



Hebrew Backgrounds	Genesis and Numbers
Greek Developments	Daniel 8-10
Angels in Philosophy	Paul's Letters
Angels in Poetry	Psalms
Angels in Pop Culture	Revelation

<http://hardlylastword.wordpress.com/angels>

Angels in Popular Culture: Some General Contours

- Angels separated out of traditional Biblical narratives
- Human idiosyncrasy takes precedence over divine function
- Mixtures of angel-teachings from all sorts of ages

Quasi-Angels

- Charles Dickens's "A Christmas Carol" (1843) features three supernatural agents who are not angels but who effect "Christmas spirit" in Ebenezer Scrooge
 - The first movie adaptation of the story is by Thomas Edison in 1908
 - The Alastair Sim (1951) and George C. Scott (1984) versions are not to be missed
- Jiminy Cricket in "Pinocchio" (1883, Disney 1940) serves in many ways as an angel
 - In the novel, Pinocchio kills the cricket, and it comes back as a ghost

Angels on the Screen

- IMDB.com has 277 titles with the keyword "angel," 2/3rds released in 1988 and after
 - The earliest on IMDB is Charlie Chaplain's "The Kid" (1921)
 - "It's a Wonderful Life" (1946) perhaps one of the best known
 - "The Bishop's Wife" (1947, later remade as "The Preacher's Wife" in 1996) has an angel who fails his mission by falling in love. Who really stands a chance against Cary Grant and Denzel Washington? "City of Angels" (1998) runs with same theme
 - "All Dogs Go to Heaven" (1989) brings Faustian elements into kids' movies
 - "The Little Mermaid" also comes out in 1989
 - "Michael" (1996) and "Dogma" (1999) feature angels who cuss, drink, and chase women

Angels in Revelation

- Book begins with a note that God sent an angel to John to reveal Heaven
- Chapters 2-3: The Angels of the Churches
 - In the opening of Revelation churches, not nations, have angels
 - The angel seems to be a messenger between the Son and the congregation
- Chapters 8-11: Angels bear censers and trumpets that carry with them prayers and judgment
 - One angel, called Destroyer (Apollyon), seems to be an echo of Exodus 12
- Chapter 12: Michael and his angels fight against the dragon and his angels
- Chapter 14: Angels and the Battle that Never Happens
- Chapter 16: Angels pour out bowls of judgment

Some Thoughts Before Nathan and Mary Leave and Jan Takes Over

- Our own tradition (Stone/Campbell Movement or 19 Century Reformation or Restoration Movement) holds that angels are real but that they always play a role in a larger Christ-story; we are not alone in the Christian world
- Angels should never become ultimate, lose their mystery, or fade entirely out of the picture
- History cannot be the end of thinking about angels, but it should be a beginning