

## THE GLORY OF GOD

Week 9 – The Angel of the LORD

November 5, 2024

Re: the glory of God, we are focusing on four words in this study: REVEAL, RESPOND, DWELL, PROVIDE. God REVEALS Himself. Man RESPONDS to God's revelation. Because God is a personal God, He expresses His desire to DWELL with man. And God, since the fall, has always PROVIDED the way to Himself – salvation!

In the OT most of 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. One such form is the Angel of the LORD! In Hebrew, the word for “angel,” is *malakh*. A *malakh* is “one who is sent,” or “a messenger,” either human or angelic. 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, the Scriptures present this Angel as more than God's representative. 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 w/ whom He's communicating only what God can deliver. The Angel of the LORD has been referred to as a rather mysterious figure Who appears suddenly, and dramatically, and frequently in the Hebrew Scriptures. And, the Angel of the LORD does NOT appear in the NT!

Throughout the OT, the Angel of the Lord often appeared in human form. Sometimes we hear His voice, as in Gen. 22 and in Ex. 3.

The existence of the Angel of the LORD supports the Trinity. He assures us of the pre-existence of God the Son, Jesus! Pre-existence – from eternity past! And we see Him as our personal God Who desires to communicate with us, to come alongside us!

The Angel of the LORD guided the people of Israel. He spoke the promises of God and took the obligation of delivering on those promises upon Himself. He spoke prophecies and administered judgment on Israel's enemies. He frequently received the respect, worship, and honor reserved only for God. Yet, at times, He was distinguished from God. We read that the Angel of the LORD was sent from God in Ex. 23:20-21 – When God spoke forth His commandments to the children of Israel in the wilderness after having been delivered from Egypt, He said, *Behold, I send an Angel before you to keep you in the way and to bring you into the place which I have prepared* (in v. 23 God states, *My Angel will go*).

The Angel of the LORD, God Himself, God the Son, revealed Himself in a **visible**, personal way – taking a physical form. Who, within the Godhead, has come in the flesh? Emmanuel! The Second Person of the Trinity. God the Son! He is the only Person in the Tri-unity of God Who appears in the flesh! Therefore, when we read of God appearing in human form prior to Jesus' incarnation, about Whom are we reading? Jesus! A pre-incarnate appearance of Jesus. Why wouldn't we have a pre-Bethlehem appearance of the Messiah? Jesus existed before Bethlehem.

Jesus, the Messiah, God the Son is eternal! Jesus declared Himself to be existent “before Abraham (John 8:58 – *Before Abraham was I AM!*).

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The Angel of the LORD revealed Himself as Jehovah and He revealed Himself as distinct from Jehovah. How does that work? The answer lies in the personal distinctions of the Trinity.

Consider: neither the Father nor the Holy Spirit is revealed in bodily/visible human form. The Father’s voice is heard from heaven, and the Holy Spirit is seen descending in the form of a dove. Jesus, God the Son, is the full manifestation of God in visible form – in both Testaments. The Angel of the LORD does not appear in the NT. During His first coming, the Messiah was the incarnate/in the flesh Jesus!

The Angel of the Lord is first mentioned in Genesis 16 after Hagar, Sarai’s Egyptian handmaiden fled from Sarai. 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<sup>8</sup> And He said, ‘Hagar, Sarai’s maid, where have you come from, and where are you going?’* The interaction seems so casual. It’s as if we should know Who this individual is!

The Angel of the LORD tells Hagar, *I will multiply your descendants exceedingly, so that they shall not be counted for multitude.* Who can do so but GOD? The Angel of the LORD then said, *Behold, you are with child, and you shall bear a son. You shall call his name Ishmael, because the Lord has heard your affliction.* Who would know this but GOD?

God saw Hagar. But Hagar also saw God! She saw a pre-incarnate appearance of Jesus.

Gen. 16:13 - *Then she called the name of the LORD who spoke to her, You-Are-the-God-Who-Sees. Have I also here seen Him Who sees me?*

Gen. 16:14 – Hagar named the well at that location Beer Lahai Roi which means Well of the One Who Lives and Sees Me. Hagar recognized the Living God Who saw her situation and heard her misery (16:11) and this Living God intervened to give her hope and comfort. The same location is mentioned two other times as the place where Isaac was living apart from his father, Abraham, who was living at Beersheba (Gen. 22:19). It seems that both separated to their respective locations following the “near sacrifice” of Isaac. Had the Angel of the LORD met with Isaac at Beer Lahai Roi to comfort him?

Hagar wouldn’t have seen the Angel of the LORD had she not been afflicted! Perhaps the same was true for Isaac.

Gen. 22 – we read of a mountain in the land of Moriah...the site of Isaac’s “near sacrifice” where the Angel of the LORD stopped Abraham’s hand as he lifted his knife to offer Isaac as a burnt offering. (Read Week 8’s handout)

Ex. 3:1-6 - we read of Moses tending the flock of Jethro his father-in-law, the priest of Midian. *And he led the flock to the back of the desert, and came to Horeb, (aka Sinai) the mountain of God.* <sup>2</sup> *And the Angel of the LORD appeared to him in a flame of fire from the midst of a bush. So he looked, and behold, the bush was burning with fire, but the bush was not consumed.* <sup>3</sup> *Then Moses said, 'I will now turn aside and see this great sight, why the bush does not burn.'* <sup>4</sup> *So when the LORD saw that he turned aside to look, God called to him from the midst of the bush and said, 'Moses, Moses!'* And he said, 'Here I am.' <sup>5</sup> *Then He said, 'Do not draw near this place. Take your sandals off your feet, for the place where you stand is holy ground.'* <sup>6</sup> *Moreover He said, 'I am the God of your father—the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.'* And Moses hid his face, for he was afraid to look upon God. The Angel of the LORD is God. And, the Angel accepted worship. Moses was told to remove his sandals as he was

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standing on holy ground. God alone is holy. At this time, God commissioned Moses to deliver His people from slavery/bondage in Egypt.

Exodus 14:19-20 - *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.* <sup>20</sup> *So it came between the camp of the Egyptians and the camp of Israel. Thus it was a cloud and darkness to the one, and it gave light by night to the other, so that the one did not come near the other all that night.*

Ex. 23:20-21 – God the Father told Moses, *Behold, I send **an Angel** before you to keep you in the way and to bring you into the place which I have prepared.* <sup>21</sup> *Beware of Him and obey His voice; do not provoke Him, for He will not pardon your transgressions; for My name is in Him* (in v. 23 God states, **My Angel** will go). The Angel of the LORD is GOD and has the power to pardon transgressions. And, God's name – which means God's character, nature, and attributes are "in Him."

The book of Judges covers approximately 265 years. Judges documents Israel's spiritual, national, and social defeats and failures. Of God's mercy we read...

Judges 2:1-6 - *Then the Angel of the LORD came up from Gilgal ("rolling" - the children of Israel's first camp after entering the land of promise. Gilgal was 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.* <sup>2</sup> *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?* <sup>3</sup> *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.'* <sup>4</sup> *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.* <sup>5</sup> *Then they called the name of that place Bochim (weeping); and they sacrificed there to the LORD.* <sup>6</sup> *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 God had rolled away the shame of the Israelites. 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?!!! 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 2:11-12 - *Then the children of Israel did evil in the sight of the LORD, and served the Baals; <sup>12</sup> and they forsook the LORD God of their fathers, who had brought them out of the land of Egypt;*

Judges 2:16 - *Nevertheless, the LORD raised up judges who delivered them out of the hand of those who plundered them...because of His covenant to fulfill His promises to Israel which would impact the world. We see God's grace; yet the cycle of sin continued...**BUT GOD...***

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Judges 6:1-6 - During the time of the Judges, at harvest time, the Midianites invaded the harvest fields and left no sustenance for Israel. It was at this time that Israel cried out to God for deliverance.

Judges 6:11-12 - ...the Angel of the LORD sat under an oak tree and observed Gideon while Gideon threshed wheat in the winepress!?? Can you imagine threshing wheat in a winepress that had sides around the as opposed to threshing wheat in the wide-open spaces so that the wind could carry away the chaff? *Now the Angel of the LORD came and sat under the terebinth tree... while...Gideon threshed wheat in the winepress, in order to hide it from the Midianites.*

<sup>12</sup> *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, in obedience to God he reduced his troop from 32,000 to 300 men in preparation to fight armed men "without number"! When Gideon's 300 men blew the trumpets and broke pitchers that held torches, and shouted, 'The sword of the Lord and of Gideon,' the Lord set every man's sword, within the Midianites' camp, against his companion!!

The Angel of the LORD appeared to Samson's parents....

Judges 13:1-18 (PLEASE READ)

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 while dealing with sin!

SUGGESTED READING:

The Angel of the LORD appeared to Balaam (Numbers 22:22-35).

The Angel of the LORD appeared to David (2 Samuel 24:1-9).

The Angel of the LORD appeared to Elijah (1 Kings 19).

The Man Who wrestled with Jacob – (Genesis 32:24-30).

The Commander of the Lord of hosts – (Joshua 5:13-15).

QUESTIONS:

What have you observed about the Angel of the LORD?

What are your questions?

Are you marveling at God? In what way?

What will you add to your Glory of God Journal?

Why did God send the Angel of the LORD to the children of Israel? How can you share God with Jewish people and Gentiles using the passages re: the Angel of the LORD?

Have you received mercy?

SUGGESTED HOMEWORK:

Reread Week 9 with Bible references.

With whom will you share this lesson?

How will this impact your walk with the LORD?

Read Week 10's handout when you receive it.