

ROMAN CATHOLICISM

In the Light of Scripture

by

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CHAPTER THIRTY

ANGELS

HOLY ANGELS are included by the Church of Rome among her objects of veneration or worship, Matthew 18:10 being quoted in support of this practice:

Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones; for I say unto you, That in heaven their angels do always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven.

This word of our Lord, however, does not say that their angels are intercessors, praying for the children on earth under their care, nor did the Lord tell His disciples that they should worship these guardian angels, or invoke them in prayer. The Lord Himself is the great Intercessor for the children before the throne of grace, as He is for us. Even the greatest, the archangels, are created beings, and to worship them would be **“to worship the creature rather than the Creator, who is God over all, blessed for ever”** (Romans 1:25). This would be sin.

Are they not all [including the greatest] ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation? (Hebrews 1:14).

The angels, at God's behest, go forth to minister to believers on earth. In both the Old and New Testaments we have instances of this so numerous that only a few can be quoted.

- a. They hastened Lot to escape before the destruction of Sodom (Genesis 19:1).
- b. They ministered to Elijah when he was discouraged and fleeing from Jezebel (I Kings 19:5, 7).
- c. They delivered Elisha from the besieging hosts of Syria (II Kings 6:17).
- d. An angel saved Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego from the fiery furnace (Daniel 3:28).
- e. God sent an angel to shut the mouths of the lions that they might not harm Daniel, thrown into their den (Daniel 6:22).
- f. An angel brought the apostles out of prison in Jerusalem (Acts 5:19).
- g. Another did the same for Peter alone (Acts 12:7).
- h. An angel stood by Paul's side in the storm, to give cheer and comfort (Acts 27:23).

In each of these instances the angel served under divine command. They were neither invoked nor worshiped. This agrees with the experience of the Apostle John:

And I fell at his [the angel's] feet to worship him. And he said unto me, See thou do it not: I am thy fellow servant, and of thy brethren that have the testimony of Jesus: worship God (Revelation 19:10).

And when I had heard and seen, I fell down to worship before the feet of the angel which showed me these things. Then saith he unto me, See thou do it not: for I am thy fellow servant, and of thy brethren the prophets, and of them which keep the sayings of this book: worship God (Revelation 22:8, 9).

“**The Angel of the Lord**” in the Old Testament refers not to one of the created angels but to God Himself.

And the Angel of the Lord called unto him out of heaven, and said, Abraham, Abraham: . . . thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son, from me (Genesis 22:11, 12).

It was to God Himself that Abraham offered up his son Isaac; therefore the Angel of the Lord is God.

And the angel of the Lord appeared unto [Moses] in a flame of fire out of the midst of a bush: . . . God called unto him out of the midst of the bush . . . Moreover he said, I am the God of thy father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. And Moses hid his face; for he was afraid to look upon God (Exodus 3:2, 4, 6).

Moses knew that the Angel of the Lord was God Himself, and we are not surprised that he was commanded to take off his shoes because the ground on which he stood was holy—for God was there.

When the angel Gabriel appeared to Daniel, the prophet fell on his face through fear and swooned, by Gabriel touched him and set him on his feet (Daniel 8:18) Again it was so in Daniel 10:11, 12. Daniel did not worship him, but stood to hear. If Daniel did not worship the Archangel Gabriel, how much less should we dare offer worship to lesser angelic beings?

Let no man beguile you of your reward in a voluntary humility and worshipping of angels, intruding into those things which he hath not seen, vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind, And not holding the Head [Christ], from which all the body [church, Ephesians 1:22, 23] by joints and bands having nourishment ministered, and knit together, increaseth with the increase of God (Colossians 2:18, 19).

~ end of chapter 30 ~

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