



By

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Does The Spirit World Exist?

I used to laugh at Christians and other religious people who believed in a spirit world with a supreme God, a devil, good and bad angels, and demons. When I was an atheist the idea of an invisible world of spiritual beings around me was ludicrous. However, when I opened my heart and mind to God and began to learn about the worlds He had created, I quickly learned that the spiritual world is just as real as the physical world.

The spirit world is usually “invisible” to us. Our physical eyes don’t have the ability to see the very active life of the supernatural spirit world. There were many times in the Bible when God allowed humans to see into that invisible world, but most of the time people didn’t see it. However, the fact that we can’t see the invisible spiritual world does not mean it doesn’t exist. On the contrary, it is very real. God created the spirit world before He created the physical world and the two worlds do affect each other.

We get an insight to the beginning of the spirit world from Job 38. God is speaking to Job. “Where were you when I laid the foundations of the earth? Tell *Me*, if you have understanding. Who determined its measurements? Surely you know! Or who stretched the line upon it? To what were its foundations fastened? Or who laid its cornerstone, When the morning stars sang together, And all the sons of God shouted for joy?” This tells us that at least two groups existed at the time God created the earth. One was the **morning stars**. The

other was **the sons of God**.

Let's see what we learn about the earliest creatures of God's imagination. First, the "morning stars." The Hebrew words are *boqer kokab*. *Boqer* means "morning light, dawn, day-break." *Kokab* means "blazing, shining." It is used for stars we see in the sky and figuratively (or metaphorically) for "an illustrious prince."

Kokab is first used in Gen. 1:16—"Then God made two great lights: the greater light to rule the day, and the lesser light to rule the night. *He made* the stars also." We'll look at the creation of solar systems later, but suffice it to say that a God Who could create at least 200 billion billion stars with temperatures of up to two million degrees each, some up to a billion miles in diameter and billions of light years away from earth, is a most powerful, wonderful and capable God!

The combination of the words "morning stars" usually means something from the spirit world. God uses it six times in the Bible. The first usage, Job 3:9, probably means literal stars in the sky, but the other five speak of the spirit world. We've already seen that the morning stars sang together at the creation of the earth. Other usages are Isa. 14:12; 2 Peter 1:19; Rev. 2:28 and 22:16. The words are used in Isaiah 14 to speak of two figures: Satan and the King of Babylon. "How you have fallen from the heavens, O morning star, son of the dawn!" (NIV) Who was that morning star? The KJV and NKJV translate the Hebrew word for morning star as "Lucifer."

The “morning star” is the brightest of all the stars. It’s a dazzling light that exceeds all other stars in brightness. The “morning stars” in the context of Job 38 may have been used for the most powerful angels (i.e. Lucifer, Michael, Gabriel).

The usage of “morning star” in the New Testament is the Greek *phosphoros* in 2 Peter 1:19; *astera ton proionon* in Rev. 2:28; and *aster ho lampros ho proinos* in Rev. 22:16.

In 2 Peter the author is writing about his being an eyewitness to the power and majesty of Jesus Christ. Peter also writes about the return of Christ to set up His Kingdom on earth. “And so we have the prophetic word confirmed, which you do well to heed as a light that shines in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts.” (2 Peter 1:19) The word *phosphoros* means “light-bearing, light-bringing, giving light.” The words *astera ton proionon* mean “star of the morning.”

In Revelation 2 Jesus speaks to several churches. In verses 18 – 29 He speaks to the church in Thyatira. Jesus encourages the saints to overcome and persevere in tough spiritual times. “And he who overcomes, and keeps My works until the end, to him I will give power over the nations— ‘ *He shall rule them with a rod of iron; They shall be dashed to pieces like the potter’s vessels*’— as I also have received from My Father; and I will give him the morning star.”

In Rev. 22:16, Jesus makes it very clear that He is speaking of Himself. “I, Jesus, have sent My angel to testify to you these things in the churches. I am the Root and the Offspring of David, the Bright and Morning Star.” *aster ho lampros ho proinos* is similar to the wording in Rev. 2:28 except it adds the word *lampros* which means “shining, brilliant, bright.” The use of the adjective seems to set it above all other usages of the words “morning star.” Jesus is the ultimate Morning Star!

At the creation of the world, the **morning stars** sang together and “all the sons of God” shouted for joy. We’ve already seen that “morning stars” are the brightest stars in the sky and probably used for the most powerful angels. The Hebrew words for “sons of God” are *bene elohim* and often translated as “angels.” The insight we gather here is of God’s creation of a special division of angels. We’ll learn more about that division and their special duties to God and us as we go through our study this week.

The Hebrew word for angel is *malak*. The Greek is *aggelo* (pronounced “angelo”). The English word “angel” is a transliteration of the Greek. The words are found more than 300 times in the Bible. Angels are created beings. The psalmist calls on angels to praise the Lord. “Praise Him, all His angels; Praise Him, all His hosts!” (Psalm 148:2) Paul wrote that Jesus Christ created all things, the invisible as well as the visible: “For by Him all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. All things were created through Him and for Him.” (Col. 1:16)

Angels are spiritual beings (Heb. 1:14). They can be invisible or make themselves visible to human beings, depending on what Jesus allows. The angels' primary responsibilities are to praise and serve God and watch over and bring messages to God's people. We don't know much about what kind of service they performed prior to the creation of the world, but the Bible is quite specific about their service after creation.

The Biblical account of creation (Gen. 1 & 2) tells us that everything God created was "good." There is no reason to think His creation of angels was anything other than good and perfect. However, from Gen. 3 through the end of Revelation, we learn about **evil** angels. Their evil leader is Satan, formerly known as Lucifer. Did God create evil angels? Did God create evil?

Did God Create Evil?

Don't get into an argument with an atheist unless you're ready to be humbled. I know because I was an atheist who humbled many Christians decades ago. Atheists don't believe in the existence of God, but they will gladly spar with people who do. One of the questions an atheist will ask a Christian or Jew is, "Alright, let's say for a moment that there is a God. Did He create evil? If not, where did evil come from and why didn't God stop it before it started since He's supposed to be so all-knowing and loving?"

Remember, an atheist doesn't believe in God or the supernatural or the spirit world. They don't really want to hear your answers to their questions because they don't believe you have any. What they're doing is 'baiting' you so you'll get in over your head, then they'll move in for the kill and make fun of you. That's a humbling experience. If we want to be ready to answer that and other questions unbelievers will ask, we need to look to God's Word for the answers. Atheists and other so-called "freethinkers" may be able to humble Christians, but they can't humble God.

The first mention of evil in the Bible is in Gen. 2:9. The context is that God created the earth and then the first human being. After creating man, God placed him in a special garden paradise called Eden. God had made all kinds of trees grow out of the ground—"... the LORD God made every tree grow that is pleasant to the sight and good for food. The tree of life was also in the midst of the garden, and the tree

of the knowledge of good and evil.” A few verses later: “And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, ‘Of every tree of the garden you may freely eat; but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die.’” (Gen. 2:16-17) In order for God to warn Adam about evil, evil must have already existed. So, where did it start? Did Adam even understand what the warning meant? Could he understand the concept of good and of evil? Did he know what it would mean to die?

The Hebrew word for “evil” is *ra*. It means “bad.” It carries the idea of moral adversity, trouble, wickedness. The word for “knowledge: is *da’ath*. It means “to know, be aware.” Was the tree of the knowledge of good and evil in the garden to help the first human beings know the difference between the two or to entice them to sin? It’s obvious that evil already existed when God introduced Adam to the Garden. It started before God created humans.

After warning Adam, God brought all the animals and birds to him so he could give names to each kind. Adam saw that the animal kingdom was paired into two sexes: male and female. “But for Adam there was not found a helper comparable to him. And the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall on Adam, and he slept; and He took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh in its place. Then the rib which the LORD God had taken from man He made into a woman, and He brought her to the man. And Adam said: ‘This *is* now bone of my bones And flesh of my flesh; She shall be called Woman, Because she was taken out of Man.’” (Gen. 2:20 – 23) Adam now had a life

partner, like the other created beings he had seen.

In Gen. 3:1 we meet a new creature, the **serpent**. “Now the serpent was more cunning than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made.” The Hebrew word for “serpent” is *nachash*. It means “snake.” The first unusual feature we see about this snake is that it talked: “And he said to the woman.” A study of animals speaking in the Bible shows that a member of the spirit world does the speaking. Animals don’t have the innate ability to think and speak in human languages. Such is the case with the serpent. Snakes don’t talk unless a spirit inhabits its body and speaks through it.

The snake was “more cunning” than any beast of the field which God had created. The Hebrew is *aruwm* and means “crafty, sneaky, cunning” in a bad sense. What made the snake bad? God created everything good. What happened between the creation of animals (good) and the snake’s meeting with the woman (bad)?

A thorough study of this encounter introduces us to a being named Satan (Hebrew – *satan*, “opponent” ... Greek — *satanas*, “accuser”). Satan is the opponent of God and accuser of the saints. He is called the “accuser, devil, tempter, evil one, father of lies, prince of this world, god of this age, leader of the kingdom of evil, angel of the Abyss, the ancient serpent.” The Bible blames evil, **all of it**, on Satan. Rev. 12:9 reads, “So the great dragon was cast out, that serpent of old, called the Devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world.” That’s exactly what Satan did in the garden of Eden. He introduced the first humans to evil and led them astray.

Fortunately, the Bible gives us insight to how one of God's **good** creatures went bad. It is the insight we need to understand the beginning of evil. In Ezekiel 28 the prophet speaks to the ruler of Tyre. The first ten verses are obviously about a man. However, in verses 11-19, the prophet speaks to the King of Tyre. What Ezekiel says is directed to someone from the spirit world, not the human world.

"You *were* the seal of perfection, Full of wisdom and perfect in beauty. You were in Eden, the garden of God; Every precious stone *was* your covering: The sardius, topaz, and diamond, Beryl, onyx, and jasper, Sapphire, turquoise, and emerald with gold. The workmanship of your timbrels and pipes *Was* prepared for you on the day you were created. 'You *were* the anointed cherub who covers; I established you; You were on the holy mountain of God; You walked back and forth in the midst of fiery stones. You *were* perfect in your ways from the day you were created, Till iniquity was found in you. By the abundance of your trading You became filled with violence within, And you sinned; Therefore I cast you as a profane thing Out of the mountain of God; And I destroyed you, O covering cherub, From the midst of the fiery stones. Your heart was lifted up because of your beauty; You corrupted your wisdom for the sake of your splendor; I cast you to the ground, I laid you before kings, That they might gaze at

you.” Ezekiel 28:12-17

In 1 Tim. 3:6, Paul writes that the devil’s judgment came upon him because of his “pride.” The Greek word is *tuphotheis*. It means “to be blinded by pride or conceit.”

The Book of Isaiah gives us more insight into why Satan chose evil instead of good. Chapter 14 is part of a prophecy against the King of Babylon.

“How you are fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning!
How you are cut down to the ground, You who weakened the nations! For you have said in your heart: ‘I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God; I will also sit on the mount of the congregation On the farthest sides of the north; I will ascend above the heights of the clouds, I will be like the Most High.’” Isaiah 14:12-14

Do you see his conceit and pride? Instead of God’s will, Satan’s desire is “My will.”

The Creator of Evil

The **creator of evil** is Satan. That answers the atheist's first and second questions: "Did God create evil? If not, where did evil come from?"

Satan is a super-powerful angelic being. God created him to be the highest of all the Heavenly host. However, Satan became proud of himself and his position and sinned against God. His sin opened the way for others to sin against God. First it was other angels (2 Peter 2:4; Jude 6; Rev. 12:7-9). Next was mankind (Gen. 3ff). The outcome was brutal. God prepared a place of torment for Satan and the angels who followed him (Matt. 25:41; 2 Peter 2:4; Jude 6). The human race was cast from the presence of God and has suffered every imaginable pain and suffering (Gen. 3:16-19).

The Bible clearly spells out Satan's eternal future. "The devil, who deceived them, was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone where the beast and the false prophet are. And they will be tormented day and night forever and ever" (Rev. 20:10). There is no reason for us ever to fear the final outcome of all things. God wins! Satan loses!

For reasons only God knows completely, Satan was not thrown into the lake of fire immediately. In fact, God allowed Satan to have freedom to wield his evil power on earth and in the heavens. God allowed Satan to tempt the first man and woman (Gen. 3), Israel's

King David (1 Chron. 21:1-8), and God's Son, Jesus Christ (Matt. 1:1-11). Jesus was the only one able to resist Satan perfectly.

One note of interest to this discussion is found in Eph. 2:6-7:

“... and raised *us* up together, and made *us* sit together in the heavenly *places* in Christ Jesus, that in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in *His* kindness toward us in Christ Jesus.”

God demonstrates the exceeding (incomparable) riches of His Amazing Grace to Satan and the rest of the spirit world through what He has done for us.

God **chose us** before He created the world. After Satan sinned, God continued with His eternal plan for us. God allowed Satan to live and do evil. God allowed Satan to threaten and accuse and rule (so to speak) over the earth. But nothing Satan has done or will do can ever thwart God's eternal plan. God sent His Precious Son to pay the penalty for man's sins. God raises us up with Christ and seats us with Him in the heavenly realms. This is so that in the coming ages God can demonstrate the exceeding riches of His grace as expressed in His kindness to us in Christ. This does not mean we are pawns in some great battle between spirit beings, but instead means we are the beneficiaries of God's everlasting Love and Grace. It's something we could not have known or understood had it not been for what we lost and then found again.

“Amazing Grace, how sweet the sound that saved a wretch like me; I once was lost but now am found, was blind but now I see.”

How does Satan, this powerful member of the spirit world, interact with human beings today? We learn much about Satan’s ploys from the Book of Job. “Now there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the LORD, and Satan also came among them.” (Job. 1:6) From this we learn that Satan has access to the Lord. “And the LORD said to Satan, ‘From where do you come?’ So Satan answered the LORD and said, ‘From going to and fro on the earth, and from walking back and forth on it.’” (Job 1:7)

Satan is free to move between heaven and earth. That’s important for us to understand as we search to grasp the process of evil in our world today. God asks Satan if he’s considered Job: “*there is none like him on the earth, a blameless and upright man, one who fears God and shuns evil?*” (Job 1:8) That fact does not please Satan. He retorts that the reason Job is a good man is because God has blessed him. “Does Job fear God for nothing? Have You not made a hedge around him, around his household, and around all that he has on every side? You have blessed the work of his hands, and his possessions have increased in the land. But now, stretch out Your hand and touch all that he has, and he will surely curse You to Your face!” (Job 1:11) Satan is aware of who people are and is opposed to those serve God. I’ve experienced Satan’s attacks in my life. Expect them in yours. He is the master accuser and liar.

“And the LORD said to Satan, ‘Behold, all that he has *is* in your power; only do not lay a hand on his *person*.’ So Satan went out from the presence of the LORD.” (Job 1:12) Notice that God will allow Satan to test people. Also notice that Satan can only do that testing with God’s prior permission. God controls how far Satan can take the test.

The following verses show that Satan has **tremendous** power. He sent fire from heaven to burn up Job’s sheep and servants. Satan sent raiding parties of the Chaldeans to steal Job’s camels and kill more servants. Satan sent a mighty wind to destroy the home of Job’s eldest son. It killed all of Job’s children. While this may sound cruel on God’s part, note carefully that God did not harm any of these people. It was the work of **Satan**. Satan is the **only** one to blame for misery and death.

Satan returned to Heaven and accused Job again before God.

“Again there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the LORD, and Satan came also among them to present himself before the LORD. And the LORD said to Satan, ‘From where do you come?’ Satan answered the LORD and said, ‘From going to and fro on the earth, and from walking back and forth on it.’ Then the LORD said to Satan, ‘Have you considered My servant Job, that *there is* none like him on the earth, a blameless and upright man, one who fears God and shuns evil? And still he holds fast to his integrity, although you incited Me against him, to destroy him without

cause.’ So Satan answered the LORD and said, ‘Skin for skin! Yes, all that a man has he will give for his life. But stretch out Your hand now, and touch his bone and his flesh, and he will surely curse You to Your face!’ And the LORD said to Satan, ‘Behold, he *is* in your hand, but spare his life.’” Job 2:1-6

In another test of Job’s commitment to God, Satan inflicted Job with painful sores all over his body. Satan would probably have liked to kill Job, but God would not allow it. Satan cannot go beyond the boundaries God sets up. Satan holds the power of death. (Heb. 2:14) We must never treat Satan lightly. Satan is the fullness of evil. All wickedness and treachery flow from his sin-soaked mind. He is the enemy of all that is good and kind. He is a murderer and destroyer (John 8:44a; Rev. 9:11). Drawings of Satan often show him in monstrous fashion or as a little imp. However, Satan appears in the opposite way. He masquerades as an angel of light (2 Cor. 11:14). He is in charge of this world (1 John 5:19). He uses the beauty of his being to deceive and fool others in believing his lies (John 8:44b). He fooled millions of angels. He’s fooled billions of people for thousands of years. Be wary of him and his wiles!

How large is Satan? How strong? How quick? How smart? I’ve often wondered this since no one I know has ever seen him, or at least they didn’t know it was him when they saw him. The Bible gives us some clues, but nothing that gives an absolute description. We know that Satan is a created being. He has some limitations. He’s not as big, as quick, as strong, or as smart as God. He could never beat

Jesus Christ in a fight (which will be proven beyond any doubt in the future conflict between Satan and Christ).

Satan is a powerful angel. He has all the abilities of other angels. He can be visible or invisible to humans. He can cross from the spirit world into the physical world and back to the spirit world with ease. Satan can, if God allows, control the weather, inflict illness and pain, and lead a major portion of the population of earth and a third of the heavenly host to sin against God. Satan can roam the earth, appear before God in Heaven, and be back on earth in a very short time.

Examples of Satan's power and speed are found in Job 1:6-19 and 2:1-7 and Matthew 4:1-11. Much of the Book of Revelation is an example of Satan's power and quickness. One example is Rev. 20:7-10. Satan has been in prison for one thousand years. He's released from prison and quickly builds a massive army from across the world to do battle with God and His people. Amazing!

Angels usually appear in the physical world as being the size of human beings or slightly larger. The same might be true for Satan. His power is formidable, but not omnipotent. Only God is all-powerful. Satan is also not omniscient and omnipresent. Only God is all-knowing and everywhere present at the same time. Satan wants to be worshiped like God, but he is not God.

The Empire of Evil

Satan is a brilliant organizer and strategist. He began by deceiving Eve, who then led Adam to sin against God. Since then, Satan has continued through the ages to oppose every step of God's plan to redeem mankind from the consequences of sin. How does Satan do it? Does he do it alone? No! He does it through his **empire of evil**.

The Apostle Paul gives us a glimpse into the evil empire in Eph. 6:10-12.

“Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual *hosts* of wickedness in the heavenly *places*.”

Paul is telling Christians that our struggle is not against flesh and blood — it's not against people. That's usually what we think as we fight through the challenges of our days on earth, but it's not true. Satan controls people. The word “wrestle” comes from the word *pallo* — “vibrate, shake.” *Pale* was a contest between two people in which each endeavored to throw the other. Wrestling or Judo is an example of the word. The winner of ancient wrestling matches was decided by which person could hold the other down after throwing him; usually

with a hand on the loser's neck. That was a demonstration of control and dominance.

We all have challenges that we struggle with in life. It may be with our past, it may be with another person, it may be with internal fears, it may be with money, it may be with health. But our **real struggle** is not with those things. Our struggle, our conflict, is not with flesh and blood. It's with the **spirit world**.

Paul says our conflict is "against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual *hosts* of wickedness in the heavenly *places*." Keep in mind that one verse earlier (6:11) Paul warns us to take our stand "against the wiles of the devil." "Wiles" is the Greek word *methodeias*. It means "craftiness, deceit, a cunning method, scheme or device, a wile, a trick."

Our struggle in life is primarily with **Satan** and his evil empire. Ever heard the phrase "he's a tricky little devil?" There's more truth to that than people realize. Satan is the master deceiver. He used his skills to trick angels into disobeying the great God Who created them. He deceived Eve. He uses those same skills and techniques to lead the world astray today.

So, how did Satan organize his evil empire? Satan is at the top. He is its supreme leader. He wanted God's throne but couldn't get it, so he built his own throne. Under him are layers of other powerful beings who do his bidding. They obey Satan's commands in the same way the rest of the spirit world obeys God's commands.

Here's the structure of Satan's empire:

1. the devil (*diabolou*)
2. principalities (*archas*)
3. powers (*exousias*)
4. the rulers of the darkness of this age (*kosmokratoras tou skotous toutou*)
5. spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places (*pneumatika tes ponerias on tois epouraniois*).

The word for "principalities" (*archas*) is used nine times in the New Testament. The uses are for people or spiritual beings who have governing powers. The spiritual rulers can be good or evil. The word *archas* is neutral. We know that the word is used in an evil context in Eph. 6:12. It is also evil in Rom. 8:38-39 and Col. 2:15. It could be good, evil or both in Col.1:16 and 2:10 and Eph. 1:21 and 3:10. Jude 6 is about angels who did not continue their position of rule under God. Titus 3:1 is about human rulers in government.

"Powers" (*exousias*) means "power of choice, liberty of doing as one pleases, the ability or strength with which one is endued, which he either possesses or exercises, the power of authority and of right, the power of rule or government." Like *archas*, *exousias* is neutral. The context tells us whether the authority is good or evil. (Notice that the authorities have the freedom to do what they do. God has allowed

even the evil authorities the freedom to act within God's limits as we've already seen.)

The word (*exousias*) is used for Jesus Christ in Matt. 7:29, 9:6 & 8, and 10:1 (where Jesus gave His disciples authority over demons), Matt. 21:23-27 and 28:18; Mark 1:22 & 27, 2:10, 3:15 and 6:7 (disciples authority over demons); Mark 11:27-33; Luke 4:32 & 36, 5:24, 9:1, and 10:19 (disciples authority over demons); Luke 20:1-8; John 2:18, 5:27, 10:18, 17:2; Acts 1:7; 1 Cor. 15:24; Eph. 1:21; Col. 1:16; 1 Peter 3:22; Jude 1:25; Rev. 2:26-27 and 12:10.

The word *exousias* is used for Satan in Luke 4:6. He is tempting Jesus in the desert. "And the devil said to Him, 'All this authority I will give You, and their glory; for *this* has been delivered to me, and I give it to whomever I wish. Therefore, if You will worship before me, all will be Yours.'" Notice that Jesus did not contradict Satan's claim to authority over the earth." And Jesus answered and said to him, 'Get behind Me, Satan! For it is written, '*You shall worship the LORD your God, and Him only you shall serve.*'" Satan claimed that he was given all the authority and splendor of the kingdoms of the world and that he can give it to anyone he wants. Apparently, that claim is true (with God's permission).

Satan shares his authority with "the beast" in the Book of Revelation. See Rev. 13:1-8, 11-17 and 17:12-13 for more about that shared authority. You can find other examples of evil authorities in 1 Cor. 15:24-25; Eph. 6:12; and Col. 2:15.

Exousias is also used for human leaders with authority. Some examples are: Matt. 8:9, 20:25; Acts 9:14, 16:19, 26:10-12; Rom. 13:1-7; 1 Tim. 2:1-2; Titus 3:1; Heb. 13:17; and 1 Peter 2:13-15. The Apostle Paul also writes about the authority he and other Christian leaders had in the formative days of the Church (2 Cor. 10:8, 13:10; 1 Thess. 4:1-2; and Titus 2:15).

“The rulers of the darkness of this age” (*kosmokratoras tou skortous toutou*) also translates as “world rulers of this darkness.” In Greek literature, Orphic hymns and Rabbinic writings, *kosmokratoras* signifies a world-lord, ruler of the whole world. Eph. 6:12 is the only place the word is used in the New Testament.

The phrase “spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places” (*pneumatika tes ponerias*) is also used only in Eph. 6:12. They are a large number of beings filled with and committed to wickedness. Paul says they are “in the heavenly places” (*en tois epouraniois*). The word is used mostly for the spiritual plane — that which is above, not on earth, in higher places.

These are the real powers with whom we struggle. They are **our** enemies because they were first **God’s** enemies. They attack us because they oppose God’s plan and purpose. We are God’s plan and purpose.

“Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly *places* in Christ, just as He chose us in Him before

the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love, having predestined us to adoption as sons by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will, to the praise of the glory of His grace, by which He made us accepted in the Beloved.” Eph. 1:3-6

The powers of evil will use every scheme, every trick, every lie, every deceit possible to damage us, make us ineffective, embarrass us. That is how Satan tries to beat God — by beating us. Let us put on the whole armor of God and fight back. “Stand firm!”

The Minions of Evil

The spirit world is a complex world that God created a long time ago. It's a world that was deeply impacted when God's most brilliant creation sinned and rebelled against the Almighty.

That brilliant but fallen creation is named Satan. Satan is the devil. There is only one. However, the King James Version of the Bible speaks of "devils" in the plural. Who and what are they? The Hebrew words translated "devils" are *saiyr* and *shed*. *Saiyr* is a "he-goat" used in the sense of a "satyr." *Shed* is a malignant or a "devil." The Greek words are *daimon*, *daimonion*, *daimonizoman*, and *daimoniodes*. It speaks of a supernatural spirit of a bad nature.

Other English versions of the Bible translate *shed* and *daimon* as "demon." The NIV translates *saiyr* as "goat idols." "Demons" is a transliteration of *daimonion*. It leaves the word "devil" for just one creature, Satan. It is the sole translation of *diabolos*.

Saiyr were idols made in the shape of goats. The ancient Egyptians practiced idol worship and passed the practice along to the children of Israel during their captivity in Egypt. God warned Israel to stop that practice after He freed them. "They shall no more offer their sacrifices to demons, after whom they have played the harlot. This shall be a statute forever for them throughout their generations." (Lev. 17:7)

Rehoboam, King of Judah following the death of his father, Solomon, reinstated the worship of goat idols. “Then he appointed for himself priests for the high places, for the demons, and the calf idols which he had made.” (2 Chron. 11:15) That continued until King Asa destroyed the idols.

At issue with *sayir* is not the physical idol, but the evil power associated with it. The idol could be destroyed, but the evil power behind it lived on.

One other term we need to know about is *akathartos pneuma*. It translates as “evil spirit.” As we’ll see, evil spirits act in a way similar, if not identical to that of demons.

There is no question in Scripture that demons are part of Satan’s evil empire. They do not act alone or on their own. They do as they are told. Satan is their master. They have special, supernatural abilities and use them to fight against God’s Will and His chosen people. But, as we will see, their battle is futile; their end is defeat.

Demons in the Old Testament

Demons are mentioned four times in the Old Testament. The first is Deut. 32:17. Moses is speaking to the whole assembly of Israel. He reminds them that Israel angered God with “their detestable idols.” In that context Moses introduces us to demons. “They sacrificed to demons, not to God, *To gods* they did not know, *To new gods*, new arrivals That your fathers did not fear.” Here we see that demons acted in ways that moved the worship of God’s people away from

God and toward the evil spirits. Demons are related to false gods throughout Scripture. Another example is Psalm 106:37. Again the context is Israel's rebellion against God and their worship of idols.

“They served their idols, Which became a snare to them. They even sacrificed their sons And their daughters to demons, And shed innocent blood, The blood of their sons and daughters, Whom they sacrificed to the idols of Canaan; And the land was polluted with blood. Thus they were defiled by their own works, And played the harlot by their own deeds.”
(Psalm 106:36-39)

It is clear that idol worship is the same thing as demon worship. People who do it are worshipping Satan and his evil empire.

Demons in the New Testament

The first mention of demons in the New Testament is Matt. 4:24. The people of Israel heard about the incredible power Jesus Christ had to heal. “Then His fame went throughout all Syria; and they brought to Him all sick people who were afflicted with various diseases and torments, and those who were demon-possessed, epileptics, and paralytics; and He healed them.” Here we see that demon possession is treated separately from people with physical maladies. Some critiques of the belief of demonic powers say that demon-possession is just a physical or mental illness. But God makes it clear that demon possession is separate from physical and mental pain. Demon possession can cause physical and mental suffering, but it is a

spiritual interference and separate from the maladies we know from science and medicine. Demon possession is part of the dark powers of Satan and his evil empire.

One of the most powerful proofs of the reality of demons is that Jesus conversed with them, commanded them and defeated them at every confrontation (Matt. 4:24; 8:16, 28-34; 9:32-33; 10:8; 12:22-28; 15:22-28; 17:14-22). Jesus knew them because He was their Creator. However, He created them perfect in the spirit world and for good purposes. They became imperfect through Satan's deception and dedicated themselves to evil. They chose to obey Satan rather than God.

We've already seen in the OT that demons were behind all idol worship. That's supported in the NT. Paul writes in 1 Cor. 10:20-21 —

“Rather, that the things which the Gentiles sacrifice they sacrifice to demons and not to God, and I do not want you to have fellowship with demons. You cannot drink the cup of the Lord and the cup of demons; you cannot partake of the Lord's table and of the table of demons.”

John writes in Rev. 9:20 about the world during God's judgment on earth.

“But the rest of mankind, who were not killed by these plagues, did not repent of the works of their hands, that they should not worship demons, and idols of gold, silver, brass, stone, and wood, which can neither see nor hear nor walk.”

Demons continue to fool people to the very end.

Demons also enter into the bodies and minds of unsaved humans. The Bible calls it “demon possession.” This continues to this day in many forms. The possession is sometimes evident in the insane behavior of people under the total control of demons. Other possessions are of a temporary nature where demons give people special physical and mental powers. Demons have lived for thousands of years and can fool people into thinking they were someone else in past lives. That leads people away from the Truth of God and the need for forgiveness and salvation in this life. The “channeling” of spirits is another demonic influence. (Deut. 18:10-12; Isaiah 8:19ff)

Demons possess human beings for the purpose of doing evil through flesh and blood. They lie to their victims and make them think they have some special gift or power or that they will receive great wealth or honor. Some have even believed the power came from God. Biblical examples of demon possession show people who were violent, unusually powerful, unable to speak, blind, in great pain, inflicted cuts upon themselves, were naked, and lived in tombs with the dead. It's not the kind of life most people would choose for themselves.

The major point of the Biblical evidence of demon possession is that Jesus Christ had power over demons and gave that power to His disciples. You may never come into contact with someone who is

demon possessed, but if you do remember that you have a Power in you that is greater than the power in them.

The Rebellion of Evil

As powerful and evil as Satan and his angels and demons are, the Heavenly Host are **more** powerful and holy. These are the angels who did not rebel with Satan, but stood firm for God. Rev. 12:7-9 is a strong reminder of the power of the Heavenly Host.

“And war broke out in heaven: Michael and his angels fought with the dragon; and the dragon and his angels fought, but they did not prevail, nor was a place found for them in heaven any longer. So the great dragon was cast out, that serpent of old, called the Devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world; he was cast to the earth, and his angels were cast out with him.”

Michael is God’s “archangel,” the only one called that by name in the Bible. The word “archangel” comes from the Greek word *archaggelos*. It is a combination of the words for “chief messenger.” All of God’s angels are “messengers” (the meaning of the word *aggelos*), but chief among them is Michael. Michael is also God’s chief warrior in the spirit world. Michael disputed with Satan about the body of Moses (Jude 9). He is the prince and protector of Israel (Daniel 10:21; 12:1). He will announce the return of Christ for His saints (1 Thess 4:16). During the last days, Michael hurls Satan from heaven to earth (Rev. 12:7-9).

Michael is called “one of the chief princes” in Daniel 10:13. The Hebrew word for “chief prince” is *ri’son sar*. It means “first commander, top leader, high ruler.” As we see in Jude, Michael is also called an “archangel.” That may mean that there are other “archangels” since Michael is **one of the chief princes**. Another “chief prince” is Gabriel (Daniel 8:16ff; 9:21ff). Gabriel interpreted some of Daniel’s visions about Israel. He also brought a quick answer to Daniel’s prayers about Israel’s salvation. We find Gabriel again hundreds of years later when he prophesied the birth of Christ to the virgin Mary (Luke 1:19, 26). He also announced the birth of John the Baptist. Gabriel may have been the angel who told Joseph about the birth of Christ (Matt. 1:20-25). Gabriel has a prominent role in bringing messages from God to the people of God.

Some of the most prominent members of the spirit world are the **cherubim**. The Hebrew word is *k’rubl*. The Greek is *cheroubim*. The words **cherub** and **cherubim** are mentioned more than 70 times in the Bible. All but one reference (Hebrews 9:5) are found in the Old Testament. Cherubim have a very special place in God’s administration of the spirit world. God placed two cherubim at the east of the Garden of Eden so the human race could no longer have access to the Tree of Life (Gen. 3:24). The likeness of two cherubim were made from gold and placed at each end of the mercy seat in the Most Holy Place. Each of the cherubim had wings and were made to face each other and stretch out their wings to cover the mercy seat. The mercy seat was placed on top of the Ark of the Covenant. God

met with the chief priest of Israel once a year from above the mercy seat and the wings of the cherubim. “And there I will meet with you, and I will speak with you from above the mercy seat, from between the two cherubim which *are* on the ark of the Testimony, about everything which I will give you in commandment to the children of Israel.” (Exodus 25:22) It was often written that God dwelled “between the two cherubim.” (i.e. 1 Samuel 4:4; 2 Samuel 6:2; 2 Kings 19:15) The cherubim had the high honor of standing on either side of God on His Throne in Heaven as well. The tabernacle had ten curtains of fine woven linen and blue, purple, and scarlet thread — “with artistic designs of cherubim you shall weave them.” (Exodus 26:1) The people of Israel were also commanded to carve cherubim on the doors of the temple (1 Kings 6:32-35).

God created the cherubim as a special class of the heavenly host. One of the more interesting duties they have is found in 2 Samuel 22. David wrote a song of praise about God’s delivering him from his enemies.

“The LORD *is* my rock and my fortress and my deliverer; The God of my strength, in whom I will trust; My shield and the horn of my salvation, My stronghold and my refuge; My Savior, You save me from violence. I will call upon the LORD, *who is worthy* to be praised; So shall I be saved from my enemies. When the waves of death surrounded me, The floods of ungodliness made me afraid. The sorrows of Sheol surrounded me; The snares of death confronted me. In my distress I called upon the

LORD, And cried out to my God; He heard my voice from His temple, And my cry *entered* His ears. Then the earth shook and trembled; The foundations of heaven quaked and were shaken, Because He was angry. Smoke went up from His nostrils, And devouring fire from His mouth; Coals were kindled by it. He bowed the heavens also, and came down With darkness under His feet. He rode upon a cherub, and flew; And He was seen upon the wings of the wind.” 2 Samuel 22:2-11

Amazing! God rode upon a cherub and flew. Cherubim are certainly beautiful and powerful. God made them that way. They are guardians of the throne of God and His chief ambassadors and are concerned with justice. They are referred to as “covering” angels. Interestingly enough, Satan was once at the highest position of this special class of heavenly host.

“You were the model of perfection, full of wisdom and perfect in beauty. You were in Eden, the garden of God; every precious stone adorned you: ruby, topaz and emerald, chrysolite, onyx and jasper, sapphire, turquoise and beryl. Your settings and mountings were made of gold; on the day you were created they were prepared. You *were* the anointed cherub who covers; I established you; You were on the holy mountain of God; You walked back and forth in the midst of fiery stones. You *were* perfect in your ways from the day you were created, Till iniquity was found in you. By the abundance of your trading You became filled with violence within, And you sinned; Therefore I cast you as a profane thing Out of the

mountain of God; And I destroyed you, O covering cherub, From the midst of the fiery stones.” Ezekiel 28:12-16

Here we have Satan, the “anointed cherub who covers,” who walked back and forth in the midst of the fiery stones on God’s holy mountain. Satan was “perfect” in his ways from the day God created him until sin was in him. He had been in Eden, the garden of God. Lucifer wore every precious stone imaginable as a beautiful adornment. God prepared the stones and the gold mountings and settings for the stones on the day God created the magnificent Lucifer. What I see here is the Great God of Heaven creating the most beautiful of all His creatures and adorning him with the most beautiful precious stones He had made. Lucifer was a creation of God’s great love. The Lord “anointed” and “established” Lucifer and gave him the highest position of covering the throne of God with his wings and pronouncing the glory and holiness of God. Two other cherubim were on either side of God’s Throne. The golden images of the two cherubim on either side of the mercy seat in the Most Holy Place, the cherubim woven into the ten curtains of the tabernacle and the cherubim carved into the Temple doors would have been a continual reminder to all the heavenly host of what Satan had lost in his rebellion. God may have also held them up as clear evidence that two of His most beautiful and powerful angels had not followed after Satan in his rebellion, but had remained loyal to their Creator

How did Lucifer repay God for this great gift? “By the abundance of your trading You became filled with violence within, And you sinned.” The idea of an abundance of trading is the results of what Lucifer did in his official position as the highest covering cherubim. His trade (KJV – commerce) was to cover the throne and walk back and forth in the midst of the fiery stones on God’s holy mountain proclaiming the greatness and beauty of the Lord. Notice what filled the heart and mind of Lucifer – **iniquity** and **violence**. This is where the evil empire had its birth. The Hebrew word for **iniquity** is *awlah* and means “evil, wicked, wickedness.” Lucifer was “perfect” (blameless) from his creation until evil was found in him. Where did that come from? He became proud of his position, beauty and power. All of those were God’s gifts to Lucifer, but Lucifer was filled with **violence** within and sinned. The Hebrew word for “violence” is *hamas*. The word carries the idea of destruction, terror, oppression and plunder.

Another insight to what caused Lucifer to change from a perfect creation of God to one filled with iniquity and violence is found in Ezekiel 28:17 and Isaiah 14:12-14.

“Your heart was lifted up because of your beauty; You corrupted your wisdom for the sake of your splendor ... How you are fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! *How* you are cut down to the ground, You who weakened the nations! For you have said in your heart: ‘I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God; I will also sit on the mount of the congregation On the farthest sides of the north; I will ascend above the heights of the clouds, I will be like

the Most High.”

Lucifer was jealous of God! Lucifer saw how much God was loved and adored and praised and worshiped and he wanted the same thing. The evil and violence started with jealousy. Lucifer covered the throne of God with his giant wings, but what he wanted was his own throne. Lucifer wanted to “exalt” his throne above the stars (angels) of God. He wanted to sit on the mount of the congregation of heavenly host who worshiped God. Lucifer wanted to “be like the Most High.” His heart was lifted up because of his beauty, a beauty God gave him. Lucifer’s wisdom was corrupted for the sake of his personal splendor. Jealousy and pride led to Lucifer’s evil thoughts and violent plans. Lucifer thought so highly of himself that he planned a rebellion against God! His plan included destruction, terror, oppression and plunder in Heaven.

It’s hard for us to imagine any created being as having the nerve to rebel against their creator, but that’s exactly what Lucifer did. He was able to convince a large number of angels to join him in his rebellion against God. Lucifer may have used the same lie with the angels that he used with Eve when he deceived her (“and you will be like God”). However, Lucifer and his rebelling angels were not successful in their attempt to overthrow God. Ezekiel presented the initial and final results of Lucifer’s great sin:

“Therefore I cast you as a profane thing Out of the mountain of God; And I destroyed you, O covering cherub, From the midst of the fiery stones. Your heart was lifted up because of your beauty; You corrupted your wisdom for the sake of your splendor; I cast you to the ground, I laid you before kings, That they might gaze at you. You defiled your sanctuaries By the multitude of your iniquities, By the iniquity of your trading; Therefore I brought fire from your midst; It devoured you, And I turned you to ashes upon the earth In the sight of all who saw you. All who knew you among the peoples are astonished at you; You have become a horror, And *shall be* no more forever.” Ezekiel 28:16-19

The Angels of Heaven

God created a **host** of living creatures in Heaven that are part of the “spirit world.” So far, we’ve seen them referred to as **morning stars, sons of God, archangels, cherubim, angels, and demons.**

Another class of the Heavenly Host is the **seraphim** or **seraphs.** They are mentioned only twice in the Bible: Isa. 6:2 and 6. They are located “above” God’s throne and have six wings. They use two wings to fly, two wings to cover their face and two wings to cover their feet. Their song is “Holy, holy, holy is the Lord Almighty; the whole earth is full of His glory.” Their concern seems to be for the worship and holiness of God and His salvation of the elect.

Another class of Heavenly Host is the **living creatures.** There are four of them in the midst of and around the throne of God. They also have six wings and are covered with eyes in front and back. Each of the four living creatures mentioned in Rev. 4:6-9 looks like a different creation of God: lion, calf (ox in the NIV), man and eagle. Their song around the throne is “Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, Who was and is and is to come!” This worship and call to glorify God leads the 24 elders of Heaven to fall down and worship God. The four living creatures also hear the song of the 144,000 godly witnesses in Rev. 14:3.

The Bible uses the term **the angel of the Lord** or **the angel of God** dozens of times in the Old Testament. The term is never used in the New Testament. Many Bible teachers believe the term signifies a **theophony**; the appearance of God in physical form. The belief goes on to state that “the angel of the Lord” is Christ, the Son of God, prior to His birth to the Virgin Mary. The first place we see the angel of the Lord is Gen. 16. The angel found Hagar, the maidservant of Sarai, Abram’s wife, near a spring in the desert. Hagar was running away from Sarai. The angel of the Lord told Hagar to return to Sarai and submit to her. The angel said, “I will multiply your descendants exceedingly, so that they shall not be counted for multitude.” Here’s how Hagar responded to the angel of the Lord: “Then she called the name of the LORD who spoke to her, You-Are-the-God-Who-Sees; for she said, ‘Have I also here seen Him who sees me?’” (Gen. 16:13). The angel did not correct her. He accepted the title of “You-Are-the-God-Who-Sees” from Hagar. An angel of God’s Heavenly Host would never allow a human being to worship him or call him God. Hagar knew she was communicating directly with God.

More evidence is found several chapters later when the angel of God spoke again to Hagar. He had heard the crying of her son, Ishmael. The angel said, “Arise, lift up the lad and hold him with your hand, for I will make him a great nation.” (Gen. 21:18) Angels do not personally make people into great nations. That is only the work of God. God promised Abraham that He would make him into a great nation. Look at Gen. 22:16-18. “Then the Angel of the LORD called to Abraham a

second time out of heaven, and said: ‘By Myself I have sworn, says the LORD, because you have done this thing, and have not withheld your son, your only *son*— blessing I will bless you, and multiplying I will multiply your descendants as the stars of the heaven and as the sand which *is* on the seashore; and your descendants shall possess the gate of their enemies. In your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed, because you have obeyed My voice.’ Those are the words of God, not a created angel. Angels instructed people to obey God, not them.

The angel of God spoke to Jacob (Abraham’s grandson) in a dream:

“Then the Angel of God spoke to me in a dream, saying, ‘Jacob.’ And I said, ‘Here I am.’ And He said, ‘Lift your eyes now and see, all the rams which leap on the flocks *are* streaked, speckled, and gray-spotted; for I have seen all that Laban is doing to you. I *am* the God of Bethel, where you anointed the pillar *and* where you made a vow to Me. Now arise, get out of this land, and return to the land of your family.”

Genesis 31:11-13

The Angel of God called Himself the God of Bethel. No created angel of God would claim that. That could only be Christ! Jacob made his vow to God, not an angel.

Other evidences are Exodus 3:2-6, Exodus 14:9, Exodus 23:20-22, Judges 2:1-5, Judges 6:11-24, and Judges 13:17-22. In all of these examples the Angel of Lord is Christ Himself! The reason we don’t

find the term “angel of the Lord” in the New Testament is because He came to earth and became a man, our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

Knowing that the Angel of the Lord in these scriptures is the pre-incarnate Christ gives us more insight into our Savior. It helps us better understand the warrior Christ of Revelation. As we study the Gospels, it becomes clear that Jesus Christ “who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, *and* coming in the likeness of men. And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to *the point of* death, even the death of the cross.” (Phil. 2:6-8)

Angels and Christians

What do angels do for people who are saved? The Bible says they are “ministering spirits sent forth to minister for those who will inherit salvation” (Heb. 1:14). Here’s a good example. The Lord and two angels appeared to Abraham. They discussed the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah. Abraham pleaded with God not to destroy the righteous with the unrighteous (Gen. 18:1-33). The two angels met with Lot, stayed in his home and ate with him. (Gen. 19:1-3) All the men of Sodom surrounded Lot’s house and demanded that Lot give them the two visitors (angels) so they could have sex with them. Lot tried to give the Sodomites his daughters for sex, but the men of Sodom wanted only the male visitors. (Gen. 19:4-9) The angels struck the Sodomites with blindness and helped Lot and his family escape the city. (Gen. 19:10-22) After Lot was safe, God destroyed

Sodom and Gomorrah with burning sulfur from heaven. Everyone was destroyed in the cities. (Gen. 19:24-29) Jude wrote that Sodom and Gomorrah served “as an example of those who suffer the punishment of eternal fire.” (Jude 7)

Other examples of angelic power include one angel who drove out enemies of Israel from the promised land (Ex. 23:2), one angel who killed 70,000 disobedient Israelites (2 Sam. 24:15-17), one angel who killed 185,000 Assyrian soldiers (2 Kings 19:35), one angel who shut the mouths of hungry lions and saved Daniel’s life (Dan. 6:22), and the powerful angels who appeared with Christ in blazing fire (2 Thess. 1:7). Some of the most vivid examples of angelic power are yet to come. The Book of Revelation mentions angels 80 times. That’s out of a total of about 300 in all the Bible. What they do for the elect of God and to the unsaved during the years of the Tribulation are beyond anything this world has experienced since the Flood.

Angels and Christ

First and foremost, angels ministered with and to Christ. Angels appeared to shepherds near Bethlehem to tell them the good news of Christ’s birth. A “great company” (*plethos*) of the “heavenly host” (*stratias ouraniou*) praising God appeared to the shepherds. It translates as “a fullness of the heavenly army” (Luke 2:13). We know this heavenly army was a group of angels because of the next verse

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“When the angels had left them...” What they said to the shepherds was that God had sent them a Savior, Christ the Lord. He came to the people of earth as a baby. ‘Glory to God in the highest, And on earth peace, goodwill toward men!’ Luke 2:14

Jesus Christ began His earthly ministry at the age of 30. After John the Baptist baptized Jesus, Christ went into the desert to face Satan’s tests. Satan quoted Psalm 91:11-12 about angelic protection as one part of his testing of Christ. When the temptation was over, angels did come to Christ and attended to His physical needs (Matt. 4:11 and Mark 1:13).

We also see angels at the end of Christ’s earthly ministry. When Peter tried to protect Jesus when soldiers arrested Him, Christ said, “Or do you think that I cannot now pray to My Father, and He will provide Me with more than twelve legions of angels?” (Matt. 26:53) Jesus lived in Israel during Rome’s Early Empire. The average legion in the Roman Army numbered about 5,120 legionaries supported by about the same number of auxiliary troops. Some legions were as large as 15,000 troops. Jesus used a term the disciples would understand. If a legion of angels was approximately the same number as a Roman legion, Jesus said all He had to do was ask His Heavenly Father and He would provide Jesus with 120,000 – 180,000 angels to protect Him!

This demonstrates many things about the spirit world. There are thousands of angels ready at anytime to move in any direction God sends them. It also demonstrates Christ's power and influence and His commitment to the salvation of the chosen. No one forced Jesus to die for our sins. He did it willingly and under His own power.

[The total number of angels is most likely in the tens of millions. The Apostle John wrote this about the number of angels he saw in Heaven: "Then I looked and heard the voice of many angels, numbering thousands upon thousands, and ten thousand times ten thousand" (Rev.5:11). $10,000 \times 10,000 = 100,000,000$. And that's on top of "thousands upon thousands."]

Just prior to Christ's arrest He was praying on the Mount of Olives. He prayed so hard that "His sweat was like drops of blood falling to the ground." (Luke 22:44) During Christ's prayer "An angel from heaven appeared to him and strengthened him." (Luke 22:43)

I must state the obvious. Jesus and the holy angels love each other. They care for one another. They've worked together for thousands of earth years and long before the creation of the world. They have a special and unique relationship. We can only imagine what the angels thought as they saw their Creator dying on the cross for the sins of human beings.

The Roman soldiers killed Christ on the cross. Then they placed guards in front of Christ's tomb so that no one could steal His body. However, the guards did not expect a visit from the Heavenly Host!

“There was a violent earthquake, for an angel of the Lord came down from heaven and, going to the tomb, rolled back the stone and sat on it. His appearance was like lightning, and his clothes were white as snow. The guards were so afraid of him that they shook and became like dead men” (Matt. 28:2-4). The angel also explained to two women what happened to Jesus (Matt. 28:5-7).

Angels are involved in the great events of Christ’s life: the announcement of Christ’s earthly ministry, the birth of Christ, the temptation of Christ, the agony of Christ in the garden, the arrest and crucifixion of Christ, the resurrection of Christ, and the ascension of Christ back to heaven. After Christ ascended, the disciples saw “two men dressed in white.” The men told the disciples: “Men of Galilee,’ they said, ‘why do you stand here looking into the sky? This same Jesus, who has been taken from you into heaven, will come back in the same way you have seen him go into heaven” (Acts 1:10-12).

Angels and the Disciples

The angels of God continued their ministry to the disciples after Jesus ascended to heaven. They gave them direction and guidance (Acts 8:26; 10:1-8; 27:23-26). They delivered saints from prison (Acts 5:17-20; 12:6-10). They killed God’s enemies (Acts 12:21-23). They were even involved in the lives of people without those people knowing it (Heb. 13:2). Angels are our friends, too. We can thank God for them. Angels are superpowerful creatures capable of great acts of justice. The holy angels respond to the righteousness of God, while unholy angels react to the wickedness of Satan.

Angels and the Church

Each church mentioned in Revelation chapters 2 and 3 had a special guardian angel. Angels proclaim the glory and power of Christ throughout the Book. They send plagues upon the earth in chapters 5, 6 and 7. More angels bring about mass destruction on the planet and its inhabitants in chapters 8 and 9. We've already seen the great power of Michael and the Heavenly Host defeating Satan and the evil angels in chapter 12. The angels of God kill thousands of God's enemies in chapter 14. They inflict more terrible plagues on earth and its inhabitants in chapters 15 through 19. An angel binds Satan and throws him into the Abyss for a thousand years in chapter 20. The power of God's angels is beyond anything we can imagine!

These angels, this great and mighty Heavenly Host, minister to the needs of God's people today. They minister directly to you and me. We should thank God for these great allies in our lives!

I'll end this section about angels with one thought. The good angels have great power and position, but they don't have something of great importance that we have. They do not know what it's like to be lost, sin-filled and without hope. They do not know what it is to be dead in sin. They do not know the great spiritual awakening that comes from God's forgiveness. They do not know the joy of "once I was lost but now I'm found, was blind but now I see." They don't know the emotion of redemption. The angels look upon all this and are amazed! Peter said it well in his first letter, chapter 1, verses 3 - 12:

“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. Wherein ye greatly rejoice, though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations: That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ: Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory: Receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls. Of which salvation the prophets have enquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you: Searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow. Unto whom it was revealed, that not unto themselves, but unto us they did minister the things, which are now reported unto you by them that have preached the gospel unto you with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven; which things the angels desire to look into.”

Now that I know the spirit world exists, I am amazed by it. It is a real world that impacts with our world and our lives every day. I pray God will help you gain more insight into His plan for the physical and spirit world and that you might find great comfort in His protection and provision.

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