

# ICG Bible Correspondence Course

## Lesson Nine – Angelic Realm

### DOCTRINAL STATEMENT

God has created powerful spirit beings as His aides, agents, and messengers. Since man's creation, these spirit beings, called *angels* in the English Bible, function as ministering spirits to help mankind attain salvation. Like man, angels have free moral agency. Although created to help God, some of them—led by Satan the devil—rebelled against God's government transforming themselves into demons.

### DOCTRINAL OVERVIEW

Before the time of man, God created powerful spirit beings (Job 38:7) in vast numbers (Rev.5:11). Although created before and on a higher plane than man, these beings will eventually be under man in authority when humanity has entered God's family (Heb. 2:7-8).

The Bible gives relatively few specifics about the numerous types and responsibilities of these spirit beings, mentioning them in context but not dwelling on them in point apparently, all of these created spirit beings of whatever variety or power are generally labeled as "angels," although the Bible nowhere directly makes that statement. The English word "angel" comes from the Greek word *angelos* which means "messenger" or "agent." The Hebrew word *malak* has the same meaning.

A number of specific types of angels are generally described. *Cherubim* are explained in Ezekiel 1 and 10 as having four wings and four faces (of a lion, ox, eagle and man) and covering (or carrying) God's throne. *Seraphim* are "full of eyes before and behind," having six wings and appearing either like a lion, a calf, an eagle or with the face of a man (Is. 6:2-3; Rev. 4:6-8). "Twenty-four elders" who apparently serve as counselors for God Himself are described in Revelation 4:4, 10-11. Angels have at times appeared on earth as men (Gen. 19:1-2), although it is not revealed whether this indeed can be their actual form or whether they had assumed the appearance of humans for their visit. (Some have wondered that since the physical world reflects the spiritual world—Rom. 1:20—could some of the animals of this earth be, at least, in some fashion, physical counterparts of angelic beings?-cf. Rev. 19:11.)

Although the above scriptures make plain that God has assigned angels various responsibilities, Hebrews 1:14 states they are also to help man attain salvation. "Are they not all spirits sent forth to serve, for the sake of those who are to obtain salvation?" The exact way or manner in which angels minister to men in this capacity is not comprehensively described in the Bible, but there are some allusions and references. Cherubim were sent to guard the way to the tree of life after Adam and Eve had been cast from the garden of Eden (Gen. 3:24). Parts of the law were given by the angels (Acts 7:35; Gal. 3:19; Heb. 2:2). In Genesis 18, angelic beings came to tell Abraham that he would have a son and in Genesis 19, they helped rescue Lot from the city of Sodom before it burned. Angels ministered to Jesus Christ after He withstood Satan for forty days and nights (Mat 4:11). Matthew 18:10 suggests that God's angels watch over God's converted sons. Likewise we are told "there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents" (Luke 15:10). The angels even desire to "look into" the specifics of salvation (I Pet. 1:12). One angel seems to be assigned to each of the seven churches in Revelation 2-3 (Rev. 1:20); and different angels will be intimately involved in God's future intervention in world affairs (Rev. 7:1-2; Ezek. 9; Rev. 8:3-5; 10:1, etc.). specifically in the final seven trumpets (Rev. 8:6 ff) and the seven final plagues (Rev. 15:1 ff). Further verses can

be cited to show other specifically revealed times when angels have served man physically or spiritually. The thrust of all these passages is that the angels play an important role in God's salvation plan for man, and that their relationship with man is one of interest and personal concern.

Long before man, one of the cherubim—his name in Latin is the familiar word Lucifer—had the honor of covering the very throne of God (Ezek. 28:14), indicating a position of very high authority and power in God's government. However, he was lifted up in his own vanity, became resentful and jealous of God, and finally rebelled against God's government. He drew with him as cohorts a third of the angels. These became evil angels or demons with Lucifer, now Satan the devil, as their leader.

Satan is called the god of this world (II Cor. 4:4) and the accuser of the brethren (Rev. 12:10). Some form of satanic "spirit" is now at work in the sons of disobedience (Eph. 2:2). These attitudes enter into the mind of man through the spirit in man (see MAN), perverting it to the twisted thinking of Satan. By this means, Satan and his demonic allies hope to destroy all human beings and ruin their chance for entering the family of God. These wicked spirits try to separate Christians from the love of God (cf. Rom. 8:38-39). A primary battle of a Christian is "against wicked spirits in high places" (Eph. 6:12). It is a battle to resist the influences of Satan and his demons against a person's mind.

God has given us the means to fight this spiritual battle. We must "put on the whole armor of God ... to stand against the wiles of the devil" (Eph. 6:11); this spiritual armor includes truth, righteousness (v. 14), peace (v. 15), faith (v. 16), salvation, the Word of God (v. 17), prayer and supplication (v. 18). Satan our adversary "prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour" (I Pet. 5:8); but he will flee from us if we resist him and draw near to God (James 4:7-8).

While angels are now above man in authority, they are not to be worshipped or prayed to, nor regarded as mediator between God and man (Col. 2:18; Rev. 19:10, 22:8-9). Nonetheless, we must, of course, acknowledge and respect their authority as powerful spiritual helpers of God and His created "sons" (Job 38:7). Even the archangel Michael dared not revile Satan the devil, but appealed to God's authority when confronting him rather than his own (Jude 9). The biblical record shows that angels' authority over man is temporary (Heb. 1:13-14), and explains that man will eventually be in the position of judging the angels (I Cor. 6:3).

God is in supreme command and is only temporarily allowing Satan to influence man within certain confines (Job 1). This process actually enables man to build greater character by resisting Satan and by learning how to rely more on God. During the millennial rule of Christ, Satan is to be removed from the world scene along with his demons. Jesus Christ will replace Satan as the ruler of this world (cf. II Cor. 4:4 and Rev. 20:4-5). Following the millennium, Satan is to be released for a short span of time and then finally, to be removed to a place of restraint for all eternity where he and his demons can no longer affect men or angels. But the faithful angels who have followed God throughout these countless eons of time will continue as servants of the greatly expanded family of God for all eternity.

It is understandable how some have an extremely simplistic impression of the angelic/spiritual realm. From the brief glimpses the Bible gives of God's throne (Rev. 4), one can get the naive idea that angelic beings bow before God all the time as though in a beatific trance; repetitively incanting "holy, holy, holy ..." constantly, without ever stopping or thinking. Likewise, one can easily think that the entire spiritual realm is very ethereal and rather dull when compared with the reality and

tremendous variety of the physical realm as we know it.

In point of fact, this must be a total misconception. The spiritual realm is the true reality while the physical realm maintains an ethereal existence; the spiritual world is the true "substance," while the physical world is the "shadow". We can only begin to comprehend the invisible things of the spiritual realm by observing the visible things of the physical realm (Rom. 1:20). Indeed, the incredible variety and abundance of the physical universe must be paled into insignificance by the unimaginable majesty, beauty, complexity, and diversity of the spiritual universe. The few hints seen show an abundance of, for lack of a better term, spiritual "things" (which comprise just a portion of spiritual reality) that extends incredibly far beyond even angelic beings. The symbolism of spiritual cities, gates, rivers, trees, fruits in Revelation 21-22; horses, armies, and swords in Revelation 19; thrones and wheels in Ezekiel 1 and 10; thrones, clothes, crowns, gold, lightnings, thunders, voices and lamps in Revelation 4, testify to an existence so incomprehensible that even the profuse utilization of physical analogies can scarcely do more than whet our appetite. Going farther, there are spiritual books, seals, incense, vials, songs, hair, etc., with no indication of any limit to the scope of spiritual "things." Indeed, there is every reason to conclude that our present physical realm is drab, plain, and dull when compared with the unfathomable variety and ineffable splendor of the spiritual realm.

## Summary:

READ THESE SCRIPTURES FROM YOUR OWN BIBLE:

**Hebrews 2:6-8** – Man was made a little lower than angels.

**Genesis 19:1-2** – Angels have appeared as men on earth.

**Hebrews 1:14** – Angels help man in the Salvation Process.

**Acts 7:35; Galatians 3:19 and Hebrews 2:2** – Parts of the Law have been given by angels.

**Luke 15:10** – Angels rejoice when a person repents of sin.

**1 Peter 1:12** – Angels are interested in the Salvation Process for mankind.

**Ezekiel 28:14 and Isaiah 14:12** – Satan was once an angel known as Lucifer.

**2 Corinthians 4:4 and Revelation 12:10** – Satan is the god of the world and the accuser of the brethren.

**Ephesians 6:12** – As Christians, we wrestle against spiritual wickedness in high places.

**Ephesians 6:11-18** – To fight Satan, we must put on the whole armor of God.

**1 Corinthians 6:3** – Man will one day judge angels.

**2 Corinthians 4:4 and Revelation 20:4-5** – Jesus Christ will replace Satan as ruler of this world.

## Questions:

1. One of the functions of angels is to help mankind attain salvation? True or False?
2. Angels do not have free moral agency. True or False?
3. Satan was originally created as an angel. True or False?
4. The word "angel" comes from the Greek word "angelio" which means \_\_\_\_\_ or \_\_\_\_\_.
5. All angels are of the same kind or class. True or False?
6. Cherubim cover or carry \_\_\_\_\_ [what?]
7. Cherubim have \_\_ wings and \_\_ faces. [how many?]
8. Seraphim have \_\_ wings. [how many?]
9. The 24 elders are resurrected saints, such as Abraham, Moses and Noah. True or False?
10. Angels can appear as humans on the earth. True or False?
11. Since angels are spirit beings and already immortal, they are not concerned with the subject of Salvation? True or False?
12. A Cherubim, known as Lucifer later became known as \_\_\_\_\_ [whom?]
13. Lucifer allowed his own \_\_\_\_\_ to lead him to resentment and jealousy of God and to rebel. [what?]
14. Lucifer drew away \_\_\_\_\_ of the angels into his rebellion against God. [what fraction; how many?]
15. Who is the god of this world?
16. Satan accuses the brethren (converted members of the Body of Christ) before God. True or False?
17. Satan's purpose is to destroy all of mankind. True or False?
18. A primary battle of Christians is against \_\_\_\_\_ in \_\_\_\_\_ (Eph. 6:12).
19. Satan is in a battle for the \_\_\_\_\_ of man. [what?]

20. Christians are on their own when it comes to battling the influences of Satan. True or False?
21. Satan will flee from a Christian if they \_\_\_\_\_ [do what?]
22. It is permissible to pray to an angel. True or False?
23. Angels act as mediators between man and God. True or False?
24. Angels are, at present, in authority over man. This will always be the case. Yes or No?
25. Man will one day be in a position to judge angels. True or False?
26. Though Satan is the god of this world, God is in supreme command. True or False?
27. Satan can do nothing without the permission of God. True or False?
28. In the future, Satan is to be replaced as ruler of this world by \_\_\_\_\_ [whom?]
29. After the 1,000-year reign of Christ, Satan will be loosed once again upon the earth. True or False?
30. Eventually Satan and his demons will be put away forever. True or False?