

THE BIG PICTURE OF SCRIPTURE THROUGH THE MAJOR AND MINOR PROPHETS

Week 6 – The Angel of the LORD

February 27, 2024

Have you received God's mercy (not getting what we deserve)?

From what you've been learning...

Who is God?

Why does God chastise/discipline/judge (execute judgment)?

God walked with Adam and Eve.

Adam and Eve ate of the fruit of the tree from which God had forbidden them to eat... and they were ashamed! From being created in innocence, man now knew guilt!

Gen. 3:8 - *And they heard the sound (the noise) of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence (panim – face) of the LORD God among the trees of the garden.*

WHO was walking with Adam and Eve?

Jesus, in John 4:24, tells us that “God is spirit” – God the Father does not have a human body. A spirit doesn't have body weight that would make noise when walking. I Tim. 6:16 – *God dwells in unapproachable light, whom no man has seen or can see.* WHO was walking with Adam & Eve?

In Gen. 18 we read that the LORD appeared to Abraham as Abraham was sitting in his tent door. Abraham lifted his eyes and beheld three men. When he saw them, Abraham ran to them and bowed down – and offered them food and they ate and then Abraham and the LORD walked toward Sodom and Gomorrah! WHO appeared at Abraham's tent? WHO ate with Abraham? WHO walked with Abraham toward Sodom and Gomorrah!!

Who is God? Do you believe God reveals Himself?

The Bible tells us that God reveals Himself to humans in four primary ways:

1) Through creation. Rom. 1:18-20 - *For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who suppress the truth in unrighteousness, ¹⁹ because what may be known of God is manifest (to be plainly apparent, recognized) in them, for God has shown (revealed) it to them. ²⁰ For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes are clearly seen, being understood (perceived) by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead, so that they are without excuse....* God's creation reveals Who God is.

2) Our consciences bear witness to the existence of God.

“Conscience” is defined as “moral awareness” based on a standard of right and wrong.

3) God reveals Himself to us through Scripture.

4) God reveals Himself to us through Jesus the Messiah.

In the OT the visible manifestations of GOD took the form of light, fire, or cloud or a combination of these. AND at times in Scripture we SEE God taking on a physical form. Who might this be? Immanuel? What does Immanuel mean? God in the flesh.

“Theophany” is a theological word that is a combination of two Greek words meaning “God” and “appearance.” A theophany is an appearance of God. A “theophany” is a manifestation (a

2

display) of God in the Bible that is tangible to the human senses – our sight, our touch. One such form of the appearance of God in the Bible is the Angel of the LORD.

In Hebrew, the word for “angel,” is *malakh*. A *malakh* is “one who is sent” by God, or “a messenger” from God. There is one *malakh* Who stands out from all the rest. The Bible calls Him, “**the** Angel of the LORD.” Of the 214 references to “malakh” in the OT, 33% are best translated as “**the** Angel of the LORD” who is distinguished from all other angels.

The Angel of the LORD represents God. YET, this messenger, **the** Angel of the LORD, appears to have powers and abilities reserved only for God Himself. He speaks as God. The Angel of the LORD promises to deliver to the one with whom He’s communicating only what God can deliver. (Note: “the Angel of the LORD” – LORD is all in caps. LORD is YHWH/Yahweh – “I Am that I Am” – the eternal God!). We read of the Angel of the LORD appearing rather suddenly, dramatically, and frequently...in the Hebrew Scriptures. The Angel of the LORD does not appear in the NT!

We first read of the Angel of the LORD in Gen. 16 when He appeared to Hagar, Sarah’s Egyptian handmaiden whom Sarah gave to Abraham for the purpose of giving Abraham and Sarah a child. Hagar fled from Sarah...and the Angel of the LORD found Hagar in the wilderness on her way back to Egypt. Gen. 16:7-8 - Now the Angel of the LORD found her by a spring of water in the wilderness, by the spring on the way to Shur. ⁸ And He said, ‘Hagar, Sarai’s maid, where have you come from, and where are you going?’ OBSERVATIONS?

This is NOT a spiritual presence. This is a Person physically present with Hagar, and that Person is the Angel of the LORD.

The Angel of the LORD told Hagar, *I will multiply your descendants exceedingly, so that they shall not be counted for multitude* (v. 10). Who could say that but GOD?

The Angel of the LORD then told Hagar, *Behold, you are with child, and you shall bear a son. You shall call his name Ishmael.* And then the Angel of the LORD spoke about the future of Ishmael. Who would know this other than GOD?

Gen. 16:13 - Then she called the name of the LORD who spoke to her, You-Are-the-God-Who-Sees (El Roi – “The God Who sees me”). Hagar seemed to be astounded by God’s GRACE being extended to her! Hagar then said, *Have I also here seen Him who sees me?* More astonishment on Hagar’s part!

When God Himself is physically present, I am strongly suggesting that this is a pre-incarnate appearance of Jesus Christ.

Ex. 33:20 – When Moses asked of God, *Please show me Your glory...* God replied, *You cannot see My face; for no man shall see Me, and live.*

John 1:18 - *No one has seen God at any time. The only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, He has declared Him,*

I Tim. 6:16 – *No man has ever seen God in the Person of the Father - ...whom no man has seen or can see, to whom be honor and everlasting power.*

The Angel of the LORD, according to Scripture, is a
Pre-incarnate appearance of the second person of the Trinity, the pre-Bethlehem appearance of
God the Son, of Jesus.

3

In Genesis 22 we have an amazing account of a father sacrificing his son, his only son whom he loved!! Gen. 22:1-18 (READ).

Approx. 500 years after Abraham, we read of Moses in the book of Exodus and his encounter with the Angel of the LORD calling out to him from the burning bush. Ex. 3:1-6 (READ).

The Angel of the LORD declared Himself to be God. And, the Angel accepted worship. Moses was told to remove his sandals as he was standing on holy ground. God alone is holy.

When the LORD delivered the children of Israel from Egypt, Ex. 13:21 13:21 tells us - *And the LORD went before them by day in a pillar of cloud to lead the way, and by night in a pillar of fire to give them light, so as to go by day and night. Ex. 14:19 - And **the Angel of God**, (Who is the LORD in Ex. 13:21) *who went before the camp of Israel, moved and went behind them; and the pillar of cloud went from before them and stood behind them.**

Exodus 23:20-21 - *Behold, I send **an Angel** (Whom God called “My Angel” in Ex. 33:2) before you to keep you in the way and to bring you into the place which I have prepared. How is this Angel explained... ²¹ Beware of Him and obey His voice; do not provoke Him, for He will not pardon your transgressions; for My name is in Him. The Angel of the LORD is GOD.*

The Angel of the LORD must be a manifestation of God Himself. The Angel of the LORD is believed to be a pre-incarnate/pre-Bethlehem appearance of Jesus. Why wouldn't we have a pre-Bethlehem appearance of the Messiah? Jesus existed before Bethlehem. Jesus, the Messiah, the Son of God is ETERNAL! Jesus declared Himself to be existent “before Abraham (John 8:58).

In Numbers 22:22-40 – you can read about Balaam, the donkey, and the Angel of the LORD in your study time!

Joshua - Having left Egypt 40 years before, the children of Israel arrived on the east side of the Jordan River. God caused the waters of the Jordan to rise up in a heap far upstream as far as 15 miles north. The people crossed over into the land of promise. I'm envisioning the inhabitants of Jericho watching the 2M+ Israelites crossing – moving toward them!

Joshua 4:19- *Now the people came up from the Jordan on the tenth day of the first month...* Why is the 10th day of the first month on the Jewish calendar noted? The tenth day of the first month was when God told Moses to tell the children of Israel to take a lamb into their homes. They were to scrutinize the lamb to make sure it was without blemish. If the lamb was spotless, they were to slay the lamb and apply the blood of the lamb on the doorposts and the lintel. God passed over the homes with the blood applied to the door. God delivered the children of Israel from bondage in Israel...and they began their wilderness journey.

And on the tenth day of the first month – approx. 1430 years AFTER the children of Israel crossed the Jordan River – 1430 years in the FUTURE, Jesus rode into Jerusalem on the colt of a donkey!

Josh. 4:19 – *and they camped in Gilgal on the east border of Jericho.* At Gilgal the second generation of Israeli males were circumcised.

Josh. 5:9 - *Then the LORD said to Joshua, 'This day I have rolled away the reproach of Egypt from you.' Therefore the name of the place is called Gilgal (rolling).* God rolled away the shame

4

that they experienced in Egypt away – at Gilgal.

Josh. 5:10 - Gilgal was the first place the Israelites celebrated the Passover after entering the land of promise. *While the sons of Israel camped at **Gilgal**, they observed the Passover on the evening of the fourteenth day of the month on the desert plains of Jericho.* And, on the fourteenth day of the first month, approximately 1430 years in the future, Jesus was crucified.

Josh. 5:13-15 (READ) – a Man, the Commander of the army of the LORD, encountered Joshua. Joshua fell on his face and worshiped this Man who told Joshua to take off his sandals for the place where he was standing was holy. And Joshua did so. WHO is this Commander of the army of the LORD?

In the land of promise, what were the children of Israel to do? Deut. 9:1, 3, 4b – (READ)

In Joshua's farewell address to the children of Israel, Joshua told them that they would be responsible for eradicating the Canaanites from their tribal lands. Israel disobeyed. God had warned them: the practices and sinfulness of the people from the land of Canaan would greatly influence the children of Israel. In the book of Judges we read of an extended period (approx. 265 years) of anarchy and moral decay which characterized the period of the Judges. The Israelites turned away from God.

Judges - To bring them back to Himself, God disciplined His people by allowing them to fall under the oppressive domination of their enemies. **But God's** mercy and grace were poured out

on the children of Israel. Why? God had made an unconditional covenant with Israel through Abraham. THEREFORE....

Judges 2:1-6 - Then the Angel of the LORD came up from Gilgal (where God had rolled away their shame) to Bochim, and said: 'I led you up from Egypt and brought you to the land of which I swore to your fathers; and I said, I will never break My covenant with you. ² And you shall make no covenant with the inhabitants of this land; you shall tear down their altars.' But you have not obeyed My voice. Why have you done this? ³ Therefore I also said, I will not drive them out before you; but they shall be thorns in your side, and their gods shall be a snare to you.' ⁴ So it was, when the Angel of the LORD spoke these words to all the children of Israel, that the people lifted up their voices and wept. ⁵ Then they called the name of that place Bochim (weeping); and they sacrificed there to the LORD. ⁶ And when Joshua had dismissed the people, the children of Israel went each to his own inheritance to possess the land ...to carry out what they had been told to do. The Angel of the LORD came up from Gilgal...where the children of Israel were NOT! It was in Gilgal, their first camp in the Promised Land, that the Israelites made a solemn dedication of themselves to God on their entrance into the Promised Land (Josh. 4:1-9). Might the Angel of the LORD have been waiting for the children of Israel to return to Gilgal...to return to the place of their dedication of themselves to God?!!!

But after the Israelites wept following their encounter with the Angel of the LORD...after the first generation died, another generation arose who did NOT know the LORD nor the work which He had done for Israel. Had the first generation failed to pass along all that the LORD had done? And so...

Judges 2:11-15 (READ)

Judges 2:16 – “Nevertheless”...what are we reading concerning God’s part? God’s GRACE! Faithfulness to the Abrahamic Covenant. *Nevertheless, the LORD raised up judges who delivered*

5

them out of the hand of those who plundered them. In spite of the fact that Israel was undeserving...God raised up Judges to rescue Israel from their calamity.

Judges 6:1-6 – Gideon, one of the Judges, the Midianites, and the Angel of the LORD!

The enemies of Israel attacked the children of Israel and destroyed their produce, stole their grain...and left no sustenance for Israel. Israel cried out to God for deliverance.

Judges 6:11 - ...the Angel of the LORD sat under an oak tree and observed Gideon while Gideon threshed wheat in the winepress!

Judges 6:12 - *And the Angel of the LORD appeared to him, and said to him, 'The LORD is with you, you mighty man of valor!'*

Gideon’s faith was weak. He was fearful. Gideon went from a man in hiding, essentially hiding in a winepress threshing wheat to victory in battle! Victory came about through Gideon’s willingness to obey God.

Judges 6:13-23 - Before entering battle, Gideon's troops numbered 32,000, but in obedience to God he reduced them by 22,000 (Judges 7:2-3). Again in obedience to God he decreased the remaining 10,000 by a further 9,700, leaving him with just 300 men (vss. 7-8). This was against an enemy that is described as "thick as locusts" with "camels as numerous as the grains of sand on the seashore" (Judges 7:12).

Judges 13:1-22 (READ) - The Angel of the LORD appeared to Samson's parents.

Isa. 9:6 - *For unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given; and the government will be upon His shoulder. And His name will be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.*

How WONDERFUL of God to REVEAL Himself to His creation and to provide the way for us through Jesus to live with Him for all eternity! Isa. 9:6 - *For unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given; and the government will be upon His shoulder. And His name will be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.*

How WONDERFUL that our God is a God of unfathomable MERCY and GRACE!

QUESTIONS:

What have you observed about the Angel of the LORD?

What are your questions?

Why did God send the Angel of the LORD to the children of Israel?

How could the Angel of the LORD fit into a gospel presentation to Jewish people and Gentiles?

Who is God?

Have you received mercy?

SUGGESTED HOMEWORK:

Reread Week 6 with Bible references.

With whom will you share this lesson?

How will this impact your walk with the LORD?

Read Week 7 when you receive it.