

Angels

Written by K B Napier

Tuesday, 16 October 2012 19:09

In this article I wish to cut through the nonsense and present a straightforward biblical account of angels – who they are, what they do, and their association with human beings.

This is important in light of the invented claims made by some charismatic ‘ministries’, that teach angels are there at our beck and call. The latest angel who can be called to our side has been named ‘Breakthrough’!! Angels are NOT ours to call; they are sent out by God, Who determines their specific tasks. Also, we must call on God, in the name of Christ, and NOT angels! When we call upon angels, particularly those with specific ‘names, the most likely result is attention from demons, who are also angels, who will readily adopt the name and position of an angel from Heaven, in order to continue the deception.

Human ‘Angels’

The term ‘angel’ is not only used of angelic, spirit beings, but is also used of men sent by God to deliver a message (e.g. the Gospel). Thus, *aggelos* can refer to both spirit-beings as well as to human beings. The word can be linked, too, to the originator of the message – God, Satan or man. In Matthew 11:10, for example, John the Baptist is called “my messenger”, *aggelos*. There are other examples (such as apostles), but in this paper we will be talking about spirit beings.

Word Meaning of ‘Angel’ in Old Testament

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Mal’ak

This is a generic term for a messenger, representative, or ambassador. Its etymology is a word meaning to send out as a deputy. The messenger can be sent out by anybody, whether a king or a private individual, God, or Satan, for good or bad. The messenger can be a priest or prophet, or even a country, e.g. Israel as a teacher of Gentiles (Isaiah 42:19, which has direct relationship with Christ).

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Though the main meaning of 'angel;' is messenger, it is deemed to be an inadequate one for such a wide-ranging set of activities, which can be something other than a direct message. There were, then, both human and spiritual *mela?kîm*.

Human *mela?kîm*

In Genesis 32:2 we have an human messenger. Some bring good news (1 Samuel 6:21), threats (1 Kings 19:2), or requests (Numbers 20:14). But, many sent were courtiers who had any number of royal tasks to perform. For example, to spy (Joshua 6:25), or to kill (1 Samuel 19:11). David sent a messenger to summon Bathsheba (2 Samuel 11:4), others were diplomats (e.g. 1 Kings 20:2).

In particular, prophets were *mela?kîm* who represented Almighty God and gave a message. David himself was called an "angel/messenger of God". This kind of messenger can sometimes be viewed as weak (Isaiah 42:19). Overall, the use of these messengers or angels is entirely dictated by the Lord, not by men. No man can summon an angel in the angel's name, even if he had one. He may only call upon God in Christ, and God will decide if an angelic messenger is required... such an envoy being determined in eternity anyway, and not by sudden requests by men.

Spiritual *mela?kîm*

Though these mainly came from God they served the same broad range of services. Messages seem to be central (as in, say, Zechariah 1:9). Some were used to protect or guard (Genesis 24:40). They protected the Hebrews in the wilderness (Exodus 23:20). They even brought swift judgment (Psalm 78:49), delivered (Genesis 19:12-17) and protected (Psalm 91:11). Perhaps one of the greatest judgment as brought by the 'angel of death' that swept over Egypt prior to the exodus.

There can be no doubt that any angelic representative exudes God's glory and praise for Him. The Angel of Yahweh had similar functions as the others from Heaven, and also interceded with God for men (Zechariah 1:12). This latter task tells us that this angel must be God Himself, for no man or being can perform this task. The term appears to have been used of Christ before He came to earth. Throughout scripture 'angel' can use either the capital 'A' or the uncial 'a', though

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the same word is used.

Of course, there are also malevolent *mela?kîm*, sent by Satan. These do his bidding and are always evil, no matter what their function is, even if the work done appears to be good. They oppose Christ and the Trinity.

The same word is used throughout the Old Testament, except in Daniel, where the word *mal'ak* is used.

This is the Aramaic version of the Hebrew word of the same spelling. It is unusual to find the same word used for a specific function, but in this case it is a singular word simply because it is generic – that is, it refers to a ‘messenger’ only and not to his function. The function is usually added to qualify what kind of angelic work is undertaken.

Plural: ‘Angels’ (Old Testament)

Often, the plural word is the same as the singular word. But, there are also variants. For example, the plural, ‘angels’, in Psalm 8:5, is *'elohiym*, which might surprise some, because it can be used of God. However, it does not exclusively refer to God. It can also refer to rulers, judges, ‘gods’ and ‘goddesses’, and people who are godlike.

Then, in Psalm 68:17, we have *shin'an*. This is an odd word, meaning myriads or many thousands. Thus, the text “thousands of angels” literally means ‘thousands upon thousands upon thousands’. Determined to be different, we find another variant –

'abbiyr

, in Psalm 78:25. In this text the writer is speaking of the manna sent to feed the Hebrews, but the word means ‘of angels’ (or, food sent by angels, but as a direct response to the command of God for them to do so)

‘Angel’/s in the New Testament

Aggelos

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The generic meaning in the New Testament is essentially that of the Old Testament, and this is why it is used throughout the New Testament, always qualified by whatever function applied at the time. As with the Old Testament, angel (singular) and angels (plural) share the same spelling/word.

The plural in Greek is generally the same as for the singular. However, in Luke 20:36 we have the word *isaggelos*. This is slightly different, meaning, 'like the angels', or 'equal to the angels'.

Guardian Angels

There are no such beings as 'guardian angels' assigned to one person in scripture. There is probably confusion over this, for God, at times, will send an angel to protect a person or thing or country. But, He does not assign a specific angel to be the constant companion of Christians. It appears that many confuse the demonic, occult 'familiar' with godly angels. These demonic beings accompany individuals and often have specific names, but their aim is destructive and malevolent. Therefore, no Christian may call on an angel, named or unnamed. We may only call the Father, Who himself will determine the mode of response.

When believers call on God with a sincere query, complaint or plea, He may, if it is part of His will in eternity, send an angel to help, but this angel may be either a spirit being or a fellow human being, who is prompted by God to counsel the believer.

The "heavenly host", Luke 2:13

"And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying,"

An angel, *aggelos*, appeared to the shepherds in the hills. He gave them the momentous news, from God, that the Messiah had been born very near to where they were. After the angel had given the message, the shepherds were startled to see a "multitude of the heavenly host" in the

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sky, praising God. 'Multitude', *plethos*, means a great number, or even the whole number that live in Heaven. 'Host' is the word *stratia*

. This refers to an army or troops of angels. It can also refer to the heavenly bodies such as stars, but inanimate objects do not sing physical praises to God, nor could they fill the night sky, being far too numerous and big to do so!

We know that this host was from Heaven, *ouranios*. That is they came from Heaven or lived there. In this text they appeared before the shepherds as if to confirm what the singular angel had said. They were, then, angels who lived in *ouranos* with God.

Creation of Angels

Though "heavenly host" appears only once in scripture (in Luke), the word 'host' appears 192 times. From this we can see that the angels were probably created with the inanimate hosts – stars, etc. (Genesis 2:1). The word here is *tsaba'*. It is a complex masculine noun that includes the making of the whole of creation, the body of angels and the heavenly bodies such as the sun, moon, stars, and so on. Which meaning applies depends on the interpretation in any single context. As one of the meanings is a reference to angelic beings, we may safely assume that the angels were created in the six days period of general creation.

The word *tsaba'* has a usual meaning to do with fighting, but also a meaning that speaks of doing service - in this case, to God. Thus, the word is more to do with function than with the name 'angels' itself, which is why four uses are to do with the service of Levites in the Temple. There is also the implied meaning of going to war, and of committing to God's service continually. It is used to describe the armies of Heaven (angels) in, for example, 1 Kings 22:19.

In Joshua 5:13 we even have mention of an angelic commander of God's army, who gave instructions to defeat Jericho. We are told that unless God accompanies an army or battle, there will be failure (e.g. Psalm 44:9). Importantly, Israel is commanded never to worship the hosts of Heaven, the angels/heavenly bodies (Deuteronomy 4:19)... but this is what charismatics do, in essence, proving their occult and cultic nature.

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Indeed, anyone in Israel who worshipped angels were to be put to death (Deuteronomy 17:2-7), and I suggest to you that this false worship includes praising angels or calling for them by name, when God has not named them for us. This is probably because the only true head of angelic hosts is God, e.g. Yahweh of Hosts; supreme God and only living God amongst false, 'dead' gods of men. He alone can defeat the enemies of His people, for angels do not operate independently. We may only address prayer to God and not to angels (as in, say, Psalm 80:19).

Conclusions

From this we can see clearly that angels are created beings, and their only function is to serve the Lord. What they do is determined in eternity by God, and only He may tell them what to do. No man may pray to angels, but only to God, to Whom all requests, etc., must be made. These facts being so, and shown in scripture, the calling of angels for whatever reason is both false and heretical; it is a blasphemy. The giving of specific names to angels, where none are given in scripture, is also sinful, proving that the name given by men is false and invented.

We may not assume the presence of a personal 'guardian angel', but we may call upon God for help, etc., and He will determine what will be done in response; any response being already determined in eternity. And this response may, or may not, include the sending of an angel – a spirit being or a human being, whichever God deems to be appropriate.

Part Two: Examples of Heresy and Error Concerning Angels

Many books have been written about angels. So-called 'Christian' websites are devoted to angels. How can mankind issue so much information when the Bible says next to nothing about the subject? Obviously, anything not based on scripture must be a lie, a deception, or a folly!

One website, beliefnet.com has daily readings from your own, personal guardian angel. Another site has messages from the 'guardian angel' of your dead pet! (a 'multi-faith' website - code for "We will tell you what you want to hear because it brings us cash"!).

The New Age movement is "obsessed with angels" (creationrevolution.com). The fake-angel Moroni, invented by Joseph Smith, started off the false religion of Mormon. And, of course, Satan comes to us as an 'angel of light' to confuse and to mislead. He is supported by devious,

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evil, fallen angels (demons). Many publications, and even TV, are replete with angelic stories.

The infamous Elijah List recently sent out an encouragement to listen to the foolish, ignorant teachings of a man who promotes the idea of contacting the supposed angel named 'Breakthrough'.

This waste of time and effort by men was known to the Puritans, who wrote against the folly of praying to, and researching, angels, despite a lack of information in scripture (e.g. 'The Works of Thomas Brooks II', Banner of Truth Trust, 1980, p281).

In 'The Complete Works of Thomas Manton', Maranatha Publications, 1976, p324, we are reminded that Jesus did not call on the angels to help Him when Satan was trying to goad Him. However, they did come to minister to Him afterwards. Why? Because Christ could easily defeat Satan on His own, and any help given might suggest the angels had a hand in His victory.

One writer (of many), Diana Cooper, is well-known for books on angels... and unicorns, Lost City of Atlantis, fairies, 'Ascended Masters', and other mythical and semi-mythical, occult topics. She writes that angels are "beings of Light from the seventh dimension and higher". She says that the will of angels is not free but subject to God, but this is just her haphazard conclusion that mingles with many big errors. For example, she says the reason we do not see them is that they "vibrate at a frequency that is beyond our visual and auditory range"! Only some psychics can communicate with them. And this is precisely what the Elijah List is advocating!

Cooper, in her book on angels, teaches people how to 'attune to angels' in an (no, I'm not really laughing) 'Angel Correspondence Course'. When you have completed this barrage of garbage, you can then go on to the more advanced 'Keys to the Universe' course. This course will give you an even higher frequency to meet with even higher beings! The ONLY Being higher than an angel is God!

She teaches that every person has a guardian angel (regardless of their relationship to the Lord). These angels keep us to the 'divine blueprint' we "agreed on before we were born". But, these angels must 'step aside' when it comes to illness or disaster we agreed upon before our birth! Even death is our own choice. And to continue this travesty of information, she says "Your angels will help you to be safe, to find a parking space, to reach your destination at the correct

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time, to find something, to heal a relationship and many other things.” Exactly what many charismatics think!

She then enters deeper into absurdity by saying: “Your Guardian Angel is always by your side if you need him. He may leave you for a few moments if he is on a mission for you. For example, he may flash off to fetch some pure energy for you from a waterfall or the moon. He may go to speak to another Guardian Angel on your behalf to bring about a better relationship. When my grand-daughter was born I was in Ireland at a Master Teachers’ Meeting for the Diana Cooper School. I received a text to say that she had been safely born, then went into a meeting. I noticed that my Guardian Angel was not by my side and immediately he came whooshing back. I said telepathically, ‘Where have you been?’ and he responded, ‘Taking your love to the baby.’” In essence, the guardian angel is depicted as a kind of spiritual puppy-dog with a wagging tail, doing everything to please you!

Communication with angels takes telepathy, she says, and the more clairvoyant you become the more you will notice, such as angelic lights. The heresy becomes more gross the more she says. For example, she says we can call on the mighty archangel Michael every night and morning and ask him to “place his deep blue cloak of protection” around our shoulders. And we can even feel the angels doing this. She adds that he lives mainly in Banff, Canada. Dare I say that a mighty archangel has a bit more to do than wait for us in a log cabin to call on him every day and night?

Then what about the (mythical) archangel, Metatron? Cooper says she has a particular link to this one. This very sad and deluded woman says he is “in charge of the Stellar Gateway chakra of the planets and of individuals”. If you do not know what a chakra is, read my various articles on alternative medicine. Basically a chakra is a demonic power behind false cults such as Buddhism and Hinduism. Her list of archangels is long. There is even an archangel (Uriel) in charge of the solar plexus of each human being (also found in cultic beliefs in eastern healing)! All of this is demonic delusion.

Muslims believe in angels and use the same word as the Hebrews. Muslims believe these angels can give abundant wealth to individuals as well as cures for ill health. Belief in angels is mandatory in Islam and is one of their Articles of Faith, and comes next to belief in one God. Islam inserts an hierarchy of angels (as did some medieval theologians).

John Calvin said:

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“But the point on which the Scriptures specially insist is that which tends most to our comfort, and to the confirmation of our faith, namely, that angels are the ministers and dispensers of the divine bounty towards us. Accordingly, we are told how they watch for our safety, how they undertake our defence [sic], direct our path, and take heed that no evil befall us. There are whole passages which relate, in the first instance, to Christ, the Head of the Church, and after him to all believers. “He shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways. They shall bear thee up in their hands, lest thou dash thy foot against a stone.” Again, “The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them.” By these passages the Lord shows that the protection of those whom he has undertaken to defend he has delegated to his angels.” (Quoted from Calvin’s Institutes, 1.14.6, CCEL version).

However, we should not make more of this than was intended. I have no doubt that God’s angels are around us generally, but we ought not make Calvin’s words suggest that each of us has his own angel. The first example of angelic presence is only about Christ being tempted by Satan. The second example is simply saying that God protects those who are His, and we can be protected by His messengers/angels, when and if God requires it. That is, we should not move beyond what scripture actually tells us on the matter.

Just as the Heavenly Host accompanied the angel who gave the good news to the shepherds, so they will accompany Christ on His return in the skies and, though normally unseen, they will be seen by everyone on earth, either to their joy or consternation (for by then it is too late).

Let us not doubt that angels exist, both good and evil. Heavenly angels are constantly before God and do His bidding, and none of us really knows to what extent God sends angels to help or protect human beings who belong to Him. Thus, we should have an healthy regard for angels, and a deep and abiding suspicion of evil angels, demons, whose one and only task is to deceive and harm humans... and this delusion can come by having an inordinate interest in angels.

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