

ANGELS: AN INTRODUCTION

Vocabulary

The word “angel” comes to us via the Greek language – *aggelov* (**ang**·el·os) – “a messenger,” be they a normal human messenger or a supernatural one sent from God. Its Hebrew equivalent is מלאך (ML·AK), which also refers to someone dispatched with a message to deliver, either from a human or from God Himself.

Purpose

The best passage for understanding the purpose of the supernatural sort of messengers –i.e., the “angels” of God – is Hebrews 1:14.

“Are they not all ministering spirits being sent into service on behalf of those being about to inherit salvation?”

[My translation]

Census

Daniel 7:10 & Revelation 5:11 present the number of angels before God’s throne as, “thousands of thousands” & “ten thousands of ten thousands,” which, in a very literal English translation, would be “millions” & “hundreds of millions.” In practical usage, the Hebrew idiom expresses a number too big to bother counting.

Angelic Form & Nature

Hebrews 1:7’s quotation of Psalm 104:4 gives us some insight into the “physical” nature of angels.

“About angels He says, ‘Making spirit *beings*, His messengers; blazing fire *beings*, His servants.’”

[My translation]

Angels, therefore, are **spirit** beings, without the bone and flesh body of humans (Luke 24:39). They also seem to radiate visible light – just like a **blazing fire** – as is so commonly noted in the Biblical records about angelic visitations. (I personally suspect that angels derive their life energy from the absorption of photons, shedding excess energy in the form of visible light.)

That being said, it would appear that angels come in a variety of forms.

Some angels certainly appear in “normal” humanoid form (always male, interestingly enough). They are seen to interact with the physical environment around them in a completely human manner – they wear clothing, walk, sit, talk, manipulate physical objects, touch people and even eat & drink. Often, their angelic nature is only discovered after they engage in some supernatural act, such as suddenly disappearing or, on other occasions, miraculously ascending into the sky. In fact, Hebrews 13:2 advises the careful extension of Christian hospitality based on the historical fact that some believers in the past “have entertained angels unawares.”

It is not altogether clear from Scripture if these particular angels are “naturally” humanoid in appearance, or if they “morph” from their own angelic form into human appearance simply to accommodate the accomplishment of their mission.

I have come to suspect that these angels may belong to a special class of angel specifically designed to have regular and intimate involvement with human beings. Perhaps they are the “watchers” – □□□ (OYR) – mentioned only in Daniel 4:13, 17, 23, which certainly seem to be so very interested and involved in human affairs. This same class might have been the source of the rebel angels of Genesis 6:1-4; 2 Peter 2:4; and Jude 6, who became infatuated with human women and by them conceived a race of hybrids. (That is certainly the plot-line of the apocryphal Book of Enoch, written sometime around the New Testament era.)

We know of at least two other specified classes of angels – Seraphs & Cherubs.

The Seraphim (this is the plural Hebrew form) – □□□ (S·RF, the singular form) – appear in close proximity to Yahweh’s heavenly throne, first in Isaiah 6 and then again in Revelation 4. The Hebrew term comes from a verb meaning “to burn,” probably a reference to the fact that they emit visible light. In both passages they have six wings and are worshipping Yahweh as “*Tsabaoth*” or “the Almighty” Commander of Armies. In Revelation we learn that these same angels are “full of eyes” (perhaps like peacock plumage), and that there are only four of these “living creatures,” each of them with a different face – lion, ox, man and eagle. (It should not be missed that the most ancient mythologies consistently portrayed their various “gods” as being basically humanoid in form, but with both wings & animal-like heads.)

The Cherubim (plural Hebrew form) – □□□□ (KR·WB, the singular form) – also appear in close proximity to Yahweh’s throne, but this time it is typically the earthly representation, i.e., the Ark of the Covenant. While they appear many places in Scripture (especially in relation to the Garden of Eden, the Tabernacle & the Temple) they are described in greatest detail within Ezekiel 1 & 10. They are basically humanoid in form, covered with (peacock-like?) “eyes,” having four wings and four faces – lion, ox, man and eagle. Based on my understanding of Ezekiel 28:11-19 (specifically verse 16), I think it probable that Satan was a Cherub.

There may be many other classes of angel about which we have no details.

Based on Jesus’ comments in Matthew 18:10 (combined with other passages, such as Hebrews 1:14; Psalms 34:7; 91:11; and Acts 12:15), it is likely that each child is assigned to the care of a “guardian” angel, although these angels may have more than one such ward at a time. Their purpose would be to aid in directing the child’s heart toward God & not necessarily to intervene supernaturally to save them from physical harm.

Movements & Limitations

Angels naturally exist in the “heavenly” realm but travel to our “earthly” realm on a regular basis on assignment from God. Jacob actually saw them moving back & forth between these two dimensions along a “stairway” or “ladder” during his dream at Luz (Genesis 28:12) – which he renamed “Beth-El” (“House of God”) – stating that this had to be a heavenly “gate” (Genesis 28:17).

Apparently, while they are constantly moving among us humans on their various assignments, angels are only seen when God wishes them to be seen. (This information is extracted from the stories of Balaam & his donkey in Numbers 22 and of Elisha at Dothan in 2 Kings 6.)

It should be kept in mind that, like humans, angels are created beings and as such are limited by both time & space. They cannot be in two places at the same time nor can they move instantly from place to place. (This information is extracted from angelic testimony in Daniel 10.)

ANGELS: HOW THE GREAT SPIRITUAL WAR BEGAN

In the beginning...

[God said to Job,] “Where were you when I laid the foundation of the earth? Tell me, if you have understanding. Who determined its measurements—surely you know! Or who stretched the line upon it? On what were its bases sunk, or who laid its cornerstone, when the morning stars sang together and all the sons of God shouted for joy?”

Job 38:4-7 (ESV)

It is a common element of Hebrew poetry to parallel the thoughts of two joined lines through the use of synonyms. In the case of final verse in the passage quoted above, the subject nouns “morning stars” & “all the sons of God” (who are very specifically called “angels” in the Greek Septuagint translation of the O.T.), as well as the verbs “sang together” & “shouted for joy” represent God’s own testimony as to what His angels were doing at the moment Planet Earth came into existence. From this we can be certain that angels were created at the very beginning of time.

One of those original angels of God was the entity now quite well-known to us, either by his Hebrew name, “Satan” (שָׂטָן - “adversary”), or by his Greek name, “the Devil” (diaboloj – “slanderer” or “accuser”). Back then, he had a completely different Hebrew name, Heylel (הֵיִלֵּל - “Shining One”); although we’re much more familiar with the Latin translation of his name, Lucifer (“Light Bearer”). This name, along with some interesting information about his transformation into Satan can be found in two O.T. passages – Isaiah 14:12-15 & Ezekiel 28:12-17. In both cases, the inspired prophet began to speak about a corrupt human king, but then seemed to veer off into a description about the far more dangerous non-human entity that is manipulating things behind the scenes.

The Ezekiel passage focuses upon Heylel’s previous status. He is described as being perfect, wise & beautiful. We learn that he was a cherub, stationed in the Garden of Eden. (It would even appear from this passage that cherubim bodies, described previously in Ezekiel 1 & 10, are covered in or decorated with precious stones & metals. As you can imagine, this would have been exceptionally beautiful.)

More specifically, Heylel was the “anointed cherub that covers.” This verb, “that covers,” harkens back to the description of the cherubim images on the Ark of the Covenant “which overshadowed” the mercy seat. Perhaps, Heylel was originally assigned to stand near an earthly throne of God set up in the Garden of Eden.

He was further described as walking among the “stones of fire.” (The cherubim back in Ezekiel 1:13 were also seen in the midst of “coals of fire.”) While I can’t be certain, I think these “stones of fire” may be later represented symbolically by the hot coals taken by Jewish priests from the sacrifice altar outside the Tabernacle/Temple & placed on the golden altar inside the Tabernacle/Temple (which was located immediately in front of the Ark of the Covenant) in order to ignite the incense offered during a times of prayer. In other words, I think the “stones of fire” have something to do with earthly communication with God & that the cherubim are intimately related to this process. There is also a possible connection to the two stones – the Urim (אֲבִנֵי אֵשׁ - “Lights”) & the Thummim (אֲבִנֵי אֵשׁ - “Perfections” – used by the High Priest in basic (Yes/No) communication with God (Exodus 28:30).

The Fall of Satan

Heylel was completely “blameless” until something happened, causing God to banish him from his special status among the “stones of fire.” Ezekiel 28:17 intimates that it had something to do with his personal pride, but we have to move to the Isaiah passage for a bit more information.

“O, how you have fallen from the heavens, Heylel, Son of the Dawn!”

Isaiah 14:12a [My translation]

Heylel is the Hebrew name for the planet Venus, the third brightest object in our sky. Poetically, Hebrew also called it the “Son of the Dawn,” in much the same way we English-speakers sometime call it the “morning star.” This poetic association of angels & stars can be found throughout the Bible and is helpful in understanding certain aspects of how the great spiritual war began.

In Isaiah 14:13-14 [My translation below], Heylel’s intention at the time of his rebellion are made clear. It consists of five statements of his prideful “will.”

1. I will ascend to the heavens, above the stars of God. [i.e., above the “angels”]
2. I will set up my throne.
3. I will sit in the designated mountain, in the extreme north. [In poetry, the heavenly “Mt. Zion” is considered to be in the north (Psalm 48:2)]
4. I will ascend above the cloud.
5. I will be like the Most High.

But Heylel didn’t simply march directly against God. Instead, he began his attempted coup against the Most High by suborning God’s most prized creature – humanity. This story is told in Genesis 3. [SPECIAL NOTE: Revelation 20:2 makes it very clear that the terms, “Dragon,” “Ancient Serpent,” “Devil” and “Satan” all refer to the same, evil entity which has been at war with humanity throughout our history. It seems to me that the serpent of Genesis 3 may have been an animal agent of Heylel, rather than Heylel himself, but in the long run it makes no real difference to the story itself.]

Heylel carried out a classic covert mission against our first parents. First, he waited until he could approach the woman when she was alone. Next, he asked a loaded question – “So, why did God tell you not to eat of all the trees of the garden?” When Eve responded with the truth, that she & the man were only prohibited from eating of one specific tree, Heylel finished his temptation by accusing God of lying to the couple and of having selfish ulterior motives – “You aren’t going to die. God knows that the day you eat of it your eyes will be opened and you will become like God, knowing good and evil.”

From that point forward it was just a matter of letting the woman’s own mental processes take over. She knew from personal experience that all the other fruit from all the other trees were delicious, why not this one? She could see with her own eyes that it was very desirable. Finally, she now had reason to pride-fully believe that eating it could make her just like God. John the apostle may have had these same three areas in mind when he warned us against falling in love with the things of this world rather than doing the will of God.

Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world— **the desires of the flesh** and **the desires of the eyes** and **pride in possessions**—is not from the Father but is from the world. And the world is passing away along with its desires, but whoever does the will of God abides forever."

1 John 2:15-17 (ESV) [Emphasis mine]

We still live with the fall-out of the free-will choices of the woman and the man to listen to the voice of Heyl rather than to stick with the Word of God.

1. There is a war between the seed of woman (humanity) & the seed of the serpent (wicked angels). Thankfully, there was also the promise that an ultimate avenger would arise – that being, of course, our Lord and our Savior, Jesus Christ.
2. There is now great pain in the midst of the blessed gift of child-bearing. In addition, because of the chaotic nature of this world, and because of the circumstances involved in sin entering this world via Eve's choice not to submit to God's rule, wives must now submit to the leadership of their husbands.
3. There is an entropic (order→disorder) curse upon this once-perfect world. Hard work is now the normal state of life. A shortened life of hard work is then, inevitably, followed up by physical death.

Satan's Ultimate Destiny & His Current Situation

This, then, was how the great spiritual war began. There are a few other bits & pieces that we can glean from various passages in Scripture.

His [the dragon's] tail swept down a third of the stars of heaven and cast them to the earth. And the dragon stood before the woman who was about to give birth, so that when she bore her child he might devour it.

Revelation 12:4 (ESV)

I think this passage indicates two significant things about Satan; 1) he managed to recruit about one-third of the original angels to his cause, and 2) he has spent much of his time & effort in the past attempting to foil the Genesis 3:15 prophecy regarding the rising of an avenger arise from among the "seed of woman."

Then he will say to those on his left, 'Depart from me, you cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels.'

Matthew 25:41 (ESV)

...and the devil who had deceived them was thrown into the lake of fire and sulfur where the beast and the false prophet were, and they will be tormented day and night forever and ever."

Revelation 20:10 (ESV)

These two passages inform us of the ultimate fate of Satan and his rebels. "Hell" was specifically designed to hold them in confinement forever. (It is only through economy of use that rebellious humans will spend eternity in that same place.) But until then, Satan & his angels seem to be on parole. They are allowed to sniff around for people willing to join their rebellion. However, it seems that they cannot violate our free will.

Now there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the Lord, and Satan also came among them.

The Lord said to Satan, "From where have you come?"

Satan answered the Lord and said, "From going to and fro on the earth, and from walking up and down on it."

Job 1:6-7 (ESV)

Be sober-minded; be watchful. Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour.

Attitude Check

Our expected attitude toward Satan is illustrated in the following passages.

"Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you."

James 4:7 (ESV)

Resist him, firm in your faith, knowing that the same kinds of suffering are being experienced by your brotherhood throughout the world.

1 Peter 5:9 (ESV)

Be angry and do not sin; do not let the sun go down on your anger, and give no opportunity to the devil.

Ephesians 4:26-27 (ESV)

Whoever makes a practice of sinning is of the devil, for the devil has been sinning from the beginning. The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the works of the devil. No one born of God makes a practice of sinning, for God's seed abides in him, and he cannot keep on sinning because he has been born of God. By this it is evident who are the children of God, and who are the children of the devil: whoever does not practice righteousness is not of God, nor is the one who does not love his brother."

1 John 3:8-10 (ESV)

Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his might. Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the schemes of the devil. For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places. Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand firm. Stand therefore, having fastened on the belt of truth, and having put on the breastplate of righteousness, and, as shoes for your feet, having put on the readiness given by the gospel of peace. In all circumstances take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming darts of the evil one; and take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God, praying at all times in the Spirit, with all prayer and supplication.

Ephesians 6:10-18a (ESV)

For your obedience is known to all, so that I rejoice over you, but I want you to be wise as to what is good and innocent as to what is evil. The God of peace will soon crush Satan under your feet. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you.

Romans 16:19-20 (ESV)

THE ANGELS WHO SINNED

What the O.T. says...

When man began to multiply on the face of the land and daughters were born to them, the sons of God¹ saw that the daughters of man were attractive.² And they took as their wives any they chose.³

Then the Lord said, “My Spirit shall not abide in man forever, for he is flesh: his days shall be 120 years.”

The Nephilim⁴ were on the earth in those days, and also afterward, when the sons of God came in to the daughters of man and they bore children to them. These were the mighty men⁵ who were of old, the men of renown.

The Lord saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every intention of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. And the Lord was sorry that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him to his heart. So the Lord said, “I will blot out man whom I have created from the face of the land, man and animals and creeping things and birds of the heavens, for I am sorry that I have made them.”

But Noah found favor in the eyes of the Lord.

Genesis 6:1-8 (ESV)

What the N.T. says...

For if God did not spare angels when they sinned, but cast them into hell⁶ and committed them to chains of gloomy darkness to be kept until the judgment; if he did not spare the ancient world, but preserved Noah, a herald of righteousness, with seven others, when he brought a flood upon the world of the ungodly;

2 Peter 2:4-5 (ESV)

And the angels who did not stay within their own position of authority, but left their proper dwelling, he has kept in eternal chains under gloomy darkness until the judgment of the great day—

Jude 6 (ESV)

¹ I.e., “angels.” This was the universal understanding during the Apostolic Era. The commonly-held notion that these were the “unrighteous offspring of Cain” who inter-married with the “righteous offspring of Seth” didn’t come into existence until several hundred years after the time of Christ.

² More literally, “good”; probably “good” for some nefarious purpose. (There’s a different Hebrew word which indicates beauty.)

³ More literally, “they took for themselves women from all, whomever they chose.” Marriage was probably not the intention of these entities, but rather the taking and use of these women for breeding purposes.

⁴ Hebrew: נִפְלִיִּים “Fallen” Greek: γίγαντες “Earth-spawned,” and the source of our English word, “giant.”

⁵ The Greek O.T. uses the word γίγαντες here, the word for “giants.”

⁶ τάρταρος “threw into *Tartaros*.” In Greek mythology, *Tartaros* was located as far below *Hades* (the place of the spirits of dead humans) as *Hades* was below Heaven (the place of the gods). It was the place where the gods confined their most dangerous enemies. The elder gods of Greek mythology, the *Titans*, confined their opponents, the giants (the children of *Gaia* or “Mother Earth”) within *Tartaros*. Later, after they defeated the *Titans*, the Olympian gods, confined them to *Tartaros* as well.

What Josephus (the 1st Century, Jewish historian) says...

1. (72) Now this posterity of Seth continued to esteem God as the Lord of the universe, and to have an entire regard to virtue, for seven generations; but in process of time they were perverted, and forsook the practices of their forefathers, and did neither pay those honors to God which were appointed them, nor had they any concern to do justice towards men. But for what degree of zeal they had formerly shown for virtue, they now showed by their actions a double degree of wickedness; whereby they made God to be their enemy, (73) for many angels of God accompanied with women, and begat sons that proved unjust, and despisers of all that was good, on account of the confidence they had in their own strength; for the tradition is, That these men did what resembled the acts of those whom the Grecians call giants. (74) But Noah was very uneasy at what they did; and, being displeased at their conduct, persuaded them to change their dispositions and their acts for the better;—but, seeing that they did not yield to him, but were slaves to their wicked pleasures, he was afraid they would kill him, together with his wife and children, and those they had married; so he departed out of that land.

2. (75) Now God loved this man for his righteousness; yet he not only condemned those other men for their wickedness, but determined to destroy the whole race of mankind, and to make another race that should be pure from wickedness; and, cutting short their lives, and making their years not so many as they formerly lived, but one hundred and twenty only, he turned the dry land into sea; (76) and thus were all these men destroyed: but Noah alone was saved;

Antiquities of the Jews, Book I, Chapter 2, Paragraphs 1-2

The Basics Gleaned from These Sources....

- Prior to the Flood, some of the rebellious angels left their proper places within the spirit world.
- Having done so, they used human women to produce a hybrid race called “giants.”
- The wicked actions of these hybrids contributed to God’s decision to bring on the Flood.
- God condemned the angels involved in this hybridization project to a special place of confinement.
- God also limited the human lifespan to about 120 years.
- Other “giants” have been produced since the Flood.

Additional Bits of Related Information...

Fallen angels (a.k.a., “demons” or “evil spirits”) seem to have an instinctive fear of being sent into “the Pit” (the “Abyss”) – perhaps just another name for *Tartaros*, a place of confinement until final judgment.

- Luke 8:31
- Revelation 9:1; 20:1-3

Jesus’ statement that angels “neither marry nor are given in marriage” does not rule out the possibility of rebellious angels messing around with the human genetic code (Matthew 22:30//Mark 12:25//Luke 20:36).

Isn’t it also interesting that in every instance where God’s angels appear in human form they invariably do so as males?

The Nephilim after the Flood

It is certain that God's Flood wiped out all the "giants" which had been spawned during the Genesis 6 hybridization incident. However, verse 4 does indicate the existence of other "giants" afterward. According to various Scriptures, these later "giants" were intentionally attacked & annihilated by humans, often at the specific directive of God Himself.

During the time of Abraham (2091 BC), an allied Mesopotamian army made a military sweep through the region northeast, east, southeast and south of Sodom & Gomorrah, before attacking those cities specifically. Along the way they defeated "the Rephaim," "the Zuzim," "the Emim" and "the Horites" (Genesis 14:5-6). These were all populations of "giants" which the Mesopotamians apparently considered as potential allies to their ultimate target, the cities of Sodom & Gomorrah.

When God promised Canaan (west of the Jordan) to Abraham's offspring, He listed "the Rephaim" as one of the current occupants of the land (Genesis 15:20). In fact, the ancient (pre-Israeli) name for the valley immediately southwest of Salem/Jebus/Jerusalem was the Valley of Rephaim ("Giants").

In my opinion, God's destruction of Sodom & Gomorrah may have been partly prompted by the presence of a post-Flood angelic hybridization project, the offspring of which were spreading outward from Sodom & Gomorrah.

After the destruction of Sodom & Gomorrah (2077 BC), Lot's two daughters gave birth to the "fathers" of the Moabite & Ammonite peoples. These two people groups eventually took over much of the land east of Canaan, beyond the Jordan, the Sea of Galilee & the Dead Sea.

We are told that the country of Moab (the more southern Lot clan) was previously occupied by the "Emim," "a people great and many, and tall as the Anakim" and who were "counted as Rephaim" or "giants" (Deuteronomy 2:10-11). The Moabites evidently annihilated them before Israel arrived in 1416 BC.

We also know that the Ammonites (the more northern Lot clan) had destroyed nearly all of the Rephaim & Zamzummim "giants" (Deuteronomy 2:18-21) near their territory. While on their way to Canaan, the Israelis were attacked by Og of Bashan, who was said to be the sole survivor of the Rephaim (Deuteronomy 3:11). After his death, they kept his iron bed (13.5 feet long x 6 feet wide) on display at his former capital of Rabbah.

In addition, Abraham's grandson Esau (brother of Jacob/Israel) completely wiped out the "Horites" of Mount Seir before 1919 BC (Deuteronomy 2:21); that region then become known as Edom.

This accounts for the utter destruction of all the "giant" populations east outside Canaan.

You might remember that the majority of the Israeli spies thought Canaan was unconquerable because the "Nephilim" were in the land (Numbers 13:32-33), specifically the "Sons of Anak." Their fearful response to these "giants" led to 40 years of wilderness wandering. As Israel prepared to go into the land a generation later, Moses reminded them that God would deal with these scary "Sons of the Anakim" (Deuteronomy 9:1-3).

Eventually Caleb (the only spy besides Joshua who had believed that Israel could take the land from the "giants") led the Judah tribe in eradicating the Anakim located around Hebron, which at that time was called Kirath-Arba; Arba being the leader of the Anakim (Joshua 15:13-14; cf. Judges 1:10, 20).

This left only a few "giants" on the Mediterranean coast; at Gezer, Gath & Ashdod (Joshua 11:21-22). These were eventually associated with the Philistines who settled at Gath. David & his mighty men annihilated this final line by killing Goliath & his relatives (1 Samuel 17; 2 Samuel 21:15-21//1 Chronicles 20:4-8).

Some Personal Observations...

Since the Fall of Mankind, Satan and his rebellious angels have been at war with humanity. I would expect that one of their primary war goals would have been to compromise the integrity of the “Seed of Woman,” so as to stop “the Avenger” of Genesis 3:15 & Revelation 12 from ever arriving on the scene. Establishing an angelic-human hybridization project would have been one means of doing so. I imagine that such hybrids would have leaned toward the anti-human tendencies of their “fathers.” Interestingly enough, world mythologies generally portray “giants,” not simply as being huge, but as being very vicious toward humans, often enslaving or even eating them.

Furthermore, it appears to me that by sending the Flood, destroying Sodom & Gomorrah, as well as by His precise instructions regarding the Conquest of Canaan, God had the intention, at least in part, of wiping out any angelic-human hybrid populations. He apparently doesn’t tolerate such manipulations of the human gene pool for very long before acting decisively against them.

Finally, I am intrigued by the fact that since the dawn of the nuclear age there has been an increasing number of stories regarding “alien abductions,” with great emphasis placed upon some sort of alien-human hybridization project which appears to be ongoing. I think it is very possible that once again the rebel angels are messing around with the human genome. If so, I expect it won’t be long before God intervenes in some manner – perhaps even with the Second Coming – that will put an end to this activity.

THE DARK SIDE OF THE OCCULT WAR

“Occult” = “Concealed”

Some O.T. Examples of Satan’s Personal, Ongoing Assault Against Humanity

- Against Job (Job 1 & 2)
- Against Israel, via King David (1 Chronicles 21:1ff; cf. 2 Samuel 24:1ff)
- Against the High Priest Joshua (Zechariah 3:1-2; cf. Jude 9)

Some O.T. Examples of Other Spirit Rebel Action in the Unseen World

- Against Job, via Eliphaz (Job 4:12-21)
- Against King Ahab of Israel (1 Kings 22:19-23//2 Chronicles 18:18-22)
- Against Gabriel(?) & Michael (Daniel 10:1-11:1)

The Demonic Power of Idolatry

Hebrew: □□ shd “a spirit which presents itself as a god”

Greek: daimwn daimon

The Bible equates idolatry with the worship of demons spirits.

- Deuteronomy 32:15-18
- Psalm 106:34-39
- 1 Corinthians 10:14-22 (Read 8:1-11:1 for the complete context.)

Therefore, any activity associated with the worship of idols (“gods”), is to be considered off limits for the covenant people of the one, true God – Yahweh.

- Exodus 20:1-6
- Deuteronomy 13:1-18
- Deuteronomy 18:9-22
 - “...pass through the fire” = A major element in the worship of Molech/Chemosh
 - “...uses divination” = The “division” of items or information by casting lots
 - “...witchcraft” = The Hebrew is literally, “a cloud watcher”
 - “...interprets omens” = Interpreting the hidden meaning behind things like animal entrails or tea leaves
 - “...sorcerer” = The Greek is pharmakos, one who uses drugs to change the behavior of self or others
 - “...casts a spell” = The use of charms (physical, verbal or musical) to produce spiritual “bonds.”
 - “...medium” = One who asks questions of the spirit world
 - “...a spiritist” = One who knows things by other than normal means
 - “...who calls up the dead” = One who attempts to contact the dead

As indicated above, this would include any attempt to gain information or control by other than natural, human means, as well as the drunkenness, gluttony and sexual immorality which were all part of pagan worship ceremonies.

- Acts 15:22-29
- Romans 1:18-32
- 1 Corinthians 11:17-34
- Galatians 5:19-21
- Ephesians 4:17-5:21 (especially 5:3-6) [Remember also Ephesians 6:12!]
- 1 Timothy 4:1-5
- 1 John 4:1-6
- Revelation 21:8; 22:15

Some Personal Observations

- As mentioned previously, although Satan and his rebels are very powerful spirit beings, they are still creatures and are therefore limited by the time & space constraints of Creation. They cannot be in more than one place at the same time.
- There is evidently some sort of regional hierarchy among the fallen angels. Their place within this command structure probably depends upon their overall effectiveness in accomplishing Satan's directives. This would explain the widespread pagan conviction that the power of the "gods" was varied and regionally limited. There are some good examples of this belief recorded in the historical books of the O.T. (Genesis 31:17-35; Exodus 5:1-2; Numbers 22-24; Judges 17-18; 1 Samuel 4-6; 1 Kings 11:1-8; 18:16-40; 20:22-20; 2 Kings 5:15-19; 17:24-33; 2 Chronicles 25:14-16; 28:22-23)
- All the activity of Satan's forces takes place within the permissive will of God. While it is difficult to understand why He allows this to happen, we should take courage in the fact that He has promised that all such activity will never exceed the limits of our own personal endurance. To the contrary, He will always provide a way of escape that does not involve sin [1 Corinthians 10:13 (MEMORIZE THIS VERSE!)], although we should understand that the only means of escaping may sometimes involve suffering or dying for the Faith we profess.
- While tempting humans to sin against God is the action most often associated with the rebel forces, the most effective and dangerous weapon in their arsenal is the personal guilt over sins already committed, together with the terror of God's righteous judgment against those sins. Thankfully, Jesus' atoning death & resurrection specifically dealt with that guilt issue (Hebrews 2:14-18).

PROJECT: MESSIAH

Compartmentalization of Information: Within the military, information is purposefully disseminated on a “need to know” basis. Members are privy only to that limited amount of information necessary for them to accomplish their particular component within the larger mission. This very effectively limits the amount of damage that can be done by the enemy in cases where classified information is compromised. It is clear that God the Father has tasked His prophets, His angels and even His Son on a similar “need to know” basis.

- 1 Peter 1:10-12
- Matthew 24:36//Mark 13:32 (consider also Mark 5:25-34//Luke 8:43-48)
- Philippians 2:5-11

Since the “Fall of Mankind,” a large portion of the angelic & prophetic work has been directed toward what I like to call “PROJECT: MESSIAH” – the Father’s plan to redeem us from sin via the atoning death & bodily resurrection of His Son. Neither the angels nor the prophets understood the full meaning of the messages they were tasked to deliver. This compartmentalization of spiritual information kept Satan unformed of - and therefore unable to effectively counter - God’s intentions regarding our salvation through Christ.

Angelic Support During PROJECT: MESSIAH

- Gabriel’s message to Daniel (Daniel 9)
- Gabriel’s messages to Zechariah, Mary & Joseph (Luke 1 & Matthew 1)
- Angelic message to the shepherds on the night of Jesus’ birth (Luke 2)
- The star & angelic messages which helped baby Jesus escape assassination (Matthew 2)
- Angelic support after Jesus’ temptation (Matthew 4:11//Mark 1:13)
- Angelic support during Jesus’ Gethsemene prayer (Luke 22:43)
- Jesus knew that angelic “legion” were on stand-by, awaiting his command (Matthew 26:53)
- Angelic support & messages after Jesus’ resurrection (Matthew 28//Mark 16//Luke 24//John 20)
- Angelic message after Jesus’ ascension (Acts 1:9-11)

Enemy Activity During PROJECT: MESSIAH

- Satan probably used Herod the Great in an assassination attempt upon baby Jesus (Matthew 2)
- Satan confronted Jesus after his immersion (Matthew 4//Mark 1//Luke 4)
- Jesus' "Parable of the Soils" illustrated Satan's attack on Mankind via ignorance, worry & self indulgence (Matthew 13:18-23//Mark 4:13-20//Luke 8:11-18)
- Jesus regularly expelled demons as part of his ministry

Some Known Characteristics of Possession by Demonic, Unclean or Evil Spirits

- Possession of a human body (Matthew 12:43-45)
- Possession by multiple spirits (Mark 5:9//Luke 8:30; Luke 8:2; Matthew 12:45)
- Possession "since childhood," i.e., school-age (Mark 9:20)
- Possession in a place of worship (Mark 1:23//Luke 4:33)
- Supernatural knowledge (Acts 16:16, 19) including the recognition of Jesus as the Holy One of God (Mark 1:23-25//Luke 4:34; Mark 1:34//Luke 4:41; Mark 3:11-12; Matthew 8:29//Mark 5:7//Luke 8:28)
- Supernatural strength (Mark 5:3-4//Luke 8:29)
- Fear of being tortured in the Abyss (Luke 4:34//Mark 1:24; Matthew 8:29//Mark 5:7//Luke 8:28, 31)
- Affliction of the possessed person by means of illness and/or self-destructive behavior (Mark 1:26//Luke 4:35; Mark 5:5//Luke 8:27; Matthew 9:32-33; Matthew 12:22//Luke 11:14; Matthew 17:14-20//Mark 9:14-29//Luke 9:37-43; Luke 13:10-11)
- Jesus empowered both his apostles (Mark 3:13-19; Matthew 10:1-11:1//Mark 6:7-13//Luke 9:1-6) & his disciples (Luke 10:1-20) with the authority to expel demons
- The expulsion of demons lessens Satan's power (Matthew 12:24-30//Mark 3:22-27//Luke 11:15-23; cf. Luke 10:18)
- Satan sought permission "to sift [the apostles] like wheat" (Luke 22:31; cf. John 6:70)
- Satan did compromise Judas Iscariot (Luke 22:3-6//John 13:2) eventually possessing him (John 13:27)

The Impact of PROJECT: MESSIAH

The two-fold goal of PROJECT: MESSIAH

1. Defeat Satan & his spirit rebels
 2. Redeem a righteous remnant of humans
- Luke 19:10
 - Hebrews 2:14-18
 - 1 John 3:8b
 - 1 Peter 3:22 (cf. Matthew 28:19)
 - Colossians 2:13-15 (cf. Matthew 12:29//Mark 3:27//Luke 11:21-22)
 - Revelation 12:1-12

The On-Going Battles of PROJECT: MESSIAH

- Revelation 12:13-17
- 1 Peter 5:6-11 (cf. James 4:1-10)
- Romans 8:1ff, especially 31-39; 16:17-20
- 1 John 3:1-10; 4:1-6; 5:18-19
- Ephesians 6:10-20

THE END OF THE WAR

PRIMARY PRINCIPLE REGARDING PROPHECY: Knowing the timing of Christ's return must never be our major focus – it must always be making sure that we're ready for His return.

He said to them, "It is not for you to know times [*time as a line*] or seasons [*time as a point*] that the Father has fixed by his own authority.

Acts 1:7 (ESV)

Now concerning the times [*time as a line*] and the seasons [*time as a point*], brothers, you have no need to have anything written to you. For you yourselves are fully aware that the day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night.

1 Thessalonians 5:1-2 (ESV)

Be on guard, keep awake. For you do not know when the time ["*hour*"] will come. It is like a man going on a journey, when he leaves home and puts his servants in charge, each with his work, and commands the doorkeeper to stay awake. Therefore stay awake—for you do not know when the master of the house will come, in the evening, or at midnight, or when the rooster crows, or in the morning—lest he come suddenly and find you asleep. And what I say to you I say to all: Stay awake.

Mark 13:33-37 (ESV)

WHAT WE (PROBABLY) KNOW ABOUT THE FINAL STAGE OF THE GREAT SPIRITUAL WAR

- We know, with absolute certainty, that the death & resurrection of Jesus Christ marked the beginning of the end for Satan's kingdom, since by those events Jesus dealt a severe blow to the spiritual forces of evil.
- It would appear from Revelation 4-18 & from Daniel 7, that at some point in the future, Satan & his rebel angels will be ejected from the unseen realm ("the heavens"), initiating a final 3 ½ year earthly showdown between his forces (both angelic & human) and anyone who opposes them. I anticipate that the "supernatural" abilities of Satan & his angels will be substantially limited by being banished to our realm (since they will then be limited by the physics of our material world); nevertheless, through his human agents (namely, the final human leader of a world government & his false prophet associate), he will manage to inflict great casualties among those humans who side with the coming King of kings & Lord of lords. But those who are faithful unto death will receive the victor's crown of life.
- After the Battle of Har Maggedon (which happens shortly after Jesus' 2nd Coming), Satan & his fallen angels will be banished to the Abyss for 1,000 years. During this time, Jesus will reign upon the earth, assisted by His immortal saints (those resurrected & transformed at His coming). I suspect that the mortals over whom they will be reigning will consist of the young people & uncommitted peoples alive at the time of Jesus' return. [Zechariah 14:16-19 clearly indicates that such "unsaved" mortals will exist.]
- Near the close of the Millennium some of the mortals will have become completely dissatisfied with the reign of Christ. They will be the ones who join in Satan's (very brief) post-Millennial rebellion. [The Battle of God & Magog is described briefly in Revelation 20:7-10, but at length in Ezekiel 38-39.]
- Jesus will decisively put down this final challenge to His authority. Afterward, Satan will be permanently remanded to the Lake of Fire – a.k.a., Hell. This place of eternal punishment was designed specifically for the Devil & his angels (Matthew 25:41) but will also be used for unrepentant sinners (Revelation 20:11-15).