

Colossians Series #14: The Point and Purpose of Angels
Study Handout by Pastor Melissa Scott, Ph. D.

Evil

Gen 3:1 Now the serpent
was more...

Gen 6:2 that the sons of God*
saw the daughters of
men that they were fair

Gen 6:4 There were giants
in the earth in
those days

Sons of God can also refer to men,
e.g. Deut 14:1, Isa 43:6, Hos 1:10, 11:1

Good



*sons of God
Job 1:6, 2:1,
see Psalm 29:1, 89:6

Gen 3:24 And He (God)
placed at the east of the
garden of Eden Cherubims,
and a flaming sword

This points back to
the eternal way.

This points to a
type of God's way
and Christ.

On guard,
protecting
the sacred place,
guarding the way back to the tree of life.

This motif will continue when
God commands Moses to shape
two golden figures of Cherubim
to lean over and guard the Mercy Seat,
(where blood will be spilled on the Day
of Atonement.)

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Good

The angel knew EXACTLY where she was.



Gen 16:7

And the angel of the LORD found her (Hagar) by a fountain of water . . .

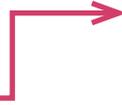
The angel knew her name and who she worked for and what she did in that capacity.



Gen 16:8

And he said, Hagar, Sarai's maid, whence camest thou? and whither wilt thou go?

He asks her 2 questions, she only answers 1.



And she said, I flee from the face of my mistress Sarai.

The questions are not asked in ignorance but rather to reassure and also to make Hagar reflect.

He orders her to return and submit to Sarai.



Gen 16:9

The angel tells Hagar to "Return to thy mistress, and submit thyself under her hands."

He also guarantees her future ("I will multiply.")



Gen 16:10

He gives Hagar a guarantee: "I will multiply thy seed" (that it shall not be numbered.)

Knows she is with child and even gives her the name to name him: "thou shalt call his name Ishmael" (because the Lord heard your affliction.)



Gen 16:11

Behold, thou art with child

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Good

This passage contains conversation directly with God and then the others that were with Him.

- Abraham welcomed angels unaware. → Hebrews 13:2

- These angels appeared as ordinary men.

- One of those present was the Lord Himself.

- Angels had a mission in Sodom (to investigate Sodom's sin and execute God's judgment.)

Lot welcomed and offered hospitality to the angels.

God had a provision to save and spare Lot.

The angels' mission to "destroy Sodom."

Gen 18

The Lord appeared to Abraham on the plains of Mamre; he saw three men with him (regarding Sarah's bearing a child.)

Gen 19:1

And there came two angels to Sodom at even. (Lot rose up to meet them.) He invited them to go inside for the night. They declined but he pressed them again so that they actually went in with him. He made them food and they ate.

19:13: The angels reveal their mission. "The LORD hath sent us to destroy it." (the city) The city was destroyed with fire and brimstone, 19:24. Lot's wife, who was told to not look back but did anyway, was turned into a pillar of salt. Lot was spared for Abraham's sake.

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Good

Hagar and Ishmael were about to die from thirst. The angel of the Lord showed her where to find water.

Gen 21

After the birth of promised “Isaac,” Hagar and her child are sent away.

Gen 21:17

And God heard the voice of the lad, and the angel of God called to Hagar:

1) What aileth thee, Hagar?

2) Fear not, for God hath heard the voice of the lad.

(and promised to make Ishmael a great nation, 21:18.)

Guidance of God after “God did tempt” Abraham.

Gen 22:1–19

The Angel of the Lord kept Abraham from sacrificing Isaac.

Angels can help, prepare and accompany humans.

Gen 24:40

Abraham was certain that an angel would guide the servant he sent to find a bride for Isaac.

“The Lord will send His angel with you and prosper your way.”

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Good

- Identifies the real abode of angels
- Identifies the angels as able to go between heaven and earth
- “angels of God” suggest a greater number of angels involved
- Interesting declaration by Jacob regarding the stone, which he also calls a pillar, but says it shall be God’s house: a type that points to Christ as Rock, and the Stone the builders rejected.

Gen 28:12

Jacob’s dream: he sees a ladder that was set upon the earth and reached heaven. There Jacob sees the angels of God ascending and descending on it.

Gen 31:11–13

The Angel of the Lord showed Jacob how to recover the wealth his uncle Laban had cheated him out of.

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Good

Jacob calls the place
“Mahanaim” meaning “two
camps.”

Jewish Midrash says that
there were 60 myriads
(600,000) of angels at the
camp!

The struggle is not just of
a body wrestling, but of a
real inner struggle to trust
God fully in the face of
uncertainty (re: Esau.)

This is the first time in
Scripture that we see God,
working through whatever
means or vessels He
chooses, to transform the
human heart and mind.

Gen 32:1–2

And Jacob went on his
way and the angels of God
met him. Jacob said, “This
is God’s host” (or God’s
camp).

(This indicates a large
number.)

Gen 32:24–30

And Jacob was left alone
and wrestled with a man
until the breaking of day.

Gen 48:16

After blessing Joseph’s
sons, Jacob, being near
death, recalls the angel who
redeemed him from evil/
harm.

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1) This is the first time the Angel of the Lord or any angel gives a specific commission.



Good

Exodus 3:2

And the angel of the LORD appeared unto him (Moses) in a flame of fire.

2) Appeared in nonhuman form

3) As a flame of fire^(a)

(a) fire is commonly associated with these appearances.

4)(a) Back in Exodus 2:11–3:1, it seems clear that Moses (before fleeing Egypt) desired to protect or liberate those in bondage. After he had been 40 years on the backside of the desert, God revives this, but now it will be done God's way, not man's way.

(b) Exodus 3:12–20 God revealed His name to Moses and the promise of His presence.

Good?

Exodus 12:23

- the angel of death
- the destroyer

Exodus 14:19

Angels accompanied Israel out of Egypt, going before them.

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God commanded the children of Israel to exterminate the people of Canaan (Deut 7:22, 23, 9:3). Also because of God's promise in Gen 15:13–16 to Abraham. These two passages Exodus 23:23 and 33:2 tell us of the involvement of angels perhaps fighting alongside the Israelites.

Good

Exodus 23:23 and 33:2

For mine Angel will 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.

See also Exodus 32:34

Good

Four passages in the New Testament seem to convey that angels were part in the giving of the Mosaic law:

Acts 7:38, 7:53

Galatians 3:19

Hebrews 2:2

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Good

Numbers 22:21–24:25

Balaam was a pagan prophet. As Israel traveled from Egypt towards the Promised Land, Balak, ruler of the land which the children of Israel needed to pass through, hired Balaam to curse them. (Back in Gen 12:2, God promised to bless and not curse the people.)

Balaam was warned in a dream by God not to go. (Numbers 22:12)

Balaam's donkey seemingly refused three times to go as Balaam had asked, making him very angry until his eyes were opened to see the Angel of the Lord.

Numbers 31:16 shows that Balaam attempted to turn God against His people.

This is the only passage in Scripture which suggests that animals can or may sense or see what may not be seen by humans.

This passage also shows us that the angel came to a pagan, not once but twice!

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Deuteronomy 4:19

Moses cautions the people against worship of the sun, moon, and stars, (which was common in Egypt) as well as the host of heaven, which is heavily practiced in pagan religion and rituals.

Deuteronomy 17:3 (parallel to the above reference.)

Deuteronomy 33:2

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Good

God kept His side of the promise, but His people did not obey God's commandment to drive out the people who had settled there, nor had they torn down any altars.

Gideon was a doubt-filled farmer, frightened to be caught threshing a few stalks of grain. He was also a man who doubted the Lord (Judges 6:13) God guided Gideon until the victory was secure.

Judges 2:1–7

1 An angel of the LORD came up from Gilgal to Bochim, and said, I made you to go up out of Egypt, and have brought you unto the land which I swore unto your fathers; and I said, I will never break my covenant with you.

2 Ye shall make no league with the inhabitants of this land; ye shall throw down their altars: but ye have not obeyed by voice . . .

Judges 6:11–15

An angel of the Lord appeared to Gideon and said to him:

- the Lord is with thee
- thou mighty man of valour.

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Good

Judges 13–16

The angel of the Lord that appeared to Manoah and his wife

The Angel of the Lord promised Manoah and his wife that they would have a son and gave them careful and important instructions of how the child should be brought up. The child, Samson, would become known as the strongest man recorded in the Bible as well as one who got off the track in God's plan – but God didn't give up on Samson.

- 1) Samson failed to follow the Lord as he was instructed.
- 2) God worked with and through a flawed individual.
- 3) God was present even though in the moment it did not seem like it.

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Good

2 Samuel 24 &

1 Chronicles 21:12–18, 21:30

David decided to number the people, an act that revealed David was more concerned about the numbers in battle than he was about trusting and relying upon the Lord.

2 Samuel 24:1 tells us the Lord was angry with Israel as Israel had greater reliance on man than on God!

1 Chronicles 21:14–18, 26

God struck Israel with a plague. But David's heart toward God confessed his sin (1 Chronicles 21:17). David built an altar, offered sacrifices to God and the plague stopped.