

the exceptions on either side are few. The spirits of evil are pre-eminently Satan or the Devil, and dæmons, or *unclean spirits*; Satan the first sinner, the first tempter, the true Antichrist, and, retaining one of his archangel names, the *prince* or *god of this world*; and devils, *δαίμονια*, who in great numbers troubled the bodies and souls of men while their Head assailed the Redeemer. When we reach the doctrine of Sin it will be necessary to introduce these higher intelligences again.

3. While the good and unfallen spirits are generally the Holy Angels, and the evil spirits of Scripture are not generally termed by that name, yet these are also represented as subserving the purposes of the Supreme. Even if they are the servants of their prince, both they and he alike must directly or indirectly, by command or by permission, do the behest of the only Supreme Will. In the mystery of that will they are left in the free restraint or the restrained freedom of the sphere of the redeeming economy. Satan is the *prince of the power of the air*, and his hosts are *spiritual wickedness in high places*; but both the air and the high places are within the Saviour's domain: His authority compasses our world, and no line limits it outward. Still more strange is it that both in ancient and in modern revelation the ministers of evil are exhibited as in the upper spiritual world: a true *wonder in heaven*. But the term is used here symbolically for the spiritual sphere only. It may be noted, finally, that while the Divine Being uses the good spirits to chastise wickedness, almost always the evil spirits are used to discipline the offending righteous.

Mark i 27
Zech. xiii.
2.
John xiv.
30.

Good and
Evil.

Eph ii.
2.
Eph. vi.
12.

Rev. xii.
3.

ANGELS.

Angels.

The denomination Angels, which runs through the Scriptures as pervadingly as the name of God Himself, before Whom they stand, is used with reference to their ministerial service; as the Hebrew *מַלְאָכִים* and the Greek *ἄγγελος* signify. With the exception of some few passages, such as *the Devil and his angels*; *Messenger*, or *angel, of Satan*; *the Dragon fought and his angels*—which do not use the term in an official sense, and are therefore scarcely exceptions,—the angels are the attendants on God and ministers of His will

Matt. xxv.
41.

2 Cor. xii.
7.
Rev. xii 7

throughout all the economies of His government. This gives them their glory and their grace in the Bible.

1. There can be no higher description of them than that they wait upon God. The Lord is the *Lord of hosts*, and the holy angels are His *sons*: *all the sons of God shouted for joy*. Their joy is the joy of worship: they sing the doxology to the Holy Trinity—to man as yet unrevealed, but revealed to them—in Isaiah's mystical temple; they receive the commandment, which they were quick to obey, to worship the Son when He was *brought into the world*; and they descend to sympathise with, if indeed they do not join in, the devotion of the Church of God among men. So near are they to the manifested Divine glory, and so do they reflect it, that they are called gods:—*worship Him, all ye gods!* though this, as in the case of human judges, receiving the same designation, may refer rather to their representative character as executing their functions in the Divine name. In this character they are known as Cherubim: forms which are symbolical, rather than descriptive, and signify the forces of the created universe, attendant upon God, but not God Himself; and Seraphim, also representing the creature before God and extolling His perfections, as unslumbering *Watchers*, burning with Divine love. But the highest honour conferred upon them is this, that the Supreme unites them with Himself as His court:—*Let us go down!* includes them, though the *US* points to another mystery. Throughout the Old Testament the Lord is *in the assembly of His saints*; into which even the representative of evil spirits might enter, before Christ came to cast them out finally: *and Satan came also among them*. But this leads to the ministry of these blessed spirits of heaven.
2. They are called *ministering spirits*, *λειτουργικά πνεύματα*: ministering to God, that is, in His general government of the universe, in the economy of redemption, and in His providence over the saints. As to the first, we have no power to determine the extent of their operation in the physical universe; but we read of such occasional interventions—for instance, the slaying of the Assyrian host, the phenomena at Mount Sinai—as forbid any doubt concerning their rare and occasional ministry in this domain: if, indeed, rare and occasional, of which there is no
- Divine Court.
Isa. xlviii. 4.
Job i. 6.
Job xxxviii. 7.
Isa. vi.
Heb. i. 6.
1 Cor. xi. 10.
Ps xcvi. 7.
Gen. iii. 24.
Ps xviii. 10.
Ezek. i. 10.
Rev. ix. 7.
Dan iv. 17.
Gen. i. 26; xi. 7.
Ps lxxxix. 7.
Job i. 6;
Zech. iii. 1.
1 Kings xxii. 19.
Heb. i. 14.
Ministering Spirits.
2 Kings xix. 35.
Gal. iii. 19.
Deut. xxxiii. 2.

proof. But in the history of redemption they appear as statedly and fixedly as Prophets and Apostles themselves: especially at the great crises, the Creation, the Lawgiving, the History of the Incarnate Lord, *seen of angels*, and the dread solemnities of the Last Day. In this high service they seem to have always acted in the order of a hierarchy. For the loftiest functions—for the guardianship of Israel in the old economy, the announcement of Christ and the protection of His kingdom in the new—there are Archangels, though so called only in the New Testament. First Michael, *Who is like God?* whose name declares that he, the highest in the scale of created beings, the first-born of every creature as Christ is the *First-born BEFORE every creature*, for ever remembers his finite creatureliness. He accordingly vindicates Monotheism in the Old Testament and is the conqueror of Satan in the New: *Who is like God?* Then Gabriel, *Hero of God*, the supreme representative in the heavenly host of God's executive will, who in both the Old and the New Testaments announces the coming of the Christ: the angelic Forerunner, as the Baptist was the human. It is probable that Satan, then Lucifer, or known by some name that he has lost, was the third in this angelic trinity. Daniel's *princes* of Grecia and Persia may without violence be interpreted of human potentates. The highest angels seem alone in the Old Testament to have been employed in human service: always, however, in subordination to One Who, called an angel, is the Lord Himself. He, as will hereafter be seen, was the Angel Jehovah, or the Angel of Jehovah, the Angel of the Covenant, a Divine Person Who, before He became man, appeared in human form, taking the name though He never took the nature of angels. Always distinguished from Him are the pre-eminent ministers from the spiritual world in the Old-Testament economy, who were thus prepared for the higher service of ministering to the Lord when He came, Whose entire incarnate life was *seen of angels*. Especially they drew near to Him in His sorrow: absent at the Transfiguration, but necessary to Gethsemane. They do not attend the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost: they are comparatively lost in His higher dispensation, and their absence on that day preludes their absence now. Not that they are wholly absent: they still and ever are *ministers*

1 Tim. iii.
16

Dan. x. 13.

Col. i. 15.
Jude 9
Rev. xii. 7.
Dan. viii.
16.
Lu. i. 19,
26.

Dan. x. 20.

1 Tim. iii.
16

- Heb. i. 14. *for them who shall be heirs of salvation.* Not as GUARDIAN ANGELS in the strict sense of the word ; it is rather *for the sake of the heirs of salvation* that they minister. *Their angels* are not the guardians of children individually, any more than Peter's *angel* was his specific guardian. Hence while the tenor of the Word of God permits us to include angel-ministry among the *all things which work together for good*, it is careful so to describe and define their service to mankind as to render both unreasonable and sinful every form of the *worshipping of angels*.
- Acts xii. 15.
- Rom. viii. 28.
- Col. ii. 18.

His-
torical.

HISTORICAL.

Whatever else of theological interest belongs to Angelology may be touched upon in a brief notice of its historical aspects : with reference, first to Superstition, and secondly to Infidelity.

Super-
stition.

1. The Jewish and the Christian Churches have their respective developments of superstition on this subject, the former being the basis of the latter. After the Captivity Jewish theology betrayed to some extent the infection of its contact with foreign speculations, especially in Persia : the Apocrypha abounds with evidences of a departure from the simple teaching of the Old Testament, as that takes its last form in Daniel. During the interval before the final settlement of the New-Testament canon there appears a tendency in the Christian Church to honour the angels unduly. The seventh Œcumenical Council at Nicæa, A.D. 787, concedes to them *προσκύνησις*, though not the Divine *λατρεία*. The Nicene Creed, issuing from an earlier and better Council, had declared that they were created ; and Irenæus had protested against invocation of angels. But the evil made steady progress in the general corruption of Christian doctrine, and received its final confirmation at Trent. There is no error more distinctly guarded against in Scripture : *ὄρα μή, See thou do it not . . . worship God*. Superstition has made the world of evil angels also its domain. Forgetting the great change that the coming of Christ has effected, and that the influence of evil spirits has been more effectually controlled than it was before, the Christian Church during almost its entire history down to the Reformation was haunted by an unevangelical idea of their operation in all regions of the Divine Government, physical and spiritual. Hence
- Rev. xix. 10.

the place given to Satan, as having a right to the redemption price, in the doctrine of the Atonement; hence the elaborate ceremonials of exorcism; hence the abject dread of the powers of malign spirits in the infliction of the natural calamities of life: hence the notion of personal contacts with the Evil One; and hence, lastly, the judicial treatment of witchcraft and sorcery down to a recent time.

2. But infidelity sweeps away, not only the superstitious appendages of the revealed truth concerning angels, but the revealed truth itself. In its more reckless form it has renounced the whole economy of the angel world. Though the Biblical revelation only confirms the inferences of analogical reasoning and the universal instinct of mankind, scepticism not only doubts but denies the existence of beings superior to man: thus rejecting in fact the whole Bible with the very fabric of which this revelation is interwoven. It specially argues against the personality of Satan: either returning to the Manichæan delusion of an independent power *αὐτοφύης* and *ἀγέννητος*, or making him merely the personification of evil which undeniably exists. But here Rationalistic Christian theology joins the infidel. It is enough to say that the person of the Enemy of Christ is as distinctly presented in the history of revelation, though not so fully described, nor so constantly present, as the Person of the Lord Himself. There is nothing more remarkable, nothing more worthy of study, than the parallel development of the representative of sin and the Redeemer from sin throughout the Bible. In the same way the argument against demoniacal possession may be met. Though Scripture allows that suffering, as part of the penalty of sin, is, like death itself, in some respect in the ministry of Satan, it makes a distinction between all trouble or wickedness arising from within, and the torment inflicted by evil spirits from without. There are in the New Testament *δαιμονιζόμενοι*, persons dæmonised, who, in body and soul, if not in spirit, are under the special influence of dæmons. That this was a reality, and not a style of language accommodated to Jewish notions, is evident from the combination of healing diseases and casting out devils in the Saviour's commission, as also from His habitually addressing Himself to personal beings when He cast them out. There is a

Infidelity.

Luke xii.
16.
2 Cor. xii.
7.

John xii.
31.

grand consistency in the Scriptural revelation on this subject. The Old Testament gives some distant indications of such possession; when our Lord appears there is an outbreak of these powers on earth: but the chief enemy is always pre-eminent, as appears in the fact that the last Evangelist withdraws his attention from all besides him, never mentioning the dæmons. And it is an illustration of the same consistency that their full force in human affairs has never been felt since the Conqueror said: *Now shall the prince of this world be cast out.* How far they are still permitted to seduce men, and what part they play in the modern devices of so-called spiritualistic science, which professes to call them in as evidence of another world, we need not now inquire.

Their
Place in
Theology.

3. This last observation will apply to the whole topic which is here closed: the angels have retreated from their high pre-eminence. The doctrine concerning them belongs to the entire scheme of revelation, as in course of delivery, and pervades every part of it. The angel world is around us everywhere in Biblical theology, and we must prepare ourselves by a firm faith at the outset for the reappearance of its representatives as we proceed through the several doctrines. It has been viewed here only or chiefly in its relation to the universe as created, but at every stage in our future course it will meet us again. Meanwhile, it may be well to observe at this point that the ANGELOLOGY of the Bible is always subordinated to human interests; and, saving as they are connected with redemption wrought out and administered, spirits good and evil, or rather spirits and angels, need not and should not be too curiously investigated. *Why askest thou thus after My name?* said One in the Old Testament. *Seeing it is secret,* He added, doubtless for a higher reason than what is here suggested: His name was as yet concealed, and in a certain sense is concealed for ever. But the caution is generally appropriate. The student, and the preacher especially, should in this matter limit himself to the clear testimonies of the Oracle, not keeping back the truth from the sceptic, but not pandering to a false Spiritualism, as the modern word is. Both evil spirits and angels may, on these conditions, most fruitfully and profitably enter into practical theology, even as they necessarily occupy a large and important place in dogmatics.

Judges
xiii. 18.