

ST. JOHN'S LUTHERAN CHURCH
Red Bud, Illinois

Adult Bible Study
“Angels, Angels Everywhere”

VIII. The Angel of the Lord

There is a special angel mentioned over forty times in the Old Testament. This is the “Angel (messenger) of the Lord (Yahweh) or God.” This angel is described in the Bible as a heavenly being sent by God to deal directly with people as God’s personal agent and spokesman. In many passages this angel virtually is identified with God. This angel speaks not merely in the name of God but as God Himself.

At other times this angel is distinguished from God. The Lord used this angel to appear to human beings who otherwise would not be able to see God and live (Exodus 33:20). This special relationship is a mystery to our human minds. Also mysterious to our human minds is the relationship between Jesus and His Father as described in the Gospels. The few uses of the phrase “angel of the Lord” in the New Testament may indicate the work of the Holy Spirit.

What type of message does the Angel of the Lord give in these passages?

Destruction/Judgment	Protection/Deliverance	Instruction/Warning	Covenant Promise
Genesis 16:7-14 _____		(notice what Hagar calls the angel in verse 13)	
Genesis 22:9-18 _____		(notice how interchangeable “angel/God/Lord” are)	
Genesis 31:10-13 _____		(“Bethel” refers to Jacob’s dream in 28:12-15)	
Exodus 3:1-6 _____		(both this angel and God appear within the bush)	
Exodus 14:19-20 _____		(“God” here translates the Hebrew <u>Elohim</u>)	
Exodus 23:20-21 _____		(Luke 1:35 “So the holy one to be born will be called the Son of God”)	
Numbers 22:20-35 _____		(compare verses 20 and 35 with each other)	
Judges 2:1-5 _____		(What is the angel claiming in verse one?)	
Judges 6:11-24 _____		(notice the back and forth between “the angel of the Lord” and “the Lord”)	
Judges 13:1-22 _____		(“The angel of the Lord/God” occurs 11 times.)	
1 Kings 19:3-8 _____			
2 Kings 1:1-4, 15-17 _____		(What the angel says is what God says.)	
2 Kings 19:32-36 _____		(Does our image of God include such an act?)	

1 Chronicles 21:14-20 and 27-22:1 _____ (this is the site of future temple)

Psalm 34:4-7 _____ (Who is the “he” and “him” in verse 7?)

Psalm 35:4-6 _____ (This is what is called an “imprecatory” psalm.)

Isaiah 63:7-9 _____ (Notice the connection between “Savior” and “the angel of His presence.”)

Zechariah 1:8-13 _____ (three distinct beings: “angel talking to me,” “angel of the Lord,” “Lord Almighty”)

Zechariah 3:1-7 _____ (What does the angel tell Joshua? Who only has that authority?)

Mark 2:5-7 When Jesus saw their faith, He said to the paralytic, "Son, your sins are forgiven." 6Now some teachers of the law were sitting there, thinking to themselves, 7"Why does this fellow talk like that? He's blaspheming! Who can forgive sins but God alone?"

While at times the “Angel of the Lord” is spoken of as distinct from God, many more times this angel is identified interchangeably with God. Those who have seen this angel marvel that they have seen God. This angel speaks for God in the first person. This angel makes intercession on behalf of God’s people.

These Old Testament references to the Angel of the Lord are commonly understood as Old Testament appearances of the pre-incarnate Jesus Christ. These appearances of the Second Person of the Holy Trinity, the Son of God, did much to sustain God’s people as they waited, no always so patiently, for God to keep His promises of salvation through the sending of His Son in human flesh as Jesus of Nazareth.

Luther’s Morning Prayer: I thank You, my heavenly Father, through Jesus Christ, Your dear Son, that You have kept me this night from all harm and danger; and I pray that You would keep me this day also from sin and every evil, that all my doings and life may please You. For into Your hands I commend myself, my body and soul, and all things. Let Your holy angel be with me, that the evil foe may have no power over me. Amen.

Next Lesson: Angels as Servants of Christ’s Church