

THE IN-BETWEEN

Angels, Demons, the Devil, Heavenly Powers, Dark Powers, Human Beings Between Death and Resurrection

Section 4

The Spiritual Realm During Israel's United Kingdom

(about 1050-930 BC)

Focal Point #1 — GOD SENDS AN EVIL SPIRIT TO TORMENT KING SAUL

1 Samuel 16:14-23

- How can an evil spirit be “from the Lord”? Does God create or send evil spirits? What do you think?
- Does God send evil spirits to torment people?
- Can music control/influence evil spirits?
- To what extent did God give David power over this evil spirit?

1 Samuel 18:6-11 & 19:8-10

- What effect did the evil spirit's presence have on Saul?

Psalm 34:1-7 — According to David here, what does the angel of the Lord do for those who fear the Lord?

Focal Point #2 — SAUL CONSULTS A MEDIUM & SPEAKS WITH THE SPIRIT OF SAMUEL

1 Samuel 28:3-25 (also notice 1 Chronicles 10:13-14)

- What reasons might motivate people to try to speak to the spirits of the departed? (Notice Saul's motivation in verse 5.)
 - When the woman at Endor saw Samuel, what exactly did she claim to see (verses 13-14)?
 - Can mediums really communicate with the spirits of the dead?
 - What was Samuel's complaint (verse 15)? What might this hint about the situation of the righteous dead?
 - How could dead Samuel know what was happening on earth and in Israel? Can the dead see what is happening on earth?
 - Can the spirits of the dead see the future?
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1 Samuel 29 — Notice verse 9. The Philistine king Achish told David, “I know that you have been as pleasing in my eyes as an _____ of God.”

- What does this tell us about what ancient Philistines and Israelites thought about angels’ appearances?

Recurring Theme — Similarity to Angels Used to Describe Character or Power

1 Samuel 29:9 — Achish answered, “I know that you have been as pleasing in my eyes as an angel of God...”

2 Samuel 14:17 — “...for my lord the king is like an angel of God in discerning good and evil.”

2 Samuel 14:20 — “My lord has wisdom like that of an angel of God—he knows everything that happens in the land.”

2 Samuel 19:27 — “My lord the king is like an angel of God; so do whatever you wish.”

Zechariah 12:8 — “On that day the Lord will shield those who live in Jerusalem, so that the feeblest among them will be like David, and the house of David will be like God, like the angel of the Lord going before them.”

Psalm 29:1 — What does David call the “heavenly beings” to do in this verse?

Recurring Theme — Angels Praise & Exalt God

Psalm 29:1 — Ascribe to the Lord, you heavenly beings, ascribe to the Lord the glory due his name; worship the Lord in the splendor of his holiness.

Psalm 89:5-7 — The heavens praise your wonders, Lord, your faithfulness too, in the assembly of the holy ones. For who in the skies above can compare with the Lord? Who is like the Lord among the heavenly beings? In the council of the holy ones God is greatly feared; he is more awesome than all who surround him.

Psalm 103:20-21 — Praise the Lord, you his angels... Praise the Lord, all his heavenly hosts...

Psalm 148:2 — Praise him, all his angels; praise him, all his heavenly hosts.

Hebrews 1:6 — And again, when God brings his firstborn into the world, he says, “Let all God’s angels worship him.”

Also notice heavenly beings worshiping/praising God in Revelation 4:8-11, 5:8-14, 7:11-12, 11:15-18, 16:5-6, 19:4.

Psalm 6:4-5 — What does David say here about the dead who are in the grave? Do you think David is entirely correct, or is there more to the story than he is aware of here?

Recurring Theme — Not Much Goes On in the Realm of the Dead

Psalm 6:5 — Among the dead no one proclaims your name. Who praises you from the grave?

Psalm 88:10-12 — Do you show your wonders to the dead? Do their spirits rise up and praise you? Is your love declared in the grave, your faithfulness in Destruction? Are your wonders known in the place of darkness, or your righteous deeds in the land of oblivion?

Psalm 115:17 — It is not the dead who praise the Lord, those who go down to the place of silence...

Ecclesiastes 9:5 — For the living know that they will die, but the dead know nothing; they have no further reward, and even their name is forgotten.

Ecclesiastes 9:10 — Whatever your hand finds to do, do it with all your might, for in the realm of the dead, where you are going, there is neither working nor planning nor knowledge nor wisdom.

Isaiah 38:18-19 — For the grave cannot praise you, death cannot sing your praise; those who go down to the pit cannot hope for your faithfulness. The living, the living—they praise you...

- Consider Solomon’s words in Ecclesiastes 9:5. Compare it with what we read about deceased Samuel in 1 Samuel 28. In what sense might Solomon be right? In what sense might he be wrong or have insufficient information?

Psalm 8:3-5 — According to David here, how does the status of human beings compare with the status of angels?

Psalm 35:4-6 — What does David call the angel of the Lord to do to those who seek his life?

Psalm 103:20-21 — This psalm of David calls angels to _____ the Lord and do his _____.

2 Samuel 22:11 / Psalm 18:10 — What does God do with the cherubim in this verse?

Recurring Theme — Cherubim (or similar angelic beings) Seen Attending or Transporting God

2 Samuel 22:11 & Psalm 18:10 — He mounted the cherubim and flew; he soared on the wings of the wind.

Isaiah 6:1-2 — In the year that King Uzziah died, I saw the Lord, high and exalted, seated on a throne... Above him were seraphim, each with six wings: With two wings they covered their faces, with two they covered their feet, and with two they were flying.

Ezekiel 1, 3:12-15, 9:3, 10, 11:22-25 — *Cherubim (the "living creatures") provide transportation for God in an extended vision.*

Revelation 4:6 — In the center, around the throne, were four living creatures, and they were covered with eyes, in front and in back.

Focal Point #3 — AN ANGEL PUNISHES ISRAEL AND INSTRUCTS DAVID

2 Samuel 24 / 1 Chronicles 21:1 to 22:1

- Was it the Lord (2 Samuel 24:1) or Satan (1 Chronicles 21:1) who incited David to count the fighting men? Is there any sense in which it could have been both?
- What did the angel in this story do (1 Samuel 24:16-17; 1 Chronicles 21:12, 15-18, 27)?
- Why might God use angels to send disasters like this plague, when he could presumably do it himself?
- What was the meaning of the angel's drawn sword (1 Chronicles 21:16, 27)?
- How did David, Araunah, and Gad respond to the angel's presence?

Psalm 78:23-25 — *These verses recall Exodus 16.* Why do you think manna was referred to as "the bread of angels"? Do angels eat manna?

Psalm 78:40-52 — *These verses recall God's ten plagues against Egypt in Exodus 7-12.* What kind of angels did God, in his anger, unleash against Egypt?

Ecclesiastes 3:18-21 — Solomon wondered whether the spirit of the _____ rises upward after death and whether the spirit of the _____ goes down into the earth.

Ecclesiastes 12:6-7 — Where does the human spirit go when "the dust returns to the ground it came from"?