

The Doctrine of Angels – Part 2

Special Classes of Angels

Archangel – The term “archangel” is from the Greek *archangelos* and it is found only two places in the Bible, 1 Thess 4:16; Jude 1:9. The word “archangel” means the chief or principle angel and can refer to good or evil angels. Archangel may be related to “principalities,” Greek *arche*, found in Rom 8:38; Eph 6:10, 12; Col 1:16; 2:15, which obviously refers to a higher level of angelic authority.

Cherubim – These angels are the guardians of God’s holiness and always appear in close proximity to God. “Cherubim” is a plural form and is found 65 times in the Old Testament and once in the New. The singular form, *cherub*, is found 30 times all in the Old Testament. God placed Cherubim to guard the way to Eden, Gen 3:24; two were the atop the ark of the covenant, Ex 25:18-20; two were on the curtain of the most holy place, Ex 26:1; they are key characters in the prophet’s visions in Ezekiel 1:1-28 and 10:1-22.

Seraphim – The name means “burning ones,” are only mentioned in Isaiah 6:2, 6. While similar to cherubim, these angels each had six wings and human hands. They serve in close proximity to God and constantly announce his holiness.

Names of Angels

Only three angels are named in the bible. **Michael**, whose name means “who is like God,” is the warrior angel who is mentioned in Daniel 10:13, 21 and 12:1 where he is called a “prince.” He came to the aid of the angel who was to deliver a message to Daniel, but had been detained by an evil angel adversary also called a “prince”(10:13). Michael came and restrained the evil angel obstructing the way so Daniel could get the message. In Jude 1:9 he is called an “archangel” which means he had both higher rank and power. In Revelation he led the battle in heaven against the revolt of evil angels.

Gabriel, whose name means “mighty man of God,” appears in Daniel 8:16 and 9:21 as the messenger angel who brings messages from God to Daniel. He was probably the unnamed angel of Daniel 10:10-14. He also was the angel who announced the birth of John the Baptist to Zechariah in Luke 1:19 and the birth Jesus to Mary in Luke 1:26ff.

Lucifer, whose name means “light bearer,” is the personal name for the adversary, Satan, who revolted against God and fell from his former position. While the name Lucifer is not given, it is implied in Jesus statement in Luke 10:18 “I saw Satan fall like lightning . . .” and also alluded to by Paul in 2 Cor 11:4 where he warns that “Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light.”

Lamar E. Cooper, Sr.