



The Angel of the Lord

Script References

Introduction and Historical Baggage

00:00–00:43

Tim: So in the Bible, reality is made up of two overlapping realms, the Heavens and the Earth, our space and God's space.

Jon: And while life here on Earth may seem ordinary, sometimes we can encounter Heaven right here in our own realm.

Tim: Yes! This happens a number of times in the Bible. And when it does, we often encounter a fascinating character, the Angel of Yahweh, or in most translations of the Bible, the Angel of the Lord.

Jon: Now, we've talked about angels. They're spiritual messengers who perform missions for God.

Tim: But the Angel of the Lord is no mere angel.

Jon: How so?

Tim: Well, every time he appears, he's described in a way that's purposefully puzzling. And it leaves you wondering: was that an angel sent by Yahweh, or was that Yahweh himself?

Yahweh Made Visible

00:44–02:29

Jon: What do you mean?

Tim: Here's one of many examples. In the book of Genesis, there's a story about Hagar, Abraham and Sara's runaway Egyptian slave, and we read this:

Jon: "The angel of Yahweh called to Hagar."¹

1. Genesis 16:7-13

Tim: But then this angel speaks as if he is Yahweh, saying, "I will give you many descendants." And then Hagar responds and says, "You are God who sees me!"

Jon: So the Angel of Yahweh is Yahweh. But that can't be. In the Bible, you can't see Yahweh or you'll die.

Tim: Yeah, so this story and others like it are inviting us into a paradox—that Yahweh is, above all, inaccessible to us, but sometimes he reveals himself to us in ways that we can see and understand. And that’s where this character shows up.

Jon: He is Yahweh made visible to us.

Tim: Yes—distinct from Yahweh and also Yahweh. This is very similar to other biblical stories about prophets who get a glimpse into God’s space, like Isaiah, Ezekiel, or Daniel. And what they see is a glorious human figure on a throne who’s called Yahweh.²

2. Isaiah 6:1-4;
Ezekiel 1:26-28;
Daniel 7:13-14

Jon: So the one on the throne and the Angel of Yahweh, this is the same person?

Tim: Exactly. Watch all this all come together in the famous story of Moses and the burning bush, where we read:

Jon: “The Angel of Yahweh appeared to Moses in a blazing fire from the midst of a bush ... And when Yahweh saw that Moses stopped to look, God called to him from the midst of the bush.”³

3. Exodus 3:2-4

Tim: So this person in the bush is called the Angel of Yahweh, then Yahweh, and then God. And then later in the story, Moses learns that the figure in the burning bush is the one leading Israel out of Egypt in a pillar of fire and cloud. And that’s the one who later takes up residence in the tabernacle!⁴

4. Exodus 13:20-21,
14:19-20, 16:9-10,
19:18-20, 23:20-21

Jon: The tabernacle—this is the throne room of God himself.

Tim: You got it. The Angel of the Lord is the royal glory of Yahweh appearing as a human.

God Becomes Human in Jesus

02:30–03:41

Tim: Now, keep all that in mind as we start talking about Jesus. In the opening of the Gospel of John, we’re told that from all eternity Jesus was with God and was God.

Jon: Distinct from God and also God. That’s the same paradox we saw with the Angel of Yahweh.

Tim: Right. And then John says that God’s word “became human and set up a tabernacle among us.”⁵

5. John 1:1-3, 14

Jon: The temple presence of the invisible God.

Tim: Exactly. Now check this out. There’s a story about when Jesus took three of his followers up to a mountain and his true identity was revealed. He was transformed into a glorious human figure.⁶

6. Matthew 17

Jon: Okay. I see what’s going on. So the Angel of the Lord was God appearing *like* a human. And Jesus is God now *become* a human.

Tim: Yes, and notice this. In the New Testament, no one ever uses the phrase “Angel of the Lord” to describe Jesus.

Jon: Why not?

Tim: Well, they wanted to avoid the idea that Jesus was merely an angel. For them, Jesus was Yahweh God become human, in order to fulfill his ultimate mission to fully reunite Heaven and Earth once and for all.

Credits

03:56–04:14

Jon: You just watched a video on the Angel of the Lord.

Tim: Next up, we’re gonna look at the Satan and demons, the spiritual beings who resist God’s plan to reunite Heaven and Earth.