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**THE DOCTRINE OF ANGELS**

**Introduction:** Throughout man’s history there has existed in the mind of men a probing question pertaining to our existence, ARE WE THE ONLY INTELLIGENT BEING IN THE UNIVERSE, AND IS LIFE AS WE KNOW IT ONLY ON PLANET EARTH?

In search of answers men have probed the depths of the sea, unearthed the fossils of the past, searched the skies and soared into space. Most recently attempts at “close encounters of that scientific kind” (extraterrestrial life) have been attempted with radio waves, signals sent out in hopes of being received and then returned. Is there someone or something out there? Friend or foe, scientists don’t know.

While they search for what they don’t know, where they don’t know we wonder why they don’t go to what we do know, the Bible1.

**Q.** Is there intelligent life in the Universe? Are there living beings out there somewhere? Are they friend or foe? Can we know?

**A.** Yes, there are other intelligent, living beings out there, their civilization is older than ours. Will we be able to communicate with them? Yes, some people already have. Who are these cosmic creatures? Angels2.

We may be talking about close encounters of another kind, but not the first time. The earliest recorded encounter is carved in the Stela Stone of UR-NAMMU from 2250 B.C.

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The ancient Babylonian Talmud reveals Hebrew tradition of four such angelic beings: 1. Gabriel3, 2. Michael4, 3. Raphael5, and 4. Uriel6.

The non-canonical Apocryphal book of Tobit tells of the angel Raphael saving a boy being eaten by a giant fish, he tells the boy to use the heart and liver of the fish to fend off demons and the gall against disease…

The Mohammedans believe in angels, they believe two are assigned to every person, one on the right (records good deeds) and one on the left (records bad deeds). Watch out for southpaws! (And I thought Disney made that up).

According to Muslim legend, when Mohammed was transported to the seventh Heaven he saw an angel there with 70,000 heads, each head has 70,000 mouths, each mouth having 70,000 tongues, each tongue speaking 70,000 languages, all singing praises to Allah, their god. (This happens every day, and a new angel appears, never to return, and this will continue till the Day of Judgment.)

Do the math? Each angel spoke over 24 quintillion languages… from 620 B.C at 365 days per year=2021 (that’s 1400 years x 365 days) every day a new angel, 70,000 heads, mouths, tongues, enough of that! Men can imagine anything they can imagine, but according to Scripture, angels exist7.

1. **THE EXISTENCE OF ANGELS:** Angels are mentioned in 348 books of the Bible, 2739 times, 10810 in the Old Testament, 165 in the New Testament. (Ps. 68:17, 104:4, 148:2; Heb. 12:22)

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1. **THE ORIGIN OF ANGELS:**
2. **The Means of their Origin:** They were made, created11, like everything else in the Universe, even beyond, they are made by God, and by Him all things consist. (Gen. 1:1-2, 2:1; Neh. 9:6; Jn. 1:1-3; Eph. 3:9; Col. 1:16)
3. **The Method of their Origin:** The angels, like men, were created by a special act of God12. They did not evolve from something to something, they are angelic beings. (Ps. 148:2, 5) They are created individually13 and independently14, as “Sons of God”. (Gen. 6:2, 4; Job 1:6, 2:1)

**NOTE:** The word “Son” seems to indicate a direct creation of God, as Adam is called the “Son of God” (Lk. 3:38). Believers are also so titled when we are “born again” into the family of God as Sons of God (Jn. 3:3; Gal. 3:26; Eph. 2:8-10, 4:24; I Jn. 3:12). There is no record of God creating more angels since those he originally created, and they cannot pro-create (Mt. 22:30). In (Lk. 20:36) we’re told they cannot die, so they cannot increase15 or decrease16, so they are not a race, but a particular species.

1. **The Measure of their Origin:** (Job 38:1, 4, 7) The time of their origin is prior17 to the creation of the world.
2. **The Ministry of their Origin:** For what purpose are angels created? (Col. 1:16; Heb. 1:6; Rev. 4:11) confirm they are to please God, fulfill God’s plan and purpose, and to glorify God18 in the midst of all things.

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1. **THE NATURE OF ANGELS:** As we have already seen, they are specially created beings19, they have several characteristics that describe and define them.
2. **Angels are Spirit Beings:** (Ps 104:4; Heb. 1:7, 14) Our Lord tells us that spirit beings do not possess flesh and bone20 (Lk. 24:39) yet they manifest bodily form in every appearance, posing the question “is there something unique in angels that enables them to manifest a body or can they have a physical body?” (I Cor. 15:40)

**NOTE:** On two occasions angels are described as partaking of physical food (Gen. 18:1-8, 19:1-3) on another occasion as applying physical force (Acts 12:7).

1. **Angels are Individual Beings:** They are present on several occasions in scripture yet not seen21, whether they are in another dimension (three dimensional-fourth dimensional) or simply choosing to avoid recognition not wanting to be falsely worshipped. (Rom. 1:18-32; Col. 2:18; Rev. 19:10, 22:9)
2. **Angels are Innumerable:** God knows how many there are, but we don’t. They are said to be “as the stars of heaven”22. (Job 38:7; Ps. 148:1-3; Rev. 9:1-2, 12:3, 4, 7‑9). The stats of heaven are in the trillions. (Mk. 5:9). Satan gave over 6000 to torment one poor lunatic. (Ps. 68:17; Dan. 7:9-10; Mt. 26:53; Heb. 12:22; Rev. 5:11)

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1. **Angels have Personality:** Similar in some sense to Human beings in that they possess three things essential to individual personality:
2. Intellect23: (Dan. 9:21-22, 10:14; Rev. 19:10, 22:8-9)
3. Free Will-Volition24: (Is. 14:12-15; Jude 6)
4. Emotion-Feeling25: (Job 38:7; Lk. 2:13 Joy; I Pt. 1:12 Desire). They can think, reason, choose, feel, realize…
5. **Angels are Superior to Humans:** (Ps. 8:4-5; Heb. 2:6, 11)
6. Strength26: (Ps. 103:20; II Thess. 1:7; II Pt. 2:11) unlimited by physical being
7. Intelligence27: (Dan. 9:21-22, 10:14) unaffected by curse, access to eternal things
8. Swifter Movements28: (Rev. 14:6) not hindered by the law of gravity “space-time”
9. **Angels are Inferior to God:**
10. They are not OMNIPRESENT29; (Dan. 9:21, 10:12) summoned30.
11. They are not OMNIPOTENT31; (Dan. 10:13; Jude 9) hindered32.
12. They are not OMNISCIENT33; (Mt. 24:36) desire to look into, unknown34

Angels like men are created35 by God, after His image or likeness, this requires two things, 1) personality36 – identity, traits that allow for recognition, fellowship, association, unity and 2. Holiness37 (Heb. 2:14) without it God is unapproachable, yet the angels gather around the throne where Holiness is the theme of the hour. The things God desires in our fellowship.

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1. **THE MORAL CLASSIFICATION OF ANGELS:** From their creation the company of angelic beings were to manifest Holiness unto the Lord and obedience to God’s word. As Adam and Eve were faultless at first, but exercising volitional will and the wrong emotions (jealousy, envy, pride, covetousness, lust) the confusion of intellect, rationalization38, recognition39, and responsibility40.

The leader? Lucifer41, heavens highest angel, deceived himself and he deceived other angels (Is. 14:12-15; Ez. 28:11‑19). It is suggested in (Rev. 12:3-4) that Lucifer persuaded one third42 of the heavens angelic host to defect, to turn away from God and follow Lucifer, the first fallen angel.

**NOTE**: The division, **the faithful** who follow after God are called Holy43 and elect44 angels (Mk. 8:38; I Tim. 5:21), **the fallen** who follow after Lucifer are known as the devils angels45 (Mt. 25:41; Rev. 12:9) demons46.

1. **THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE FAITHFUL ANGELS:** According to scripture, there are positions of rank47 and assigned responsibility48 as well as diversity in duties. There are Archangels, Cherubim, and Seraphim, the living creatures in the throne room, ruling angels, and guardian angels.
2. **Archangels**49 The highest rank, designated by their roles; we have two archangels presented in Scripture who correctly occupy this position.

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1. **Michael**50**:** His name means “who is like God”, and his ministry magnifies the God of all creation and His majesty, His sovereignty and authority. He is the Avenging51 angel mentioned four times in scripture.
   1. Michael assists a lesser ranked angel get through a demonic host hindering deliverance of Daniels answered prayer. (Dan. 10:13, 21) delay is not denial.
   2. Michael will standup for Israel during the Tribulation (Dan. 12:1).
   3. Michael disputes the devil concerning the dead body of Moses (Jude 9).
   4. Michael fights against the devil-dragon in the heavens-celestial (Rev. 12:7).

**NOTE**: Characteristically (Acts 12:23) is considered the ministry of Michael, the avenging angel.

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1. **Gabriel**52**:** His name means “The mighty one of God”, He is the announcing53 angel, delivering the authorized words of God. God’s appointed messenger. In (Daniel 8:16) he reveals the vision of the Ram and the Goat to Daniel. In (Dan 9:21) he explains the seventy weeks to him. He predicts John’s birth to Zacharias (Lk. 1:19) and in (v:26) the birth of Jesus. He assures Joseph of Mary’s purity and God’s provision for Christ (Mt. 1:20) and he warns Joseph of Herod’s plot (Mt. 2:13) and in (v:19) about Herod’s death and their safe return.

**NOTE:** Several Bible teachers identify Gabriel’s characteristics in light of the various appearances of the “Angel of God54,” if so then on at least 10 occasions we see his ministry performed in the remainder of the New Testament.

1. (Lk. 2:9) announcing the birth of Christ to the shepherds.
2. (Lk. 22:43) answering Christ’s prayer, anointing Him with strength in the Garden.
3. (Mt. 28:2) He leads the angels in rolling back the stone, announcing His resurrection.
4. (Acts 5:19) He delivers the disciples from prison, shows them their escape.
5. (Acts 8:26) He delivers God’s instructions to Philip and takes him to the Eunuch.
6. (Acts 10:13) He instructs Cornelius concerning Peter.

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1. (Acts 12:7) He assists Peter in escaping the prison.
2. (Acts 27:23) He assures Paul on the sinking ship.
3. (I Thess. 4:16) He announces the Rapture with the sounding of the trumpet.

The characteristics of Gabriel are delivering the word of the Lord55, as for Michael it is the sword of the Lord56, both to the glory of God, perhaps Michael is in mind for number ten (he executes Herod for blasphemy (Acts 12:23))

**NOTE:** There is another category of angels that will reveal yet another characteristic, the anointed angel57. This angel had a special appointed purpose, to reflect the glory of God revealed on the throne. We will study this characteristic in detail in the doctrine of Satan.

1. **The Cherubim**58**:** (Gen. 3:24; Ex. 25:18-20, Ez. 1:4-28, 10:1-22) we can best define their duties59 by their description, they were designed60 by God for specific ministry.
2. **The Description of Cherubim:**
   1. Each has four faces, the front is the face of a man, on the right is a lion, on the left is an ox, and in the back, it is an eagle.

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* 1. Each has two pair of wings, one out from the middle of the back for flying, another pair from the sides that fold over the front to cover their nakedness before God. Their wings sound as rushing water. They have legs like men, and feet like the cloven hooves of a calf which shine as brass. They have four human hands under the four wings. They move in groups of four, each of them touching the wings of two others, in a square, all sides covered, so they move without turning their bodies, circular motion yet all sides covered at all times. Appearing almost motionless.

1. **The Duties of Cherubim:** We have several duties described, but all they were designated to do is not disclosed, but they are very distinct in their design.
   1. (Gen. 3:24) They were dispatched to the garden to keep Adam & Eve from having access to the tree of life after the fall61 lest they eat of it and live forever in sin.
   2. (Ex. 25:18-20, Heb. 9:5) Two golden casted cherubim were mounted atop the Ark of the Covenant62 at God’s command, facing one another, wings pointing to one another and covering.
   3. (Ex. 1:5, 10:1) They were manifest before Ezekiel the prophet as four living creatures63, each bearing some likeness to a man.

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* 1. (Is. 14:12; Ez. 28:14) Prior to his fall, Satan (Lucifer) was the Chief Cherub angel64, “the anointed cherub that covereth.”

1. **The Seraphim**65**:** (Is. 6:1-7) “Burning ones” a glow of glory, more than a description it is a declaration of their devotion to God. These Holy Angels66 are Heaven’s hosts67. In (Is. 6:1) Isaiah is pointed to “the most High God” by these Holy ones, much like Daniel in (Dan. 4:17).
2. **The Description of the Seraphim:**
   1. They have six wings, 2 to cover their faces, 2 to cover their feet, and 2 to fly.
   2. They sound out praise and majesty of the most high (Is 6:3) shakes the temple…
   3. They were revealed to Isaiah in a vision, their holiness convicts Isaiah of his sinfulness.
   4. They minister to Isaiah (Is. 6:7), tongs, burning coal, touched his lips, healed.
3. **The Duties of the Seraphim:** In each appearance they are presenting and promoting the Holiness of God68 the most high, they proclaim His glory.

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1. **The Living Creatures**69: (Rev. 4:6-9, 5:8, 6:1, 3, 5, 7) It seems these angelic beings, with their similarities, are of the same order70 as the Cherubim71 and Seraphim72, yet their differences are uniquely distinct making their design significant to their duties. They’re designated to a particular place, and number, four only, around the throne in heaven.

**NOTE:** Some have suggested these angels were appointed to this place73 and this position74 following the fall of Lucifer who once held this place and this position. The privilege of such a position is paramount and the responsibilities for such a position in light of past failures must be as well. This appears to be an exalted position among the order of “living creatures75” from (Gen. 3:24, Ex. 25:18-20; Ez. 1:4-28, 10:1-22; Is. 6:1-7)

1. **The Description of the Angels:** John’s vision of the four living creatures76 standing before the shinning crystal sea before the throne of God in heaven. They are covered with eyes, to and fro, or front to back, each of the four has a single, different face, even as the Cherubim have with four faces. The first a lion77, the second an ox78, the third a man79 and the fourth an eagle80, and each had six wings, whereas the Cherubim have four wings.
2. **The Duties of the Angels:** Encompassing the single passage that reveals this distinct group we discover in (Rev. 4:6-9, 5:8, 6:1, 3, 5, 7):
3. (Rev. 4:8) They proclaim God’s praise continually day and night.

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1. (Rev 6:1-7) They each proclaim one of the four Great Tribulation Judgments from the seven sealed books.
2. (Matt. 2:1-6) They present the fourfold Gospel of Christ. Matthew presents the Lion of Judah, Mark, the suffering servant, is seen as a lowly ox, Luke presents the perfect man, while John presents Him as the mighty godlike eagle. These living creations were created by God for specific ministry as are all of those in the angelic host.
3. **The Ruling Angels**81: (Eph. 1:21, 3:10; Col. 1:16, 2:10; I Pt. 3:22) There are a great host of angels assigned to so many purposes, places, and possessions. There are six of these given in Scripture:
   * + 1. Principalities82 4. Authorities85
       2. Powers83 5. Dominions86
       3. Thrones84 6. Might87

Perhaps designation of position, from a private to a General? Perhaps?

1. **The Guardian Angels**88: (Mt. 18:10; Heb. 1:14) It appears from Scripture that angels are assigned to individuals89 (even from youth). It seems from (Mt. 18:10) they are interceding for them90 at the throne of grace, and Paul points us to “ministering angels” or “spirits”, sent forth (with purpose) to minister to believers! To aid? To intercede? To protect? To guide and to guard? It is not unreasonable to think so.

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**NOTE:** We have given a detailed description of these “special” designated angels and their duties, but there is yet a number of Biblical references to a whole host more.

1. Ministers91 Those angels who prefer spiritual service (Ps. 103:20-21, 104:4)
2. Host92 Those who serve as soldiers (Gen. 32:1, 2; Joshua 5:14; I Sam. 17:45; Ps. 89:8)
3. Chariots93 The swift, speed of angels (II Kings 6:16-17; Ps. 68:17; Zech. 6:5)
4. Watchers94 Supervisors, overseer’s, observers (Dan. 4:13, 17)
5. Sons of the Mighty95 The angels of heaven as a whole – the sons of the mighty (Ps. 29:1, 89:6)

**NOTE:** The O.T refers to angels as “sons of God” and men as “servants of God”, this is reversed in the N.T, Angels are servants and men are sons. In Hebrews we see the superiority of men/sons of God and the inferiority of angels/servants of God. Opposite of the O.T. L.S Chafer

1. Holy Ones96 This is the state of their being, separate from sin, and sanctified unto God (Ps. 89:7; Dan. 8:13; Zech. 14:5)
2. Stars97 As the heaven, their brightness, their innumerable number (Job 38:7; Ps. 148:2-3; Rev. 12:3-4) reflecting the light of God’s glory.

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1. **THE MINISTRY OF ANGELS:** They minister between two realms, one in Heaven98 the other on earth99, what do they do?

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| **In Heaven** | **On Earth** |
| * They continually, visibly and audibly worship God (I Kings 22:19; Ps. 29:1-2; Is. 6:3; Rev. 4:8, 19:4) | * Concerning the saved (Heb. 1:14; Rev. 22:16) they inform, instruct and influence the will of God, by the word of God. |
| * They watch over God’s people – observe – oversee (Lk. 12:8-9, 15:10; I Cor. 4:9, 11:10; I Tim. 5:21) | * There are many such examples:   Daniel (Dan. 7:16; 10:5-11)  Zechariah (Zech. 1:9-19)  Zacharias (Lk. 1:11-17)  Mary (Lk. 1:26-33)  Joseph (Mt. 1:20, 2:13, 19)  The Shepherds (Lk. 2:9-12)  Women/Tomb (Lk. 24:4-7)  The Apostles (Acts 1:10-11)  Phillip (Acts 8:26)  Cornelius (Acts 10:3-6)  John the Revelator (Rev. 17:1, 7; 21:9) |
| * They desire to know God’s plan for man (Daniel 12:5-6) | * They protect God’s people:   Lot from the Sodomites (Gen. 9:10-11)  Elisha from the Syrians (II Kings. 6:15-17) |
| * They rejoice in the mighty works of God (Job 38:7; Rev. 4:11) in creation (I Tim. 3:16; Rev. 5:11-12) in redemption | * They comfort God’s people (I Kings 19:5; Acts 27:24) |
| * They do always do the will of the father/creator, sustainer (Gen. 28:12; Ps. 103:20; Dan. 7:10) | * They deliver God’s people (Acts 5:19, 12:7) |
| * They are witnesses of God’s wrath and judgment, of His rule over all the earth. (Rev. 14:10) | * They assist the believer at death (Lk. 16:22) |

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**The angels have a responsibility to the unbelievers on earth also:**

* They judged the Egyptians (Ex. 12:13, 23)
* They judged the Sodomites (Gen. 19:13)
* They judged the Assyrians (II Kings. 19:35)
* They judged Herod (Acts 12:23)

**They will judge the whole earth in the tribulation:**

* Hold back the four winds of Heaven (Rev. 7:1)
* Pronounce seven trumpet judgement (Rev. 8:2)
* Cast Satan & demons out of Heaven (Rev. 12:7-8)
* Announce eternal Hell awaiting them (Rev. 14:10)
* Predict-announce the fall of Babylon (Rev. 14:8, Rev. 18:1-2)
* Pour out the seven vial judgments (Rev. 15:1)
* Announce Armageddon (Rev. 19:17)
* Accompany Christ – second coming (II Thess. 1:7-8)
* Gather unsaved – damned for Hell (Mt. 13:39-43)
* Bind Satan in the bottomless pit (Rev. 20:1)

**The angels have a responsibility to Israel:**

* They fought for Israel (Judges 5:20)
* They gave the law to Israel (Deut. 33:2; Acts 7:53)
* They seal the 144,000 Israelites (Rev. 7:1-3)
* They regather faithful Israel (Mt. 24:31)

**They have a responsibility to the Saviour (Heb. 1:6):**

* They were made by Him and for Him (Col. 1:17)
* They predicted Christ’s birth (Mt. 1:20-21; Lk. 1:31)
* They announced Christ’s birth (Lk. 2:9-13)
* They provided protection for the Saviour (Ps. 91:11, Mt. 2:13)
* They ministered to Him in the wilderness (Mt. 4:11)
* They ministered to Him in the garden (Lk. 22:43)
* They rolled the stone away from the tomb (Mt. 28:2)
* They announced His resurrection (Mt. 28:6)
* They predicted His second coming (Acts 1:10-11)
* They will accompany Him at His return (II Thess. 1:7-8)
* They are subject to the Saviour day and night (I Pt. 3:22)

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| Notes |
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1. **THEIR DESTINY:** What does eternity hold for these angels?

* They will spend eternity in the New Jerusalem living with100 God’s elect (Heb. 12:22-23; Rev. 22:10-12).
* They will spend eternity in the New Jerusalem learning from101 God’s elect (Eph. 2:4-7, 3:10-11). Perhaps the primary reason for this extended dispensation of the grace of God is stated here by the Apostle Paul, for the benefit of the angels. Grace extended to sinners to bring salvation, forgiveness granted at great expense, not to the sinner, but to their Saviour. What a crowd, a host of angels hearing so many stories all for God’s glory.