

Christology 101

Lesson 7

Old Testament Appearances of Christ in The Rest of the Old Testament

Psalm 34:6-10

⁶ This poor man cried, and the LORD heard him And saved him out of all his troubles. ⁷ ***The angel of the LORD*** encamps around those who fear Him, And rescues them. ⁸ O taste and see that the LORD is good; How blessed is the man who takes refuge in Him! ⁹ O fear the LORD, you His saints; For to those who fear Him there is no want. ¹⁰ The young lions do lack and suffer hunger; But they who seek the LORD shall not be in want of any good thing.

- Considering what we have learned about “The Angel of the Lord” so far, how does this verse speak to you?

So far we have examined several Christophanies in the Genesis and Exodus concerning Hagar, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Moses. This week we will point out some other instances throughout the rest of the Old Testament. Some refer to “The Angel of the Lord,” “The Angel of God,” or “The Angel of His presence.” Others are references to an “Angel” or a “man.” Regardless, the identity is unmistakably God, and considering His role, it is the Son of God.

As always, we will enlist the signposts that have been mentioned in the previous lessons to be a guide to us in our journey.

Some Interpretive Questions:

- Is the person identified as the second Person of the Trinity?
- Is the person identified as God?
- Is the person given any characteristics that are reserved for deity?
- How do others in the story respond to him?
- Does the person receive worship?
- Does the scriptural writer (Moses, for example) leave you with the understanding that the person is God?
- Using the Principle that “Scripture interprets Scripture,” are there other passages in the Old Testament or the New Testament that shed light on the identity of this person as Christ?

“A study of the many passages dealing with the Angel of Jehovah will reveal a most remarkable breadth to the preincarnate work of Christ for His people. At the same time, His person is revealed in all its grace and righteousness....The combined testimony of these passages portrays the Son of God as exceedingly active in the Old Testament, dealing with sin, providing for those in need, guiding in the path of the will of God, protecting His people from their enemies and, in general, executing the providence of God. The references make plain that this

ministry is not occasional or exceptional but rather the common and continual ministry of God to His people." (Walvoord, 52, 53)

We cannot examine all of the passages in the Old Testament, but we will examine several prominent passages.

More "Angel of the Lord" Passages

Numbers 22:22-35 (The Angel of the Lord threatens the prophet Balaam)

²² But God was angry because he was going, and **the angel of the LORD** took his stand in the way as an adversary against him. Now he was riding on his donkey and his two servants were with him. ²³ When the donkey saw **the angel of the LORD** standing in the way with his drawn sword in his hand, the donkey turned off from the way and went into the field; but Balaam struck the donkey to turn her back into the way. ²⁴ Then **the angel of the LORD** stood in a narrow path of the vineyards, with a wall on this side and a wall on that side. ²⁵ When the donkey saw **the angel of the LORD**, she pressed herself to the wall and pressed Balaam's foot against the wall, so he struck her again. ²⁶ **The angel of the LORD** went further, and stood in a narrow place where there was no way to turn to the right hand or the left. ²⁷ When the donkey saw **the angel of the LORD**, she lay down under Balaam; so Balaam was angry and struck the donkey with his stick. ²⁸ And **the LORD** opened the mouth of the donkey, and she said to Balaam, "What have I done to you, that you have struck me these three times?" ²⁹ Then Balaam said to the donkey, "Because you have made a mockery of me! If there had been a sword in my hand, I would have killed you by now." ³⁰ The donkey said to Balaam, "Am I not your donkey on which you have ridden all your life to this day? Have I ever been accustomed to do so to you?" And he said, "No." ³¹ Then the LORD opened the eyes of Balaam, and he saw **the angel of the LORD** standing in the way with his drawn sword in his hand; and he bowed all the way to the ground. ³² **The angel of the LORD** said to him, "Why have you struck your donkey these three times? Behold, I have come out as an adversary, because your way was contrary to me. ³³ "But the donkey saw me and turned aside from me these three times. If she had not turned aside from me, I would surely have killed you just now, and let her live." ³⁴ Balaam said to **the angel of the LORD**, "I have sinned, for I did not know that you were standing in the way against me. Now then, if it is displeasing to you, I will turn back." ³⁵ But **the angel of the LORD** said to Balaam, "Go with the men, but you **shall speak only the word which I tell you.**" So Balaam went along with the leaders of Balak.

Balaam is a false prophet who has been hired to put a curse on the Israelites who have come out of Egypt on their way to the Promised Land. The "Angel of the Lord," who spoke to Moses in the burning bush, and was a pillar of fire for protection against the Egyptians, now meets Balaam.

What is the significance of the "Angel of the Lord" coming out to meet Balaam?

Judges 6:11-24 (The Angel of the Lord recruits Gideon)

11 Then the angel of the LORD came and sat under the oak that was in Ophrah, which belonged to Joash the Abiezrite as his son Gideon was beating out wheat in the wine press in order to save it from the Midianites.

12 The angel of the LORD appeared to him and said to him, "The LORD is with you, O valiant warrior."

21 Then the angel of the LORD put out the end of the staff that was in his hand and touched the meat and the unleavened bread; and fire sprang up from the rock and consumed the meat and the unleavened bread. Then the angel of the LORD vanished from his sight.

22 When Gideon saw that he was the angel of the LORD, he said, "Alas, O Lord GOD! For now I have seen the angel of the LORD face to face."

23 The LORD said to him, "Peace to you, do not fear; you shall not die."

24 Then Gideon built an altar there to the LORD and named it The LORD is Peace. To this day it is still in Ophrah of the Abiezrites.

- What is Gideon doing and why?
- How does the Angel of the Lord address him?
- What was the threat or threats that Israel was facing?

Judges 13:3-23 (The Angel of the Lord speaks to Samson's parents.)

3 Then the angel of the LORD appeared to the woman and said to her, "Behold now, you are barren and have borne no children, but you shall conceive and give birth to a son.

4 "Now therefore, be careful not to drink wine or strong drink, nor eat any unclean thing.

5 "For behold, you shall conceive and give birth to a son, and no razor shall come upon his head, for the boy shall be a Nazirite to God from the womb; and he shall begin to deliver Israel from the hands of the Philistines."

6 Then the woman came and told her husband, saying, "A man of God came to me and his appearance was like the appearance of the angel of God, very awesome. And I did not ask him where he came from, nor did he tell me his name.

7 "But he said to me, 'Behold, you shall conceive and give birth to a son, and now you shall not drink wine or strong drink nor eat any unclean thing, for the boy shall be a Nazirite to God from the womb to the day of his death.'"

Samson's mother first recognizes this person as a man.

- Did Manoah have any reason to be skeptical about his wife's statement?
- Did Manoah need some convincing?
- Did the Angel of the Lord do anything to convince them?
- What are the "signposts" in this passage relating this person to God?
- What threat or threats was the nation experiencing?

2 Kings 19:35 (The Angel of the Lord meets the Assyrian Army.)

³⁵ Then it happened that night that the angel of the LORD went out and struck 185,000 in the camp of the Assyrians; and when men rose early in the morning, behold, all of them were dead.

- What threat was the nation experiencing?
- What was the outcome of this meeting?
- Is this consistent with any other Christophanies we have studied? How?
- What does this teach us about the Angel of the Lord, or the second person of the Trinity?

Isaiah 63:7-14

⁸ For He said, "Surely, they are My people, Sons who will not deal falsely." So He became their Savior. ⁹ In all their affliction He was afflicted, And **the angel of His presence** saved them; In His love and in His mercy He redeemed them, And He lifted them and carried them all the days of old.

Isaiah summarizes the work of the Angel of the Lord in this passage. A thorough look at this passage reveals that the "Angel of His presence" not only protected Israel, but also held them accountable. When they were disobedient to God, He punished them. When they repented He restored them.

The Prince of the Lord's Hosts

We have already examined a couple of Christophanies that were not the "Angel of the Lord," such as Genesis 18 when the three men stopped to eat with Abraham, and the "man" who wrestled with Jacob. We will also quickly refer to another Christophany in the book of Joshua. Joshua was the successor to Moses and an incredible leader and godly man. As he prepared to lead the Israelites in their first major battle in the Promised Land, he met an armed soldier with an unusual appearance.

Joshua 5:13-15

¹³ Now it came about when Joshua was by Jericho, that he lifted up his eyes and looked, and behold, a man was standing 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?" ¹⁴ He said, "No; rather I indeed come now as **captain of the host of the LORD.**" And Joshua fell on his face to the earth, and bowed down, and said to him, "What has my lord to say to his servant?" ¹⁵ The **captain of the LORD'S host** said to Joshua, "Remove your sandals from your feet, for the place where you are standing is holy." And Joshua did so.

- Joshua describes this individual as "a man was standing opposite him with his sword drawn in his hand." What does this say about his appearance?
- What is Joshua's response to the "Captain of the Lord's host?"
- What does Joshua call Him?
- What is Joshua told to do?
- Does this sound familiar?
- What threat is the nation facing?
- "Joshua" which means "a savior" is the Jewish name "Jesus."

Next Week: Christ in Old Testament Prophecy