

The Classification of Spirit Beings According to Their Hebrew Designations

Throughout the Old Testament spirit beings are referred to by the word “host.” The Hebrew word carries the idea of an army and is used both of human armies and the heavenly host. They are first mentioned in Genesis 2:1:

Thus the heavens and the earth, and all the host of them, were finished.

Moses is speaking of all living beings, both on the earth, which would undoubtedly include animals, as well as in heaven, which would refer to all the created spirit beings. Clearly, the spirit beings were created somewhere during the six days of creation just preceding this reference.

See also Genesis 31:1-2; Psalm 33:6.

God is regularly called “the Lord of Hosts” in the Old Testament, i.e. 1 Samuel 1:11; 2 Kings 3:14.

☐ Cherubim

1. Cherubim Guarded the Way to the Garden

Genesis 3:24 So He drove out the man; and He placed cherubim at the east of the garden of Eden, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to guard the way to the tree of life.

2. Cherubim Stood On the Mercy Seat

a. Cherubim faced each other with their wings over-stretching the mercy seat.

Exodus 25:18-22 And you shall make two cherubim of gold; of hammered work you shall make them at the two ends of the mercy seat. ¹⁹ Make one cherub at one end, and the other cherub at the other end; you shall make the cherubim at the two ends of it of one piece with the mercy seat. ²⁰ And the cherubim shall stretch out their wings above, covering the mercy seat with their wings, and they shall face one another; the faces of the cherubim shall be toward the mercy seat. ²¹ You shall put the mercy seat on top of the ark, and in the ark you shall put the Testimony that I will give you. ²² And there I will meet with you, and I will speak with you from above the mercy seat, from between the two cherubim which are on the ark of the Testimony, about everything which I will give you in commandment to the children of Israel.

b. God's presence dwelt between the cherubim.

1 Samuel 4:4 So the people sent to Shiloh, that they might bring from there the ark of the covenant of the LORD of hosts, who dwells between the cherubim.

2 Samuel 6:2 And David arose and went with all the people who were with him from Baale Judah to bring up from there the ark of God, whose name is called by the Name, the LORD of Hosts, who dwells between the cherubim.

3. Images of Cherubim Were Used for Decorations for the Tabernacle and Temple

a. The Tabernacle

Exodus 26:1 Moreover you shall make the tabernacle with ten curtains of fine woven linen and blue, purple, and scarlet thread; with artistic designs of cherubim you shall weave them.

Exodus 36:8 Then all the gifted artisans among them who worked on the tabernacle made ten curtains woven of fine linen, and of blue, purple, and scarlet thread; with artistic designs of cherubim they made them.

b. The Temple

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1 Kings 6:23-29 Inside the inner sanctuary he made two cherubim of olive wood, each ten cubits high. 24 One wing of the cherub was five cubits, and the other wing of the cherub five cubits: ten cubits from the tip of one wing to the tip of the other. 25 And the other cherub was ten cubits; both cherubim were of the same size and shape. 26 The height of one cherub was ten cubits, and so was the other cherub. 27 Then he set the cherubim inside the inner room; and they stretched out the wings of the cherubim so that the wing of the one touched one wall, and the wing of the other cherub touched the other wall. And their wings touched each other in the middle of the room. 28 Also he overlaid the cherubim with gold. 29 Then he carved all the walls of the temple all around, both the inner and outer sanctuaries, with carved figures of cherubim, palm trees, and open flowers.

4. Cherubim Operated as God's Attendants

Ezekiel 10:15-20 And the cherubim were lifted up. This was the living creature I saw by the River Chebar. ¹⁶ When the cherubim went, the wheels went beside them; and when the cherubim lifted their wings to mount up from the earth, the same wheels also did not turn from beside them. ¹⁷ When the cherubim stood still, the wheels stood still, and when one was lifted up, the other lifted itself up, for the spirit of the living creature was in them. ¹⁸ Then the glory of the LORD departed from the threshold of the temple and stood over the cherubim. ¹⁹ And the cherubim lifted their wings and mounted up from the earth in my sight. When they went out, the wheels were beside them; and they stood at the door of the east gate of the LORD's house, and the glory of the God of Israel was above them. ²⁰ This is the living creature I saw under the God of Israel by the River Chebar, and I knew they were cherubim.

See also Ezekiel 1:4-5

5. One Cherub Was Higher in Rank Than the Others

Ezekiel 28:14-16 You were the anointed cherub who covers; I established you; You were on the holy mountain of God; You walked back and forth in the midst of fiery stones. ¹⁵ You were perfect in your ways from the day you were created, Till iniquity was found in you. ¹⁶ By the abundance of your trading You became filled with violence within, And you sinned; Therefore I cast you as a profane thing Out of the mountain of God; And I destroyed you, O covering cherub, From the midst of the fiery stones.

☐ Seraphim

Isaiah 6:1-7 In the year that King Uzziah died, I saw the Lord sitting on a throne, high and lifted up, and the train of His robe filled the temple. ² Above it stood seraphim; each one had six wings: with two he covered his face, with two he covered his feet, and with two he flew. ³ And one cried to another and said: Holy, holy, holy is the LORD of hosts; The whole earth is full of His glory! ⁴ And the posts of the door were shaken by the voice of him who cried out, and the house was filled with smoke. ⁵ So I said: Woe is me, for I am undone! Because I am a man of unclean lips, And I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips; For my eyes have seen the King, The LORD of hosts. ⁶ Then one of the seraphim flew to me, having in his hand a live coal which he had taken with the tongs from the altar. ⁷ And he touched my mouth with it, and said: Behold, this has touched your lips; Your iniquity is taken away, And your sin purged.

☐ Malachim (Angels)

1. They Have Ranks (See Chart)

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Colossians 1:16 For by Him all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. All things were created through Him and for Him.

2. The Highest in Rank is the Archangel

Jude 1:9 Yet Michael the archangel, in contending with the devil, when he disputed about the body of Moses, dared not bring against him a reviling accusation, but said, The Lord rebuke you!

1 Thessalonians 4:16 For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first.