

## Strong's Concordance

**ophan: a wheel**

Original Word: 

Part of Speech: Noun Masculine

Transliteration: ophan

Phonetic Spelling: (o-fawn')

Short Definition: wheels

Definition a wheel

<http://biblehub.com/hebrew/212.htm>

In the Hebrew Enoch (Jellinek, "B. H." v. 176) the following angel-princes are named:

Baradiel,	from <i>barad</i> ,	set over the hail
Ruḥiel,	" <i>ruah</i> ,	" " " wind.
Baraḳiel,	" <i>baraḳ</i> ,	" " " lightning.
Za'amael,	" <i>za'am</i> ,	" " " storm.
Zikḥel,	" <i>zik</i> ,	" " " glow wind (or comet).
Zava'el,	" <i>zva'ot</i> ,	" " " whirlwind.
Za'afiel,	" <i>za'af</i> ,	" " " hurricane.
Ra'amiel,	" <i>ra'am</i> ,	" " " thunder.
Ra'ashiel,	" <i>ra'ash</i> ,	" " " earthquake.
Shalgiel,	" <i>sheleg</i> ,	" " " snow.
Maṭariel,	" <i>matar</i> ,	" " " rain.
Shamsiel,	" <i>shemesh</i> ,	" " " light of day.
Lailahel,	" <i>lailah</i> ,	" " " night.
Galgaliel,	" <i>galgal</i> ,	" " " wheel of the sun.
Ofaniel,	" <i>ofan</i> ,	" " " wheel of the moon.
Kokbiel,	" <i>kokab</i> ,	" " " stars.
Rehaṭiel,	" <i>rahat</i> ("runner"),	set over the planets.

<http://www.jewishencyclopedia.com/articles/1521-angelology>

# Ophanim

"Ofanim" redirects here. For the charity, see Ofanim (charity).

The *ophanim* or *ofanim*, also *Ophde* (Hebrew "wheels" אֹפְנַיִם *'ōphannām*; singular אֹפְנָן *'ōphān*) refer to the wheels seen on Ezekiel's vision of the chariot (Hebrew *merkabah*) in Ezekiel 1:15-21 <sup>[1]</sup>. These are first construed as angels in one of the Dead Sea scrolls (4Q405), and as a class of celestial beings in late sections of the Book of Enoch (61:10, 71:7) where with the Cherubim and Seraphim they never sleep, but guard the throne of God.

These "wheels" have been associated with Daniel 7:9 <sup>[2]</sup> (mentioned as *galgal*, traditionally "the wheels of galgallin", in "fiery flame" and "burning fire") of the four, eye-covered wheels (each composed of two nested wheels), that move next to the winged Cherubim, beneath the throne of God. The four wheels move with the Cherubim because the spirit of the Cherubim is in them. These are also referred to as the "**many-eyed ones**" in the late Second Book of Enoch (20:1, 21:1).

The Ophanim are also equated as the "Thrones", associated with the "Wheels", in the vision of Daniel 7:9 (Old Testament). They are the carriers of the throne of God, hence the name. However, they may or may not be the same Thrones (Gr. *thronos*) mentioned by Paul of Tarsus in Colossians 1:16 <sup>[3]</sup> (New Testament).

## Function and philosophy

These Angelic Princes are often also called "Ofanim, Wheels of Galgallin." It is said that they were the actual wheels of the Lord's Heavenly Chariot (Merkabah). "The four wheels had rims and they had spokes, and their rims were full of eyes round about." They are also frequently referred to as "many-eyed ones."

Rosemary Gulley (1996: p. 37) states that:

The 'thrones'; also known as 'ophanim' (offanim) and 'galgallin', are creatures that function as the actual chariots of God driven by the cherubs. They are characterized by peace and submission; God rests upon them. Thrones are depicted as great wheels containing many eyes, and reside in the area of the cosmos where material form begins to take shape. They chant glorias to God and remain forever in his presence. They mete out divine justice and maintain the cosmic harmony of all universal laws.<sup>[4]</sup>



One traditional depiction of the chariot vision, based on the description in Ezekiel.

## Ophanim in specific spiritual traditions

### Ophanim in Judaism

Maimonides lists Ophanim as occupying the second of ten ranks of angels in his exposition of the Jewish angelic hierarchy.

Ophanim are mentioned in the *kel adon* prayer, often sung by the congregation, as part of the traditional Shabbat morning service.

In the Jewish angelic hierarchy thrones and wheels are different. This is also true in the Kabbalistic angelic hierarchy.

### Thrones in the Catholic Church

*De Coelesti Hierarchia* refers to the Thrones (from the Old Testament description) as the third Order of the first sphere, the other two superior orders being the Cherubim and Seraphim. It is mentioned that "*The name of the most glorious and exalted Thrones denotes that which is exempt from and untainted by any base and earthly thing, and the super mundane ascent up the steep. For these have no part in that which is lowest, but dwell in fullest power, immovably and perfectly established in the Most High, and receive the Divine Immanence above all passion and matter, and manifest God, being attentively open to divine participations.*"

### Lords of the Flame in the Western Wisdom Teachings

*The Rosicrucian Cosmo-Conception* refers that the "Lords of the Flame", the Hierarchy of Elohim astrologically assigned to Leo, are the Thrones (from the Old Testament description, "because of the brilliant luminosity of their bodies and their great spiritual powers."); the other two superior hierarchies being also the Cherubim and Seraphim. According to this teaching, these three Hierarchies have already reached liberation, and thus are no longer active in the work of evolution.

### Nation of Islam

The Nation of Islam identifies the ophanim with the Mother Plane, which Wallace Fard Muhammad described as a "small man-made planet" located approximately 40 miles (64 km) above the earth that would one day destroy the cities of white people. His successor Elijah Muhammad also identified them with contemporary sightings of flying saucers.<sup>[5][6]</sup>

## References

- [1] <http://tools.wmflabs.org/bibleversefinder/?book=Ezekiel&verse=1:15-21&src=NIV>
- [2] <http://tools.wmflabs.org/bibleversefinder/?book=Daniel&verse=7:9&src=NIV>
- [3] <http://tools.wmflabs.org/bibleversefinder/?book=Colossians&verse=1:16&src=KJV>
- [4] Gulley, Rosemary Ellen (1996). *Encyclopedia of Angels*. ISBN 0-8160-2988-1, p.37
- [5] Elijah Muhammad, *Message to the Blackman in America*, ch. 125
- [6] Elijah Muhammad, *The Fall of America*, ch. 58

<b>Christian angelic hierarchy</b>		
<b>First Sphere</b>	<i>Seraphim • Cherubim • Ophanim • Thrones</i>	
<b>Second Sphere</b>	<i>Dominions • Virtues • Powers or Authorities</i>	
<b>Third Sphere</b>	<i>Principalities or Rulers • Archangels • Angels</i>	

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**Ofaniel** or **Ofan** (Ofniel, Ophan, Ophaniel, Yahriel)—eponymous chief of the order of ofanim (thrones). Ofaniel is said to exercise dominion over the moon and is sometimes referred to as “the angel of the wheel of the moon.” In *3 Enoch*, he has 16 faces, 100 pairs of wings, and 8,466 eyes. He is “one of the 7 exalted throne angels who carry out the commands of the powers.” [Rf. *Almadel of Solomon; The Sixth and Seventh Books of Moses.*] “By the ancient sages,” says Rashi, commenting on Ezekiel 1:20, “Ophan, prince of this order, is regarded as identical with Sandalphon.” [Rf. glossary to C. D. Ginsburg, *The Essenes and The Kabbalah.*]