

STUDY SEVEN – ANGELS IN THE OLD TESTAMENT II

OLD TESTAMENT MINISTRIES OF ANGELS

Continued from last week, the Old Testament reveals that angels...

- **Delivered Israel from Egypt.**

An angel was involved in the deliverance of the children of Israel from Egypt. If angels were involved then, we can confidently expect that angels are at work concerning our lives.

“And the Angel of God, 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. 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.” (Exodus 14:19-20)

“When we cried out to the LORD, He heard our voice and sent the Angel and brought us up out of Egypt; now here we are in Kadesh, a city on the edge of your border.” (Numbers 20:16)

Further to these examples, the Psalmist said:

“The angel of the LORD encamps all around those who fear Him and delivers them.” (Psalms 34:7)

- **Led Israel through the wilderness.**

God 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.” (Exodus 23:20)*

Just as God sent an angel in this instance, He is still sending angels to help us through our journeys of life. The Psalmist said: *“For He shall give His angels charge over you, to keep you in all your ways. In their hands they shall bear you up, lest you dash your foot against a stone.” (Psalms 91:11-12)*

- **Delivered the Old Testament law.**

Angels were involved in the delivery of the Old Testament law as we see in the scripture below. It is no wonder that angels were also involved in the delivery of the birth of the Messiah and through His life on earth until the New Testament was delivered.

“What then was the purpose of the Law? It was added [later on, after the promise, to disclose and expose to men their guilt] because of transgressions and [to make men more conscious of the sinfulness] of sin; and it was intended to be in effect until the Seed (the Descendant, the Heir) should come, to and concerning Whom the promise had been made. And it [the Law] was arranged and ordained and appointed through the instrumentality of angels [and was given] by the hand (in the person) of a go-between [Moses, an intermediary person between God and man].” (Galatians 3:19 AMPC)

- **Opposed Balaam.**

The evil King Balak wanted the Prophet Balaam to curse God’s people. God told Balaam not to go with the king’s servants, yet despite this Balaam decided to think about it for a night. He wanted to receive the promised rewards from Balak. Read Numbers 22:22-25.

- **Encouraged Joshua.**

It was just prior to entering the Promised Land, and Joshua was concerned about what lay ahead:

STUDY ON ANGELS

“And it came to pass, when Joshua was by Jericho, that he lifted his eyes and looked, and behold, a Man stood opposite him with His sword drawn in His hand. And Joshua went to Him and said to Him, “Are You for us or for our adversaries?” So, He said, “No, but as Commander of the army of the LORD I have now come.” And Joshua fell on his face to the earth and worshiped, and said to Him, “What does my Lord say to His servant?” Then the Commander of the LORD’s army said to Joshua, “Take your sandal off your foot, for the place where you stand is holy.” And Joshua did so.” (Joshua 5:13-15)

This Man described himself as the Commander of the army of the LORD which means he could be Michael or a theophany. When we study the Angel of the Lord, we will visit this encounter further.

- **Announced Samson’s birth and provided instructions for his upbringing.**

An angel announced to Manoah’s barren wife that she would have a son (Judges 13:2-5). The woman told her husband what had happened, and he prayed and asked God to send the angel again to teach them how to raise the child. His prayer was answered (Judges 13:9-33).

- **Chastened God’s people.**

David had pridefully sinned by falling prey to Satan’s temptation to number the people of Israel. God gave him a choice of judgments for his transgression: Either three years’ famine; three months in the hands of his enemies; or three days experiencing the sword of the Lord. (1 Chronicles 21:12). David picked the latter:

“So, the LORD sent a plague upon Israel, and seventy thousand men of Israel fell. And God sent an angel to Jerusalem to destroy it. As he was destroying, the LORD looked and relented of the disaster, and said to the angel who was destroying, “It is enough; now restrain your hand.” And the angel of the LORD stood by the threshing floor of Ornan the Jebusite. Then David lifted his eyes and saw the angel of the LORD standing between earth and heaven, having in his hand a drawn sword stretched out over Jerusalem. So, David and the elders, clothed in sackcloth, fell on their faces.” (1 Chronicles 21:14-16)

- **Brought provision and comfort.**

Elijah stood against idolatry and destroyed the false prophets of Baal and as he fled from Jezebel, an angel brought provision for Elijah:

“Then as he lay and slept under a broom tree, suddenly an angel touched him, and said to him, “Arise and eat.” Then he looked, and there by his head was a cake baked on coals, and a jar of water. So, he ate and drank and lay down again. And the angel of the LORD came back the second time, and touched him, and said, “Arise and eat, because the journey is too great for you.” So, he arose and ate and drank; and he went in the strength of that food forty days and forty nights as far as Horeb, the mountain of God.” (1 Kings 19:5-8)

If an angel was an instrument of God to bring provision to Elijah, it is also still possible that is still using angels to bring provision to those in need.

- **Conquered the enemies of God’s people.**

When Hezekiah and all Judah was surrounded by the enemy, God’s people were outnumbered. During this impending devastation, King Hezekiah declared:

“Be strong and courageous, be not afraid nor dismayed for the king of Assyria, nor for all the multitude that is with him: for there be more with us than with him: With him is an arm of flesh; but with us is the Lord our

STUDY ON ANGELS

God to help us, and to fight our battles. And the people rested themselves upon the words of Hezekiah king of Judah.” (2 Chronicles 32:7-8)

Through the prayers of Hezekiah, Isaiah, and God’s people, the enemy was destroyed by an angel:

“Then the LORD sent an angel who cut down every mighty man of valor, leader, and captain in the camp of the king of Assyria. So, he returned shamefaced to his own land. And when he had gone into the temple of his god, some of his own offspring struck him down with the sword there. Thus, the LORD saved Hezekiah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem from the hand of Sennacherib the king of Assyria, and from the hand of all others, and guided them on every side.” (2 Chronicles 32:21-22)

The psalmist recognized the power of angels and declared regarding the enemy:

“Let them be like chaff before the wind and let the angel of the LORD chase them. Let their way be dark and slippery, and let the angel of the LORD pursue them.” (Psalms 35:5-6)

- **Protected God’s people.**

Numerous Old Testament accounts reveal God’s protection for His people through His angels. One of the most classic accounts is when the prophet Elisha was surrounded by an enemy army, but was surrounded by a force of angels much greater:

“Therefore, he sent horses and chariots and a great army there, and they came by night and surrounded the city. And when the servant of the man of God arose early and went out, there was an army, surrounding the city with horses and chariots. And his servant said to him, “Alas, my master! What shall we do?” So, he answered, “Do not fear, for those who are with us are more than those who are with them.” And Elisha prayed, and said, “LORD, I pray, open his eyes that he may see.” Then the LORD opened the eyes of the young man, and he saw. And behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire all around Elisha. (2 Kings 6:14-17)

- **Brought messages to the prophets.**

By definition, a prophet delivers a message from God to the people. Several Old Testament prophets received messages from God through angels. For example:

“But the angel of the LORD said to Elijah the Tishbite, “Arise, go up to meet the messengers of the king of Samaria, and say to them, ‘Is it because there is no God in Israel that you are going to inquire of Baal-Zebub, the god of Ekron?’ ... And the angel of the LORD said to Elijah, “Go down with him; do not be afraid of him.” So, he arose and went down with him to the king.” (2 Kings 1:3, 15)

One of the most interesting encounters with angels occurred when an angel, identified as Gabriel, brought the Prophet Daniel a series of messages regarding future events (Daniel 8:16; 9:20-27). Another angel named Michael, known as is the defender of Israel, came to assist Gabriel (Daniel 10:13).

The visions given to the Prophet Zechariah were explained by angels. Angelic reproofs and predictions regarding the rebuilding of Jerusalem were made in Zechariah 1:13-17. The man on the red horse was the Angel of the Lord and those who followed him on horses symbolized His angelic attendants. Angelic predictions regarding the restoration of true faith are recorded in Zechariah 3:1-6. Joshua, the Jewish priest, was pardoned purified, and clothed in holiness.

- **Participated in commissioning spiritual leaders.**

Moses was commissioned by the angel of the Lord that spoke to Him from a burning bush:

STUDY ON ANGELS

“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. Then Moses said, “I will now turn aside and see this great sight, why the bush does not burn.” 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.” ... Come now, therefore, and I will send you to Pharaoh that you may bring My people, the children of Israel, out of Egypt.”” (Exodus 3:2-4, 10)

Gideon was also commissioned to ministry by God through an angel:

“Now the Angel of the LORD came and sat under the terebinth tree, which was in Ophrah, which belonged to Joash the Abiezrite, while his son Gideon threshed wheat in the winepress, in order to hide it from the Midianites. And the Angel of the LORD appeared to him, and said to him, “The LORD is with you, you mighty man of valor!” ... Then the LORD turned to him and said, “Go in this might of yours, and you shall save Israel from the hand of the Midianites. Have I not sent you?”” (Judges 6:11-12, 14)

- **Ministered in worship.**

The Old Testament confirms the worship of God by angels.

“Bless the LORD, you His angels, who excel in strength, who do His word, heeding the voice of His word. Bless the LORD, all you His hosts, you ministers’ of His, who do His pleasure.” (Psalms 103:20-21)

“The four living creatures, each having six wings, were full of eyes around and within. And they do not rest day or night, saying: “Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, Who was and is and is to come!”” (Revelation 4:8)