor sharp and useful on the down-stroke as well as the upstroke. So “the word of God is living and active and sharper than any two-edged sword” (Hebrews 4:12). It is by knowing and rightly dividing the word of God that the believer can be offensively involved in the spiritual battle. It is the word of God alone that corrects the lies of enemy.

The final element of success in the spiritual battle is the need for constant prayer. This understanding that the Lord hears and answers the prayers of the saints is to be constantly at the frontline of the believer’s faith. Thus, prayer is the final piece in the perfect provision which the Lord has given to confound the method of Satan. This simple yet profound provision. A lack of understanding of what the Lord has provided, combined with the generally lackadaisical attitude toward the spiritual battle that rages around us is the clear reason for so many spiritually lukewarm believers who become quick casualties whenever they find themselves on the battle front.

### *Colossians 2:15: Christ disarmed Fallen Angels at the Cross*

“Having disarmed principalities and powers, He made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them in it.” (Colossians 2:15 NKJV)

At the cross the powers of darkness were disarmed. This is because the power which Satan has over a human is on the basis that he is unacceptable to God. In his sin and iniquity, a human cannot appeal to God for help in righteousness. This makes him easy prey for the wicked one. However, only at the cross are sins are forgiven, and thus the enemy – while his craft and

power are great – cannot again rightly claim that a person who is in Christ can ever again be vulnerable to his spiritual authority. Christ’s death on the cross was a public spectacle – every crucifixion was by its very design. When Christ paid the penalty for all of man’s sin anyone who accepted that salvation by trusting in Christ was joined with Christ in His eternal victory over sin.

### *Colossians 2:18: Worship of Angels Forbidden*

Let no one cheat you of your reward, taking delight in false humility and worship of angels, intruding into those things which he has not seen, vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind, (Colossians 2:18 NKJV)

### *Hebrews 1: Jesus Christ Is Greater Than Angels*

1 God, who at various times and in various ways spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets, 2 has in these last days spoken to us by His Son, whom He has appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the worlds; 3 who being the brightness of His glory and the express image of His person, and upholding all things by the word of His power, when He had by Himself purged our sins, sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high, 4 having become so much better than the angels, as He has by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they. 5 For to which of the angels did He ever say: “You are My Son, Today I have begotten You”? And again: “I will be to Him a Father, And He shall be to Me a Son”? 6 But when He again brings the firstborn into the world, He says: “Let all the angels of God worship Him.” 7 And of the angels He says: “Who makes His angels spirits And His ministers a flame of fire.” 8 But to the Son He says: “Your throne, O God, is forever and ever; A scepter of righteousness is the scepter of Your kingdom. 9 You have loved righteousness and hated lawlessness; Therefore God, Your God, has anointed You With the oil of gladness more than Your companions.” 10 And: “You, LORD, in the beginning laid the foundation of the earth, And the heavens are the work of Your hands. 11 They will perish, but You remain; And they will all grow old like a garment; 12 Like a cloak You will fold them up, And they will be changed. But You are the same, And Your years will not fail.” 13 But to which of the angels has He ever said: “Sit at My right hand, Till I make Your enemies Your footstool”? 14 Are they

not all ministering spirits sent forth to minister for those who will inherit salvation? (Hebrews 1:1–14 NKJV)

The New Testament angelology is consistent with the rest of biblical angelology in the understanding that angels are never appropriate objects of worship. Praise and worship are for God and God alone. Yet, as was previously mentioned, mankind has frequently fallen into the demonic trap of worshipping angels of all kinds. This is probably why the Pseudepigrapha shows such familiarity with the angelic world, the biblical accounts spend far less time on that fascinating field. Mankind is not meant to be preoccupied with angels, but rather to be preoccupied with Christ. It is thus entirely inappropriate to be overly obsessed or concerned with the specific movements, names, or actions of celestial beings – angelic or demonic. While they will go about their schemes (of which the student is aware) the concern and focus of the believer’s life and gaze of faith is upon Jesus Christ.

### *Hebrews 2:16: Fallen Angels Cannot Be Saved*

16 For indeed He does not give aid to angels, but He does give aid to the seed of Abraham. 17 Therefore, in all things He had to be made like His brethren, that He might be a merciful and faithful High Priest in things pertaining to God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people. (Hebrews 2:16–17 NKJV)

While this verse does not speak on the issue in absolute terms, it is the clear assumption from its contents that angels have no opportunity at redemption. The reasons for this are many and varied, but the most important point that it lays out is that a believer ought never to be concerned with hoping for or looking to the redemption or repentance of the fallen angels. They are entirely beyond our scope of influence, and totally beyond repentance. The truth that this verse sets out to make clear is that were they to repent, there would be no salvation available to them because Christ came in the form of a man, only to save mankind.

### *James 4:7: Submit, Resist, and the Devil Flees*

“Therefore submit to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you.” (James 4:7 NKJV)

The first command of this verse is most important. A healthy relationship with the spiritual world is predicated upon a right relationship to God. This is here described as submitting to God. While the word *hupotasso* (here an aorist imperative) has the sense of responsive support and under-attachment, here it also has the clear sense of involving the volitional choice to be obedient to God.

After being rightly related to God, the believer is then to “resist the devil.” The Greek word *antisteteis* a compound word combining the word for “to stand” with the prefix for “against.” This harmonizes perfectly with the revelation of Ephesians 6 on spiritual warfare. The Christian is not gaining ground but standing upon the ground which Christ won at the cross. Thus, the believer in Jesus is meant to submit himself to God and stand in opposition to the lies and deceit of the Evil One. Then, we are promised, the enemy will flee. While even the weakest demon is able to overpower a human without the slightest exerted effort – the believer that is rightly related to God through Christ is invincible to his greatest weapons of deception.

### *2 Peter 2:10–11: Do not Pronounce Judgement Against Them*

10 and especially those who walk according to the flesh in the lust of uncleanness and despise authority. They are presumptuous, self-willed. They are not afraid to speak evil of dignitaries, 11 whereas angels, who are greater in power and might, do not bring a reviling accusation against them before the Lord. (2 Peter 2:10–11 NKJV)

### *Jude 8–11: Do not Pronounce Judgement Against Them*

8 Likewise also these dreamers defile the flesh, reject authority, and speak evil of dignitaries. 9 Yet Michael the archangel, in contending with the devil, when he disputed about the body of Moses, dared not bring against him a reviling accusation, but said, “The Lord rebuke you!” 10 But these speak evil of whatever they do not know; and whatever they know naturally, like brute beasts, in these things they corrupt themselves. 11 Woe to them! For they have gone in the way of Cain, have run greedily in the error of Balaam for profit, and perished in the rebellion of Korah. (Jude 1:8–11 NKJV)

These two final passages of this study in the New Testament epistles point out something that is tragically missed in the world of modern Christianity. While the fallen angels are enemies of the Living God, and their judgment and destiny are assured, they are still angelic majesties. Just as God did not allow anyone to kill Cain, because the time of his judgement was not to be upon the antediluvian world, so the Lord alone has the authority to judge and sentence Satan.

It is true that the believers will judge angels, and that passage (1 Corinthians 6:3) is more than reasonably secure. We must recognize that the believer's job in judging angels is a yet future event. This will be fully enacted when believers will rule and reign with Christ. This position of honor and authority will put at our disposal not only human, but angelic authorities to the ultimate end of seeing the Lord glorified during the Millennial Kingdom. This function of judging (in the Old Testament sense) will be part of our portion in the Kingdom of the Messiah and we will know how to adequately discharge our roles based upon our spiritual growth and progress in this present time.

## Conclusion

The examination of the New Testament epistles is, in many ways, the most important information available regarding the angelology of the New Testament in relationship to the angelology of the Old Testament and the Pseudepigrapha. While being entirely rooted in the Old Testament theology of angels and demons, it also affirms many of the larger ideas and principles presented in the extra-biblical writings involving angelic beings. This again affirms the premises of this paper. First, that the Jewish people had a concrete sense of angelology that was entirely their own, and entirely rooted within scripture, and second that angelology was largely an orthodox one that recognized both the power and authority of individual angels, and the varying results of their rebellion.

Romans				
Reference	Summary	Action	Elect or Fallen	Angel of the LORD
8:38	None can separate the believer from love of God	Lack of Power	All	N
16:20	Satan Crushed under saints' feet	Crushed	Fallen	N

Part III: Angelology in the New Testament

1 Corinthians				
Reference	Summary	Action	Elect or Fallen	Angel of the LORD
4:9	Angels watch	Watching	Both	N
5:5	Rebellious brother delivered to Satan	Destruction	Fallen	N
6:3	Believers will judge angels	Judged	U/K	N
7:5	Satan tempts believers	Temptation	Fallen	N
10:20–21	Sacrifices to demons	Receive praise	Fallen	N
11:10	Head Coverings for Angels	Tempted (?)	U/K	N
13:1	Tongues of angels (hyperbole)	Figurative	U/K	N

2 Corinthians				
Reference	Summary	Action	Elect or Fallen	Angel of the LORD
2:11	Satan plans to outwit believers	Scheming	Fallen	N
11:14	Satan masquerades as an angel of light	Disguising	Fallen	N
12:7	Paul's "thorn" a messenger of Satan	Harassing	Fallen	N

Galatians				
Reference	Summary	Action	Elect or Fallen	Angel of the LORD
1:8	Angels cannot contradict the gospel	Authority	Elect	N
3:19	Angels gave the Law	Revelation	Elect	N
4:14	Paul received as an Angel	Comparison	Elect	N

Ephesians				
Reference	Summary	Action	Elect or Fallen	Angel of the LORD
2:2	Prince of the Power of the Air	Deceiving Worldlings	Fallen	N
4:27	Exhortation not to give the devil an opportunity	Seeking opportunity	Fallen	N
6:10-20	Devil Schemes - Spiritual Warfare	Scheming	Fallen	N

Colossians				
Reference	Summary	Action	Elect or Fallen	Angel of the LORD
1:16	Angels created	Created	All	N
2:15	Christ disarmed fallen angels at the cross	Disarmed	Fallen	N
2:18	Worship of angels (forbidden)	Worshipped	Either	N

1-2 Thessalonians				
Reference	Summary	Action	Elect or Fallen	Angel of the LORD
1 Thess. 2:18	Satan Hinders Paul's Travel plans	Hindering	Fallen	N
2 Thess. 2:9	Antichrist empowered by Satan	Empowering	Fallen	N

Part III: Angelology in the New Testament

1-2 Timothy				
Reference	Summary	Action	Elect or Fallen	Angel of the LORD
1 Tim. 1:20	Carnal Believers handed over to Satan	Handing over	Fallen	N
1 Tim. 3:6-7	Devil is puffed up and condemned	Puffed up/condemned	Fallen	N
1 Tim. 3:16	Angels saw Christ's ministry	Watchers	Elect	N
1 Tim. 4:1	People will worship/demon's teaching	Teaching - receiving praise	Fallen	N
1 Tim. 5:15	Some strayed after Satan	Followed by believers	Fallen	N
2 Tim. 2:26	Snares of the Devil	Ensnare believers	Fallen	N

Hebrews				
Reference	Summary	Action	Elect or Fallen	Angel of the LORD
1:4	They are not THE SON	Inferior	Elect or Fallen	N
1:5	They are not THE SON	Inferior	Elect or Fallen	N
1:6	Not worthy of worship	Inferior	Elect or Fallen	N
1:7	Winds - Servants	Servants	Elect	N
1:8	Will not rule	Inferior	Elect or Fallen	N
2:2	Reliable messengers	Revelation	Elect	N
2:5	Kingdom not given to the authority of angels	Authority	Elect	N
2:7, 9	Man inferior to angels	Superior	Elect or Fallen	N
2:14	Devil has the power of death	Power	Fallen	N
2:16	Angels are not helped	Not helped	Elect or Fallen	N
12:22	Angels Gather in the New Jerusalem	Gathering	Elect	N
13:2	Angels entertained	Entertained	Elect	N

James				
Reference	Summary	Action	Elect or Fallen	Angel of the LORD
2:19	Demons Believe	Believe	Fallen	N
4:7	The Devil resisted will flee	Flee	Fallen	N

1 & 2 Peter				
Reference	Summary	Action	Elect or Fallen	Angel of the LORD
1 Pet. 1:12	Angels long to look	Desire to See	Elect or Fallen	N
1 Pet. 3:22	Angels, and demonic authorities subject to Christ	Subjugated	Elect or Fallen	N
1 Pet. 5:8	Devil prowls, devours	Prowls, Devours	Fallen	N
2 Pet. 2:4	Sinned - not spared	Sinned, Judged	Fallen	N
2 Pet. 2:11	Do not pronounce judgement	Humble	Elect	N

1 John				
Reference	Summary	Action	Elect or Fallen	Angel of the LORD
3:8	Those sinning of the Devil	Identification	Fallen	N
3:10	Children of the Devil	Identification	Fallen	N

Jude				
Reference	Summary	Action	Elect or Fallen	Angel of the LORD
6	Not staying in their position of authority	Rebellion	Fallen	N
9	Michael does not judge	Humility	Elect	N
9	Michael and Satan did battle for Moses' body	Warfare-Conflict	Both	N



## CHAPTER 15

# Angelology in the Book of Revelation

The final book of the Bible has the most dramatic and orderly explanation of God's plan for the end times. The largest contribution of the book of Revelation is not new information, but a simplification and ordering of the things already revealed in the Old Testament. This reality roots every aspect of Revelation very much in the tradition of Scripture. However, the fantastic nature of Revelation that inspires such wonder also makes it easy to draw parallels between the book of Revelation and various Pseudepigraphical writings. These will become plain as this chapter progresses. The angelology of Revelation will be considered in three categories: The angels who are active on the heavenly scene, those active upon the earthly scene, and those of Satan and the fallen angels and their activity.

### Angels on the Heavenly Scene

*Revelation 4:6–11: the Four Living Creatures (Rev. 6 – “Come and See”)*

6 Before the throne there was a sea of glass, like crystal. And in the midst of the throne, and around the throne, were four living creatures full of eyes in front and in back. 7 The first living creature was like a lion, the second living creature like a calf, the third living creature had a face like a man, and the fourth living creature was like a flying eagle. 8 The four living creatures, each having six wings, were full of eyes around and within. And they do not rest day or night, saying: “Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, Who was and is and is to come!” 9 Whenever the living creatures give glory and honor and thanks to Him who sits on the throne,

who lives forever and ever, 10 the twenty-four elders fall down before Him who sits on the throne and worship Him who lives forever and ever, and cast their crowns before the throne, saying: 11 “You are worthy, O Lord, To receive glory and honor and power; For You created all things, And by Your will they exist and were created.” (Revelation 4:6–11 NKJV)

The four living creatures which John encounters are both alluring and challenging. These creatures have a great deal of similarity with the creatures beheld by Isaiah, and yet they have some distinct differences. While the Seraphim which Isaiah saw had four faces, those seen by John appeared to have one face each. Additionally, while the creatures which Isaiah saw had four wings, those which John beheld had six wings. These difference may be accounted for in the perspective of the beholder, but it is more likely that they were different creatures with a similar function. This returns to the challenge of the classification of angels. Wiersbe comments:

Also around the throne, John saw four “living creatures” (“beasts” in the King James Version) who were nearer to God than the angels and the elders. They resemble the cherubim that the prophet Ezekiel saw (Ezek. 1:4–14; 10:20–22), but their praise (Rev. 4:8) reminds us of the seraphim of Isaiah 6. I believe that these special creatures symbolize God’s creation and are related to God’s covenant with Noah (Gen. 9:8–17). The faces of the living creatures parallel God’s statement in Genesis 9:10—His covenant is with Noah (the face of the man), the fowl (the face of the eagle), the cattle (the face of the calf), and the beasts of the earth (the face of the lion).

These creatures signify the wisdom of God (“full of eyes”) and proclaim the holiness of God. They are heavenly reminders that God has a covenant with His creation and that He rules His creation from His throne. The presence of the emerald rainbow further enhances this image, since the rainbow was given as the sign of the creation covenant. No matter what terrible judgments may fall on God’s earth, He will be faithful to keep His Word. Men may curse Him during the judgments (Rev. 16:9, 11, 21), but nature will praise Him and magnify His holiness.

The cherubim described in Ezekiel 1 seem to have a part in the providential workings of God in the world, pictured by the “wheels within the wheels.” God uses the forces of nature to accomplish His will (Ps. 148), and all nature praises and thanks Him.

Some students see in the four faces described (Rev. 4:7) an illustration of the fourfold picture of Christ given in the gospel accounts. Matthew is the royal gospel of the King, illustrated by the lion. Mark emphasizes the servant aspect of the Lord's ministry (the calf). Luke presents Christ as the compassionate Son of Man. John magnifies the deity of Christ, the Son of God (the eagle).

Finally, the name used by these creatures, "Lord God Almighty," emphasizes the power of God. As mentioned in chapter 1, the name Almighty is used nine times in Revelation. The only other such usage in the New Testament is 2 Corinthians 6:18, but it is found at least thirty-one times in Job, a book that magnifies the power of God in nature.<sup>160</sup>

Similarly, McGee observes;

"Four beasts" are literally "four living creatures." The Greek word is *zōa*, from which we get our English word *zoo*. It doesn't mean a wild beast as we might think. We will have a wild beast when we get to chapter 13, but that is a different word and a different type of beast. This is just a living creature. The emphasis is not upon the bestial, but upon the vital, upon the fact that they are living.

"Four beasts full of eyes before and behind." This speaks of their alertness and awareness. They resemble both the cherubim of Ezekiel 1:5–10; 10:20; and the seraphim of Isaiah 6:2–3.<sup>161</sup>

Albert Barnes makes particularly lucid comments:

Were four beasts. This is a very unhappy translation, as the word beasts by no means conveys a correct idea of the original word. The Greek word (*zoon*) means properly a living thing—and it is thus indeed applied to animals, or to the living creation; but the notion of their being living things, or living creatures, should be retained in the translation. Professor Stuart renders it, "living creatures." Isaiah, (chapter 6) in his vision of Jehovah, saw two Seraphim; Ezekiel, whom John more nearly resembles in his description, saw four "living creatures" – (*bayot*) Ezek. 1:5—that is,

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160. Wiersbe, Warren W., *Be Victorious*. BE Series Commentary. Accordance electronic ed. Colorado Springs: David C. Cook, 2010.

161. McGee, J. Vernon, *1 Corinthians—Revelation*. Vol. V of *Thru the Bible*. Accordance electronic ed. Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1983.

living, animated, moving beings. The words “living beings” would better convey the idea than any other which could be employed. They are evidently, like those which Ezekiel saw, symbolical beings; but the nature and purpose of the symbol is not perfectly apparent. The “four and twenty elders” are evidently human beings, and are representatives, as above explained, of the church. In Rev. 5:11, angels are themselves introduced as taking an important part in the worship of heaven; and these living beings, therefore, cannot be designed to represent either angels or men. In Ezekiel, they are either designed as poetic representations of the majesty of God, or of his providential government, showing what sustains his throne: symbols denoting intelligence, vigilance, the rapidity and directness with which the Divine commands are executed, and the energy and firmness with which the government of God is administered. The nature of the case, and the similarity to the representation in Ezekiel, would lead us to suppose that the same idea is to be found substantially in John; and there would be no difficulty in such an interpretation, were it not that these “living creatures” are apparently represented in Rev. 5:8–9, as uniting with the redeemed from the earth in such a manner as to imply that they were themselves redeemed. But perhaps the language in Rev. 5:9, “And they sung a new song,” etc., though apparently connected with the “four beasts” in Rev. 4:8, is not designed to be so connected. John may intend there merely to advert to the fact that a new song was sung, without meaning to say that the “four living beings” united in that song. For, if he designed merely to say that the “four living beings” and the “four and twenty elders” fell down to worship, and then that a song was heard, though in fact sung only by the four and twenty elders, he might have employed the language which he actually has done. If this interpretation be admitted, then the most natural explanation to be given of the “four living beings” is to suppose that they are symbolical beings designed to furnish some representation of the government of God—to illustrate, as it were, that on which the Divine government rests, or which constitutes its support—to wit, power, intelligence, vigilance, energy. This is apparent

(a) because it was not unusual for the thrones of monarchs to be supported by carved animals of various forms, which were designed undoubtedly to be somehow emblematic of government—either of its stability, vigilance, boldness, or firmness. Thus Solomon had twelve lions

carved on each side of his throne—no improper emblems of government—1 Kings 10:19–20.

(b) These living beings are described as the supports of the throne of God, or as that on which it rests, and would be, therefore, no improper symbols of the great principles or truths which give support or stability to the Divine administration.

(c) They are, in themselves, well adapted to be representatives of the great principles of the Divine government, or of the Divine providential dealings, as we shall see in the more particular explanation of the symbol.

(d) Perhaps it might be added, that, so understood, there would be completeness in the vision. The “elders” appear there as representatives of the church redeemed; the angels in their own proper persons render praise to God. To this it was not improper to add, and the completeness of the representation seems to make it necessary to add, that all the doings of the Almighty unite in his praise; his various acts in the government of the universe harmonize with redeemed and unfallen intelligences in proclaiming his glory. The vision of the “living beings,” therefore, is not, as I suppose, a representation of the attributes of God as such, but an emblematic representation of the Divine government—of the throne of Deity resting upon, or sustained by, those things of which these living beings are emblems—intelligence, firmness, energy, etc. This supposition seems to combine more probabilities than any other which has been proposed; for, according to this supposition, all the acts, and ways, and creatures of God unite in his praise. It is proper to add, however, that expositors are by no means agreed as to the design of this representation. Professor Stuart supposes that the attributes of God are referred to; Mr. Elliott, (i. 93,) that the “twenty-four elders and the four living creatures symbolize the church, or the collective body of the saints of God; and that as there are two grand divisions of the church, the larger one that of the departed in Paradise, and the other that militant on earth, the former is depicted by the twenty-four elders, and the latter by the living creatures;” Mr. Lord, (pp. 53, 54,) that the living creatures and the elders are both of one race: the former perhaps denoting those like Enoch and Elijah, who were translated, and those who were raised by the Saviour after his resurrection, or those who have been raised to special eminence—the latter the mass of the redeemed; Mr. Mede, that the living creatures are symbols of the church worshipping on earth; Mr. Daubuz, that they are symbols of the ministers of the church on earth; Vitringa, that they are

symbols of eminent ministers and teachers in every age; Dr. Hammond regards him who sits on the throne as the metropolitan bishop of Judaea, the representative of God, the elders as diocesan bishops of Judaea, and the living creatures as four apostles, symbols of the saints who are to attend the Almighty as assessors in judgment! See Lord on the Apocalypse, pp. 58, 59.

Full of eyes. Denoting omniscience. The ancients fabled Argus as having one hundred eyes, or as having the power of seeing in any direction. The emblem here would denote an ever-watchful and observing Providence; and in accordance with the explanation proposed above, it means that, in the administration of the Divine government, everything is distinctly contemplated; nothing escapes observation; nothing can be concealed. It is obvious that the Divine government could not be administered unless this were so; and it is the perfection of the government of God that all things are seen just as they are. In the vision seen by Ezekiel, (Ezek. 1:18) the “rings” of the wheels on which the living creatures moved are represented as “full of eyes round about them,” emblematic of the same thing. So Milton—

“As with stars their bodies all,  
And wings were set with eyes; with eyes the wheels  
Of beryl, and careening fires between.”

Before. In front. As one looked on their faces, from whatever quarter the throne was approached, he could see a multitude of eyes looking upon him.

And behind. On the parts of their bodies which were under the throne. The meaning is, that there is universal vigilance in the government of God. Whatever is the form of the Divine administration; whatever part is contemplated; however it is manifested—whether as activity, energy, power, or intelligence—it is based on the fact that all things are seen from every direction. There is nothing that is the result of blind fate or of chance.<sup>162</sup>

Based upon the survey of the Old Testament and the Pseudepigrapha, combined with the understanding that celestial beings did not come forth

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162. Barnes, Albert, Barnes' Notes on the New Testament. Accordance electronic ed. Altamonte Springs: Oak Tree Software, 2006.

through procreation, it is theologically reasonable to assume that the Lord created many different magnificent creatures to minister before Him. While they may be similar in general composition, were each unique in appearance.

### *Revelation 5:2: the Strong Angel*

“Then I saw a strong angel proclaiming with a loud voice, “Who is worthy to open the scroll and to loose its seals?”” (Revelation 5:2 NKJV)

This is one of a group of angels specifically noted for its strength. It is impossible to be certain whether by “strong” that John meant that it was large and muscular, or simple exuded great spiritual authority, but the latter is preferred given the larger spiritual character of the narrative.

### *Revelation 7:11–12: Angels Worship*

11 All the angels stood around the throne and the elders and the four living creatures, and fell on their faces before the throne and worshiped God, 12 saying: “Amen! Blessing and glory and wisdom, Thanksgiving and honor and power and might, Be to our God forever and ever. Amen.” (Revelation 7:11–12 NKJV)

These angels stand around the throne and the elders providing a hierarchy of presence. The four living creatures stand nearest the throne, defending and proclaiming the holiness of Almighty God. The twenty-four elders are next as a picture of the Church of Jesus Christ. The final circle of the heavenly scene is the innumerable angelic crowd who declares the praise of God at this juncture of the drama of the book of Revelation.

### *Revelation 8: Given and Blowing Trumpets*

2 And I saw the seven angels who stand before God, and to them were given seven trumpets. 3 Then another angel, having a golden censer, came and stood at the altar. He was given much incense, that he should offer it with the prayers of all the saints upon the golden altar which was before the throne. 4 And the smoke of the incense, with the prayers of the saints, ascended before God from the angel’s hand. 5 Then the angel took the censer, filled it with fire from the altar, and threw it to the earth. And there were noises, thunderings, lightnings, and an earthquake. 6 So the seven

angels who had the seven trumpets prepared themselves to sound.”  
(Revelation 8:2–6 NKJV)

This appearance of the seven angels speaks to the role of angels in declaring and activating the continuing judgement of God. These angels are implicitly pictured as being human-like in their appearance, having all the apparatus necessary to hold and blow trumpets as a human being would. These trumpets are the war trumpets that signify the active declaration of war upon the God-rejecting world in the context of the first half of the Tribulation period. This is harmonious with the angelic role in the process of judgment which began at the setting of cherubim to guard the garden in Genesis 3:24 and in the judgment of Sodom and Gomorrah recorded in Genesis 19.

### *Revelation 10:1–10: Might Angel Gives John the Book*

1 I saw still another mighty angel coming down from heaven, clothed with a cloud. And a rainbow was on his head, his face was like the sun, and his feet like pillars of fire. 2 He had a little book open in his hand. And he set his right foot on the sea and his left foot on the land, 3 and cried with a loud voice, as when a lion roars. When he cried out, seven thunders uttered their voices. 4 Now when the seven thunders uttered their voices, I was about to write; but I heard a voice from heaven saying to me, “Seal up the things which the seven thunders uttered, and do not write them.” 5 The angel whom I saw standing on the sea and on the land raised up his hand to heaven 6 and swore by Him who lives forever and ever, who created heaven and the things that are in it, the earth and the things that are in it, and the sea and the things that are in it, that there should be delay no longer, 7 but in the days of the sounding of the seventh angel, when he is about to sound, the mystery of God would be finished, as He declared to His servants the prophets. 8 Then the voice which I heard from heaven spoke to me again and said, “Go, take the little book which is open in the hand of the angel who stands on the sea and on the earth.” 9 So I went to the angel and said to him, “Give me the little book.” And he said to me, “Take and eat it; and it will make your stomach bitter, but it will be as sweet as honey in your mouth.” 10 Then I took the little book out of the angel’s hand and ate it, and it was as sweet as honey in my

mouth. But when I had eaten it, my stomach became bitter. (Revelation 10:1–10 NKJV)

This account parallels the experience of Ezekiel in Ezekiel 3:3. This experience of eating the revelation of God as a deep picture of internalization of the message which a messenger is told to give show the personal nature of being God's messenger at any given time. The angelic information regarded here is again the familiar role of angelic action regarding revealing truth to humanity.

### *Revelation 11:1–3: Angel Gives Instructions*

1 Then I was given a reed like a measuring rod. And the angel stood, saying, "Rise and measure the temple of God, the altar, and those who worship there. 2 But leave out the court which is outside the temple, and do not measure it, for it has been given to the Gentiles. And they will tread the holy city underfoot for forty-two months. 3 And I will give power to my two witnesses, and they will prophesy one thousand two hundred and sixty days, clothed in sackcloth." (Revelation 11:1–3 NKJV)

This angelic revelation and provision of a measuring rod is given to provide an added degree of reality to the revelations that are given by angelic means. They are not simply symbolic visions, but rather are real and thus can be seen and measured like any real physical thing. In this instance the angel involved is working as an intermediary who is providing for John the information and encouragement to understand the actual and literal nature of what he is perceiving.

### *Revelation 15–16: Angels Hold and Pour Bowls of God's Wrath*

5 After these things I looked, and behold, the temple of the tabernacle of the testimony in heaven was opened. 6 And out of the temple came the seven angels having the seven plagues, clothed in pure bright linen, and having their chests girded with golden bands. 7 Then one of the four living creatures gave to the seven angels seven golden bowls full of the wrath of God who lives forever and ever. 8 The temple was filled with smoke from the glory of God and from His power, and no one was able to enter the temple till the seven plagues of the seven angels were completed. 1 Then

I heard a loud voice from the temple saying to the seven angels, “Go and pour out the bowls of the wrath of God on the earth.” (Revelation 15:5–16:1 NKJV)

As with the angels who received and blew the trumpets, these angels are instruments of enacting the righteous judgments of God. This use of angelic agency again shows that God most frequently works through His creatures in order to bring about His will and ends upon the earth. These angels pour out the very wrath of God upon the earth and it becomes plain that the Lord utilizes His angels for the completion of His will. While He could constantly work by fiat of His declaration alone, He chooses to include His obedient and chosen creations to this end to allow them to participate in His work, both creative and destructive.

### *Revelation 17: Bowl Angel Explains*

1 Then one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls came and talked with me, saying to me, “Come, I will show you the judgment of the great harlot who sits on many waters, 2 with whom the kings of the earth committed fornication, and the inhabitants of the earth were made drunk with the wine of her fornication.” (Revelation 17:1–2 NKJV)

This is one of the most familiar roles of angels: the role of explanation. Each human who is welcomed onto the heavenly scene or illuminated to the spiritual situation, is unprepared for the world which he beholds. Thus, as with Zechariah and Enoch, an angelic guide is provided. This angelic interpreter explains the reality of the great harlot, spiritual Babylon, and the destiny which shall come upon her.

### *Revelation 18:1–3: Angel Declares the Fall of Babylon*

1 After these things I saw another angel coming down from heaven, having great authority, and the earth was illuminated with his glory. 2 And he cried mightily with a loud voice, saying, “Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and has become a dwelling place of demons, a prison for every foul spirit, and a cage for every unclean and hated bird! 3 For all the nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication, the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her, and the merchants of the earth

have become rich through the abundance of her luxury.” (Revelation 18:1–3 NKJV)

While the significance of this situation has been personally and privately explained to John for the benefit of his readers in the coming centuries, this angelic messenger makes a proclamation for the entire earth. The fact that this angelic messenger is coming down from heaven shows that he is giving a message to the earth in the final days of the Tribulation Period. This angel is given special description as being of great authority and having a glory that illuminates the entire earth. He is also given a loud voice making it clear that this revelation and judgment is revealed to the entire earth. God gave this angel the special honor of declaring that the satanic hope of humanity is fallen and that the end of this rebellion is a fast-closing window.

### *Revelation 21:12; 17: Angels in the New Jerusalem*

12 Also she had a great and high wall with twelve gates, and twelve angels at the gates, and names written on them, which are the names of the twelve tribes of the children of Israel: 13 three gates on the east, three gates on the north, three gates on the south, and three gates on the west. 14 Now the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and on them were the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb. 15 And he who talked with me had a gold reed to measure the city, its gates, and its wall. 16 The city is laid out as a square; its length is as great as its breadth. And he measured the city with the reed: twelve thousand furlongs. Its length, breadth, and height are equal. 17 Then he measured its wall: one hundred and forty-four cubits, according to the measure of a man, that is, of an angel. (Revelation 21:12–17 NKJV)

This revelation moves passed the issue of the Great Tribulation and shows that the celestial beings are fully involved in the world that is yet to come. Twelve angels take their place at these twelve gates to stand guard. This is, again, a familiar role for angels from a biblical perspective. The celestial beings that stand guard here guard the holiness and pristine spiritual nature of the city just as the seraphim guard the holiness of God in the heavenly courtroom.

### *Revelation 22:8–9: Angel Refuses Worship*

8 Now I, John, saw and heard these things. And when I heard and saw, I fell down to worship before the feet of the angel who showed me these things. 9 Then he said to me, “See that you do not do that. For I am your fellow servant, and of your brethren the prophets, and of those who keep the words of this book. Worship God.” (Revelation 22:8–9 NKJV)

The final angelic observation of this sub-section shows a key feature of elect angels. The angel denies the worship which John is compelled to give him. While Satan and his fallen angels have been shown to desire the worship of humans, this elect angel of God refuses it entirely. This angel rejects this worship on the basis that he, also, is a servant of the living God. This gives the reader a clear understanding of the difference between the elect and fallen angels.

### Angels on the Earthly Scene

#### *Revelation 7:1: Four Angels Hold the Corners of the Earth*

“After these things I saw four angels standing at the four corners of the earth, holding the four winds of the earth, that the wind should not blow on the earth, on the sea, or on any tree.” (Revelation 7:1 NKJV)

These four angels seem clearly to be elect angels who are controlling the winds and weather patterns of the earth. This displays the clear relationship between the celestial beings and the weather. As with all meteorological phenomena which the secular world applies to natural chance and causation, the reality is that God controls the weather through angelic means. Barnes explains these angelic creatures in symbolic terms:

I saw four angels. He does not describe their forms, but merely mentions their agency. This is, of course, a symbolical representation. We are not to suppose that it would be literally fulfilled, or that, at the time referred to by the vision, four celestial beings would be stationed in the four quarters of the world, for the purpose of checking and restraining the winds that blow from the four points of the compass. The meaning is, that events would occur which would be properly represented by four angels standing in the four quarters of the world, and having power over the winds.

Standing on the four corners of the earth. This language is, of course, accommodated to the prevailing mode of speaking of the earth among the Hebrews. It was a common method among them to describe it as a vast plain, having four corners, those corners being the prominent points—north, south, east, and west. So we speak now of the four winds, the four quarters of the world, etc. The Hebrews spoke of the earth, as we do of the rising and setting of the sun, and of the motions of the heavenly bodies, according to appearances, and without aiming at philosophical exactness. Compare Note on Job 26:7.

With this view they spoke of the earth as an extended plain, and as having boundaries or corners, as a plain or field naturally has. Perhaps also they used this language with some allusion to an edifice, as having four corners; for they speak also of the earth as having foundations. The language which the Hebrews used was in accordance with the prevailing ideas and language of the ancients on the subject.

Holding the four winds of the earth. The winds blow in fact from every quarter, but it is convenient to speak of them as coming from the four principal points of the compass, and this method is adopted, probably, in every language. So among the Greeks and Latins, the winds were arranged under four classes—Zephyrus, Boreas, Notus, and Eurus—considered as under the control of a king, AEolus. See Esehenburg, *Man. Class. Lit.* % 78, comp. % 108. The angels here are represented as “holding“ the winds—κρατουντας. That is, they held them back when about to sweep over the earth, and to produce far-spread desolation. This is an allusion to a popular belief among the Hebrews, that the agency of the angels was employed everywhere. It is not suggested that the angels had raised the tempest here, but only that they now restrained and controlled it. The essential idea is, that they had power over those winds, and that they were now exercising that power by keeping them back when they were about to spread desolation over the earth.

That the wind should not blow on the earth. That there should be a calm, as if the winds were held back.

Nor on the sea. Nowhere—neither on sea nor land. The sea and the land constitute the surface of the globe, and the language here, therefore, denotes that there would be a universal calm. Nor on any tree. To injure it. The language here used is such as would denote a state of profound quiet; as when we say that it is so still that not a leaf of the trees moves.

In regard to the literal meaning of the symbol here employed there can be no great difficulty; as to its application there may be more. The winds are the proper symbols of wars and commotions. Compare Dan. 8:2. In Jer. 49:36–37, the symbol is both used and explained: “And upon Elam will I bring the four winds from the four quarters of heaven, and will scatter them toward all those winds; and there shall be no nation whither the outcasts of Elam shall not come. For I will cause Elam to be dismayed before their enemies, and before them that seek their life.” So in Jer. 51:1–2, a destroying wind is an emblem of destructive war: “I will raise up against Babylon a destroying wind, and will send unto Babylon farmers, that shall fan her, and shall empty her land.” Compare Horace, Odes, b, i. 14. The essential ideas, therefore, in this portion of the symbol, cannot be mistaken. They are two:

(1) that at the period of time here referred to—after the opening of the sixth seal and before the opening of the seventh—there would be a state of things which would be well represented by rising tempests and storms, which if unrestrained would spread desolation afar; and

(2) that this impending ruin was held back as if by angels having control of those winds; that is, those tempests were not suffered to go forth to spread desolation over the world. A suspended tempest; calamity held in check; armies hovering on the borders of a kingdom, but not allowed to proceed for a time; hordes of invaders detained, or stayed in their march, as if by some restraining power not their own, and from causes not within themselves—any of these things would be an obvious fulfilling of the meaning of the symbol.<sup>163</sup>

### *Revelation 7:2–8: Angel Seals the 144,000*

2 Then I saw another angel ascending from the east, having the seal of the living God. And he cried with a loud voice to the four angels to whom it was granted to harm the earth and the sea, 3 saying, “Do not harm the earth, the sea, or the trees till we have sealed the servants of our God on their foreheads.” 4 And I heard the number of those who were sealed. One hundred and forty-four thousand of all the tribes of the children of Israel were sealed: 5 of the tribe of Judah twelve thousand were sealed; of the tribe of Reuben twelve thousand were sealed; of the tribe of Gad

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163. Barnes, Albert, Barnes’ Notes on the New Testament. Accordance electronic ed. Altamonte Springs: Oak Tree Software, 2006.

twelve thousand were sealed; 6 of the tribe of Asher twelve thousand were sealed; of the tribe of Naphtali twelve thousand were sealed; of the tribe of Manasseh twelve thousand were sealed; 7 of the tribe of Simeon twelve thousand were sealed; of the tribe of Levi twelve thousand were sealed; of the tribe of Issachar twelve thousand were sealed; 8 of the tribe of Zebulun twelve thousand were sealed; of the tribe of Joseph twelve thousand were sealed; of the tribe of Benjamin twelve thousand were sealed. (Revelation 7:2–8 NKJV)

McGee offers a more literal understanding, as well as a defense against the secularist viewpoint:

After winds of judgment. God uses wind in judgment, and He controls the wind. Psalm 148:8 says, “Fire, and hail; snow, and vapours; stormy wind fulfilling his word.”

The winds of judgment are now to be held back. Nothing can move until God accomplishes His purpose. What is His purpose going to be? I do not think that God would permit any period to continue on this earth in which there were not some of the human family turning to God, because that is His purpose. I do not think He would continue to keep this world running; I think He would shut it down, turn it off, and speak it out of existence if there were not folk turning to Him. Therefore, this will be a period when multitudes will turn to Him.

A great company is going to be saved, and this reveals that these judgments will accomplish a purpose for God. It will cause multitudes to turn to Him in this period, and it will cause another multitude to turn against Him. It is just like the effect of the sun shining down on a piece of soft clay. What will the sun do to the clay? It will harden it. What would be the effect of that same sunlight upon wax? It would melt it. The sun has the opposite effect upon clay and wax. The judgments of God are the same. In our lives as believers, when trouble comes to us—I’ve discovered this in my own life—it will either draw us to God or drive us from Him. We need to be drawn to Him, and that is the reason the Lord lets some of us have sicknesses. He wants to draw us closer to Himself, and this is His way of doing it.

We cannot explain every little detail here in this chapter—at least, I cannot. I get a little irritated and provoked that I do not know as much as some of these so-called prophetic teachers claim to know today. They

seem to have a private line in to the Lord. They now know the date when the Lord is coming again, and not only that, they can actually interpret some of these passages in the most amazing fashion. Where the Scriptures say that the blood during the war of Armageddon will be up to the bridle bits, some of these fellows can tell you the type of blood it is! They irritate me because I don't seem to be able to get that kind of information—and then I wonder what the value of it is when you get it. To begin with, the church ought to understand clearly that we have been delivered from going through this period. The Lord Jesus said, “Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath [right now] everlasting [eternal] life, and shall not come into condemnation [judgment]; but is passed from death unto life” (John 5:24). The Great Tribulation is a judgment, and the church is not coming into it. He made it clear to the church of Philadelphia that He was going to deliver them from that hour. What hour? The hour that John is talking about right now. We need to let Scripture speak for itself.<sup>164</sup>

This event has nothing to do with a flat-earth view of any perspective. It displays the angelic power over, and manipulation of, the physical world and all its weather patterns. In this time, due to angelic interference, no wind will fall upon the earth for a period. This eerie calm will be noticeable to all who dwell upon the earth and important to the revelation and judgment of God.

### *Revelation 8:13: Angel Flies Through Heaven*

And I looked, and I heard an angel flying through the midst of heaven, saying with a loud voice, “Woe, woe, woe to the inhabitants of the earth, because of the remaining blasts of the trumpet of the three angels who are about to sound!” (Revelation 8:13 NKJV)

### *Revelation 14:6–7: Angel Flies through Heaven*

6 Then I saw another angel flying in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach to those who dwell on the earth—to every nation, tribe, tongue, and people— 7 saying with a loud voice, “Fear God

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164. McGee, J. Vernon, 1 Corinthians—Revelation. Vol. V of Thru the Bible. Accordance electronic ed. Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1983.

and give glory to Him, for the hour of His judgment has come; and worship Him who made heaven and earth, the sea and springs of water.” (Revelation 14:6–7 NKJV)

### *Revelation 14:8: Announcing the Fall of Babylon*

And another angel followed, saying, “Babylon is fallen, is fallen, that great city, because she has made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication.” (Revelation 14:8 NKJV)

### *Revelation 14:9–10: Declaration of Judgment on Those Who Take the Mark of the Beast*

9 Then a third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice, “If anyone worships the beast and his image, and receives his mark on his forehead or on his hand, 10 he himself shall also drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out full strength into the cup of His indignation. He shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels and in the presence of the Lamb. (Revelation 14:9–10 NKJV)

### *Revelation 14:14–16: Declaration of Judgment*

14 Then I looked, and behold, a white cloud, and on the cloud sat One like the Son of Man, having on His head a golden crown, and in His hand a sharp sickle. 15 And another angel came out of the temple, crying with a loud voice to Him who sat on the cloud, “Thrust in Your sickle and reap, for the time has come for You to reap, for the harvest of the earth is ripe.” 16 So He who sat on the cloud thrust in His sickle on the earth, and the earth was reaped. (Revelation 14:14–16 NKJV)

Each of these angelic announcements have great significance in the understanding of angelology and God’s greater plan of judgment. In each of them God uses angelic agency to announce the judgment of God. This is part of the period of the Tribulation when the Lord makes clear the rebellion of every person who rejects the clear revelation of Jesus Christ. These angelic announcements prove to show that those unsaved people who continually reject the revelation of God are not doing so without fair warning and clear

supernatural revelation about the eternal nature of the situation. Those who reject Christ in this time are standing against the clear declaration of God.

*Revelation 14:17–20: Angel Uses Sickle to Judge the Earth*

17 Then another angel came out of the temple which is in heaven, he also having a sharp sickle. 18 And another angel came out from the altar, who had power over fire, and he cried with a loud cry to him who had the sharp sickle, saying, “Thrust in your sharp sickle and gather the clusters of the vine of the earth, for her grapes are fully ripe.” 19 So the angel thrust his sickle into the earth and gathered the vine of the earth, and threw it into the great winepress of the wrath of God. 20 And the winepress was trampled outside the city, and blood came out of the winepress, up to the horses’ bridles, for one thousand six hundred furlongs. (Revelation 14:17–20 NKJV)

This judgment of God, by angelic agency is often used to argue for a mid-tribulation rapture. Green responds accurately:

14:14–20. The vision of a sharp sickle followed (v. 14). The view that the reaping in vv. 14–16 describes the midtribulation rapture ignores the context of the following verses, which is one of gathering for judgment (14:19–20), not a joyful gathering as the rapture would be, and should be rejected. John saw the son of man (Dn 7:13–14) ready to judge the nations (Jl 3:13). As an angel cried out his agreement, the judgment began, assisted by the angelic host. The great wine press (v. 19) describes the destructive fury of God the Father, as administered through His Messiah-Son. Here the vision took an unexpected turn. The judgment would take place outside the city of Jerusalem (v. 20) as rebellious armies were destroyed (19:15–19). The phrase up to the horses’ bridles describes the extent of splashing, as military steeds ran over the blood-saturated region. The first-century church could rejoice in the midst of its trials, for the forces of evil would ultimately be ruined. Modern believers may also have their understanding of Christ enhanced. He is not only a savior, but also a destroyer of His enemies.<sup>165</sup>

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165. Green, Daniel, Revelation. Edited by Michael Rydelnik and Michael Vanlaningham. The Moody Bible Commentary. Chicago: Moody Publishers, 2014.

This is part of the judgment of those who are in constant rejection of the Lord of glory and this angel is caused to bring about a judgement upon the earth in this time.

*Revelation 18:21: Angel Throws a Millstone into the Sea*

Then a mighty angel took up a stone like a great millstone and threw it into the sea, saying, “Thus with violence the great city Babylon shall be thrown down, and shall not be found anymore.” (Revelation 18:21 NKJV)

*Revelation 19:17–18: Angel Calls the Birds to the Feast*

17 Then I saw an angel standing in the sun; and he cried with a loud voice, saying to all the birds that fly in the midst of heaven, “Come and gather together for the supper of the great God, 18 that you may eat the flesh of kings, the flesh of captains, the flesh of mighty men, the flesh of horses and of those who sit on them, and the flesh of all people, free and slave, both small and great.” (Revelation 19:17–18 NKJV)

This angel is again providing revelation of God’s will upon the rebellious world as the time of the battle of Armageddon draws near. This angel is calling the physical birds of the earth together for a gory feast that is coming upon the earth when the Lord Jesus Christ returns in His glory and destroys all of His enemies with the sword of His mouth.

*Revelation 20:1–3: Angel Casts Satan to the Abyss*

1 Then I saw an angel coming down from heaven, having the key to the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. 2 He laid hold of the dragon, that serpent of old, who is the Devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years; 3 and he cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal on him, so that he should deceive the nations no more till the thousand years were finished. But after these things he must be released for a little while. (Revelation 20:1–3 NKJV)

This passage could be considered in the next section but is included here because the main actor is not the Devil, but rather the angel who is called upon by God to bind Satan and throw him into this abyss for the balance of the Messianic Kingdom that is to come. It shows that different angels have

different powers and abilities. This angel will be able to overpower Satan and overcome his will to be free by placing him in a place of dramatic captivity for most of the thousand-year period to come. This gives key information about the nature and power of Satan. When the Lord declares his time to be at end, another angel will place him in the custody which the Lord has declared showing that no creature can stand against the will of the Lord God Almighty.

## Satan and Demons and their Actions on the Earth

### *Revelation 9:1–10: Demonic Locusts*

1 Then the fifth angel sounded: And I saw a star fallen from heaven to the earth. To him was given the key to the bottomless pit. 2 And he opened the bottomless pit, and smoke arose out of the pit like the smoke of a great furnace. So the sun and the air were darkened because of the smoke of the pit. 3 Then out of the smoke locusts came upon the earth. And to them was given power, as the scorpions of the earth have power. 4 They were commanded not to harm the grass of the earth, or any green thing, or any tree, but only those men who do not have the seal of God on their foreheads. 5 And they were not given authority to kill them, but to torment them for five months. Their torment was like the torment of a scorpion when it strikes a man. 6 In those days men will seek death and will not find it; they will desire to die, and death will flee from them. 7 The shape of the locusts was like horses prepared for battle. On their heads were crowns of something like gold, and their faces were like the faces of men. 8 They had hair like women's hair, and their teeth were like lions' teeth. 9 And they had breastplates like breastplates of iron, and the sound of their wings was like the sound of chariots with many horses running into battle. 10 They had tails like scorpions, and there were stings in their tails. Their power was to hurt men five months. (Revelation 9:1–10 NKJV)

The judgment of the fifth trumpet is one of extreme circumstances, as the judgments of God commonly are. In this case a large demonic army comes upon the earth in the body of horrifying locust monsters. About these creatures there is, of course a variety of opinions. Beale comments:

Demonic-like beings portrayed as locusts arise from the smoking abyss and go out to the earth. “Authority was given to them” (ἐδόθη αὐταῖς ἐξουσία), which means that they were commissioned by someone to execute a task. Either God or Christ commissioned them, as we can see from use of the same authorization clause in 6:2–8; 8:2 and elsewhere in the Apocalypse (see further on 6:2–8 and esp. on 13:2–7). The model of the exodus plagues here confirms that God is the one who has absolute sovereignty over the plagues. The authority of the locusts is likened to the power that scorpions have over their prey (Pliny, *Natural History* 11.30.86–88, records a report of scorpions who were “poisonous like snakes” and had wings). The victims of these locusts are people on the earth, as the following verses reveal.

In exercising this power the locusts execute judgment, as has already been intimated by their association with “smoke” (see on 9:2). Could Isa. 14:29, 31 also stand in the background, since it strikingly portrays an enemy who will oppress and “demoralize” (see below on 9:5–6) unbelieving Philistia as “a flying serpent” associated with “smoke”? The harmful nature of the judgment in Rev. 9:3 is also expressed by the description of the beings here as “locusts” going out “into the earth.” They are destructive as a swarm of locusts devouring all vegetation in their path. The wording of this expression is based on Exod. 10:12 (“let the locust come up on the land/earth”), which introduces the locust plague against Egypt. Therefore, the fifth trumpet is partly modeled literarily and thematically on the exodus plagues, as were the preceding trumpets. Yet, as we have already seen, Wisdom’s interpretation of the Exodus plagues approximates that of John (see on 8:12). Likewise, Wis. 16:9 speaks of the Egyptians being “killed” by “the bitings of locusts and flies . . . neither was there found any remedy for their soul, because they were worthy to be punished by such things.” Although John stops short of saying that these locusts kill, he sees them as more directly harming unbelievers than the Exodus narrative states (see further on v 5; indeed, the demonic beings of the sixth trumpet do kill). And just as the frogs of the third exodus plague symbolize demons in Rev. 16:13, so here the locusts that physically plagued the Egyptians now represent demonic forces.<sup>166</sup>

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166. Beale, G. K., *The Book of Revelation: A Commentary on the Greek Text*. New International Greek Testament Commentary. Accordance electronic ed. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999.

Wiersbe, similarly, writes:

But it is what came out of the smoke that truly terrorized mankind: an army of demons, compared to locusts. The eighth plague in Egypt was a devastating swarm of locusts (Ex. 10:1–20). People who have never encountered these insects have little idea of the damage they can do. When God wanted to judge His people, He would sometimes send locusts to devour the harvests (Deut. 28:38, 42; Joel 2).

These are not literal locusts, because locusts do not have scorpion-like stings in their tails. These creatures do not devour the green vegetation; in fact, they are prohibited from doing so. This demonic army is given the assignment of tormenting all who have not been protected by the seal of God. The 144,000 men from the tribes of Israel would therefore escape this painful judgment (Rev. 7:1–8). In fact, it is likely that all who have trusted the Lord will be sealed in some special way and protected from torment.

The normal lifespan of the locust is about five months (May to September), and this is the length of time that the judgment will last. These demons will sting people and thus create such pain that their victims will actually want to die, but death will flee from them (Jer. 8:3).<sup>167</sup>

Adam Clarke argues that this is symbolic imagery used to describe an army of men:

Verse 7. The locusts were like unto horses. This description of the locusts appears to be taken from Joel ii. 4. The whole of this symbolical description of an overwhelming military force agrees very well with the troops of Mohammed. The Arabs are the most expert horsemen in the world: they live so much on horseback that the horse and his rider seem to make but one animal. The Romans also were eminent for their cavalry.

Crowns like gold. Not only alluding to their costly tiaras or turbans, but to the extent of their conquests and the multitude of powers which they subdued.

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167. Wiersbe, Warren W., *Be Victorious*. BE Series Commentary. Accordance electronic ed. Colorado Springs: David C. Cook, 2010.

Their faces were as the faces of men. That is, though locusts symbolically, they are really men.<sup>168</sup>

While Clarke's argument is interesting, it does not account for the specific nature of these creatures nor of the type of work which they are doing. These seem to be the rebellious angels that were imprisoned (2 Peter 2:4–6) and are being let loose for this short time to inflict painful judgments upon unbelievers. This is a very important reference because it also largely relates to the book of Enoch in the way in which fallen angels were imprisoned and judged. While it would be difficult to be overly dogmatic about this conclusion, it is also quite clearly the most likely of the presented options.

### *Revelation 9:11: Abaddon – King of the Demons*

And they had as king over them the angel of the bottomless pit, whose name in Hebrew is Abaddon, but in Greek he has the name Apollyon. (Revelation 9:11 NKJV)

In this reference a great fallen angel is mentioned. We see that this angel is the king of the other angels who are being released from the bottomless pit. His name is given in both Hebrew and Greek meaning the Destroyer. Robert L. Thomas presents the options:

Some prefer not to attempt a definitive identification of this king, relegating him to the sphere of symbolic delusion or imagination (Swete, Charles, Lenski, Mounce). Yet according to 9:6, the fulfillment of this vision will be much more than a delusion. The verse gives the leader a name (two in fact), calls him an angel, and assigns him a role as king of the demonic locusts. He cannot be disregarded as a delusion, not having actual existence.

Another idea has been that he is Satan, but the fact that Satan is the “prince of demons” (Matt. 12:24) does not necessarily make him kin over the demons confined in the abyss. His domain is the heavenly places, not the lower parts (cf. Eph. 6:12). Nowhere does Satan have a connection with the abyss until being cast into it later (cf. 20:1–3). Satan will become prominent later in the book (cf. Rev. 12 ff.), but it is unlikely that this

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168. Clarke, Adam, Adam Clarke's Commentary on the Whole Bible. Accordance electronic ed. Altamonte Springs: Oak Tree Software, 2004.

obscure reference introduces him this early (Beckwith, Mounce). When he does enter the sequence, his introduction is dramatic (cg. 12:3, 9) (Alford).

On the other hand, a significant case exists for identifying this king as an otherwise unknown angel who is in charge of the abyss. Satan has leaders and sub-leaders under his command (cf. Eph. 6:12), so this could easily be one of those (Swete). The angel's title assures that the demon locusts obey his orders (Swete). Demons were assigned specific responsibilities like this in the Jewish thought of the day. The highly developed angelology of Judaism had a special angel assigned to many spheres. Consequently, this is simply an angel whose name and responsibility in the hierarchy of evil the text discloses.<sup>169</sup>

The biblically sound options present very clearly that Apollyon is either Satan himself or a subordinate angel with a specific task of being the king over the angels in the pit. For the interests of this topic of discussion, either option gives keen insights into the nature of the demonic forces. Again, it is seen that they occupy space and time. They are not allowed to do as they please but must await the permission of God to open the bottomless pit and let them out. They are only able to sting unbelievers, meaning that their power is again limited only to harming those who do not belong to the Lord. These demons are subjected in the chain of command to a ruler or king. While this author believes that this authority is enough and description enough to identify this angel as Satan himself, there is great strength in the understanding of the various levels, abilities, and responsibilities in the demonic world.

### *Revelation 9:13–19: Angels Bound at the River Euphrates*

13 Then the sixth angel sounded: And I heard a voice from the four horns of the golden altar which is before God, 14 saying to the sixth angel who had the trumpet, "Release the four angels who are bound at the great river Euphrates." 15 So the four angels, who had been prepared for the hour and day and month and year, were released to kill a third of mankind. 16 Now the number of the army of the horsemen was two hundred million; I heard the number of them. 17 And thus I saw the horses in the vision:

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169. Thomas, Robert L. *Revelation 8–22: An Exegetical Commentary*. Moody Publishers. Chicago, IL 1995. p. 38

those who sat on them had breastplates of fiery red, hyacinth blue, and sulfur yellow; and the heads of the horses were like the heads of lions; and out of their mouths came fire, smoke, and brimstone. 18 By these three plagues a third of mankind was killed—by the fire and the smoke and the brimstone which came out of their mouths. 19 For their power is in their mouth and in their tails; for their tails are like serpents, having heads; and with them they do harm. (Revelation 9:13–19 NKJV)

These angels are referenced as being “bound.” This is an indicator that these are fallen angels or demons. There would be no need to bind these four angels were they elect, because if they were elect they would freely stand their post. However, this shows that there are geographical locations that serve as demonic prisons. It would be unwise to assume that there were more of these than the one referenced here, yet the fact that they happen is, again a very similar situation of the fallen angels in Enoch and Jubilees, as well as other Pseudepigraphical works.

The next interesting observation from this passage is the incredible number and appearance of this demonic army. An army of 200 million is an unthinkable large military force and is surely demonic in nature as well as in focus and desire. This shows the nearly innumerable company of demons who followed Satan in his rebellious fall. This brings a clearer picture to the massive number of fallen angels in play on the world scene at any given time.

### *Revelation 9:20: Demons Are Worshipped*

But the rest of mankind, who were not killed by these plagues, did not repent of the works of their hands, that they should not worship demons, and idols of gold, silver, brass, stone, and wood, which can neither see nor hear nor walk. (Revelation 9:20 NKJV)

This verse shows the clear goal and desire of demons to receive worship from men. It also shows that this worship of anything demonic or angelic is strictly forbidden by God who alone deserves the praise, glory, and honor of mankind.

*Revelation 12:1–17: Satan's Past, Present, and Future*

1 Now a great sign appeared in heaven: a woman clothed with the sun, with the moon under her feet, and on her head a garland of twelve stars. 2 Then being with child, she cried out in labor and in pain to give birth. 3 And another sign appeared in heaven: behold, a great, fiery red dragon having seven heads and ten horns, and seven diadems on his heads. 4 His tail drew a third of the stars of heaven and threw them to the earth. And the dragon stood before the woman who was ready to give birth, to devour her Child as soon as it was born. 5 She bore a male Child who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron. And her Child was caught up to God and His throne. 6 Then the woman fled into the wilderness, where she has a place prepared by God, that they should feed her there one thousand two hundred and sixty days. 7 And war broke out in heaven: Michael and his angels fought with the dragon; and the dragon and his angels fought, 8 but they did not prevail, nor was a place found for them in heaven any longer. 9 So the great dragon was cast out, that serpent of old, called the Devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world; he was cast to the earth, and his angels were cast out with him. 10 Then I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, "Now salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of His Christ have come, for the accuser of our brethren, who accused them before our God day and night, has been cast down. 11 And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, and they did not love their lives to the death. 12 Therefore rejoice, O heavens, and you who dwell in them! Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and the sea! For the devil has come down to you, having great wrath, because he knows that he has a short time." 13 Now when the dragon saw that he had been cast to the earth, he persecuted the woman who gave birth to the male Child. 14 But the woman was given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness to her place, where she is nourished for a time and times and half a time, from the presence of the serpent. 15 So the serpent spewed water out of his mouth like a flood after the woman, that he might cause her to be carried away by the flood. 16 But the earth helped the woman, and the earth opened its mouth and swallowed up the flood which the dragon had spewed out of his mouth. 17 And the dragon was enraged with the woman, and he went to make war with the rest of her offspring, who keep the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus Christ." (Revelation 12:1–17 NKJV)

This chapter is among the most important in the Bible when it comes to the topic of angelology. This is the most certain passage when it comes to the identification of the serpent from Genesis 3 as being possessed by Satan or some expression of him. It also gives information about the number of angels which he drew down – one third – and records the war that will take place in heaven. This passage confirms the revelation of Job 1, Isaiah 14, and Ezekiel 28 which teach that Satan has continuing access to heaven, as was also studied in the survey of the New Testament Epistles. This also shows the central desire of Satan to draw glory to himself and to rob God of His glory by attacking God’s chosen earthly people – Israel – as well as any who have trusted in Jesus Christ.

### *Revelation 16:13–16: Demons Perform Signs*

13 And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs coming out of the mouth of the dragon, out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet. 14 For they are spirits of demons, performing signs, which go out to the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty. 15 “Behold, I am coming as a thief. Blessed is he who watches, and keeps his garments, lest he walk naked and they see his shame.” 16 And they gathered them together to the place called in Hebrew, Armageddon. (Revelation 16:13–16 NKJV)

These three unclean spirits look like frogs, a creature thought to be repellent in every way. These demons come out of the mouth of the dragon, the Antichrist, and the False Prophet which shows they are completely in line with the Satanic program. They are expressions of his desires and they speak his words and do his works. These perform this work to summon leaders of the earth to the great final battle that is the campaign of Armageddon.

### *Revelation 20:7–10: Satan is Released – Deceives the Nations*

7 Now when the thousand years have expired, Satan will be released from his prison 8 and will go out to deceive the nations which are in the four corners of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle, whose number is as the sand of the sea. 9 They went up on the breadth of the earth and surrounded the camp of the saints and the beloved city. And fire came down from God out of heaven and devoured them. 10 The

devil, who deceived them, was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone where the beast and the false prophet are. And they will be tormented day and night forever and ever. (Revelation 20:7–10 NKJV)

Revelation 20 tells the reader about the final fate of Satan. It seems that the angels under his authority, while not explicitly mentioned, share in this judgment with him. During the Messianic Kingdom Satan is bound and thrown into the bottomless pit. He spends one-thousand years falling in that horrible and torturous state. He is then released for a short season and is apparently able to deceive the nations once again. He is then thrown into the lake of fire, a place of eternal torment, and spends the rest of eternity there with all those who rebelled against God.

## Conclusion

The study of angelology in the book of Revelation is a most interesting study by itself. It also gives us a clear picture of the angelic world. Largely, it builds on the central themes, events, and cast of angels that was clearly introduced from the very beginning of the Bible in Job and in Genesis. However, it would be impossible to deny that it shares many themes and a larger angelology from the Pseudepigraphical works. It would be untrue to claim that Revelation was influenced by the Pseudepigrapha as it was given by direct revelation from God. One would also have to be blind not to notice that the angelology of the Pseudepigrapha accurately portrays an angelology that is thoroughly biblical in its general perspective. Even if the accounts of the Pseudepigrapha were all fabrications (this author very much believes they were not), it would still be a meaningful portrayal of that well-known Jewish worldview regarding angels.

## Angelology in the Book of Revelation

Revelation				
Reference	Summary	Action	Elect or Fallen	Angel of the LORD
1:1	Angel signifies the Revelation	Revelation	Elect	?
1:20, 2:1, 8 Etc	Identification of these messengers as angels highly disputed	Representing Churches	Elect	no
4:6-11	Four living Creatures	Worship	Elect	no
5:2	Strong angel	Proclamation	Elect	no
5:11-13	Innumerable angels worships	Worship	Elect	no
6	Horsemen (angelic - see Zechariah)	Judgment	Fallen	no
6	Living Creatures Proclaiming "Come and See"	Declaring Judgment	Elect	no
7:1	Four angels holding the corners of the earth	Stopping the wind	Elect	no
7:2-8	Angel ascends - sealing 144,000	Sealing	Elect	no
7:11-12	Angels and living creatures worship	Worship	Elect	no
8:2-5	Angels given trumpets, another offers saint's prayers	Serving	Elect	no
8	Angels sound Trumpets	Judgment	Elect	no
8:13	Angel flies through Heaven declaring judgment	Judgment	Elect	no
9:1-11	Demonic locusts are freed and torture men	Torment	Fallen	no
9:11	Abaddon - king of the demons	Authority	Fallen	no
9:13-19	Angels bound at the river euphrates	Unbound	Fallen	no
9:20	Demons worshipped	Receiving Worship	Fallen	no
10:1-10	Mighty angels gives the book and reveals (which is sealed)	Revelation	Elect	no
11:1-3	Angel gives measurement instruction	Explanation	Elect	no
12:1-17	Satan's background, present, and future	Rebellion	Fallen	no
14:6	Angel flies through Heaven declaring Eternal Gospel	Declaring Good News	Elect	no
14:8	Declaration of Babylon's Judgment	Declaring Judgment	Elect	no
14:9-10	Declaration of judgment on those who take the mark	Declaring Judgment	Elect	no
14:14-16	Declaration of judgment	Declaring Judgment	Elect	no

Part III: Angelology in the New Testament

Revelation				
Reference	Summary	Action	Elect or Fallen	Angel of the LORD
14:17-20	Angel uses sickle to judge the earth	Judgment	Elect	no
15-16	Angels hold and pour bowls of God's wrath	Judgment	Elect	no
15:7	One of the Four living Creatures gives the Bowls to the angels	Serving	Elect	no
16:13-16	Unclean Spirits of demons perform signs	Deception	Fallen	no
17	Bowl angel explains things to John	Explanation	Elect	no
18:1-3	Angel declares the fall of Babylon	Declaring Judgment	Elect	no
18:21	Angel throws a millstone into the sea	Declaring Judgment	Elect	no
19:17	Angel calls birds to the judgment	Declaring Judgment	Elect	no
20:1-2	Angel casts Satan into the Abyss	Judgment	Both	no
20:7-10	Satan released Deceives the nations	Rebellion	Fallen	no
20:10	Satan cast into the lake of fire	Judgment	Fallen	no
21:9	Angel shows John the New Heavens and the New Earth	Explanation	Elect	no
21:12	Angels man the gates of New Jerusalem	Protection	Elect	no
21:17	Angel measures New Jerusalem	Explanation	Elect	no
22:8-9	Angel refuses worship	Humility	Elect	no
22:16	Jesus sends angel to testify (messenger)	Testify	Elect	no

## CHAPTER 16

# Conclusion

This book set out to accomplish several goals: first, to prove that the angelology of the Bible, and consequently the Jewish people, is unique and consistent from cover to cover. A fair reading of all the major angelic texts in Old and New Testaments show a thoroughly consistent thread of angelology from beginning to end. While different angels function in different ways and different times, the Bible presents a world in which angels are very important in the plan of God but not to be the subject of morbid human curiosity. This consistent and level picture of the unique and self-contained biblical angelology gives the reader great confidence in being able to evaluate other, non-scriptural documents in order to come to a fuller understanding of the various other documents that help us to understand the informed views of the Jewish world when it comes to these celestial beings.

A second goal of this book is to prove that while the New Testament gives new revelation regarding angels, it is not because of external influence from the Pseudepigrapha. The reason for the confusion among biblical scholars who hold a lower view of the Bible is that their assumptions are turned upside down. Rather than the similarity between the Pseudepigraphal angelology and New Testament angelology being due to NT writers being unduly influenced by these writings, it is far more reasonable to notice that the similarity is because both documents are written from a Jewish worldview that has an identical angelology. This is because both texts are deeply informed by the documents of the Old Testament.

The final goal is to prove that the Pseudepigrapha is an invaluable gift to every Bible interpreter because it gives vital information about the beliefs and worldview into which the Bible was given. It would be impossible to list the merits, advantages and insights that are available to the bible student who is willing to immerse himself in wealth of ancient literature to which we currently have access. Tragically, it has been largely overlooked in many Bible teaching churches. The reasons for this make sense. The power and authority is in the word of God, and no other book is even comparably important.

### Part III: Angelology in the New Testament

However, for the Bible scholar, these books are indispensable. Other orthodox Jewish writings like the Babylonian Talmud and the Targums have long been used to gain key insights into the Jewish perspectives and understanding of the word of God. The inclusion of these other first century writings is long overdue in our exploration and understanding of the biblical world.

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