

THE ANGEL OF THE LORD

The Angel of the Lord occurs 59 times in 58 verses; it is found in 11 books of the OT & 3 books of the NT.

The word 'angel' (in one form or another) occurs 297 times in 283 verses.

117 of these instances are in 108 verses of the OT.

180 of these instances in 175 verses of the NT.

Angels can be found in 17 books of the OT & 18 books of the NT.

Angels created – Neh 9v6, Acts 4v24

Angels were in the beginning – Job 38v7+4

How many Angels are there? – Ps 68v17, rev 5v11

Angels are 'angels!'

The 'cherubim' are FOUR (4) in number (Eze 1v5) – they are NOT angels! (They have 4 wings – Eze 1v6, & God dwells between them – Isa 37v16)

'Seraphim' have 6 wings – Isa 6v2+6 & stand above the throne of God

Angels do NOT have wings!

Satan originally was a 'cherub' (Eze 28v14)

Not every angel termed 'the angel of the Lord' is 'THE' angel of the Lord!

There are also other manifestations of the angel of the Lord that do NOT refer to him exactly in this manner!

1st mention is Gen 16v7-12

Next mention is Gen 22v11-18

Let us look at a few Scriptures regarding THE ANGEL OF THE LORD...

Exo 3v2-5

Num 22v22-35

Jud 2v1-4 (Note Jud 2v1 'an' angel is 'THE' angel Jud 2v4)

Jud 6v11-12 (note Jud 6v11+19 'an' & 'the')

Jud 6v20-22 ('an' & 'the')

Jud 13v3+13-21 (note 'a man of God' – Jud 13v6, 'an angel of God', 'the angel of God' Jud 13v9, 'an angel of the Lord' Jud 13v16)

2 Sam 24v15-17 (see also 1 Chr 21v12-18)

1 Kings 19v4-8

2 Kings 1v3+15

2 Kings 19v35 (see also Isa 37v36)

Zech 1v11+12

Zech 3v1-7

Mat 1v20-24

Mat 2v13-15

Mat 28v2

Luke 2v9-12



★ V10 – (see also Gen 22v17) the angel said... ‘I will’

★ V16 – Gen 13v16 God said... ‘I will’

★ Note Gen 15v5, 26v4+24, 24v60, 28v14, 32v12, 48v4

★ So like God the angel of the Lord is responsible for the expansive multiplication of a seed!

★ Number 2

★ Gen 21v16-19

★ God hears & the angel of the Lord speaks (v17) – just like 16v11

★ The angel of the Lord speaks but God opens Hagar’s eyes (v18+19)

★ Number 3

★ Gen 22v11-18

★ This account contains three references to the deity of the angel of the Lord: one by inference, one by comparison, & one by direct affirmation.

★ The first is an allusion to the deity of the angel of the Lord. The angel of the Lord in calling Abraham from heaven, tells him... ‘For now I know that thou fearest God’ (Gen 22v12): By comparison within the context of this account we can also ascertain direct proof for the deity of the angel of the Lord. The statement was made to Abraham by the angel of the Lord that ‘thou has not withheld thy son, thine only son from me’ (Gen22v12). Yet it was God himself who commanded Abraham to offer his son (Gen 22v2), commended him for not withholding his son (Gen 22v16), & extolled him for obeying his voice (Gen 22v18). But the most prominent testimony for the deity of the angel of the Lord appears at the second calling of Abraham by the angel of the Lord (Gen 22v15). Here it is not Hagar (Gen 16v13), but the angel of the Lord who declares ‘by myself have I sworn, saith the Lord’ (Gen 22v16), affirming his deity.

★ Number 4

★ Gen 31v11-13

★ The angel of the Lord (here called the angel of God) claims to Jacob that he is the God of Bethel, the same God who earlier declared ‘I am the Lord God of Abraham thy father, and the God of Isaac’ (Gen28v13)

★ Number 5

★ Gen 32v24-30

★ This time the angel of the Lord wrestles with Jacob! That this was no ordinary man we have seen, for in Hosea 12v4 he is called ‘the angel’. There are two references in this passage that explicitly prove the deity of the angel of the Lord; one from the mouth of the angel & one from the mouth of Jacob. When the angel of the Lord changed Jacob’s name to Israel after wrestling with him, the purpose stated by the angel of the Lord was because Jacob had ‘power with God’ (Gen 32v28). Jacob certainly believed this for he subsequently claimed to ‘have seen God face to face’ (Gen 32v30)

★ Reference is later made to this event where even stronger proof for the deity of the angel of the Lord is offered... Hos 12v3-5 **He took his brother by the heel in the womb, and by his strength he had power with God: Yea, he had power over the angel, and prevailed: he wept, and made supplication unto him: he found him in Bethel, and there he spake with us; Even the LORD God of hosts; the LORD is his memorial.**

★ Jacob wrestled with ‘a man’ (Gen 32v24) who was said to be ‘the angel’ (Hos12v40, yet he ‘had power with God’ (Hos 12v4). Another example can be seen here in the words of God in which he equates ‘the angel’ (Hos 12v4) with ‘the Lord God of Hosts’ Hos 12v5

★ Number 6

★ Gen 48v16



It is evident that 'the angel' (Gen 48v16) is here substituted for 'God' (Gen 48v15)

Number 7

Exo 3v2-6

Note the angel appears in a 'flame of fire' without burning up. His presence causes the soil to be 'holy ground' (Exo 3v5). Note also that three times the angel of the Lord is said to be God! Although the angel of the Lord was in the burning bush, 'God called unto him out of the midst of the bush' (Exo 3v4).. He then vocalized that he was 'the God of thy father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob' (Exo 3v6). Moses recognised this for he 'hid his face; for he was afraid to look upon God' (Exo 3v6). The deity here of the angel of the Lord is further confirmed by the ensuing dialogue between God & Moses in which the narrative further relates what 'the Lord said' (Exo 3v7) or 'God said' (Exo 3v14+15), as well as Moses' reply 'unto God' (Exo 3v11+13). Stephen's account of this event in the NT provides additional support for the deity of the angel of the Lord (Acts 7v30-34). The only difference being that he refers to the angel as 'an angel of the Lord' (Acts 7v30)

Number 8

Exo 14v19-20

There are two confirmations of his deity here by comparing this passage with Exo 13v21 + Exo 14v24

Like God the angel of the Lord 'went before' (Exo 13v21 + 14v19) the children of Israel.

Number 9

Exo 23v20-23

Note the angel of th Lord here has the authority to pardon transgressions! (only God can forgive sins – Psa 32v5 + Luke 5v21)

Note also in Exo 23v21, God's 'name is in him'

Note also the remark, 'But if thou shalt indeed obey his voice, and do all that I speak' (Exo 23v22)

Number 10

Josh 5v13-15

Here the angel of the Lord announces to Joshua that because of his presence the ground is holy! This is a strong allusion to his deity. Note also in this passage in Joshua that the angel of the Lord accepted worship (Exo 34v14 + Mat 4v10)

Number 11

Judg 2v14

There are five phrases here spoken by the angel of the Lord that, when compared with other Scriptures, yield still more proof for the deity of the angel of the Lord.

- 1) **I made you to go up out of Egypt** (Jud 2v1) there are only four examples in Scripture of someone said to bring Israel out of Egypt. Although one time we read that the children of Israel 'went forth out of the land of Egypt with their armies under the hand of Moses and Aaron' (Num 33v1), & a few times just 'Moses, the man that brought us out of the land of Egypt' (Exo 32v1), plus Israel once saying concerning the molten calf; 'these be thy gods, O Israel, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt' (Exo 32v4), the overwhelming majority of the time we are told that the Lord God brought them out. This was affirmed both before, the very day, & after the actual event... Ex 12:17 **And ye shall observe the feast of unleavened bread; for in this selfsame day have I brought your armies out of the land of Egypt: therefore shall ye observe this day in your generations by an ordinance for**

ever. Ex 20:2 I am the LORD thy God, which have brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. So we see that the angel of the Lord brought the children of Israel up out of Egypt because he was God!

- 2) 'unto the land which I swore unto your fathers' – (Jud 2v1) – see Deut 8v1
- 3) I will never break my covenant with you. (Jud 2v1) – see Lev 26v44
- 4) The angel of the Lord maintained that the children of Israel disobeyed him because they didn't 'throw down' (Jud 2v2) the altars of the heathen, yet God was the one who made the command – see Exo 34v12+13
- 5) ...they shall be as thorns in your sides (Jud 2v3) – see Num 33v55

Number 12

Judg 6v11-16

Although the angel of the Lord is standing in front of Gideon, it is declared that 'the Lord looked upon him' (Jud 6v14)

Number 13

Dan 3v25+28

Three Hebrews were cast into the 'burning fiery furnace' (Dan 3v23) by Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, yet he saw four men. A comparison of Nebuchadnezzar's remarks reveals the special character of the angel of the Lord!

Number 14

Acts 27v21-25

Paul said that he 'belonged' to the angel of God & served him; yet Paul was a servant of God – see Rom 1v1, 2 Tim 1v3

Number 14

In Rev 10v1 the angel of the Lord is termed a 'mighty angel'; but it is his countenance that is convincing!

The description of this angel is like no other. But that is not all, for later he takes credit for the two witnesses who prophecy during the Tribulation – see Rev 11v3.

So who is 'THE ANGEL OF THE LORD?'

By looking at all the Scriptures quoted we see that the angel of the Lord is one of supremacy & pre-eminence to all other angels in general.

Now remember, we should ONLY take the Scriptures as the FINAL AUTHORITY i.e. 'the last word' on all matters; NOT men's opinions etc.

The angel of the Lord is who the BIBLE says he is, GOD!

Yet we know...God...

1 Ti 6:16 **Who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, nor can see: to whom be honour and power everlasting. Amen.**

1 John 4:12 **No man hath seen God at any time. If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and his love is perfected in us.**

So how can God be seen?

John 4:24 **God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.**

Although there is ONLY ONE GOD - Isa 43:10 **Ye are my witnesses, saith the LORD, and my servant whom I have chosen: that ye may know and believe me, and understand that I am he: before me there was no God formed, neither shall**



★ Not only was God’s name in him but the angel of the Lord was God’s presence – Exo 33v14, Isa 63v19

★ The Lord Jesus Christ is also connected with the presence of God – Acts 3v20 + Heb 9v24

★ It is also worth considering that the children of Israel were told to ‘beware of him, and obey his voice, provoke him not’ (Exo 23v21) - the same could be said of the Lord Jesus Christ – 2 Thes 1v7+8

★ Now note also that the angel of the Lord has the authority to pardon transgressions; this is true of course of the Lord Jesus Christ...

★ Mark 2v5, Luke 5v20

★ Our next appearance of the angel of the Lord is his manifestation to Joshua. The Lord had just spoken to Joshua four times (Josh 1v1, 3v7, 4v1+15)...

★ Josh 5v13-15

★ Note the angel of the Lord is called ‘the captain of the Lord’s host’ (Josh 5v15) – note also that the Lord Jesus Christ has a similar term – Heb 2v10

★ Note also that the ‘captain’ accepted worship, both here & in the NT – Mat 8v2+3, Mat 28v9

★ The NT also establishes the identity of the angel of the Lord – Gal 4v4, Acts 27v25 (see Rom 1v1)

★ The angel of the Lord in the NT

★ THE angel of the Lord occurs 9 times in the NT

★ AN angel of the Lord occurs 3 times

★ ‘angel of God’ occurs twice

★ ‘the angel of God’ occurs once!

★ Mt 1:20 **But while he thought on these things, behold, the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a dream, saying, Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife: for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost.**

★ Mt 1:24 **Then Joseph being raised from sleep did as the angel of the Lord had bidden him, and took unto him his wife:**

★ Mt 2:13 **And when they were departed, behold, the angel of the Lord appeareth to Joseph in a dream, saying, Arise, and take the young child and his mother, and flee into Egypt, and be thou there until I bring thee word: for Herod will seek the young child to destroy him.**

★ Mt 2:19 **But when Herod was dead, behold, an angel of the Lord appeareth in a dream to Joseph in Egypt,**

★ Mt 28:2 **And, behold, there was a great earthquake: for the angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and came and rolled back the stone from the door, and sat upon it.**

★ Lu 1:11 **And there appeared unto him an angel of the Lord standing on the right side of the altar of incense.**

★ Lu 2:9 **And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid.**

★ Ac 5:19 **But the angel of the Lord by night opened the prison doors, and brought them forth, and said,**

★ Ac 7:30 **And when forty years were expired, there appeared to him in the wilderness of mount Sina an angel of the Lord in a flame of fire in a bush.**

★ Ac 8:26 **And the angel of the Lord spake unto Philip, saying, Arise, and go toward the south unto the way that goeth down from Jerusalem unto Gaza, which is desert.**

★ Ac 12:7 **And, behold, the angel of the Lord came upon him, and a light shined in the prison: and he smote Peter on the side, and raised him up, saying, Arise up quickly. And his chains fell off from his hands.**

★ Ac 12:23 **And immediately the angel of the Lord smote him, because he gave not God the glory: and he was eaten of worms, and gave up the ghost.**

★ So who is the angel of the Lord? Is he an ordinary angel; the angel Gabriel, the Lord Jesus Christ or a combination of any of them?

★ The usage of the term angel of the Lord in the OT was always the genuine angel of the Lord. Likewise, the 6 references to ‘AN’ angel of the Lord in the OT were identified in the context as the angel of the Lord! Once in the NT (acts 7v30), a



mention of an angel of the Lord is also distinguished as the angel of the Lord by comparison with the original account in the OT (Exo 3v2).

Another reference to an angel of the Lord in the NT (Luke 1v11) makes it clear that the angel Gabriel is in view (Luke 1v19). The final report of an angel of the Lord in the NT (Mat 2v19) is undoubtedly the same angel who also appeared to Joseph in a dream (Mat 1v20, 2v13). Therefore, if the angel of the Lord in the NT is just an ordinary angel, it is a usage restricted to the NT. However, 'an angel of God' (Acts 10v3) that came to Cornelius certainly appears to be just a common angel!

As just mentioned, the angel Gabriel was referred to as an angel of the Lord (Luke 1v11). It is he who is connected with Christ's birth in that he appeared to Zacharias, & named John the Baptist (Luke 1v13), & to Mary, telling her the name Jesus for her son (Luke 1v31). There are four (4) similarities between the angel of the Lord in Matthew & the mission of the angel Gabriel. The first two involve the mention & naming of a son – Mat 1v21, Luke 1v31

Both angels also mention the supernatural nature of Mary's conception – Mat 1v20, Luke 1v35

Both angels connect this supernatural son with God – Mat 1v23, Luke 1v35

For this same reason it is plausible that Gabriel is the angel of the Lord who appeared to 'the shepherds abiding in the field' (Luke 2v9) at the birth of 'Christ the Lord' (Luke 2v11).

Although the angel of the Lord mentioned in these accounts could be Gabriel, there is no such evidence that the other mentions of the angel of the Lord could be him as well (Mat 28v2, Acts 5v19, 8v26, 12v7+23). There would also be no reason to assume that 'an angel of God' (Acts 10v3) who came to Cornelius was likewise the angel Gabriel.

So is the angel of the Lord the Lord Jesus Christ?

We have already pointed out that both 'the angel of God' (Acts 27v23) & 'an angel of God' (Gal 4v4) are in fact the Lord Jesus Christ.

There are then two classes of verses to consider: those that refer to the angel of the Lord during the advent of Christ & those after his advent. Of the first the question is inevitably asked: how could Jesus Christ as the angel of the Lord appear to Joseph in a dream (Mat 1v20, 2v13), speak to the shepherds (Luke 2v9), & roll back the stone from Christ's tomb (Mat 2v28v2) if He was already on the earth at that time? The only way He could is revealed in his discourse to Nicodemus – John 3v13

The other references in the NT to the angel of the Lord are naturally more apt to be considered as relating to the Lord Jesus Christ since he had already ascended back to heaven - Acts 5v19, Acts 8v26, Acts 12v7+23

If there is any problem with these referring to the Lord Jesus Christ it should be remembered that He later appears as a 'mighty angel' (Rev 10v1) who takes credit for the two witnesses who prophesy during the Tribulation.

So who is the angel of the Lord in the NT?

It is entirely possible that an ordinary angel, the angel Gabriel, & The Lord Jesus Christ are all spoken of as the angel of the Lord with each appearing in one or more passages.

Amen.