

Psalm 103:20

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Bless the LORD, ye his angels, that excel in strength, that do his commandments, hearkening unto the voice of his word.

Analysis

Angels 'excel in strength' and 'do his commandments,' serving as perfect models of obedient service. They 'hearken unto the voice of his word,' responding immediately to God's instructions. This angelic obedience challenges believers to similar responsiveness. The Reformed emphasis on God's glory recognizes that all creation, including angels, exists to serve and glorify Him. Christ, superior to angels (Heb 1:4), commissions angels to serve believers (Heb 1:14), demonstrating the dignity of redeemed humanity.

Historical Context

Angels in Hebrew thought were powerful spiritual beings serving as God's messengers and agents. Israel understood them as part of God's heavenly court, executing His will throughout creation.

Related Passages

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Study Questions

1. What can you learn from angels about prompt, wholehearted obedience to God's word?
2. How does knowing angels serve believers affect your view of God's care for you?

Interlinear Text

בָּרוּ כְּמַלְאָכִים יְהוָה בָּרוּכָה
Bless the LORD ye his angels that excel in strength that do
H1288 H3068 H4397 H1368 H3581 H6213

דְּבָרָיו בְּקָרְבָּן לְשֻׁמְעָן
his commandments hearkening unto the voice his commandments
H1697 H8085 H6963 H1697

Additional Cross-References

Psalms 148:2 (Parallel theme): Praise ye him, all his angels: praise ye him, all his hosts.

Hebrews 1:14 (Parallel theme): Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?

Luke 1:19 (Parallel theme): And the angel answering said unto him, I am Gabriel, that stand in the presence of God; and am sent to speak unto thee, and to shew thee these glad tidings.

Psalms 78:25 (Parallel theme): Man did eat angels' food: he sent them meat to the full.

Matthew 26:53 (Parallel theme): Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to my Father, and he shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels?

2 Kings 19:35 (References Lord): And it came to pass that night, that the angel of the LORD went out, and smote in the camp of the Assyrians an hundred fourscore

and five thousand: and when they arose early in the morning, behold, they were all dead corpses.

Joel 2:11 (Word): And the LORD shall utter his voice before his army: for his camp is very great: for he is strong that executeth his word: for the day of the LORD is great and very terrible; and who can abide it?

Isaiah 6:2 (Parallel theme): Above it stood the seraphims: each one had six wings; with twain he covered his face, and with twain he covered his feet, and with twain he did fly.

Psalms 29:1 (References Lord): Give unto the LORD, O ye mighty, give unto the LORD glory and strength.

Matthew 6:10 (Parallel theme): Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven.