

ISLAMIC CREED SERIES • 2

# THE WORLD OF THE NOBLE ANGELS

In the Light of the Qur'an and Sunnah

عالم الملائكة الأبرار

‘Umar S. al-Ashqar

INTERNATIONAL ISLAMIC PUBLISHING HOUSE



PERDANA  
LEADERSHIP  
FOUNDATION  
YAYASAN  
KEPIMPINAN  
PERDANA



IN THE NAME OF  
**ALLAH**  
THE ALL-COMPASSIONATE, ALL-MERCIFUL



---

**THE WORLD OF THE  
NOBLE ANGELS**

---



- Title: THE WORLD OF THE NOBLE ANGELS
- Author: 'Umar S. al-Ashqar
- Arabic Edition 1 (1990)
- Translated from Arabic edition 7 (1995)
- English Edition 2 (2005)
- Translator: Nasiruddin al-Khattab
- Editor: Huda Khattab
- Layout: IIPH, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia
- Cover Designer: Haroon Vicente Pascual, Arlington, U.S.A.

---

# THE WORLD OF THE NOBLE ANGELS

---

In the Light of the Qur'an and Sunnah

'Umar S. al-Ashqar

Translated by:  
Nasiruddin al-Khattab

PUSTAKA PERDANA



1012880



INTERNATIONAL ISLAMIC PUBLISHING HOUSE

© **International Islamic Publishing House, 2005**

*King Fahd National Library Cataloging-in-Publication Data*

Al-Ashqar, Umar S.

**The world of the Noble Angels in the light of the Qur'an and Sunnah. / Umar S. al-Ashqar ; translated by Nasiruddin al-Khattab - 2nd ed.,-Riyadh , 2005**

...p ; 22 cm , - (Islamic creed series ; 2)

1- Angels (Islamic creed) I-Nasiruddin al-Khattab (trans.)

II-Title III-Series

243 dc 5383/22

Legal Deposit no. 5383/22

ISBN Hard Cover: 9960-672-75-1

ISBN Soft Cover: 9960-672-93-X

All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopying, recording, or by any information storage and retrieval system, without written permission from the Publisher.

**International Islamic Publishing House (IIPH)**

**P.O.Box 55195 Riyadh 11534, Saudi Arabia**

**Tel: 966 1 4650818 - 4647213 - Fax: 4633489**

**E-Mail: [iiph@iiph.com.sa](mailto:iiph@iiph.com.sa) . [www.iiph.com.sa](http://www.iiph.com.sa)**

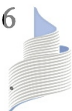
---

---

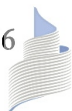
*Please take part in this noble work  
by conveying your comments to IIPH  
through e-mail, fax or postal-mail address.*

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>PUBLISHER'S NOTE</b>	<b>09</b>
<b>TRANSLATOR'S FOREWORD</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>AUTHOR'S FOREWORD</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>INTRODUCTION</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>DEFINITION OF THE ANGELS AND BELIEF IN THEM</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>CHAPTER ONE</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>THEIR PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS, ATTRIBUTES AND ABILITIES</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>1 - PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS</b>	<b>17</b>
(1) What they were created from and when Seeing the angels	<b>17</b> <b>19</b>
(2) Their great physical size The great size of Jibreel The great size of the bearers of the Throne	<b>19</b> <b>19</b> <b>22</b>
(3) Their most important physical characteristics	<b>22</b>
<b>2 - ATTRIBUTES</b>	<b>35</b>
The angels are honourable and obedient The modesty of the angels	<b>35</b> <b>35</b>
<b>3 - ABILITIES</b>	<b>36</b>
(1) Their ability to take on different forms	<b>36</b>



(2) Their great speed	39
(3) Their knowledge	39
(4) They are disciplined and organized in all their affairs	42
(5) The infallibility of the angels	43
CHAPTER TWO	47
THE WORSHIP OF THE ANGELS	47
A LOOK AT THE NATURE OF THE ANGELS	47
THE STATUS OF THE ANGELS	48
Examples of their worship	49
(1) <i>Tasbeeh</i> (Glorifying Allah)	49
(2) Standing in rows	50
(3) <i>Hajj</i>	51
(4) Their fear of Allah	53
CHAPTER THREE	55
THE ANGELS AND MAN	55
1 - THE ANGELS AND ADAM	55
2 - THE ANGELS AND THE SONS OF ADAM	57
(1) Their role in the creation of man	57
(2) The angels guard the sons of Adam	58
(3) The emissaries of Allah to His Messengers and Prophets	59
His leading the Messenger in prayer	63
(4) Stirring up good motives in human hearts	66



(5) Recording the good and bad deeds of the sons of Adam	68
(6) Testing the sons of Adam	73
(7) The angels take the soul from the body when the appointed time of death comes	75
(8) The relationship of the angels with man in the grave, on the Day of Resurrection and in the Hereafter	78
3 - THE ANGELS AND THE BELIEVERS	79
(1) The role of the angels with the believers	79
(2) The obligations of the believers towards the angels	99
4 - THE ANGELS AND THE <i>KUFFAAR</i> AND EVILDOERS	104
(1) Bringing the punishment down upon the <i>kuffaar</i>	104
(2) Their destruction of the people of the Prophet Loot	104
(3) Their cursing of the <i>kuffaar</i>	106
(4) The demand of the <i>kuffaar</i> to see the angels	108
CHAPTER FOUR	111
THE ANGELS AND OTHER CREATED THINGS	111
1 - THE BEARERS OF THE THRONE	111
2 - THE ANGELS OF THE MOUNTAIN	111
3 - THE ANGELS WHO ARE APPOINTED OVER RAIN, VEGETATION AND PROVISION	112
CHAPTER FIVE	115
WHO IS SUPERIOR — THE ANGELS OR THE SONS OF ADAM?	115

THIS IS AN ANCIENT DISPUTE	115
Different views on this matter	116
The point of dispute	117
The evidence of those who say that righteous human beings are superior to the angels	117
The correct view	120
SYMBOLS' DIRECTORY	122
GLOSSARY	123
TRANSLITERATION CHART	127

## PUBLISHER'S NOTE

All praise and thanks belong to Allah, Lord of the Universe. May Allah's blessings and peace be upon the last of the prophets and messengers Muhammad, his family, Companions, and all those who follow his footsteps till the end of time.

This is the second book of the Islamic Creed (*'aqeedah*) series by Dr. 'Umar Sulaymaan al-Ashqar. It deals with the world of the Angels, an integral part of the Islamic faith. Persons denying the existence of Angels go outside the pale of Islam.

As usual, Dr. Al-Ashqar has discussed this issue exhaustively. His arguments are based on the texts of the Qur'an and the Sunnah. He has covered all aspects of the topic: definition, origin and characteristics, kinds and their relationship with mankind and other creation. Moreover, he draws a comparison between mankind and the angels in their respective roles as determined by Allah. A number of editions of the Arabic original have been sold out.

We are pleased to present this excellent English translation of a very popular book. May Allah bless with acceptance the efforts of the author, the translator and all those associated with the publication of this work.

***Muhammad ibn 'Abdul-Muhsin Al Tuwaijri***

General Manager

International Islamic Publishing House

Riyadh, Saudi Arabia





## TRANSLATOR'S FOREWORD

*In the name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful*

Belief in the Unseen (*Al-Ghayb*) is one of the basic tenets of Islam, and forms an important part of Islamic teachings. One of the unseen worlds of which Islam tells us is the world of the angels, who are described in great detail in the Qur'an and Sunnah and who are involved with man throughout his life.

From the moment an individual is conceived in his mother's womb, until his death and beyond, angels play a role in human life. Angels accompany the human being, protecting him and keeping a record of all his deeds. Angels bring forth the soul of the deceased person/s and they bring comfort or inflict torment in the grave. An angel will sound the Trumpet on the Last Day, and angels will be present on the Day of Judgement until they accompany people to their ultimate destination in Paradise or Hell.

Almost all human cultures, ancient and modern, have some kind of belief about angels. The pre-Islamic Arabs believed them to be daughters of the Almighty. Some philosophers thought that angels were the stars in the sky. In modern times there has been a resurgence of interest in angels, and they feature prominently in movies and other forms of popular western culture. Stories featuring angels circulate on the internet and various kinds of gifts, bearing supposed images of angels, gift shops in the west.

But these myths have no role to play in the belief of the Muslim. Our beliefs are based on the teachings of the Qur'an and Sunnah, which tell us all we need to know about the reality of the unseen, including the world of the angels. Belief in the angels brings comfort to man's soul; this belief makes man feel that he is important in the sight of Allah, and that he matters a lot to Him; this belief also encourages a person to strive in the path of goodness. Hence it is of the utmost importance for the

Muslim to understand what Islam says about the angels, and what the implications of this knowledge are for his daily life. In this book, Dr. 'Umar al-Ashqar draws on the sources of Islam to give us a comprehensive picture of who the angels are, their origins, their role in the universe and their interaction with mankind in this world and the next.

May Allah reward the author for his presentation of the Islamic belief in the angels. May He guide us on the Straight Path which leads to Paradise, and may He grant us admittance to that eternal abode where the angels will welcome the believers with greetings of *salaam*. May Allah bless our Prophet Muhammad and his family and Companions, and grant them peace.

*Naṣiruddin al-Khaṭṭab*

### **Translator's Note:**

**All translations of the meaning of the Qur'anic quotations have been taken from "Translation of the Meanings of the Noble Qur'an" by Dr. Muhammad Muḥsin Khan and Dr. Muhammad Taqi-ud-Din al-Hilali, unless otherwise stated.**

## AUTHOR'S FOREWORD

Praise be to Allah. We praise Him and seek His help, forgiveness and guidance. We seek refuge in Allah from the evil of our own selves and from our evil actions. Whomsoever Allah guides, none can lead astray, and whomsoever He leads astray, none can guide. I bear witness that there is no god except Allah alone, with no associate or partner, and I bear witness that Muhammad is His slave and Messenger.

Belief in the angels is one of the basic principles of *'aqeedah*, and faith is not complete without this belief. The angels form one of the worlds of the Unseen, belief in which is commanded by Allah, Who praises those who believe in what Allah and His Messenger (ﷺ) have told us about them.

The texts of the Qur'an and Sunnah speak in detail about all aspects of this subject. Whoever studies these texts will come to have a clear belief in the angels and realize that this is not an obscure topic. This will deepen and strengthen his faith, for detailed knowledge is stronger and firmer than general knowledge.

The only reason why the texts go into such detail on this topic is that the human mind on its own is not able to learn about the angels. Human senses are unable to see the angels or hear their conversations, but this inability is no doubt in man's best interests, for if man could hear and see everything that is going on around him, he would not be able to survive. It is sufficient for us to imagine how hard it would be for a man if he could detect all the sounds that are picked up by a radio set; the result would surely make him lose his mind.

No one should assume that studying this principle is a kind of superfluous knowledge. The facts stated in the texts which speak of this topic have a great effect in counteracting the myths and false beliefs that exist in people's minds concerning this matter. Since ancient times there has been a widespread belief that the angels are divine or that they are



the daughters of Allah, and some philosophers think that the angels are the stars which we see in space.

The facts which are stated in the texts implant in our hearts the firm belief in the One God Who is in control of all of creation, Who has appointed His troops of angels to take care of the various affairs of this universe.

The relationship of the angels with us, their role in our formation and their watching over us, speaks to man of his importance and valuable status, and it refutes the idea that human beings are insignificant and worthless. Thus man can fully appreciate his own value and strive hard to play the great role which he is required to fulfil.

If we were to count the positive effects which stem from man's belief in the angels, and to study the texts which speak of them, the introduction would turn into a lengthy article. So I will leave the reader to look at those texts which, when studied in depth, will supply him with these inspiring effects.

We ask Allah to benefit people through this book, and to make it sincerely for His sake, for He is the best of helpers and supporters.

*'Umar Sulaymaan al-Ashqar*

## INTRODUCTION

# DEFINITION OF THE ANGELS AND BELIEF IN THEM

The Angels form a world different to the world of mankind and the world of the jinn. It is a noble world, completely pure. They are noble and pious, worshipping Allah as He should be worshipped, fulfilling whatever He commands them to do and never disobeying Him.

From the texts of the Qur'an and Sunnah, we will see their attributes as described therein.

The word *malak* (angel) is derived from the root *alaka; ma'lakah* and *ma'lak* mean message. From this root is derived the word *malaa'ik* (angels), because they are the messengers of Allah.

It is also said that the word *malak* is derived from the root *la'aka*, and that *mal'aakah* means message. The phrase *wa'alikni ila fulaan* means 'convey to him from me.' *Al-Mal'ak* means *al-malak* (angel) because the angels convey (messages) from Allah.

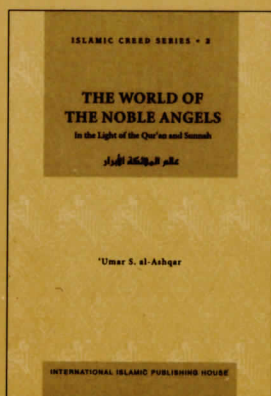
Some of the scholars said *al-malak* (angel) is derived from *al-mulk* (sovereignty). He said: if one of the angels is in control of some affairs, he is described as *malak*, and if a human being is in control of some affairs, he is described as *malik* (king).<sup>1</sup>

Belief in the angels is one of the principles of faith. A person's faith cannot be correct unless he believes in them. Allah says:

﴿ءَاْمَنَ الرَّسُوْلُ بِمَا اُنزِلَ اِلَيْهِ مِنْ رَبِّهِ وَالْمُؤْمِنُوْنَ كُلُّ ءَاْمَنَ بِاللّٰهِ وَمَلَائِكَتِهِ  
وَكُتُبِهِ وَرُسُلِهِ لَا نُفِرْقُ بَيْنَ اَحَدٍ مِنْ رُسُلِهِ﴾

﴿The Messenger [Muhammad] believes in what has been sent down to him from his Lord, and [so do] the believers. Each one believes in

<sup>1</sup> *Baṣaa'ir Dhawi al-Tamyeez*, by Al-Fayroozabadi, 4/524.



From the moment an individual is conceived in his mother's womb, until his death and beyond, angels play a part in human life. Angels bring forth the soul of the dying and they bring comfort or inflict torment in the grave. An angel will sound the Trumpet on the Last Day, and angels will be present on the Day of Judgement until they accompany people to their ultimate destination in Paradise or Hell.

Almost all human cultures, ancient and modern, have some kind of belief about angels. The pre-Islamic Arabs believed them to be daughters of the Almighty. Some philosophers thought that angels were the stars in the sky. In modern times, there has been a resurgence of interest in angels, and they feature prominently in movies and other forms of popular western culture.

But these myths have no role to play in the belief of the Muslim.

Our beliefs are based on the teachings of the Qur'an and Sunnah, which tell us all we need to know about the reality of the unseen, including the world of the angels. In this book, Dr. Umar S. al-Ashqar draws on the sources of Islam to give us a comprehensive picture of who the angels are, their role in the universe and their interaction with mankind in this world and the next.

### **ISLAMIC CREED SERIES**

- 1 • Belief in Allah
- 2 • The World of the Noble Angels
- 3 • The World of the Jinn and Devils
- 4 • The Messengers and the Messages
- 5 • The Minor Resurrection (What happens after death)
- 6 • The Day of Resurrection
- 7 • Paradise and Hell
- 8 • Divine Will and Predestination

ISBN 9960-672-75-1



9 789960 672755

