

Precis Paper

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New Testament

Article 1:

Fackre, Gabriel "Angels and Demons Seen" *Theology Today*, 25 June 2016, pp.345-357

The belief in angels and demons and their powers /purpose varies according to one's beliefs. Fackre contends based on Genesis 1:1 when we read God created the heavens and the earth that both a celestial as well as a terrestrial heavens was created as well as angels and their "abode" " He goes on to state the creation of these beings is implied "the heavenly kingdom as the created place under the rule of God and the"whence "of the divine purpose among us in perfect conformity with their divine will. He notes "biblical angels are unswervingly obedient." (p.347.) As far as the role of angels,he states that by being obedient to the ways and will of God they become messengers of God. Angels do not call attention to themselves, but witness to the word. Fackre states that angels have a three fold ministry. Prophetic, Priestley and Royal.Biblical angels point us to Christ , particularly the New Testament prophetic ministry of angels. They bring good news as well as sobering news. In addition to the prophetic office they have a priestly office. The Priestly office we see in Luke 2:13-14 where the angels proclaim and lead others to praise "Glory to God in the highest heaven on earth, peace among those whom he favors. and again in Isaiah we see the Priestly office of angels singing praise as well "Holy Holy Holy, Lord God Almighty." These angels teach us the heart of worship, to usher in praise not focus on our wants and needs angels teach us to keep focused on God.Lastly the Royal office."We see angels

save Lot and his family (Gen 19:1-19), protect Daniel in the lion's den (Daniel 6:23) and care for Jesus after his temptation (Matt:11), and strengthen Him in the garden(Luke 22:43), and we see them throughout the Bible as ministering spirits (Hebrews 1:14).”” Angels do good deeds deeds as well as praise God and deliver good news”

Demons on the other hand,Fackre notes, “are a fallen transcendence “ We are shown in scripture that demons exist but shouldn't be exalted and they serve to counterfeit the offices of God, He encourages us to recall Col 2:15 God “disarmed the powers and authorities, he made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them by the cross.” .

In sum, the case is made for the existence of angels and demons biblically. Angels seek to serve God while demons exist to counterfeit , misguide and lead people away from God.

Article 2

Martin Dale Basil,”When did Angels Become Demons”*Journal of Biblical Literature*.Vol 129.No 4 Winter 2004 pp.657-677.

According to Martin, Ancient Jews may not have shared the same belief/ understanding of angels and demons as some christians equating it with mythology. He goes on to say “Some have taken a more philosophical stand when comparing it with the Greek translation of Hebrew scriptures”p657 .In his findings Martin notes Christians asserted that”evil fallen angels they inherited from Judaism were to be identifies with the Greek word(daimon) which were beings that greeks worshiped as gods or demigods.”(p.658) .The Hebrew generic word for evil beings are the gods that others (non-jews) worshiped or fell prey to .In addition he notes abstract ideas

were looked at as deities .For instance to “Agathos Daimon’ was a deity to protect the household . “In the Psalm 91:6 this word is translated as disease or pestilence .”(p.661) Martin concludes that although the Ancient Jews translated the word for demon into five to six different Hebrew words which referred to different kinds of beings,goat-man gods, superhuman beings,that are either a cause for the disease or are the disease itself, abstract qualities such as fortune or fate.”(p.662) What the commonality is they were all thought of as gods which people falsely worshiped:the gods of the nations.”(p.662) These demons were linked to false idols.

Looking at demons from a philosophical standpoint the author states that these demons are often “unpredictable moody sometimes blessings and sometimes harming.”(p.663) These were deities that linked to sacrifices that were required to appease these false deities. Greeks did not have the same perspective of demons .They were not looked at in Greek culture as entities that possess humans.

The author contends that there was a role played by a specific character in the Hebrew Bible , and that was the word for angel.He notes their roles were to intervene and serve as an intermediary between God and humans . The word was intentionally chosen by Hebrew writers to denote a heavenly being as opposed to an activity .

In the New Testament , Martin states that demons are not equated with fallen angels.He attributes “christian demonology “ to what is found in the Synoptic Gospels.He notes that the preference in the gospels is to refer to evil spirits as demons. However , he does mention an understanding “ why later Christian readers saw the association between demons as fallen angels and reference Luke 6:18 where Satan is referred to as falling from heaven.”(p. 673).He also makes note of the reference to angels in Paul’s world and suggests that these beings could have been working for satan referencing 2 Cor 12:7 and the thorn in Paul’ flesh could be a

“satanic angel”(p.674)Martin gives the reader insight into how the demons and angels are viewed through time, culture, beliefs and meanings of original Hebrew words.

Article 3

Van Eyghen,Hans, “From Theism to Spirit Belief”s ,*Religions*, 19 May2022, pp.1-15.

Van Eygghen proposes the belief in what he calls “ non theistic supernatural agents,”(NTSA) This term will refer to supernatural agents that are not God.(”p,1-2)He states these spiritual entities have the capacity to act intentionally or they act because they are moved by prayers. They are non physical operating outside of time and space.He points out that these beings are separate from God as in “western philosophy of religion “ God is a perfect being and these perfections (Omnipresent, omnipotent , too name a few) serve to distinguish God from other supernatural agents’(p.3)We come to see that that NTSA’s are “less elevated, less powerful and do not create”(p.5). The author goes on to state the many arguments surrounding the existence of God ,and when individuals buy into God's existence they are highly likely that they will believe in NTSA’s such as demons and angels. He notes while many more arguments and debates exist with regard to the existence of God, he purports that there is a” high probability of of an omnibenevolent God creating a messenger and more likely a supernatural realm”p.6 One reason he notes these messengers would be necessary is that “God” may not be capable or desire to interact with humans p.7 He does later go on to sat thai in both the New Testament and Old Testament , God did not need an intermediary to communicate with His people . He stipulate “When God is merely trying to provide information to humans messages are usually sent by angels.If the circumstances exceed the power of angels God would grant a Divine self

revelation, as when he sent Christ to reveal Himself to us .Lastly it is noted that the reliability of the Holy scriptures plays a role in the attestation of NTSAs.

Summary

The question of the existence and functions of angels and demons is intriguing. In the essay on Supernatural Beings ,Lesses notes Jews And Christians believe” in multiple supernatural beings.Some of these beings partook in the divine glory and other evil forces challenged God and His angels”(p.682). In the articles noted previously, it became apparent that these authors took note that angels functioned as messengers of God , but were separate entities and not necessarily an extension of God himself. While one author suggested that God needed these entities to “help . to avoid human interaction all together, he later recognized that the Lord chooses to use them. He doesn't need angels.I would argue we serve a God who desires a deep intimacy with all of creation and doesn't want to substitute Himself by sending a messenger. On the other side of the supernatural we see evil or the demonic side . While some of the authors debated if these demons were in fact fallen angels. The study of the word in Hebrew for demon and angel sheds light on the intentionality of the Lord and Hebrew writers. As the word demon was translated as “false gods” . In addition the Hebrew word for angel was preserved to mean messenger so no mistake would be made that these entities were in fact agents from God and were instrumental for his Kingdom could choose to . Angels and demons are both created beings that serve opposite roles. Demons are agents of evil and counterfeit the roles of angels. They work to bring about a separation from God, an idolatry or patterns of sin. Angels serve to bring a word, message, announcement , usher us into praise that focuses solely on the Lord and they also serve to minister in times of need. As noted previously there are multiple scriptures that give

testimony to the Truth and existence of these entities.

Citation:

Lesses, Rebecca “Supernatural Beings” in *The Jewish Annotated New Testament 2nd Edition*, Levine Amy-Jill and Brettler Marc Zvi ,Oxford University 2017