



Messenger of God

Many accounts in Scripture confirm that we are the subject of their (angels) individual concern. In his book, "Table Talk," Martin Luther said, "An angel is a spiritual creature created by God without a body, for the service of Christendom and the church."

Many experiences of God's people suggest that angels have been ministering (serving) to them. Others may not have known they were being helpful, yet the visitation was real. The Bible tells us that God has ordered angels to minister to His people, those who have been redeemed by the power of Christ's blood.

Daniel and the Angel

In the Old Testament, Daniel vividly describes the bitter conflict between angelic forces of God and the opposing minions of darkness. Before the angel came to him he had spent three weeks mourning—Daniel 10:3. He ate no bread, meat or wine, nor did he anoint himself (refreshed or washed). As he stood by the Tigris river, a man appeared clothed in linen. His face looked like lightning and his eyes flaming torches. His voice sounded like the roar of a crowd.

Daniel was held in the bonds of great sleep, yet he heard the voice of the angel. A hand touched him and the angel described an experience he himself had just had. The angel had started to come to Daniel from the moment he began to pray, but en route was waylaid by a dark prince who engaged him in conflict and delayed him. Then Michael came to help this subordinate angel, freeing him to fulfil his mission to Daniel. The angel had a message. He was to show Daniel what God foresaw would befall the world, especially Israel in the latter days.

Daniel then found himself weak and unable to speak, so the angel touched his lips and also restored his strength. Having finished his mission, the angel told Daniel he was returning to fight with the dark prince in the unending struggle of the forces of good versus the forces of evil. In all this Daniel was having no hallucination or dream. It was a genuine experience with a real person, and no one could ever have persuaded Daniel otherwise. He had pleaded with God for the sons of Israel.

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Daniel and the Angel/continued...

At that moment he received the news from the “angel visitor” sent from heaven that his prayer had been heard. This incident makes it clear that delays are not denials, and that God’s permissive will is involved in all of life.

Unseen Forces at Work—Billy Graham’s Experience

On the eve of one of his missions abroad during the Ford Administration, Secretary of State Kissinger briefed me (Billy Graham) on some of the staggering problems facing the world. I told him I believed the world was experiencing an unseen spiritual war in which the powers of darkness were attacking the forces of God. As we have moved through the turbulent events of the past decade, I have become more convinced than ever that the activities of the unseen demonic forces are increasing. A well-known television newscaster said to me in his office, “The world is out of control.” It seems incredible that such a warfare is taking place, but the Bible says it is!

Dr A.C. Gaebelain has called it “the conflict of the ages.” It will be resolved only when Jesus Christ returns to the earth. This is why the world is crying for “a leader.” The Anti-Christ who will be Satan’s “front” will arrive on the scene for a brief time and seemingly be “The Answer”. But after only a few month the world will be thrown back into chaos and conflict. He will prove to be “The Lie” (**2 Thessalonians 2:3-10**). Then the One whom God chose and anointed before time began will return to earth with His mighty holy angels. At the end of the age He will throw the devil and his demons into the lake of fire. Thus, for the true believer the conflict now raging will end as God intends. Righteousness will prevail.

2 Thessalonians 2:3-10

King James Version Bible

Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition; Who opposeth and exalteth himself above...

Jacob’s Experience

The experience of Jacob with angels is a splendid illustration of their ministry of God to men. In some ways Jacob was a cheat. He had stolen the birth-right from his brother. From him the twelve tribes of Israel were to come. While he was en route home the Scripture tells us that “the angels of God met him.”

So overcome was he by what happened that he said, “This is God’s army” - Genesis 32:2, and called the place Mahanaim, meaning “two camps.” He called the angels, “God’s hosts.” But the story does not end there. Having formerly cheated his brother, Esau, he now feared him, not knowing whether he would be welcomed or killed. So Jacob prayed, admitted he was not worthy of the least of God’s mercies. He asked to be delivered from the hand of his brother Esau.

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St Davids Congregational Church, cnr Verbena Road & Cassia Drive, Sunridge Park, Gqeberha (PE)

Tel: 041-3601127 / Business WhatsApp 081 041 0935

E-Mail: stdavids@telkomsa.net / Website: www.stdavids.org.za / Face Book: St Davids Congregational Church

Jacob's Experience/continued..

The night before Jacob met Esau he was alone, his family and servants had gone ahead. Suddenly a man appeared and wrestled with him until daybreak, when he finally touched Jacob's thigh, "*the hollow of the thigh was out of joint.*" At this, Jacob realised the man was a heavenly visitor, and would not let him go until the man said, "*Thy name shall be called no more Jacob, but Israel: for as a prince hast thou power with God and with men and hast prevailed.*"

When Jacob asked the man to identify himself, he received no reply. But the man blessed him there. Jacob called the place Peniel, meaning "face of God" saying, "*I have seen God face to face, and my life is preserved*" - **Genesis 32:24-30.**

When Jacob Saw Them,
He Said, "This Is The
Camp Of God!" So
He Named That Place
Mahanaim.

The Theophany

It may well be that the wrestler was a theophany, appearing fleetingly in human form. In the former part of the story many angels were surrounding Jacob. Through the two experiences God revealed His will for Jacob's life more fully, and promised that he would be a prince. The next day he, therefore, went forward more cheerfully to meet Esau, everything turned out well for him and his family. Centuries later Hosea testified to this incident saying that the God of heaven had appeared to Jacob, ministering to him in the person of an angel—Hosea 12:3-6.

Moses and Abraham are perhaps the two greatest Old Testament characters, angels were involved in their lives on important occasions. We have already seen how angels ministered to Abraham. We must look at the experience of Moses at the burning bush—Exodus 3.

Moses meets an Angel

The presence of angels became part of "the Exodus experience." Thus, in Numbers 20:16 the Bible says, "When we cried unto the Lord, he heard our voice, and sent an angel, and hath brought us forth out of Egypt." Isaiah says that "In all their affliction he was afflicted, and the angel of his presence saved them: in his love and in his pity he redeemed them; and he bare them, and carried them all the days of old" Isaiah 63:9.

It may well be that some of these instances involved angelic forms taken by Jesus Christ, the second person of the Trinity.

The Mystery of Angels

Therefore, just as Jesus is with us now through the Holy Spirit, revealing Himself and His will, so was He with His people in ages past, and so shall He be for all time to come, the Angel of God's presence who leads us. To His "faithful" of past ages, God the Father revealed His presence through angels; through the angel of the Lord, God the Son, Jesus Christ, He revealed Himself and redeemed us by His Son's crucifixion, death and resurrection. Here is, a mystery too deep for any of us to fathom fully.

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Jewish scholars called the angel of the Lord by the name, "Metatron," "the angel of countenance," because he witnesses the countenance of God continuously and, therefore, works to extend the program of God for each of us.

God has given us the fullest revelation, Jesus Christ in the flesh, so He no longer needs to manifest Himself in the form of "the angel of the Lord" in this age of grace. Consequently, the angels who appear in the New Testament or even today are always "created spirits" and not God in that special angel form He used now and then in the Old Testament. The appearance of God the Son in physical form (a theophany) in the Old Testament is no longer necessary. Consider the presence of angels in the New Testament subsequent to the thrilling account of the birth of God the Son in the flesh through His incarnation at Bethlehem. The angels then were to minister the message of God and to establish the message of the Gospel of Christ, but never to supplant it or to detract from it.

Angels are Ministering Spirits

God uses both men and angels to declare His message to those who have been saved by Grace. "*Are they (angels) not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?*" **Hebrews 1:14**. What a glorious honour it will be for angels to know us by name because of our faithful witness to others. Angels will share our rejoicing over those who repent (Luke 15:10), even though they cannot preach the Gospel themselves.

An angel ministered in a somewhat similar way in an incident in Daniel's life. Chapter 5 describes a great feast ordered by Belshazzar in Babylon. It had been prepared ostensibly to show the glory of the kingdom, but in reality Belshazzar meant to parade his own personal greatness. It was a feast for the thousands of his kingdom's greatest nobles. But on this occasion they desecrated the sacred vessels taken from the Temple of Jerusalem by using them for an ignoble purpose. They ate and drank and offered homage to idols of wood and stone, silver and gold. The gold of materialism was in power. Suddenly the fingers of a man's hand appeared and traced on the wall a record of God's judgement of Babylon. "*Mene, Mene, Tekel Upharsin*" the hand wrote—"You have been weighed in the balances and been found wanting. Your kingdom is finished" **Daniel 5:25-27**. It was one of God's angels sent to announce the impending judgement. Not only were the days of King Belshazzar numbered, but God was finished with him.

Daniel prayed for his people. "*And he (Gabriel) informed me, and talked with me, and said, O Daniel, I am now come forth to give thee skill and understanding ... therefore, understand the matter, and consider the vision*" **Daniel 9:22-23**. In answer to Daniel's prayer, God gave him a panoramic view of the future "history" of the human race. It is my belief that the world is now possibly reaching the climax of those great visions that God gave Daniel.

The scene in the time of Belshazzar seems almost contemporary, those times and conditions resembling so closely what we see and hear today. It may even be that God is writing another story of impending judgement through the crisis of the hours. He is telling men everywhere that unless they repent they are finished.

