

IX.2. Lambs to Rams: The Angel of the Lord

Identified with God

In Gen 16:13 Hagar “called the name of the LORD that spake unto her, Thou God seest (*ELROI, that is, God is seeing*) me: for she said, Have I also here looked after Him that seeth me?” In the context it was the Angel of the Lord that was directing Hagar to return after she fled from the abuse of her mistress Sarai (*v. 6*). Sarai was jealous that Hagar became pregnant to Abram and was carrying a son, Ishmael. Later when Sarai, now Sarah, had born Isaac when she was “well stricken in age” (*18:11*) and Isaac was weaned, Ishmael “mocked” Isaac. Sarah then said to Abraham to cast her and the child out of their presence saying Ishmael “shall not be heir with my son, even with Isaac” (*21:10*). When Hagar fled into the wilderness, she and Ishmael ran out of water.

Gen 21:17 And God heard the voice of the lad; and **the Angel of God** called to Hagar out of heaven, and said unto her, What aileth thee, Hagar? Fear not; for **God hath heard** the voice of the lad where he is. 18 Arise, lift up the lad, and hold him in thine hand; **for I will make** him a great nation. (*Emp. added*)

Ishmael went on to become the father of the Arab nation. But soon when Isaac was older Abraham was to undergo a test that would produce a seed of faith that Christians are to emulate (*Rom 4:16*).

Gen 22:1 And it came to pass after these things, that **God** did tempt (*Heb.5254-test*) Abraham, and said unto him, Abraham: and he said, Behold, *here I am*. 2 And He said, Take now thy son, thine only *son* Isaac, whom thou lovest, and get thee into the land of Moriah; and offer him there for a burnt offering upon one of the mountains which I will tell thee of. (*Emp. added*)

It was by Abraham’s faith that he understood that if “in Isaac shall thy seed be called” (*21:12*) then God would have to

resurrect his son after he had sacrificed him out of his obedience to God's command. Abraham even told those who were with them that they (*both he and Isaac*) would return after they had worshipped God with a sacrifice.

Gen 22:9 And they came to the place which God had told him of; and Abraham built an altar there, and laid the wood in order, and bound Isaac his son, and laid him on the altar upon the wood. 10 And Abraham stretched forth his hand, and took the knife to slay his son. 11 And **the Angel of the LORD** called unto him out of heaven, and said, Abraham, Abraham: and he said, Here *am I*. 12 And He (*the Angel of the Lord*) said, Lay not thine hand upon the lad, neither do thou any thing unto him: **for now I know** that thou **fearest God**, seeing thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son **from Me**. (*Emp. added*)

Where is the omniscience (*all knowing attribute*) in this passage that is usually attributed to Jehovah? If God did not know in advance what Abraham would do then He wouldn't be considered all-knowing. In Mk 13:32 Jesus made a statement that helps us understand Who the Angel of the Lord is, in the above verse and concerning the end of the world.

Mar 13:32 But of that day and *that* hour knoweth no man, no, **not the angels** which are in Heaven, **neither the Son**, but the Father. (*Emp. added*)

Each Member of the Godhead has certain attributes but all have the same mindset. Holy Spirit was responsible for the miraculous endowment that Christ and the apostles received in order to convince the world that both the Messenger and the message (*of the Gospel*) came from God (*Mat 3:16; Lk 4:1, Act 1:8; 10:38; 1 Thes 1:5*). The Angel of the Lord here would also have had the same traits Jesus had in His limited knowledge of future events. Take a look now at how the Angel of the Lord is identified with God, but as an Individual that is separate from God the Father, in the next few verses.

Gen 22:15 And **the Angel of the LORD** called unto Abraham out of heaven the second time, 16 And said, **By Myself have I sworn, saith the LORD**, for because thou hast done this thing, and hast not withheld thy son, thine only *son*: 17 That in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand which is upon the sea shore; and thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies; 18 And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; because thou hast obeyed My voice. (*Emp. added*)

Exo 3:2 And **the Angel of the LORD** appeared unto him (*Moses*) in a flame of fire out of the midst of a bush: and he looked, and, behold, the bush burned with fire, and the bush *was* not consumed. 3 And Moses said, I will now turn aside, and see this great sight, why the bush is not burnt. 4 And when the LORD saw that he turned aside to see, **God called unto him out of the midst of the bush**, and said, Moses, Moses. And he said, Here *am* I. (*Emp. added*)

As toward Balaam in Num 22, and to David in 1 Chr 21, so with Joshua in the following verses, the Angel of the Lord is seen bearing a sword.

Jos 5:13 And it came to pass, when Joshua was by Jericho, that he lifted up his eyes and looked, and, behold, there stood a man over against him with **His sword drawn in His hand**: and Joshua went unto Him, and said unto Him, *Art* Thou for us, or for our adversaries? 14 And He said, Nay; but *as* ***Captain** of the host of the LORD *am* I now come. And Joshua fell on his face to the earth, and did worship, and said unto Him, What saith my lord unto His servant? 15 And **the Captain of the LORD'S host** said unto Joshua, Loose thy shoe from off thy foot; for **the place whereon thou standest is holy**. And Joshua did so. (*Emp. added*)

*Heb 2:10 For it became Him, for Whom *are* all things, and by Whom *are* all things, in bringing many sons unto

glory, to make the **Captain** of their salvation perfect through sufferings. (*Emp. added*)

As Moses was told to remove his footwear, so Joshua was told likewise here, showing the reverence that each of these Individuals was (*are*) deserved as being Members of the Godhead. The Angel of the Lord has appeared many times throughout the days of the Old Testament. He appeared to Gideon in Judges 6 and when He told him to make an offering, “there rose up fire out of the rock, and consumed the flesh and the unleavened cakes. Then the Angel of the LORD departed out of his sight.” It was then that Gideon “perceived” that He was the Angel of the Lord. (*Jdg 6:21-22*) He later appeared to Manoah’s wife to tell the once barren woman that she was going to conceive and bare Samson who would judge Israel during the time they were enslaved under the Philistines. When He reappeared He rehashed all to Manoah what was told to his wife and “Manoah knew not that He was the Angel of the Lord”.

Jdg 13:19 So Manoah took a kid with a meat offering, and offered *it* upon a rock unto the LORD: and *the Angel* did wondrously; and Manoah and his wife looked on. 20 For it came to pass, when the flame went up toward heaven from off the altar that **the Angel of the LORD ascended in the flame of the altar.** (*Just as He did in Gideon’s sight.*) And Manoah and his wife looked on *it*, and fell on their faces to the ground. 21 But the Angel of the LORD did no more appear to Manoah and to his wife. Then Manoah knew that he *was* an Angel of the LORD. (*Emp. added*)

Another time that the Angel of the Lord appeared was in the presence of the fiery furnace to be with Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego. He later appeared with Daniel to close the mouths of the lions when Daniel was found innocent before the Median king Darius.

Dan 3:23 And these three men, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, fell down bound into the midst of the burning fiery furnace. 24 Then Nebuchadnezzar the king was

astonied, and rose up in haste, *and* spake, and said unto his counsellors, Did not we cast three men bound into the midst of the fire? They answered and said unto the king, True, O king. 25 He answered and said, Lo, I see four men loose, walking in the midst of the fire, and they have no hurt; and **the form of the fourth is like the Son of God.** (*Emp. added*)

Dan 6:21 Then said Daniel unto the king, O king, live for ever. 22 My God hath sent **His Angel**, and hath shut the lions' mouths, that they have not hurt me: forasmuch as before Him innocency was found in me; and also before thee, O king, have I done no hurt. (*Emp. added*)

Distinguished from God

Exo 23:20 Behold, I send an **Angel** before thee, to keep thee in the way, and to bring thee into the place which I have prepared. 21 Beware of Him, and **obey His voice**, provoke Him not; **for He will not pardon your transgressions: for My name is in Him.** 22 But if thou shalt indeed obey His voice, and do all that I speak; then I will be an enemy unto thine enemies, and an adversary unto thine adversaries. 23 For **Mine Angel** shall go before thee, and bring thee in unto the Amorites, and the Hittites, and the Perizzites, and the Canaanites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites: and I will cut them off. (*Emp. added*)

Mat 9:2 And, behold, they brought to Him a man sick of the palsy, lying on a bed: and Jesus seeing their faith said unto the sick of the palsy; Son, be of good cheer; thy sins be forgiven thee. 3 And, behold, certain of the scribes said within themselves, This *man* blasphemeth. 4 And Jesus knowing their thoughts said, Wherefore think ye evil in your hearts? 5 For whether is easier, to say, *Thy* sins be forgiven thee; or to say, Arise, and walk? 6 But **that ye may know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins**, (then saith He to the sick of the palsy,) Arise, take up thy bed, and go unto thine house. 7 And he arose, and departed to his house. 8 But when the multitudes

saw *it*, they marvelled, and glorified God, which had given such power unto men. (*Emp. added*)

The Identity of the Angel of God

According to “The Logos Theory”, Christ is known as “The Word”. He was “in the beginning with God. All things were made by Him; and without Him was not anything made that was made.” (*Jn 1:1-3*) He has always existed and is eternal in nature. He is a specific Member of the Godhead and has been involved with man throughout history, specifically during the Old Testament.

Joh 5:39 Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of Me.

Joh 8:56 Your father Abraham rejoiced to see My day: and he saw *it*, and was glad. 57 Then said the Jews unto Him, Thou art not yet fifty years old, and hast Thou seen Abraham? (*Gen 18*) 58 Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham was, **I am** (*Gk.1473/1510- I exist*). (*Emp. added*)

To say “I exist” in this context is claiming to be Deity and is the same as saying “I have always existed, I at present do exist, and I will always exist”. Jesus was clearly in this passage claiming the same attribute that God did in Exo 3:14 when He told Moses to tell the Israelites that “I AM hath sent me unto you”. From what has been revealed thus far concerning the Angel of the Lord then, we can deduce that He was none other than Christ pre-incarnate.

Exo 23:23 For **Mine Angel** shall go before thee, and bring thee in unto the Amorites, and the Hittites, and the Perizzites, and the Canaanites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites: and I will cut them off. (*Emp. added*)

1Co 10:1 Moreover, brethren, I would not that ye should be ignorant, how that all our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea; 2 And were all baptized unto

Moses in the cloud and in the sea; 3 And did all eat the same spiritual meat; 4 And did all drink the same spiritual drink: for they drank of that **spiritual Rock that followed them:** and **that Rock was Christ.** (*Emp. added*)

The Messenger of God

Angel:

Heb.4397- to *dispatch* as a deputy; a *messenger*; specifically of God.

Gk.32 [to bring *tidings*] a *messenger*.

Although mentioned in Acts 7:30 by Steven concerning Moses' encounter with Him (*Ex 3:1-6*) the Angel of the Lord ceases to appear in the New Testament with the incarnation of Christ! (*Mat 28:2 KJV uses "the" whereas the ASV uses "an"; Interlinear uses "an".*)

"This is highly significant. After reading about the active role played by the Angel throughout the Old Testament history, His sudden disappearance after the incarnation would be strange indeed unless He was the preincarnate manifestation of Jesus Christ. There is no other way to explain the Angel's complete inactivity among humans in New Testament times unless He is recognized as continuing His activity as God's incarnate, that is, as Jesus Christ."

Ron Rhodes: "Angels Among Us"

Php 2:5 Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: 6 Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: 7 But made Himself of no reputation, and **took upon Him the form of a servant,** and was made in the likeness of men: 8 And being found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. (*Emp. added*)

Heb 2:14 Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, He also Himself likewise took part of the

same; that through death He might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; 15 And deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage. 16 For verily He took not on *Him the nature of* angels; but He took on *Him* the seed of Abraham.

Heb 10:5 Wherefore when He cometh into the world, He saith, Sacrifice and offering Thou wouldst not, but a body hast Thou prepared Me:

Old and New Testament ministries parallel

"The divine pattern in scripture is that of the Father as the Sender and the Son as the Sent One."

"Both the Angel...and Christ...interceded to and called upon God the Father."

Ron Rhodes: "Angels Among Us"

Both were involved in:

- a. revealing truth,
- b. commissioning individuals for service (*Moses, Apostles, etc*),
- c. delivering those enslaved,
- d. protecting the downcast,
- e. protecting God's servants,
- f. acting as judge.....

Mal 3:1 Behold, I will send My messenger (*John the immerser*), and he shall prepare the way before Me: and **the Lord, Whom ye seek**, shall suddenly come to His temple, even **the Messenger of the covenant**, Whom ye delight in: behold, He shall come, saith the LORD of hosts. (*Emp. added*)

The first messenger was to herald the second.

Mat 3:1 In those days came John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judaea, 2 And saying, Repent ye: for the kingdom of Heaven is at hand. 3 For this is he that was spoken of by the prophet Esaias (*40:3*), saying, The voice of

one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make His paths straight.

IX.2. Questions

1. Who did Ishmael become? a) the father of the Jewish nation; b) the father of the Arab nation; c) the father of the Hebrew nation.
2. Abraham was willing to sacrifice Isaac, knowing what? a) that God would have to choose another of his offspring to be the seed of promise; b) that God would choose Ishmael to be his heir; c) that God would have to resurrect Isaac since the promise was to come through him.
3. What did Balaam, Joshua and David see that was in the hand of the Angel of the Lord? a) a nail print; b) a scroll; c) a sword.
4. Why were Moses and Joshua both told to remove their shoes? a) they were on holy ground; b) their feet needed washed; c) their shoes needed replaced.
5. What happened when both Gideon and Manoah made offerings to the Angel of the Lord? a) He ate it before them; b) He ascended with the fire from the offering; c) He went to fight against their enemies.

6. What is one way in which the Angel of the Lord and Christ compare in authority? a) Both possess the authority to forgive sins; b) Both were with John in the wilderness; c) the text does not say.
7. What is the significance of Christ claiming the title “I am”? a) He was the One Who told Moses “I am the God of Abraham”; b) He was claiming to be Deity; c) it was His surname.
8. When did the Angel of the Lord cease to appear? a) when John was on the Island of Patmos; b) with the incarnation of Christ; c) when John the Immerser saw Him by the Jordan River.