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Angels: In the Bible, the Apocrypha & the Dead Sea Scrolls



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Acworth, Georgia
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Christian Theology and History Adult Sunday School Courses

Robert Jones

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I've always been a strong believer in adult Sunday School classes and Bible studies in our churches. And many churches have quality, Biblically-based adult-focused programs. Unfortunately, just as many churches tend to downplay adult education, focusing on children's education (not a bad thing in itself), or focusing on the needs of the "unchurched", where topics such as church history and theology are often purposely ignored.

Yet there is a strong need for adult education focused on both the Bible and the basic tenets and history of the Faith. Among the reasons:

- Not all adults come from a strong childhood background in the church – adult Sunday School classes/Bible studies may be their first serious introduction to what Christianity is all about
- Christianity (and especially Evangelical Christianity) is under constant attack from the media and popular culture (movies, music, etc.). We need to give fellow Christians the tools to defend the Faith against attack (or to provide a "ready defense" as Peter says in 1 Peter 3:15)
- Even adult Christians that have a strong Biblical background often know little about the origins and history of their Faith

To better meet the needs of adult Christians (both those mature in their Faith, and those just starting out in the "School of Christ"), I've written a series of courses that focus on the history of the Christian Church (including the Jewish roots), as well as the development of doctrine in the Church. The topics represented in these courses are intended to both further the participant's walk in the Faith, as well as serve as a starting point for Christian apologetics.

While the primary purpose of these courses is for use in churches, they also may be useful for High School and College projects, especially the courses focused primarily on historical aspects.

One note: these courses are primarily written from an Evangelical Protestant viewpoint (I come from a Reformed Church background), but I hope I've given ample time to other points of view throughout the various courses.

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Introduction

"For if we desire to know God by his works, we surely cannot overlook this noble and illustrious specimen." (John Calvin, *Christian Institutes*, p. 192)

Angels have been in vogue the last several years. One sees them portrayed in movies, on television, and in books. There are discussion forums regarding angels on the Worldwide Web. From a Christian standpoint, however, many of these depictions are somewhat dubious. (One must keep in mind that angels are not a solely Christian concept - they are quite popular in the New Age movement, for example). Thus, it is difficult for many Christians to know which portrayals are Biblically accurate, and which ones are not.

This course will focus on what the Bible says about angels, as well as what other Jewish sources (including the Dead Sea Scrolls and the Apocrypha) from the Second Temple period add.

Key sources

The primary source for this course is the Old and New Testaments of the Bible – almost every reference to angels in the canonical Bible is referenced in this course. Assuming that most people have access to a Bible, I've generally included only scripture references, as opposed to actual quotes from the Bible.

To round out the discussion of ancient Jewish thought on angels (which, of course, greatly influenced Christian thought), I've also included some references to:

- The **Dead Sea Scrolls**, which refer often to an ultimate battle between the "sons of light" and the "sons of darkness". The latter forces are led by *Belial*, one of the New Testament names for Satan. The archangel Michael, and the mysterious Melchizedek also feature prominently in the Scrolls.
- The **Apocrypha** – the set of 12-16 books, most of which appeared in the Greek translation of the Old Testament known as the Septuagint, but not in Hebrew versions of the Old Testament. Today, they appear in some Bibles (Roman Catholic, NRSV, Orthodox, etc.) but not all (NIV, KJV, etc.).
- **1 Enoch** - 1 Enoch is a 1st or 2nd B.C. Jewish work whose relative importance has been raised in recent years because at least 20 fragmentary copies of 1 Enoch have been found among the Dead Sea Scrolls. 1 Enoch does *not* appear in the Septuagint, and is not generally considered to be part of the collection of books known as the Apocrypha. I've included it in this study because it has more named angels (100+) than any other Jewish work of the Second Temple period. It also has an interesting view of "The Fall" of Satan from heaven.

Quiz on Angels: A Biblical View

1. T/F A clear hierarchy of angels is indicated in the Bible
2. T/F The term "guardian angel" is used at least once in the Bible
3. T/F The only angels mentioned by name in the Bible are Michael, Gabriel, and Satan
4. T/F Angels are commonly depicted in the Bible as having wings
5. T/F Angels as depicted in the Old Testament most commonly appear as normal humans
6. T/F Raphael is named as an angel in some versions of the Bible
7. T/F Angels play an important part in the sequence of events that define the "end times"
8. T/F The actions of angels in the Bible are always peaceful
9. T/F There is no concept of Satan in the Dead Sea Scrolls
10. T/F Angels can directly intercede in human events, changing the outcomes of human history

11. T/F All angels are without sin
12. T/F There are more references to angels in Revelation than in any other book of the Bible
13. T/F The term "archangel" is commonly used in the Bible to describe angels that personally attend to God on the throne
14. T/F The Bible tells us to worship angels, since they are close to the Father
15. T/F Michael is identified in the Bible as an archangel

Nomenclature

The term "angel" comes from the Greek word *angelos* (the Hebrew equivalent is *malak*). Both words mean "messenger".

There are a number of other terms used in the Bible to describe various heavenly beings, including cherubim, seraphim, "holy ones", "heavenly hosts", "four living creatures", and "twenty-four elders". ("Dominions", "powers" and "authorities" may possibly also be heavenly beings.) For the purposes of this book, I use the term "angel" to refer to any non-divine heavenly being.

Creation of the angels

The Bible is not explicit as to when or how angels were created. However, the Bible is explicit that angels were created beings - they weren't eternal in the sense of God and Christ.

"Where Scripture speaks of the world's creation, it is not plainly said whether or when the angels were created; but if mention of them is made, it is implicitly under the name of "heaven," when it is said, "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth," or perhaps rather under the name of "light..." (St. Augustine, *City of God*, p. 461)

Reference	Notes
Gen 1:26	"Let us make man in our image..."
Gen 2:1	"Thus the heavens... were completed"
Psalms 148:2-6	"and they were created..."
Col 1:15-17	"all things were created by him and for him."

Purpose of angels

Angels have several clearly defined roles in the canonical Bible, which include:

- Messengers - Angels act as messengers of God, delivering warnings, issuing proclamations, and interpreting visions
- Instruments of God's will - Angels sometimes carry out the will of God on earth; angels are particularly active in the sequence of events known as the "end times".
- Attendants - Angels act as attendants or worshippers of God in heaven
- Ministering spirits - The New Testament book of Hebrews identifies that the purpose of angels is to minister to the saved:

Heb 1:14 "Are not all angels ministering spirits sent to serve those who will inherit salvation?" (NIV)

Angels as messengers



A key role for angels is to act as messengers between God and humans. Sometimes angels deliver a message to a single human (Hagar), and sometimes to large amounts of people (Rev 14:6-7). Sometimes the message is a warning (Lot), and sometimes they bring "good tidings of great joy" (to the shepherds minding their flocks in Luke).

Angels are one of the primary ways that God chooses to communicate with His earthly flock.

Reference	Notes
Gen 16:7-13	Hagar
Gen 18:2-15	Three visitors to Abraham & Sarah
Gen 19:1-25	Warning to Lot
Judges 13:1-25	An angel appears to parents of Samson
Dan 4:13; 4:17	Messenger from heaven
Zec 1:8-17	"man riding a red horse..."
Matt 1:20-25	An angel appears to Joseph
Matt 2:13	An angel warns Joseph
Matt 2:19	An angel tells Joseph Herod is dead
Matt 28:2-8; John 20:11-13	An angel at the tomb of Jesus
Luke 2:8-15	An angel appears to the shepherd
Acts 1:10-11	"two men dressed in white..."
Acts 8:26	An angel appears to Philip
Acts 10:3-7	An angel appears to Cornelius
Acts 27:23-24	An angel appears to Paul
Rev 1:1; Rev 22:6,10,16	John's Revelation
Rev 14:6-7	An angel proclaims God's word to the whole world

Theophanies



There are several apparent places in the Old Testament where the Lord (Yahweh) himself, appearing in the form of an angel, seems to be speaking directly to a human (as opposed to using an angel as an intermediary). Such passages often begin with "**The** Angel of the Lord..."

Many evangelical scholars (John Calvin among them) view that "**The** Angel of the Lord" could be a pre-incarnate Christ. In John 1:1 Christ is referred to as the "logos" of God, which can variously be described as "word", "rationality", or "consciousness". Colossians 1:15 describes Christ as being the "image of the invisible God". Given these descriptions, it is not inconceivable that God would use a pre-incarnate Christ to communicate directly with humans in Old Testament times.

"The orthodox doctors of the Church have correctly and wisely expounded, that the Word of God was the supreme angel, who then began, as it were by anticipation, to perform the office of Mediator. For though he were not clothed with flesh, yet he descended as in an intermediate form, that he might have more familiar access to the faithful...I am rather inclined, however, to agree with ancient writers, that in those passages wherein it is stated that the angel of the Lord appeared to Abraham, Jacob, and Moses, Christ was that angel." (John Calvin, *Christian Institutes*, p. 161,195)

Reference	Notes
Gen 16:7-13	The Lord talks to Hagar
Gen 18	The three visitors; the Lord speaks to Abraham
Gen 22:15-18	An angel calls to Abraham from heaven
Ex 3:2-6	Moses & the burning bush
Joshua 5:13-6:2	Commander of the Army of God (see also Rev 19:11-16)
Judges 2:1-3	"I brought you up out of Egypt..."
Judges 6:11-23	Gideon
Zec 3:1-10	"The LORD said to Satan..."

Melchizedek

One other figure in the Old Testament (although not necessarily an angel) could fit into the idea of the appearance of a pre-incarnate Christ - this is the mysterious figure of Melchizedek.

"Many Christian writers have thought that this was an appearance of the Son of God himself, our Lord Jesus, known to Abram at this time by this name. But as nothing is expressly revealed concerning it, we can determine nothing." (John Wesley, *John Wesley's Notes On The Whole Bible - The Old Testament*, p. 88)

Certainly the Scriptures go to great length to show the similarities between Melchizedek and Christ, and Melchizedek seems to have many attributes that one would normally only associate with the triune God:

- Melchizedek was known as the "King of Righteousness"
- He has no recorded beginning or end (birth or death)
- Abraham is blessed by Melchizedek "by God Most High"
- Abraham tithes to Melchizedek
- Christ is a priest forever in the order of Melchizedek (as opposed to the Levitical order)
- Melchizedek is the "King of Peace", or the "King of Salem" - Salem is generally considered to be an early name for Jerusalem

References to Melchizedek	
Gen 14:18-20	Melchizedek meets Abraham
Psalms 110:1-4	"You are a priest forever..."
Heb 5:6,10; 6:20	Christ as the high priest
Heb 7:1-17	"Even the patriarch Abraham gave him a tenth of the plunder!"

One of the Dead Sea Scrolls, named *The Heavenly Prince Melchizedek* (11Q13), would seem to add to the idea of Melchizedek being a divine being, actually referring to Melchizedek as *Elohim*, one of the terms used in the Hebrew Bible to refer to God. Note that letters in [] are extrapolated by the translator. The translation "godlike being" is translating the Hebrew word *Elohim*. *Belial* refers to Satan.

"For this is the time decreed for 'the year of Melchiz[edek]'s favor', [and] by his might he w[i]ll judge God's Holy Ones and so establish a righteous ki[n]gdom, as is written about him in the Psalm of David, 'A **godlike being** has taken his place in the divine council; in the midst of the divine beings he holds judgment...the true import applies to Belial and the spirits predestined to him, becau[se] all of them have reb[el]led, turn[ing] from God's precepts [and so becoming utterly wicked]. Therefore Melchizedek will thoroughly prosecute the veng[ea]nce required by Go[d's] statu[te]s. [Also, he will deliver all the captives from the power of [B]elial, and from the power of all [the spirits predestined to him]. Allied with him will be all the ['righteous] divine beings.'" (*The Heavenly Prince Melchizedek*, translation from Wise, emphasis added)

Geza Vermes, author of *The Complete Dead Sea Scrolls in English*, equates Melchizedek in this scroll with Michael the Archangel.

Angels as instruments of God's will on earth

God sometimes uses angels to carry out his will on earth. Sometimes His will is awesome in its might - the death of the 185,000 Assyrians, for example. Other times, His will is to save individual humans, such as Isaac, Daniel, and Peter.

Reference	Notes
Gen 3:24	Garden of Eden

Reference	Notes
Gen 22:9-12	An angel stops Abraham's sacrifice of Isaac
Exodus 14:19	An angel leading Israeli army
Exodus 23:20-26; 32:34; 33:2	An angel will lead the Israelites into the promised land
Numbers 20:16	An angel leads Israelis out of Egypt
Joshua 5:13-15	Commander of the Army of God (see also Rev 19:11-16)
2 Sam 24:15-17; 1 Chron 21:15-16	Instrument of God's vengeance
2 Kings 19:35; 2 Chronicles 32:21; Isa 37:36	185,000 Assyrians killed
Psalms 78:49-51	Band of destroying angels
Dan 6:22	Daniel saved from the Lions
Acts 5:19-20	An angel frees Apostles from prison
Acts 7:53; Gal 3:19	Law put into effect through angels"
Acts 12:7-11	An angel frees Peter from jail
Acts 12:23	Herod struck down

The Apocrypha contains an interesting account of an angel directly interceding on behalf of Judas Maccabeus, the great Jewish leader who helped drive the Seleucids out of Israel in 2nd century B.C.:

"⁶When Maccabeus and his men got word that Lysias was besieging the strongholds, they and all the people, with lamentations and tears, prayed the Lord to send a good angel to save Israel. ⁷Maccabeus himself was the first to take up arms, and he urged the others to risk their lives with him to aid their kindred. Then they eagerly rushed off together. ⁸**And there, while they were still near Jerusalem, a horse-man appeared at their head, clothed in white and brandishing weapons of gold.** ⁹And together they all praised the merciful God, and were strengthened in heart, ready to assail not only humans but the wildest animals or walls of iron. ¹⁰They advanced in battle order, having their **heavenly ally**, for the Lord had mercy on them. ¹¹They hurled themselves like lions against the enemy, and laid low eleven thousand of them and sixteen hundred cavalry, and forced all the rest to flee." (NRSV, 2 Maccabees 11:6-11, emphasis added)

In 3 Maccabees Ptolemy IV Philopator (221-204 B.C.) of Egypt is thwarted from killing the Jews in his kingdom by heavenly intervention. The death they are saved from? Being trampled to death by 500 drunk elephants in a hippodrome!

"¹⁸Then the most glorious, almighty, and true God revealed his holy face and opened the heavenly gates, from which **two glorious angels of fearful aspect descended, visible to all but the Jews.** ¹⁹They opposed the forces of the enemy and filled them with confusion and terror, binding them with immovable shackles. ²⁰Even the king began to shudder bodily, and he forgot his sullen insolence. ²¹The animals turned back upon the armed forces following them and began trampling and destroying them." (3 Maccabees 6:18-21, NRSV)

In 4 Maccabees, the Temple in Jerusalem is saved from being plundered by a Seleucid Governor named Apollonius by "angels on horseback with lightning flashing from their weapons":

⁹"While the priests together with women and children were imploring God in the temple to shield the holy place that was being treated so contemptuously, ¹⁰and while Apollonius was going up with his armed forces to seize the money, **angels on horseback with lightning flashing from their weapons appeared from heaven**, instilling in them great fear and trembling." (NRSV, 4 Maccabees 4:9-10, emphasis added)

Guardian angels?

One of the most cherished notions held by many people is the idea that each Christian is assigned a "guardian angel" to watch over them. While the Bible doesn't actually use the term "guardian angel", there are several references in the Bible to angels being assigned to protect human beings.



Photo by Robert Jones

Reference	Notes
Psalms 34:7	"...encamps around those that fear him..."
Psalms 91:11-12	Angels will "guard you in all your ways..."
Dan 12:1	Michael "protects your people"
Matt 18:10	Children have "their angels in heaven"
Luke 15:7,10	Rejoicing in heaven
Acts 12:12-15	Peter's angel
Heb 1:14	Angels as "ministering spirits"

The Protestant Reformers, while not necessarily accepting the idea of individual Christians being assigned individual guardian angels, certainly viewed that one of the main roles of angels was to protect the saved:

"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 defense, direct our path, and take heed that no evil befall us. " (John Calvin, *Christian Institutes*, p. 196)

"They may prevent our falling into many dangers, which we are not sensible of; and may deliver us out of many others, though we know not whence our deliverance comes. How many times have we been strangely and unaccountably preserved, in sudden and dangerous falls!...And who can hurt us while we have armies of angels, and the God of angels, on our side?" (John Wesley, *Sermon on Good Angels*, p. 406, 408)

An interesting example of how an angel (Raphael) is sent to protect two individuals is found in Tobit, from the Apocrypha:

¹⁶At that very moment, the prayers of both of them were heard in the glorious presence of God. ¹⁷So Raphael was sent to heal both of them: Tobit, by removing the white films from his eyes, so that he might see God's light with his eyes; and Sarah, daughter of Raguel, by giving her in marriage to Tobias son of Tobit, and by setting her free from the wicked demon Asmodeus." (NRSV, Tobit 3:16-17)

Angels interacting with Jesus



Several times in the New Testament, angels are depicted as acting in a protective role with Jesus. An especially important example is when angels attend to Jesus after he has been tempted for 40 days by Satan.

Reference	Notes
Matt 4:11, Mark 1:13	Angels attend Jesus after 40 days of temptation by the devil
Luke 22:39-43	Jesus strengthened by an angel from heaven

Angels during the end times



Photo by Robert Jones

Angels are assigned important and active roles during the end times. Their roles are clearly defined in both the synoptic Gospels, and the Book of Revelation. (There are more references to angels in the

Book of Revelation than in any other book of the Bible.) Christ is accompanied by the "armies of heaven" during the second coming.

Reference	Notes
Zec 6:1-8	"four chariots"
Matt 13:39-43, 49-50	"the harvesters are angels..."
Matt 16:27; Matt 24:30-31; Matt 25:31; Mark 8:38; Mark 13:27; John 1:51; 2 Thess 1:7	Son of Man will come with his angels
Matt 24:36	Angels don't know the time of the end times
1 Thess 4:16	Voice of the archangel
Jude 1:14-15	Enoch's prophesy
Rev 6:1-8	Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse
Rev 7:1-3	Angels at four corners of the earth
Rev 8:2-10:10	Seven angels with trumpets
Rev 14:6-13	"Fallen is Babylon the Great"
Rev 14:15-20	Grim reaper
Rev 15:1-16:21	Seven angels with 7 last plagues
Rev 19:11-21	"armies of heaven"
Rev 20:1-3	Angel w/ the key to the Abyss

Angels as heavenly attendants

A number of seemingly different types of heavenly beings are identified as having the role of attending to and/or worshipping God in heaven. These include "cherubim" (identified in Ezekiel as being one in the same as "four living creatures"), "seraphim" (referenced only in Isaiah), "heavenly hosts", and the "twenty-four elders".

The "cherubim" and "seraphim" ("the burning ones") are the only angels in the Bible that are depicted as having wings (except, possibly, Zec 5:9, and the locusts in Rev 9). The cherubim are also mentioned in Gen 3:24, as the guards that God places at the Garden of Eden, after Adam and Eve have been cast out.

The "twenty-four elders" are traditionally considered to be the twelve patriarchs, and the twelve Apostles. However, this is solely by church tradition - the canonical Bible makes no such claim.



Reference	Notes
Cherubim/Seraphim	
Genesis 3:24	"...he placed on the east side of the Garden of Eden cherubim and a flaming sword..."
Ezekiel 1:1-24	Wheel in a wheel
Ezekiel 10:1-22	Winged cherubim
Rev 4:6-8	Four living creatures
Rev 5:8-10,14	Four living creatures
Rev 6:1	"Come!"

Reference	Notes
Rev 14:3	A new song before the throne
Isaiah 6:1-7	Seraphs in heaven
Twenty-four elders	
Rev 4:9-11	Twenty-four elders before the throne
Rev 5:5	Elder speaks to John
Rev 5:8-10	Fall before the lamb
Rev 7:13-17	Elder interprets John's vision
Angelic hosts	
Rev 5:11-12	""Worthy is the Lamb, who was slain..."
Rev 7:10-12	Angels worshipping before the throne
Rev 19:1-8	"a great multitude in heaven..."

The named angels

Only three angels are mentioned by name in the canonical Bible - Gabriel, Michael, and Satan. At least two other angels are named in the Apocrypha, including Raphael (Book of Tobit), and Uriel (2 Esdras). The Dead Sea Scrolls mention Michael prominently, and Satan (typically referred to as *Belial*) often. 1 Enoch lists the names of many, many angels. In this section, we'll concentrate on the angels named in the Old & New Testaments and the Apocrypha – with added detail from the Scrolls and 1 Enoch.

Gabriel

The angel Gabriel is mentioned in both the Old and New Testaments, where he acts primarily as a messenger of God. As Gabriel is given the role of announcing the births of John the Baptist and Jesus to their parents, he is perhaps the most cherished angel in the Bible in terms of Christian tradition.

Reference	Notes
Dan 8:15-19	Interprets a vision of Daniel
Dan 9:20-23	Instructs Daniel
Luke 1:11-20	Appears to Zechariah (father of John the Baptist)
Luke 1:26-38	Appears to Mary, wife of Joseph

Gabriel is mentioned several times in the 1 Enoch. Some of the references include:

"Gabriel, one of the holy angels, who is over Ikisat, over paradise, and over the Cherubim." (1 Enoch 20:7, Laurence translation)

"The third who presides over all that is powerful, is Gabriel." (1 Enoch 40:9, Laurence translation)

Also in 1 Enoch, Gabriel is one of 4 angels that will cast Satan (Azazyeel) and his minions "into a furnace of blazing fire, that the Lord of spirits may be avenged of them for their crimes, because they became ministers of Satan, and seduced those who dwell on earth." (1 Enoch 53:6, Laurence translation)

In the Dead Sea Scrolls book *War of the Sons of Light with the Sons of Darkness*, the Sons of Light go into battle with the names of several angels, including Gabriel, on their shields.

Michael



Michael, like Gabriel, is also mentioned in both Old and New Testaments. Unlike Gabriel, though, Michael's role seems to be primarily that of a protector, or as the head of an angelic army.

Reference	Notes
Dan 10:13	"one of the chief princes"
Dan 10:21	"No one supports me against them except Michael"
Dan 12:1	Great prince
Jude 1:9	Archangel Michael
Rev 12:7	War in heaven against Satan

Michael seems to be an important figure in the angelology of the Dead Sea Scrolls. In the *War of the Sons of Light Against the Sons of Darkness* (1QM, and others), Michael seems to be assigned an almost Messianic role:

"Today is his appointed time to lay low and to make fall the prince of the dominion of wickedness; and he will send eternal help to the lot he has redeemed by the power of the angel he has made glorious for rule, Michael, in eternal light, to give light in joy to all Israel, peace and blessing to the lot of God, to exalt among the gods the rule of Michael and the dominion of Israel over all flesh." (*War of the Sons of Light Against the Sons of Darkness*, XIV, translation by Millar Burrows)

In the same book, the Sons of Light go into battle with the names of several angels, including Michael, on their shields.

The Dead Sea Scrolls also contains a book entitled *Words of the Archangel Michael*, in which Michael reveals a vision to Gabriel. However, the work is so fragmented that it is difficult to make any sense out of it.

Michael is mentioned many times in 1 Enoch. Among the references:

"Michael, one of the holy angels, who presiding over human virtue, commands the nations." (1 Enoch 20:5, Laurence translation)

"The first is the merciful, the patient, the holy Michael." (1 Enoch 40:8, Laurence translation)

Also in 1 Enoch, Michael is one of 4 angels that will cast Satan (Azazyeel) and his minions “into a furnace of blazing fire, that the Lord of spirits may be avenged of them for their crimes...” (1 Enoch 53:6, Laurence translation)

Satan

Alas, the angel mentioned most often in the scriptures is the "fallen angel", Satan. We examine his various names, his fall from heaven, his characteristics, and ultimate demise in this section. We also tackle the question of whether Satan appears in the Old Testament.

Names of Satan

"Satan" is a Hebrew word meaning accuser, adversary, or opponent. While the name Satan appears 53 times in the scriptures (NIV), Satan is also referred to under a number of other names, such as "devil", "evil one", "the destroyer", etc. The table below lists many of the names of Satan.

Name	Sample Reference	Notes
Satan	Zec 3:1	Adversary or accuser
Beelzebub	Mat 12:24	"Lord of the flies"; Jewish nickname for Satan
Devil	Rev 12:9	Gr. "diabolos" - "Slenderer"
Abaddon, Apollyon	Rev 9:11	"Destruction" or "Destroyer"
Angel of the Abyss	Rev 9:11	
Evil One	John 17:15, Eph 6:16	
Accuser	Rev 12:10	Will be hurled down
Great Dragon	Rev 12:9	
Red Dragon	Rev 12:3	
Ancient serpent	Rev 12:9	See Genesis 3
Belial	2 Cor 6:15, Nahum 1:15	Heb.. "useless", "worthless", "wicked"
Ruler of the kingdom of the air	Eph 2:2	
Prince of demons	Mat 9:34	
Prince of this world	John 12:31	
Father of lies	John 8:44	
God of this age	2 Cor 4:4	
Lucifer	Isa 14:12 (KJV)	Latin trans. of Hebrew word for "morning star"

The Dead Sea Scrolls often refer to Satan as Belial (see also 2 Cor 6:15), which means "useless", "worthless", or "wicked". The followers of Belial are often referred to as the “sons of darkness”:

“At the beginning of the undertaking of the sons of light, they shall start against the lot of the sons of darkness, the army of Belial...so that wickedness shall be laid low without any remnant; and there shall be

no survivor of the sons of darkness.” (*The War of the Sons of Light with the Sons of Darkness*, translation from Burrows)

The Dead Sea Scrolls also occasionally refer to Satan as *Melkiresha*, which means “my king is wickedness”. Geza Vermes views that this is in distinction to Melkizedek, which means “my king is justice”.

1 Enoch refers to Satan often as Azazel or Azazyel.

Characteristics and character of Satan

The Bible contains a number of descriptions of the character, capabilities and limitations of Satan. Satan is described as the great deceiver, and the great tempter of mankind. Christ triumphed over Satan through the cross.

Reference	Notes
Characteristics of Satan	
Mat 4:1-11	Satan is a tempter - Christ is tempted by Satan, but remains sinless
Mat 17:14-18	Can bring sickness to mankind
1 John 5:19	Ruler of this world
Rev 13, 16:14	Satan can control politicians
1 John 3:8	Christ appeared to destroy the Devil's work
Col 2:15	Christ triumphs over the Devil through the cross
1 Cor 10:13, James 4:7, 1 Pet 5:8-9	Satan can tempt, but believers have the power to resist
Mat 16:23, John 13:2, John 13:27, 1 Thes 2:18	Satan can affect even the Apostles
2 Cor 11:14	Satan masquerades as an angel of light
2 Cor 12:7	Satan can be used by God for good
John 12:31-33, Heb 2:14-15	Christ's death and resurrection is the beginning of the end for Satan
Rev 16:12-14	Satan and the demons perform miraculous signs

A book of the Dead Sea Scrolls entitled *Curses of Belial* describes Belial and his followers:

“...council of the Community shall all say together, Amen, amen. Afterwards [they] shall damn Belial and all his guilty lot. They shall answer and say, Cursed be [B]elial in his hostile design, and damned in his guilty dominion. Cursed be all the spirits of his [lo]t in their wicked design, and damned in their thoughts of unclean impurity. For they are the lot of darkness and their visitation is for eternal destruction.” (*Curses of Belial*, 4Q286, translation by Vermes)

The Dead Sea Scrolls’ *Manual of Discipline* lists characteristics of Satan and his followers:

“But to the spirit of error belong greediness, slackness of hands in the service of righteousness, wickedness and falsehood, pride and haughtiness, lying and deceit, cruelty and great impiety, quickness to

anger and abundance of folly and proud jealousy, abominable works in a spirit of fornication and ways of defilement in the service of uncleanness, and a blasphemous tongue, blindness of eyes and dullness of ears, stiffness of neck and hardness of heart, walking in all the ways of darkness and evil cunning.” (*Manual of Discipline*, Burrows translation)

The Fall

The Bible contains several references to the Fall of Satan and his angels from heaven. However, the time and reason for the Fall is not absolutely clear. Did the Fall occur before Adam & Eve, or after?

Many commentaries and theologians view that the Fall is described in Isaiah 14:12-20 and Ezekiel 28:12-19. Others view that neither set of verses concerns Satan or the Fall. If we assume that the passages do indeed describe Satan and the Fall, then we learn that Satan (or the “morning star”, translated as Lucifer in KJV) had a special place of honor guarding the throne of God. Because of his pride, Satan tries to set himself up as higher than God, and is cast out of heaven (to earth) as a result.

Revelation 12, which describes a war between Satan and the Archangel Michael, may indicate that a third of the angels in heaven were ejected along with Satan.

Reference	Notes
The Fall of Satan and the Angels	
Isaiah 14:12-20	"Morning star" is translated as "Lucifer" in KJV
Ezekiel 28:12-19	Satan once had a special place of honor guarding the throne of God
Luke 10:18	"I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven."
2 Peter 2:4	Angels that sinned are placed in hell, awaiting judgment
Jude 1:6	Fallen angels are held in darkness for Judgment Day
Revelation 12:4	May indicate that Satan took a third of the angels with him
Revelation 12:7-12	War in heaven between Archangel Michael and Satan

1 Enoch gives a somewhat different view of the cause of the Fall, amplifying on Genesis 6:1-4, which states:

¹When men began to increase in number on the earth and daughters were born to them, ²the sons of God saw that the daughters of men were beautiful, and they married any of them they chose. ³Then the LORD said, “My Spirit will not contend with man forever, for he is mortal; his days will be a hundred and twenty years.” ⁴The Nephilim were on the earth in those days—and also afterward—when the sons of God went to the daughters of men and had children by them. They were the heroes of old, men of renown.” (NIV, Gen 6:1-4)

1 Enoch describes it this way:

“It happened after the sons of men had multiplied in those days, that daughters were born to them, elegant and beautiful. And when the angels, the sons of heaven, beheld them, they became enamored of

them, saying to each other: Come, let us select for ourselves wives from the progeny of men, and let us beget children...Then they took wives, each choosing for himself; whom they began to approach, and with whom they cohabited; teaching them sorcery, incantation, and the dividing of roots and trees. And they conceiving brought forth giants..." (1 Enoch, Chapter 7, Laurence translation)

1 Enoch further goes on to identify one particular angel that holds all the blame:

"All the earth has been corrupted by the teaching of the work of Azazyel. To him therefore ascribe the whole crime." (1 Enoch 10:12, Laurence)

1 Enoch (Chapter 87), like Revelation 12, also discusses the Fall of the angels in terms of stars falling from heaven.

The end of Satan

The Bible is clear about the ultimate disposition of Satan and his minions. Matthew 25:41 tells us that an "eternal fire" has been prepared for Satan and his angels. In Revelation 20:10, Satan is thrown into a lake of burning sulfur – forever.

Reference	Notes
Mat 25:41	"Eternal fire" was prepared for Satan and his angels
Rom 16:20	God will crush Satan under the feet of the Church
Rev 20:1-3	Satan thrown into the abyss for 1000 years
Rev 20:10	Satan thrown into lake of burning sulfur forever

In the Apocrypha, 2 Esdras describes what will happen to the evil, after a final judgment day:

³⁶The pit of torment shall appear, and opposite it shall be the place of rest; and the furnace of hell shall be disclosed, and opposite it the paradise of delight. ³⁷Then the Most High will say to the nations that have been raised from the dead, 'Look now, and understand whom you have denied, whom you have not served, whose commandments you have despised. ³⁸Look on this side and on that; here are delight and rest, and there are fire and torments.' Thus he will speak to them on the day of judgment..." (2 Esdras 7:36-38, NRSV)

The Dead Sea Scrolls describe a similar fate for all who follow the "spirit of error":

"...the spirit of error...And the visitation of all who walk by it is for abundance of afflictions by all destroying angels, to eternal perdition in the fury of the God of vengeance, to eternal trembling and everlasting dishonor, with destroying disgrace in the fire of dark places. And all their periods to their generations will be in sorrowful mourning and bitter calamity, in dark disasters until they are destroyed, having no remnant or any that escape." (*Manual of Discipline*, Burrows translation)

1 Enoch describes the final disposition of Satan...

"Bind Azazyel hand and foot; cast him into darkness..." (1 Enoch, 10:6, Laurence translation)

...and what will happen to his followers:

“...bind them for seventy generations underneath the earth, even to the day of judgment, and of consummation, until the judgment, the effect of which will last forever...” (1 Enoch, 10:15, Laurence translation)

Satan in the Old Testament

One last bit before we let Satan go. Some Bible scholars state that Satan doesn't appear in the Old Testament – he only appears in the New. This interpretation is based on the fact the Hebrew word for Satan can be interpreted either as a name (“Satan”), or to mean “accuser”, “adversary”, or “opponent”. For example, some translations translate “satan” in Job as “The Adversary”. However, in 3 books of the Bible, Satan is usually translated as a proper name:

Reference	Notes
1 Chr 21:1	"Satan rose up against Israel"
Job 1-2	Satan is clearly represented as a being, not a concept; "roaming through the earth"
Zec 3:1-2	"The LORD rebuke you, Satan!" - Satan as an accuser and adversary of God

Revelation 12:9 also identifies Satan as being the "ancient serpent" in Genesis (3:15).

Raphael

Raphael features prominently in the Book of Tobit from the Apocrypha, where he is a companion of Tobit and his son Tobias for much of the book. It is not until the end of the book that Raphael is revealed as an angel:

“I am Raphael, one of the seven angels who stand ready and enter before the glory of God...¹⁸As for me, when I was with you, I was not acting on my own will, but by the will of God. Bless him each and every day; sing his praises. ¹⁹Although you were watching me, I really did not eat or drink anything—but what you saw was a vision. ²⁰So now get up from the ground, and acknowledge God. See, I am ascending to him who sent me. Write down all these things that have happened to you.” And he ascended. ²¹Then they stood up, and could see him no more...” (NRSV, Tobit 12: 11, 18-21)

Note that Tobit seems to identify that Raphael is one of seven angels that have special status.

Raphael is mentioned several times in the 1 Enoch. Some of the references include:

“Raphael, one of the holy angels, who is over the spirits of men.” (1 Enoch 20:3, Laurence translation)

“The second is he who presides over every suffering and every wound of the sons of man, the holy Raphael.” (1 Enoch 40:9, Laurence translation)

Also in 1 Enoch, Raphael is one of 4 angels that will cast Satan (Azazyel) and his minions “into a furnace of blazing fire, that the Lord of spirits may be avenged of them for their crimes...” (1 Enoch 53:6, Laurence translation)

In the Dead Sea Scrolls book *War of the Sons of Light with the Sons of Darkness*, the Sons of Light go into battle with the names of several angels, including Raphael, on their shields.

Uriel

In 2 Esdras, a series of apocalyptic visions are presented through the device of a dialogue between the prophet Ezra and the archangel Uriel (once seemingly referred to as Jeremiel). It has similarities in tone, content, and style to the Book of Revelation in the New Testament and to the 2nd century Christian work *Shepherd of Hermes*. An example of the dialogue:

¹"Then the angel that had been sent to me, whose name was Uriel, answered ²and said to me, "Your understanding has utterly failed regarding this world, and do you think you can comprehend the way of the Most High?" ³Then I said, "Yes, my lord." And he replied to me, "I have been sent to show you three ways, and to put before you three problems. ⁴If you can solve one of them for me, then I will show you the way you desire to see, and will teach you why the heart is evil." (NRSV, 2 Esdras 4:1-4)

1 Enoch mentions Uriel several times, including:

"Uriel, one of the holy angels, he it is who is over clamor and terror." (1 Enoch 20:2, Laurence translation)

"And the days, Uriel shewed me; the angel whom the Lord of glory appointed over all the luminaries." (1 Enoch 74:7, Laurence translation)

Numbers of angels

The Bible doesn't indicate exactly how many angels exist, but there are a number of references that show that there are many, many angels.

Reference	Notes
Psalms 68:17	Chariots of God
Dan 7:10	"Thousands upon thousands attended him"
Matt 26:53	12 Legions (4,500-6,000 men ea.)
Heb 12:22	Angels on Mt. Zion
Rev 5:11	Angels in heaven
Rev 9:16	200,000,000 angels

1 Enoch states:

"After this I beheld thousands of thousands, and myriads of myriads, and an infinite number of people, standing before the Lord of spirits." (1 Enoch 40:1, Laurence translation)

Hierarchies/Relationships

The Bible as used by most Protestant churches contains no detailed hierarchies of angels. However, it was common during the Middle Ages to attempt to assign complicated hierarchies to angelic beings. A pre-500 A.D. writer named Dionysius produced such a hierarchy, which was later adopted by theologian Thomas Aquinas. The Protestant Reformers almost uniformly rejected such non-canonical hierarchies. John Calvin, for example, said:

"Wherefore, if we would be duly wise, we must renounce those vain babblings of idle men, concerning the nature, ranks, and number of angels, without any authority from the Word of God." (Calvin, p. 193/94)

While no hierarchies of angels can be discerned in the canonical Bible, several relationships are fairly clear:

- God is above all, including all heavenly creatures
- Christ is greater than the angels
- While humans are identified as being "a little lower than the heavenly beings", the Bible also identifies a) the world to come is for humans, b) by the end times (at least), angels and humans will be "fellow servants" and c) the role of angels is to minister to the saved.
- The term "archangel" ("chief", or "first" angel) appears only twice in the Bible. No name is assigned in 1 Thess 4:16, but in Jude 1:9, Michael is designated as an archangel.

Reference	Notes
Psalms 8:4-5	Man is a little lower than the heavenly beings
Psalms 89:5-8	God is above all
Philippians 2:9-11	"every knee should bow..." to Christ
Col 1:15-20	"all things were created by him and for him..."
1 Tim 5:21	Elect angels
Heb 1:4-13	Christ greater than the angels
Heb 2:5-9	"not to angels that he has subjected the world to come..."
Heb 2:16	God doesn't help angels
1 Pet 3:22	Angels in submission to Christ
Jude 1:9	Archangel Michael
Rev 19:9-10; Rev 22:8-9	"a fellow servant with you and with your brothers..."

Archangels

As mentioned above, only Michael is named as an archangel in the canonical Bible. In the Apocrypha, Jeremiel (Uriel?) is also named as an archangel (2 Esdras 4:36).

So, how many archangels are there? One? Two? Another argument could be made for four, as this passage in 1 Enoch shows – these four angels stand on the “four sides” of God:

“The first is the merciful, the patient, the holy Michael. The second is he who presides over every suffering and every wound of the sons of men, the holy Raphael. The third who presides over all that is powerful, is Gabriel. And the fourth, who presides over repentance, and the hope of those who will inherit eternal life, is Phanuel. These are the four angels of the most high God, and their four voices which at that time I heard.” (1 Enoch 40:8-9, Laurence)

Another passage in 1 Enoch singles out 6 angels:

“These are the names of the angels who watch:

- Uriel, one of the holy angels, he it is who is over clamor and terror
- Rapahel, one of the holy angels, who is over the spirits of men
- Raguel, one of the holy angels, who inflicts punishment on the world and the luminaries
- Michael, one of the holy angels, who presiding over human virtue, commands the nations
- Sarakiel, one of the holy angels, who presides over the spirits of the children of men that transgress
- Gabriel, one of the holy angels, who is over Iskisat, over paradise, and over the Cherubim" (1 Enoch 20:1-7, Laurence translation)

Tobit, in the Apocrypha, suggests that there are seven angels of note:

"I am Raphael, one of the seven angels who stand ready and enter before the glory of God" (Tobit 12:15, NRSV)

The Dead Sea Scrolls *War of the Sons of Light with the Sons of Darkness* list the names of four angels on the shields of the sons of light as they go into battle – however, there are gaps in the manuscript:

"They shall write on all the shields of the towers: on the first, Michael, [on the second, Gabriel, on the third] Sariel, and on the fourth, Raphael. Michael and Gabriel [shall stand on the right, and Sariel and Raphael on the left]..." (*War of the Sons of Light with the Sons of Darkness*, Chapter 9, translation by Vermes)

Don't worship angels

Colossians 2:18 would seem to infer that worshipping angels is wrong. Colossians 1:15-17 affirms that all earthly and heavenly creatures are submissive to the triune God.

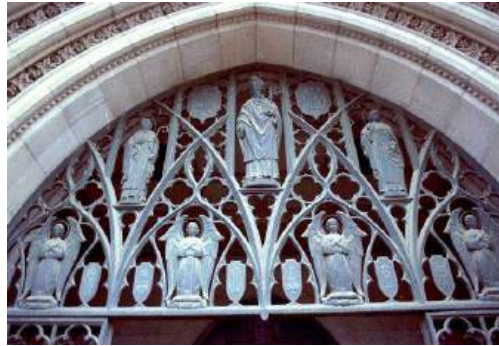
The Protestant Reformers were particularly strong against the practice of worshipping angels:

"And although the angels in heaven pray for us (as Christ Himself also does), as also do the saints on earth, and perhaps also in heaven, yet it does not follow thence that we should invoke and adore the angels and saints, and fast, hold festivals, celebrate Mass in their honor, make offerings, and establish churches, altars, divine worship, and in still other ways serve them...For this is idolatry, and such honor belongs alone to God." (Martin Luther, *The Smalcald Articles*, p. 15)

"Even Paul appears to have had a severe contest with some who so exalted angels as to make them almost the superiors of Christ. Hence he so anxiously urges in his Epistle to the Colossians, (Colossians 1:16, 20) that Christ is not only superior to all angels, but that all the endowments which they possess are derived from him; thus warning us against forsaking him, by turning to those who are not sufficient for themselves, but must draw with us at a common fountain." (John Calvin, *Christian Institutes*, p. 199)

"Religious worship is to be given to God, the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; and to him alone; not to angels, saints, or any other creature..." (Westminster Confession, Chapter 23)

Characteristics of Angels



St. Patrick's Cathedral, Melbourne, Australia
Photo by Robert Jones

The Bible mentions a number of miscellaneous characteristics of angels, usually in passing. These include a) angels don't marry b) angels walk among humans without being recognized c) angels don't know everything, etc.

As to the appearance of angels, they appear most often to humans as ordinary people. Other references to appearance include being clothed in white, and having a body like chrysolite. As mentioned earlier, only cherubim and seraphim are identified in the Bible as having wings.

Reference	Notes
Gen 19:3	Angels on earth can eat food
Gen 28:12	Angels climbing the stairway between heaven & earth
Psalms 103:20-21	Angels do the bidding of the Lord
Matt 22:30; Mark 12:25	Angels don't marry
Luke 20:35-36	Angels don't die
1 Pet 1:12	Angels don't know everything!!
2 Pet 2:10-11	Angels more powerful than humans
Dan 10:5-6	His body was like chrysolite..."
Matt 28:3	"clothes were white as snow..."
Acts 1:10-11	"two men dressed in white..."
Heb 13:2	Angels can look just like humans

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Notes

About the Author

Robert C. Jones grew up in the Philadelphia, Pennsylvania area. He made his living as a hotel lounge band leader/musician from 1974-1981. In 1981, he moved to the Atlanta, Georgia area, where he received a B.S. in Computer Science at DeVry Institute of Technology. From 1984-2009, Robert worked for Hewlett-Packard as a computer consultant.

Robert is an ordained elder in the Presbyterian Church. He has written and taught numerous adult Sunday School courses (see front inside cover). He has also been active in choir ministries over the years, and has taught the Disciples Bible Study five times.

Robert is also President of the Kennesaw Historical Society, for whom he has written several books, including "The Law Heard 'Round the World - An Examination of the Kennesaw Gun Law and Its Effects on the Community", "Retracing the Route of the General - Following in the Footsteps of the Andrews Raid", and "Kennesaw (Big Shanty) in the 19th Century". A new book, "Images of America: Kennesaw", was published by Arcadia in 2006.

Robert has also written several books on ghost towns in the Southwest, including in Death Valley, Nevada, Arizona, New Mexico, and Mojave National Preserve.

In 2005, Robert co-authored a business-oriented book entitled "Working Virtually: The Challenges of Virtual Teams". His co-authors were Lise Pace and Rob Oyung.

His interests include the Civil War, Medieval Monasteries, American railroads, ghost towns, hiking in Death Valley and the Mojave, and Biblical Archaeology.

Robert is available as a guest speaker on Christian history and theology topics in the Atlanta Metro area, and North Georgia. See <http://www.sundayschoolcourses.com/speaker.htm> for more information.



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