

Of the Creation of Angels.

by John Gill

This sermon explores the creation, nature, qualities, and employment of angels, highlighting their importance in the biblical worldview.

Scripture: Genesis 2:1, Job 38:7, Psalm 104:5, Daniel 4:35, Matthew 26:53, Luke 2:13, Luke 24:4, Colossians 1:16, Hebrews 12:22, Revelation 19:10

Topics: "Divine Assistance", "Creation of Angels"

Description

John Gill discusses the creation of angels, emphasizing their significance as the chief of God's works in the heavens. He notes that while the creation of angels is not explicitly mentioned in Genesis, it is implied within the creation narrative, as they are part of the heavenly host created by God. Gill elaborates on the nature, qualities, and roles of angels, highlighting their holiness, wisdom, and power, as well as their ministerial functions towards God, Christ, and humanity. He concludes that angels, being created beings, should not be worshipped but valued for their divine roles and assistance in the lives of believers.

Transcript

A Body of Doctrinal Divinity

Book 3--Chapter 2

OF THE CREATION OF ANGELS.

From considering the creation in general, I descend to particulars; not to all the creatures that are made; to treat of the nature, form, figure, and qualities of every creature in heaven, earth, and sea, would be a work too large and tedious, and what belongs to naturalists and philosophers, and not divines: I shall only consider angels, the chief of God's works in the heavens; and man, the principal of his creatures on earth. And begin with the angels. Though the creation of angels is not expressly mentioned in the account of the creation by Moses, yet it is implied in it; for the heavens include all that are in them; which are said to be created by God; and among these must be the angels: besides, Moses, in closing the account of the creation, observes, "Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them" (Gen. 2:1).

Now of the hosts of heaven, the angels are the principal part; they are expressly called, the heavenly host, and the armies of heaven (Dan. 4:35; Luke 2:13), and therefore must have been created within the six days of the creation; though on what particular day is not certain, whether on the first, second, third, or

fourth; all have been pitched upon by one or another; most probably the first, on which day the heavens were created; and that first, and then the earth; so that the angels might be created with the heavens, whose nature is most similar to the heavens, and the heavens the habitation of them; and accordingly might be present at the forming and founding of the earth, on the same day, and sing on that occasion (Job 38:7), which if the sense of that text, the time of their creation is plainly pointed out by it; for though they were created very early, some time within the creation of the six days, since some of them fell before man did; and one of the apostate angels was concerned in the seduction of our first parents, and was the instrument of their fall and ruin, quickly after their creation; yet they were not created before the world was, as some have fancied, and which is a mere fancy; for there was nothing before the world was, but the supreme Being, the Creator of all things; "Before the world was", is a phrase expressive of eternity, and that is peculiar to God, and whose eternity is expressed by the same phrase; "Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadst formed the earth and the world; even from everlasting to everlasting thou art God" (Ps 90:2).

Besides though angels have not bodies, and so are not in place circumscriptively; yet, as they are creatures, they must have an "ubi", a somewhere, in which they are definitively; so that they are here, and not there, and much less every where: now where was there an "ubi", a somewhere, for them to exist in, before the heavens and the earth were made? it is most reasonable therefore to conclude, that as God prepared an habitation for all the living creatures before he made them; as the sea for the fishes; the expanse, or air, for the fowls; and the earth for men and beasts; so he made the heavens first, and then the angels to dwell in them: and these were made all at once and together; not like their kindred, the souls or spirits of men, which are made one by one, as their bodies are; for they are created, not without them, but in them, by God, "who formeth the spirit of man within him" (Zech. 12:1).

But the angelic spirits were made altogether; for "all" those morning stars, the sons of God, were present, and shouted at the foundation of the earth; and all the host of heaven, which must be understood chiefly of angels, were made by the breath of God, when the heavens were created by his word (Job 38:7; Ps. 33:6), and their numbers are many; there was a multitude of them at the birth of Christ (Luke 2:13), and our Lord speaks of twelve legions of them and more, that he could have had at asking them of his Father (Matthew 26:53).

According to the vision in Daniel 7:10 thousand thousands of these ministering spirits, ministered to the Ancient of days, and which number is greatly exceeded in the vision John saw (Rev. 5:11) where those in worship with the living creatures and elders are said to be ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands, and may well be called an innumerable company (Heb. 12:22), and yet the passages referred to only speak of good angels; the evil angels are many also; we read of a legion of them in one man (Mark 5:9), perhaps those that fell, may be as many as those that stood; and if so, how great must be the number of them all together, at their creation?

Now these are all the creatures of God; "who maketh his angels spirits" (Ps. 104:5), they are made by Jehovah the Father, who is called from hence, as well as from his making the souls of men, "the Father of spirits" (Heb. 12:9), and by Jehovah the Son, "for by him were all things created that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible"; and among the latter, angels must be reckoned; and who are further described by "thrones, dominions, principalities, and powers"; these "all were created by him and for him" (Col. 1:16).

Nor is Jehovah the Spirit to be excluded from a concern in the creation of them, since, as "by the word of the Lord were the heavens made, so all the host of them", the angels, "by the breath", or Spirit, "of his mouth" (Ps 33:6). Concerning these excellent creatures of God, the following things may be observed: 1. First, Their names: as for proper names, though there are many of them in the Apocryphal and Jewish writings, yet in the sacred scriptures but few, perhaps no more than one, and that is Gabriel, the name of an angel sent with dispatches to Daniel, Zacharias, and to the Virgin Mary (Dan. 8:16; 9:21; Luke 1:19,26), for as for Michael, the Archangel, he seems to be no other than Christ, the Prince of angels, and Head of all principality and power; who is as God, like unto him, as his name signifies; yea, equal with him.

The names, titles, and epithets of angels, are chiefly taken from their nature, qualities, appearances, and offices; some that are ascribed to them, do not seem to belong to them, as "cherubim" and "seraphim", which are names and characters of ministers of the word, as I have shown in a sermon of mine published;^[1] and the "Watchers", in Nebuchadnezzar's dream, thought to be angels by many, more probably are the divine Persons in the Godhead, the same with the Holy Ones, and the most High (Dan. 4:17,24).

The name of Elohim is their principal one, translated "gods" (Ps. 97:7), and interpreted of angels (Heb. 1:6), the same word is translated angels (Ps. 8:5), and which is justified by the apostle (Heb. 2:9). Now angels have this name because they have been sent with messages from God, in his name, to men; and they have spoken in his name, and been his representatives; and may be called so, as magistrates sometimes are, because God's vicegerents, and act under him, and for a like reason have the names of "thrones, dominions, principalities, and powers" (Col. 1:16).

Not because of any hierarchy, or order of government, established among themselves, which does not appear; but rather because of the dignity they are advanced unto, being princes in the court of heaven; and because of that power and authority which, under God, and by his direction, they exercise over kingdoms, provinces, and particular persons on earth: and if the text in Job 38:7 is to be understood of angels, it furnishes us with other names and titles of them; as "morning stars", and "sons of God"; and they may be called "morning stars", because of the brightness, splendor, and glory of their nature; and because of the clearness of their light, knowledge, and understanding; in which sense they are "angels of light"; and into one of which Satan sometimes transforms himself, who was once a bright morning star: and these may be said to be sons of God; not by grace and adoption, as saints are; much less by divine generation, as Christ is; "For unto which of the angels said he at any time, Thou art my son, this day have I begotten thee?" (Heb. 1:5), but by creation, being made in the image of God, which consists in wisdom and knowledge, in righteousness and holiness; and being his favorites, and beloved of him.

They sometimes have the name of men given them; because they have appeared in an human form; such were two of those who appeared like men to Abraham, and afterwards to Lot; and two others seen by the women at Christ's sepulchre (Gen. 18:2; 19:1,5,8; Luke 24:4). The more common name given to these celestial spirits, is that of angels; the word for which in the Hebrew language, and which is used of them in the Old Testament, signifies "messengers"; and so the uncreated Angel, Christ, is called the Angel, or Messenger of the covenant (Mal 3:1), and it comes from a root, preserved in the Ethiopic dialect, which signifies to "send,"^[2] because these spirits have been often sent with messages and dispatches to the children of men: the word "angels" we use, comes from a Greek word,^[3] which signifies the same; and are so called, from their being sent on, and bringing messages, which they declare, publish, and proclaim.

2.

Secondly, The nature of angels, which is expressed by the word spirits; so good angels are called spirits, and ministering spirits (Heb. 1:7,14), and evil angels, unclean spirits, Christ gave his apostles power to cast out of the bodies of men (Mt 10:1; Luke 10:17,20), that is, spiritual subsistence, they are real personal beings, that subsist of themselves. There was a sect among the Jews, the Sadducees, who said there was "neither angel nor spirit" (Acts 23:8), and our modern Sadducees are not less absurd, who assert that good and evil angels are no other than good and evil thoughts; but this is to be confuted, from the nature and names of angels; from the offices they bear, and are employed in; from the works and actions ascribed unto them; from the powers and faculties of will, understanding, and affections they are possessed of; and from the happiness and misery assigned to them that do well or ill.

From all which it appears, that they are not imaginary, or "entia rationis"; nor mere qualities, but personal beings; and they are of a "spiritual" nature; not compounded of parts, as bodies are; and yet they are not so simple and uncompounded as God is, who is a Spirit; in comparison to him, they approach nearer to bodies; wherefore Tertullian, and some other of the fathers, asserted them to be corporeal, though with respect to bodies they are incorporeal. It is difficult for us to form any idea of a spirit; we rather know what it is not, than what it is; "A spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have," says Christ (Luke 24:39), was it corporeal, a legion of spirits could never have a place in one man; nor penetrate and pass through bodies, through doors bolted and barred, as these angelic beings have: nor is it any objection to their being "incorporeal", that they have sometimes appeared as men, since they have only seemed so; or they have assumed bodies only for a time, and then laid them aside: nor that they ascend and descend, and move from place to place; for this is said of the souls of men, which are incorporeal; and being spirits, or of a spiritual nature, they are possessed of great agility, and with great swiftness and speed descend from heaven, on occasion; as Gabriel did, who flew swiftly, having his order to carry a message to Daniel, at the beginning of his prayer, and was with him before it was ended; who must move as swift as light from the sun, or lightning from the heavens: and being without bodies, they are invisible, and are among the invisible things created by the Son of God, as before observed; and though it was a notion that obtained among the Jews in Christ's time, and does among the common people with us, that a spirit may be seen; it is a vulgar error (Luke 24:37).

Indeed, when angels have assumed an human form they may be seen, as they were by Abraham and Lot; and so when they appeared in the forms of chariots and horses of fire, around Elisha, they were seen by his servant, when his eyes were opened; but then these bodies seen were not their own; and these appearances were different from what they really were in themselves. Once more, being incorporeal and immaterial, they are "immortal"; they do not consist of parts of matter capable of being disunited or dissolved; and hence the saints in the resurrection will be like them in this respect, that "neither can they die any more" (Luke 20:36).

God, who only has immortality originally and of himself, has conferred immortality on the angelic spirits; and though he can annihilate them, he will not; for even the evil spirits that have rebelled against him, though they die a moral and an eternal death, yet their beings, their substances, continue and perish not; everlasting fire, eternal punishment, is prepared for the devil and his angels. 3. Thirdly, The qualities and excellencies of angels may be next considered; and they are more especially three, holiness, wisdom, or knowledge, and power. 3a.

Holiness; they are holy creatures, called "holy angels" (Mark 8:38), and so they were created, even all of them: not indeed so holy as God is; for "there is none holy as the Lord" (1 Sam. 2:2), in comparison of him all creatures are unholy; "the heavens are not clean in his sight" (Job 15:15), that is, the inhabitants of

them, the angels; nor were they created immutably holy, but so as that they were capable of sinning, as some of them did; who, being left to the mutability of their own free will, departed from their "first estate", which was a state of holiness, as well as happiness; and "abode not in the truth", in the truth of holiness, in that uprightness and righteousness in which they were created; and they are called the "angels that sinned", (2 Pet. 2:4; Jude 1:6; John 8:44).

But others of them stood in their integrity, and are become impeccable; not owing to the power of their free will, and their better use of it than the rest; but to the electing grace of God, and the confirming grace of Christ, who is the Head of all principality and power (1 Tim. 5:21; Col. 2:10). These now, as they persist in their obedience, they are perfect in it; hence the petition Christ directed his disciples to; "Thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven" (Matthew 6:10), they are subject to the same laws and rules of morality and righteousness that men are, excepting such as are not suitable to their nature; as some duties belonging to the fourth, fifth, seventh, eighth, and tenth commands of the Decalogue; but to the rest in such manner as their nature will admit of; with all other orders, prescriptions, and directions of the divine will, they cheerfully and constantly yield an obedience to; for they "do his commandments, hearkening to the voice of his word" (Ps. 103:20). 3b.

Wisdom and knowledge; angels are very wise and knowing creatures; it is an high strain of compliment in the woman of Tekoah to David; "My Lord is wise, according to the wisdom of an angel of God; to know all things that are in the earth" (2 Sam. 14:20), yet it shows the general opinion entertained of the wisdom of angels; though in comparison of the all wise and only wise God, they are by him chargeable "with folly" (Job 4:18). Very wise and knowing creatures no doubt they are; but they are not omniscient; they know much, but not everything; they know much of themselves, through the strength and excellency of their nature, being rational and intelligent creatures, of the highest form and class: and by observation and experience, for which they have had a long time, and great opportunity; and also by divine revelation, through which they are acquainted with many things they otherwise would not know: they know much of God, being always in his presence, and beholding his face, and whose perfections displayed in his works, they have the clearest knowledge of; and much of their fellow creatures, of the same species with them, the holy angels; who, having a language peculiar to themselves, can converse with, and communicate to each other; and much of the apostate angels, who they are set to oppose, conflict with, and counterwork; and much of men, of wicked men, on whom, by divine direction, they inflict the judgments of God; and of good men, the heirs of salvation, to whom they are sent, as ministering spirits: they know much of the mysteries of providence, in the execution of which they are often employed; and of the mysteries of divine grace, not only by divine revelation, but by the church, and by the ministry of the word, they attending the congregations of the saints; though it seems that this their knowledge is imperfect, since they bow their heads, and desire to pry more into these things: and there are many things which they know not unless by marks and signs, in a conjectural way, or by a particular revelation; as the thoughts of men's hearts, which of others, men themselves know not, only the spirits of men within them; and which to know, peculiarly belongs to God, the searcher of the hearts, and trier of the reins of the children of men: nor do they know future contingencies, or what shall be hereafter, unless such as necessarily and ordinarily follow from natural causes, or may be guessed at, or are revealed unto them of God, in order to impart them to others; of the day and hour of the end of the world, and the last judgment, as no man knoweth, so neither the angels of heaven (Matthew 24:36; Rev. 1:1). 3c.

Power is another excellency of the angels; they are called "mighty" angels, and are said to "excel in strength"; that is, other creatures (2 Thess. 1:7; Ps. 103:20), their strength is great, and their power and

authority under God very large, yet finite and limited; they are not omnipotent, nor sovereign; they do not preside over the celestial bodies, move the planets, dispose of the ordinances of heaven; bind or loose their influences, and set their dominion in the earth; they have not the power of the air, nor the command of the earth; the world is not in subjection to them: they are capable indeed, under a divine influence, and by divine direction, help, and assistance, of doing great and marvelous things; of holding the four winds of heaven; of quenching the violence of fire; and of stopping the mouths of lions; and of restraining other hurtful things: they have great power over the bodies of men, of moving them from place to place; as an evil spirit, by permission, carried Christ, and set him upon the pinnacle of the temple; and a good spirit caught away Philip, and carried him to Azotus: they have power, when they have leave, or are ordered, to smite the bodies of men with diseases; as the men of Sodom with blindness, yea, with death itself, as seventy thousand Israelites, on account of David's numbering the people; and a hundred and forty-five thousand Assyrians in one night, as they lay encamped against Jerusalem; and Herod the king, who, being smitten by an angel, was eaten of worms, and died.

But the power of angels will still more appear under the following head, concerning, 4. Fourthly, Their office and employment. 4a. First, With respect to God; their work is to praise him, to celebrate the glory of his perfections; "Praise ye him, all his angels" (Ps. 148:2), and to worship him with his saints; we find them sometimes joining with men, with the living creatures and elders, in John's visions, in ascribing blessing, glory, wisdom, thanksgiving, honour, power, and might unto God; and the same, in the same company, to the Lamb that was slain (Rev. 5:11,12; 7:11,12), and their work also lies in keeping the commandments of God, and doing his will in heaven and in earth; these are the four spirits of the heavens, which go forth from standing before the Lord of all the earth, to do his will and work in it; they wait his orders, and immediately go forth and execute them, (Zech. 6:4,5). 4b.

Secondly, With respect to Christ, on whom they are said to ascend and descend, as they did on Jacob's ladder, a type of him (Gen. 28:12; John 1:51), these attended at the incarnation of Christ; one informed the Virgin of her conception of him, removed her doubts about it, and explained to her the mystery of it; another encouraged Joseph to take her to wife, who thought to put her away, because of her pregnancy; and a third published the news of his birth to the shepherds; and who was presently joined with a multitude of them, who in chorus celebrated the glory of God, displayed therein.

Yea, when God brought him, his first begotten, into the world, and manifested him to it in human nature, he gave orders to all the angelic host, to do him homage and worship, saying, "Let all the angels of God worship him" (Luke 1:30-35; Matthew 1:19, 20; Luke 2:10-14; Heb. 1:6), these had the care and charge of him in his state of humiliation; they were solicitous for the preservation of his life in his infancy; when Herod sought to take it away, an angel gave notice of it to Joseph, in a dream, and directed him to take the child and his mother, and flee into Egypt: and I see no reason why those wonderful escapes of Christ out of the hands of his enemies, in later years, when just going to destroy him, may not be ascribed to the ministration of angels; since it is most certain, that God gave his angels charge over him, to keep him in all his ways; (see Matthew 2:13; Luke 4:29,30; John. 8:59; Ps. 91:11).

When he had fasted forty days and nights in the wilderness, these same excellent creatures came and ministered food unto him (Matthew 4:11), and one of them attended him in his agony in the garden, and strengthened and comforted him (Luke 22:43), they were present at his resurrection, and rolled away the stone from the sepulchre; and declared to the women at it, that he was risen from the dead (Matthew 28:2; Luke 24:4,6,23), they accompanied him at his ascension to heaven, even thousands of them; though only in the Acts of the Apostles two are mentioned; by whom he was seen, and escorted through the region of

the air, the territory of Satan, in triumph; and was received and welcomed to heaven (Ps. 68:17,18; Acts 1:10,11; 1 Tim. 3:16), and by whom he will be attended at his second coming; for they will make a part of his glorious appearing, which will be in his own glory, and in the glory of his Father, and in the glory of his holy angels (2 Thess. 1:7; Luke 9:26). 4c.

Thirdly, With respect to the saints, to whom they are sent as ministering spirits; for though in some instances they may have a concern with others, yet that is chiefly in the behalf of the church and people of God, who are more especially their charge and care, both in respect to things temporal and spiritual. 4c1. With respect to things temporal, instances of which are, 4c1a. Preserving them in their infant state; there is a special providence concerned with the elect; as soon as they are born they are under the particular watch and care of it, and are distinguished by it; which is what the apostle means when he says, that "God separated him from his mother's womb" (Gal. 1:15), and which providence may be thought to be chiefly executed by the ministry of angels; for though it is not certain, which yet some scriptures countenance (Matthew 18:10; Acts 12:15), that everyone has his guardian angel, since sometimes more angels are deputed to one, and sometimes but one to many; yet doubtless saints from their birth are under the care of angels, and are preserved by them to be called; it is not known how many difficulties and dangers they are preserved from in infancy, in childhood, and in youth, as well as in later years, by means of angels. 4c1b.

Providing food for them when in want of it, or that they might not want it; as they ministered food to Christ in the wilderness; and prepared manna, called angels food, because prepared by them in the air, and let down by them from thence, for the Israelites during their forty years' travels; and as an angel dressed food for the prophet Elijah, and called upon him to arise and eat (Matthew 4:11; Ps. 78:25; 1 Kings 19:5-8). 4c1c. Keeping off diseases from them, and healing of them according to the promise, "He shall deliver thee from the noisome pestilence--neither shall any plague come nigh thy dwelling; for he shall give his angels charge over thee" &c. (Ps. 91:3,7,10,11), and if evil angels can, by divine permission, inflict diseases, as appears from the case of Job, and doubtless they would oftener do it, was it not for the interposition of good angels, why may not good angels be thought capable of healing diseases? and those many strange and wonderful cures wrought when all means have been ineffectual, may be ascribed, at least many of them, to the good offices of angels in directing to simple things, whose nature and virtue they are well acquainted with; and even they have cured diseases in a miraculous way, witness the pool of Bethesda, whose healing virtue for all diseases was owing to the agitation of its waters by an angel (John 5:4). 4c1d.

Directing and protecting in journeys, and at other times; thus Abraham, when he sent his servant to Mesopotamia to take a wife for his son Isaac, assured him that God would send an angel before him to direct and prosper him, which the servant found to be true, and blessed God for it (Gen. 24:7,27,48), so Jacob, as he was travelling, was met by the angels of God, who divided themselves into two hosts for his guard, and one went on one side of him and the other on the other; or one went before him, and the other behind him; wherefore he called the name of the place where they met him Mahanaim, which signifies two camps or armies (Gen. 32:1,2), and even all that fear the Lord have such a guard about them, for "the angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him" (Ps. 34:7). 4c1e.

Keeping from dangers, and helping out of them: when Lot and his family were in danger of being destroyed in Sodom, the angels laid hold on their hands and brought them forth, and set them without the city, and directed them to escape for their lives to an adjacent mountain (Gen. 19:15-17), the preservation of Shadrach, Meshech, and Abednego, in the furnace of fire, and of Daniel in the lions' den, is ascribed to angels (Dan. 3:28 6:22), the opening of the doors of the prison where the apostles were, and setting them

free; and the deliverance of Peter from prison, whose chains fell from him, and the gate opened before him, were done by angels (Acts 5:19,20 12:7,10). 4c2.

With respect to things spiritual. 4c2a. Angels have been employed in revealing the mind and will of God to men. They attended at mount Sinai, when the law was given; yea, it is said to be ordained by angels, and to be given by the disposition of angels, and even to be the word spoken by angels (Deut. 32:2; Acts 7:59; Gal. 3:19; Heb. 2:2). And an angel published the gospel, and brought the good news of the incarnation of Christ, and salvation by him (Luke 2:10,11). An angel made known to Daniel the time of the Messiah's coming; as well as many other things relating to the state of the church and people of God (Dan. 8:16-19; 9:21-27; 12:5-13).

And an angel was sent to signify to the apostle John the things that should come to pass in his time, and in all ages to the end of the world (Rev. 1:1). 4c2b. Though the work of conversion is the sole work of God, yet as he makes use of instruments in it, as ministers of the word, why may he not be thought to make use of angels? they may suggest that to the minds of men which may be awakening to them, and may improve a conviction by a providence, which may issue in conversion.

However, this is certain, they are acquainted with the conversions of sinners; and there is joy in heaven, and in the presence of the angels of God, over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine just persons that need no repentance (Luke 15:7,10). 4c2c. They are useful in comforting the saints when in distress; as they strengthened and comforted Christ in his human nature, when in an agony, so they comfort his members, as Daniel, when in great terror, and the apostle Paul, in a tempest (Dan. 9:23; 10:11,19; Acts 27:23,24), and as when in temporal, so when in spiritual distresses; for if evil angels are capable of suggesting terrible and uncomfortable things, and of filling the mind with blasphemous thoughts, and frightful apprehensions; good angels are surely capable of suggesting comfortable things, and what may relieve souls distressed with unbelief, doubts, and fears, and the temptations of Satan; for 4c2d.

They are greatly assisting in repelling the temptations of Satan; for if they oppose themselves to, and have conflicts with evil angels, with respect to things political and civil, the affairs of kingdoms and states, in which the interest and church of Christ are concerned; (see Dan. 10:13,20; Rev. 12:7), they, no doubt, bestir themselves in opposition to evil spirits, when they tempt believers to sin, or to despair; so that they are better able to wrestle against principalities and powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, and against spiritual wickednesses in high places (Eph 6:12; Zech. 3:1-4). 4c2e.

They are exceeding useful to saints in their dying moments; they attend the saints on their dying beds, and whisper comfortable things to them against the fears of death; and keep off the fiends of hell from disturbing and distressing them; and they watch the moment when soul and body are parted, and carry their souls to heaven as they carried the soul of Lazarus into Abraham's bosom (Luke 16:22), and thus Elijah was carried to heaven, soul and body, in a chariot of fire, and horses of fire, which were no other than angels, which appeared in such a form, for the conveyance of him (2 Kings 2:11). 4c2f.

Angels, as they will attend Christ at his second coming, when the dead in Christ shall rise first; so they will be made use of by him, to gather the risen saints from the four quarters of the world, and bring them to him; to gather the wheat into his garner, and to take the tares, and even all things out of his kingdom that offend, and burn them (Matthew 13:40,41; 24:31). From the whole it appears, that angels are creatures, and so not to be worshipped; which kind of idolatry was introduced in the apostles' time, but condemned

(Col. 2:18), the angels themselves refuse and forbid it (Rev.19:10; 22:8,9), yet, notwithstanding, they are to be loved, valued, and esteemed by the saints, partly on account of the excellency of their nature, and partly because of their kind and friendly offices; and care should be taken to give them no offence, in public or private; (see 1 Cor. 11:10) for the saints are highly honored, by having such excellent spirits to wait upon them, and minister unto them, and be guards about them; and it is no small part of their gospel privileges, for which they should be thankful, that they are come to an innumerable company of angels, (Heb 1:14; 12:22). ENDNOTES:

[1] Called the Doctrine of the Cherubim opened and explained from Ezek. 10:20. printed in 1764.

[2] dal "legavit, misit nuncium", Ludolf. Lexic. Ethiop. p. 19. vid. Hottinger. Smegma Oriental. l. 1. c. 5. p. 88.

[3] aggelw "nuntio, nuntium affero", Scapula.

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