

## Chapter 21

### THE ANGELS

Man is not the only creature God created to worship and adore Him.

- The Bible teaches us that God also made angels.
- The angels may not be worshipped because they are creatures as we are creatures.
- The angels are heavenly beings who work for the Lord in heaven and here on earth.
  - The Hebrew word for *angel* is *melek*. Which means *messenger/minister/ambassador*.
  - The Greek word is *angelos* which means *messenger*.

In the New Testament there are 175 references to angels.

- 24 times in the Gospels
- 21 times in Acts
- 28 times in Paul's epistles
- In the book Revelation on just about every page

We know of different types of angels.

The *first group* is the *archangels*. We know *two* of them:

- Michael (Jude 1:9)
  - His name means *Who is like God?*
  - Michael always works where the Light and the darkness collide (Dan. 12:1).
  - He acts as field-general against the evil forces (Rev. 12:7; Jude 1:9).
- Gabriel (Luke 1:19)
  - His name means *Man of God*.
  - He is near to God and is used as the Lord's messenger (Dan. 8:16; 9:21).
  - In the New Testament he announces the birth of John the Baptist (Luke 1:19) and also that of the Lord Jesus (Luke 1:26).

The *second group* are the *cherubim* and the *seraphim*.

- Cherubim
  - It is they who are on the mercy seat (lid) of the ark.
  - Their job is primarily to protect God's property. For example; it is their task to guard Paradise (Gen. 3:24).
  - They are the carriers of God's throne (Ezek. 9:3; 10:1-22; 1:8).
  - God is escorted by them (Ps. 18:10).
- Seraphim
  - As far as we know, this group is primarily God's messengers.
  - Their name is derived from a word which means *burn*. Hence they burn away the unholiness of the prophet who may see YHWH.

The third group are called: thrones, dominions, principalities and powers.

- *NB*: Thus there are more spiritual beings than just the 'average angels', but we have no certainty about them, *e.g.* we also read of throne spirits.
- We read of this group in Colossians 1:16. The purpose is merely that the Lord thereby reveals that there are more beings in the spirit world than just the angels we come across in His revelation.

The last group are the *evil angels*

- They were all good and perfect angels but during the Fall in heaven they revolted against God (Rev. 12).
- According to Revelation twelve they comprise a third of the angels.

- They sinned of own volition because they were proud / haughty (Jude 1:6).
- The evil angels are well organised and attack the Lord's church (Eph. 6:12).

### The nature of the angels

Angels have bodies like humans have bodies, but theirs are spiritual bodies.

- We know that angels have wings.
  - The seraphim for example have six wings — with two they cover their eyes, they fly with two, and with two they cover their feet.
  - A variety exists amongst the cherubim — some have six wings like the seraphs, while some have four and another group has two wings each.
- The angels are intelligent beings.
  - They have understanding (Ps. 103:21; 1 Pet. 1:12).
  - They have strength (Ps. 103:20).
  - They have wisdom (2 Sam. 14:20).
  - They speak (Luke 1:10; 1 Cor. 13:1).
  - They can be happy (Luke 15:10).
  - They are inquisitive (1 Pet. 1:12).
  - They can pray (Heb. 1:6).

### Number of angels

- There are many. Daniel 7:10: *“thousand thousands ministered unto him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him.”*
- They don't marry and they don't multiply. They have a fixed number.

### The work of the angels

- They serve the Lord (Job 1:6).
- They extol (praise) night and day (Isa. 6:2-3; Rev. 15:8).
- They are witnesses to creation (Job 38:7).
- They guard the entrance to Paradise (Gen. 3:24).
- They appear to people in dreams: *“And he dreamed, and behold a ladder set up on the earth, and the top of it reached to heaven: and behold the angels of God ascending and descending on it.”* (Gen. 28:12).
- Joshua is supported by an angel (Josh. 5:13).
- In Gethsemane an angel strengthened the Lord (Luke 22:43).
- Paul is encouraged by an angel (Acts 27:23-24).
- The pestilence in Jerusalem is ended by an angel (2 Sam. 24:16-17).
- Peter is set free from jail by an angel.
- They protect children (Matt. 18:10).
- They combat Satan and the devils.
- They are messengers.
- They protect God's property (Ps. 91).
- They are present during worship services (Heb. 12:22).