

I have been approached for some clarity on “angels”. This was a new request and so here I shall be doing my best to provide an answer. If there are any mistakes, please let me know so that I can correct them.

Fluit-Fluit, my storie is uit. Nag Ou Grote! Hoop dit help.

Er. Theo Ph.D

In attempting to comment on the nature and purpose of angels I shall attempt to do so by means of a brief general summary about the creation, nature and purpose of angels in the past and in the present. This is an attempt to answer a question posed to me by a Christian group concerning an emerging trend which discards the Old and New Testament understanding and experience of and with angels.

In Hebrew the word “angel” means “messenger” or “envoy”. In Greek, the word “*angelos*”, may refer to either an angelic being or a human messenger such as appears in the seven letters addressed to the angels (or leaders) of the Churches in Asia Minor (Revelation 2-3). While another example is that of the Prophet Malachi, whose name in Hebrew means “My messenger” or “my angel”. Malachi as a prophet was the messenger of the Lord to Israel. However, when messengers do supernatural things, they are God’s messengers. The little angels with wings as depicted in stories and paintings can therefore be put aside as these do not do justice to our understanding of the role of angels (Flor, 2013).

Angels can be considered as heavenly beings created by God before the creation of the world (Job 1:6-7; 38:6-7-referred to as “sons of God”) and sometimes referred to as “spirits” or “spiritual beings” (Hebrews 1:4-5, 13-14; see also Flor, 2013). Man is created a little lower than angels (Psalms 8:4-5; see also Flor, 25 December 2015b). Angels worship and give glory and honour to God with endless praise (Is 6:1-3). Without bodily form, they have however on occasion been permitted to appear in the form of man (Genesis 19:1 and 5, 15; Acts 1:11). In the Bible they are described as personal beings created higher than mankind (Psalms 8:4-5; see also Luke 20:35-36). They are not glorified human beings (1Corinthians 6:3; Hebrews 1:4-5). They possess more than human knowledge but are still not all-knowing (Matthew 24:36; 1Peter 1: 12). They are stronger than men but not omnipotent (Psalm 103:20-21; 2 Peter 2:11; 2 Thessalonians 1:7). They are also not omnipresent (Daniel 10:12-14). Angels are enabled at times to perform miracles (Genesis 19:10-11) and in the New Testament it is revealed that there are a great multitude of angels in heaven (Matthew 26:53; Hebrews 2:22; Revelations 5:11). Two of the more important angels are Gabriel (Daniel 8:16; Luke 1:19, 26) and Michael (Daniel 10: 13; Jude 1: 9; Revelation 12:7).

Jesus Christ is the centre of the world of angels and will come with Him at His return (Matthew 24:30). They are His as Scripture teaches that all was created for Him, and through Him, as recorded in Colosians 1:16, “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.” As Jesus Christ is our saviour, who redeemed us all from sin, hell and death, their main role is that of divine messengers assisting the Lord Jesus in His plan of salvation. The holy angels stand in God’s presence and worship Him alone (Matthew 18:10; Hebrews 1:6; Revelation 5:11-12). They also minister to the saints (faithful believers) through giving assistance, protection and deliverance (Genesis 19:11 Acts 5:19). At times they also give encouragement (Acts 27:23-24) and interpret and carry out God’s will (Genesis 19:12-16; 2 Samuel 24:16).

They are also often referred to as guardian angels as they are assigned to watch over each and every believer and to represent them in heaven (Acts 12:15; Psalms 34:7; Matthew 18:10). Another text that can be seen as a prophesy of the coming Messiah, Jesus Christ, can also be seen today to refer to these guardian angels, “10 No evil shall befall you, Nor shall any plague come near your dwelling; 11 For He shall give His angels charge over you, To keep you in all your ways. 12 In their hands they shall bear you up, Lest you dash your foot against a stone” (Psalm 91:10-12). As Christian Apostolics, part of the Universal Apostolic Church, our belief in the protection of guardian angels (Flor, 2010) reflect the beliefs of the Catholic Apostolic Church (Armstrong, 1857) and are shared with other Orthodox (DECRMP, n.d) and Catholic (CCC #335) Christian traditions.

Angels played a large part in the life of Christ and appear both before and at his birth, while they also strengthen Him during the time of temptation after His baptism and in the Garden of Getsemane before his arrest. Angels are also present at His resurrection, rolled away the stone in front of the grave and confirmed his return at the Ascension. Scripture also teaches that he could have called upon his father for 12 legions of angels to deliver him from his enemies (Matthew 26:52). References to angels in Gospels can be found in Luke 1, Matthew 1:20-21, Luke 2:8-15, Matthew 2:13, Matthew 4:11, Luke 22:43, Matthew 28:2, Matthew 28:5-7, John 20:11-14, Acts (written by Luke) 1:10-11 and Matthew 25:31.

In Apostle Flor's teaching, on 23 August (2015a), the necessity of confessing Christ before man, becomes clear as Christ says that He will then confess the names of those who so before God and his angels (Luke 12:8). At the end, God will send his angels to gather the elect of God (Mark 13:26-27). In order to do so they need to know who these confessing witnesses to the name of Jesus Christ are. As they need to know these by name, they learn who they are when Jesus Christ confess their names before God and His angels in return for the faithful confessing his name before all. The importance of the place of angels in our lives are further emphasised in the following teachings of Apostle Flor (8 November 2015; 29 November 2015; 25 October 2015; 6 December 2015; 20 December, 2015; 17 January 2016; 10 November 2013, etc.).

I believe personally that whoever encountered in Scripture an angel, were sure that these were heavenly messengers and that the impact of the meeting with these angels drastically altered the lives of peoples, nations and history. Some general examples are Abraham, Jacob, Moses etc. In conclusion, it can be summarised in general that angels can be regarded as personal and immortal creatures with intelligence, who is in constant praise of God and whose chief role it is to deliver messages from the Divine to humanity in order to carry out His plan of salvation.

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