

4: Angels

There is also an “angel in charge of the waters” (Revelation 16:5). In another vision, John sees an angel come “out of the temple and” call “in a loud voice to him who was sitting on the cloud, ‘Take your sickle and reap, because the time to reap has come, for the harvest of the earth is ripe.’ ” (Revelation 14:15). John then sees two more angels: “Another angel came out of the temple in heaven, and he too had a sharp sickle. Still another angel, who had charge of the fire, came from the altar and called in a loud voice to him who had the sharp sickle...” The angel then directs him to swing his sickle (Revelation 14:17-18). The angel who has charge of the fire is seen in an earlier vision offering incense on this altar.

At Revelation 19:17, John sees an angel “standing in the sun” who gives instruction “in a loud voice to all the birds flying in midair”. In another vision, John sees “an angel coming down out of heaven, having the key to the Abyss and holding in his hand a great chain”, who then binds Satan and hurls him into the Abyss (Revelation 20:1-3). Angels are not simply standing idly by in heaven. They have a variety of important assignments and positions within God’s heavenly arrangement and participate in events that occur on the earth.

John even sees a great battle in heaven take place. At Revelation 12:7-9, John sees a war in heaven where “Michael and his angels” fight with the “dragon and his angels... .” The dragon and his angels lose the battle and are hurled to the earth. The angelic realm is very active indeed.

The angels are entrusted with great authority and power in the fulfillment of God’s will toward the earth and mankind. John witnesses this angelic activity throughout the visions he is shown. He also hears and is instructed by “a voice from heaven”.