

# TERMS USED IN CONNECTION WITH ANGELS

## A. The word 'angel'...

1. The Hebrew word *malak* (found 103 times in the OT) simply means "messenger"
  - a. It can refer to a human messenger - 1Ki 19:2
    - 1) It is applied to the prophet Haggai - Hag 1:13
    - 2) It is applied to a priest - Mal 2:7
    - 3) It is applied to both John the Baptist and Jesus in prophecy - Mal 3:1
  - b. It can refer to a divine messenger - Gen 28:12
    - 1) Supernatural or heavenly beings sent as messengers to men
    - 2) Agents who carry out the will of God
2. The Greek word *angelos* likewise means "messenger"
  - a. The word occurs 175 times in the NT / Of men, it is used only 6 times in the NT

## B. Other terms applied to 'angels'...

1. **Sons of God** - God's sons by virtue of His creation - cf. Job 1:6; 38:7
2. **Holy ones** - suggesting they belong to God, 'set apart' for His purposes - Ps 89:5,7
3. **Watcher, watchers** - likely referring to angels - cf. Dan 4:13, 17,23
4. **Host** - denoting the armies of heaven, which likely included angels - cf. 1Sa 17:45
5. **Archangel** - used twice, once in connection with Michael - 1 Th 4:16; Jude 9
6. **Prince, chief princes, great prince** - used in the book of Daniel - Dan 10:13,21; 12:1
7. Paul used terms that may refer to angels - cf. Col 1:16; Ep 1:21; 3:10
  - a. **Principalities** (archai)
  - b. **Powers** (exousiai)
  - c. **Thrones** (thronoi)
  - d. **Dominions** (kyriotetes)
  - e. **Powers** (dynamesis)

# DESCRIPTIONS OF ANGELS

## A. Their nature and attributes...

1. They are spirit beings
  - a. Called "spirits", suggesting they do not have corporeal bodies - He 1:14
  - b. Though they did reveal themselves at times in the form of humans - Gen 18:3
  - c. They do not function as human beings in such things as marriage - Mk 12:25
  - d. They are not subject to death - Lk 20:36
2. They are created beings
  - a. They are part of the creation that is to praise Jehovah - Ps 148:1-5
  - b. They were created by Christ, among all other things - Co 1:16
3. They are innumerable
  - a. An innumerable company - He 12:22
  - b. John's descriptions suggests their number is countless - Re 5:11
4. They are a higher order than man
  - a. Man was created lower than the angels - He 2:6-7

- b. Angels are not capable of death - Lk 20:36
  - c. They have greater wisdom, though limited - 2Sa 14:20; Mt 24:36
  - d. They have greater power, though it too is limited - Mt 28:2; Dan 10:13
5. They always appeared as men
- a. Never as women or children, always clothed
  - b. Other than Cherubim and Seraphim> (whose classification as angels is suspect), they never have wings - though cf. Re 8:13; 14:6
  - c. Many times they were so disguised as men they were not first identified as angels - Gen 18:1-2; 19:1; He 13:2

## **B. Classifications...**

### **1. The archangel, the "great prince"**

- a. Michael is called the archangel - Jude 9; cf. 1Th 4:16
- b. Michael is called the "great prince", who watched over Israel - Dan 12:1; cf. 10:21
- c. Michael is mentioned in Re 12:7

### **2. The chief princes**

- a. Of whom Michael was one - Dan 10:13
- b. Some would include Gabriel in this classification
  - 1) The angel sent to explain visions to Daniel - Dan 8:16;9:21
  - 2) Who also made announcements to Zacharias and Mary - Lk1:19,26

### **3. The princes**

- a. The term applied to angels in the book of Daniel - e.g., Dan 10:13,21
- b. Also to what appear to be evil angelic forces - cf. Dan 10: 13,20-21

### **4. The Angel of the Lord**

- a. An angel who seems to speak as the Lord Himself - e.g., Judg 2:1; Gen 16:10-13
- b. Leading some to wonder if this was the pre-incarnate Christ

### **5. Cherubim?**

- a. Thought by some to be an order or class of angels, though others hold them to be a higher class of heavenly beings than angels
- b. Whose purpose was to be "proclaimers and protectors of God's glorious presence, His sovereignty, and His Holiness"
- c. In the Bible...
  - 1) They stood guard at the Garden of Eden - Gen 3:24
  - 2) Their golden figures covered the mercy seat above the ark in the tabernacle - Exo 25:17-22
  - 3) Their designs graced the walls and veils of the tabernacle, and later in the temple - Exo 26:1,31; 1 Kin 6:23-35; 7:29,36
  - 4) They attended the glory of God in Ezekiel's vision – Ezek 1:1-28; cf. 10:1-20
- d. Their description fits those of the four living creatures in Revelation - cf. Re 4:4-6

### **6. Seraphim?**

- a. Six winged creatures attending the Lord in Isaiah's vision - Isa 6:1-13
- b. Whose name literally means "burning one"
- c. Their work was to "praise and proclaim the perfect holiness of God"
- d. Their description is also akin to those of the four living creatures in Revelation rather than angels - cf. Re 4:8-9