

## Bible Study: The Order of Angels in the Bible

Campus Lutheran Church

Bible Discussion #3

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For starters: Here are a few questions to consider before we go into order of angels and special reports on angels in stories of Gideon, Daniel, David, and Elijah.

1. Is Jesus Christ an angel? (Eph. 1:21; Col. 1:15-20; Heb. 1:1-4) :”And I, John, am the one who saw and heard these things. And when I had seen and heard them, I fell down at the feet of the angel who was showing them to me in order to worship him. And he said to me, “Don’t do this! I am a fellow servant of your brethren and of the prophets and of those who keep the words of this book.  
**Worship God!** (Rev. 22:8-9; repeated pattern).
2. Why is Jesus called “Bright Morning Star”? Lucifer used to be “the morning star.”
3. Why are the angels often associated with **military** names:
  - a. Hosts: 1 Kings 22:19; Ps. 103:21; Dan. 8:10)
  - b. Army (Lk. 2:13; Rev. 19:9)
  - c. Legion (Matt. 26:53; Lk. 8:30)
  - d. Band (Ps. 78:49)
4. Why are angels referred to as “stars”? (Rev. 12:4) Lucifer is “light-bearer.”
5. Who is commander-in-chief of the angelic armies then?( See Rev. 17:14; 19:16)
6. Does God give angels the authority to proclaim the Gospel? Can an angel be an evangelist? **Gabriel** could not preach, but he could prophesy, as we see in book of Daniel. (Luke 2:10-11—“For behold I bring you good tidings of great joy. . . .”
7. Does the Bible have a lot to say about angelic organization and hierarchy? Why not? Where do people get much of their information, do you think? Why is there so much disagreement on these matters?

Caveat: The Order of angels is conjectural, and, in part, based on **Colossians 1:16** and **Romans 8:38**: archangels, angels, seraphim, cherubim, principalities, authorities, powers, thrones, might and dominion.

### Here is the Order of Angels (The Elect Angels of God):

- **Cherubs:** Also called seraph, which means “burning one” (Is. 6:2-7) and “living creature” (Rev. 4:6-9) These are the four attendants of God’s chariot-throne. The highest angelic rank. God sits enthroned between the cherubim. They shield and sometimes propel God’s throne and

they praise him, “Holy, Holy, Holy.” 4 Cherub faces: ox, lion, human, eagle are symbolic aspects of Christ’s earthly ministry.

- **Elders** (Greek: presbyteroi): They are associated with royal crowns and thorns
- **Archangels** (Greek: arch-angel): or rule/ruler; Hebrew “sar” (prince): Michael (Dan. 10: Jude 1:9) and Gabriel are the only elect angels mentioned in Scripture

- (Dan. 8:16; 9:21; Lk. 1:19; 1:26). Sar is a marital office. In Rev. 12:7, Michael leads “his angels” in battle against the devil and his forces, driving them from heaven down to earth. Archangels carry out God’s commands, often using trumpets and pouring out judgment from bowls. (Rev. 7:2; 15:7, etc.)
- **Authorities** (Greek: exousia): both elect and fallen angels fits this unique category: they do not attract much attention. These are high-level commanders, under the archangels. The 4 angels of Revelation who restrain the winds and administer four trumpet judgments may be of this rank. (Rev. 7:1-3; 8:7-12)
  - **Powers** (Greek: dynamis or “power”). Bible uses “power of God.” They command authority. In Eph. 6:12, they are referred to as “world-powers.” They are limited in power to the devil’s “cosmos.” (kosmokratores)
  - **Spirits:** Rank and file angels. The vast majority of angels (elect and fallen) belong in this category. Good and evil spirits. They are no less significant in God’s eyes, even though they are “last.” Special functions: restraining, watching, judging, guiding, protecting, overseeing. Entrusted with a variety of tasks to fulfill God’s will: escorting spirits of believers to heaven; providing manna during Exodus; rescuing believers; making proclamations and communicating with believers on God’s behalf; and praising God (Neh. 9:6; Rev. 5:11ff).

**Here is the Order of Non-Elect Angels of God:**

- Cherub (Satan was originally a cherub, but this is also conjectural)
- Thrones
- Princes
- Authorities
- World-Rulers
- Lordships: also known as demons, evil spirits (Lk. 7:21), unclean spirits (Matt. 10:1; Mk. 1:27), and devils (Jn. 6:70). Demons are not currently at liberty. One third of angelic beings followed Satan in his rebellion against God. So now Satan is operating with less than his full army!

**Special Reports:**

**Michael:** Archangel (Jude 9); he is the angel above all angels. He stands alone in the Bible. His name means “who is like unto the Lord.” He is God’s messenger of law and judgment. Michael might have cast Lucifer out of heaven. (Thes. 4:16)

**Gabriel:** (Hebrew: God’s hero); the messenger of Jehovah. He is a minister of mercy and promise, according to Billy Graham. He appears 4 times in Bible and brings good news. Our first view of him is in Dan 8:15, 16. Gabriel assured Daniel of the ultimate return and victory of Christ. He announces in his prayer to God the “tribulation” which shall be for 7 years (Dan. 9:27). He also announces birth of John the Baptist to Zacharias and, in his finest role, he appears to Virgin Mary to announce the incarnate God!

**Next Week: Angels in the New Testament**

