

## The Angel of the Lord

Series 1-7

### **1 of 7: The Angel of the Lord – Who Is He? A Doctrinal Introduction**

In the sacred pages of the King James Bible, a mysterious figure appears repeatedly throughout the Old Testament — one who walks, speaks, commands, and even forgives as only God can. He is not merely *an* angel; He is *The* Angel of the Lord. This being is unlike any created angelic messenger. His words bear divine authority. His presence invokes reverence and fear. And His identity, though veiled to many, is unmistakably that of the pre-incarnate Christ. This first essay in our seven-part series introduces and lays the theological foundation for understanding *The Angel of the Lord* as a Christophany — a pre-Bethlehem appearance of the Lord Jesus Christ.

#### **I. Defining Christophany: A Pre-Incarnate Appearance of Christ**

Before diving into the narratives, we must define the term at the heart of our study:

**Christophany.** A Christophany is a visible appearance or manifestation of the second Person of the Godhead — Jesus Christ — before His incarnation in Bethlehem.

These manifestations occur throughout the Old Testament, usually as “*The Angel of the Lord*.” They differ from theophanies, which more broadly refer to appearances of God in any form, such as a voice, a cloud, or fire. Christophanies, however, are distinct and personal — they are the appearances of Christ Himself, in temporary bodily form, before He took on permanent flesh through the virgin birth (John 1:14).

In these moments, the eternal Son steps into time not as Jesus of Nazareth, but as “The Word,” interacting with mankind — often to deliver, instruct, or judge — always consistent with His divine mission.

#### **II. Distinguishing “The Angel of the Lord” from Created Angels**

The Bible speaks often of angels, and it is vital to understand that **not all angels are equal** in identity or role. While most angels are created beings — messengers of God, servants sent to minister to those who shall be heirs of salvation (Hebrews 1:14) — there is one “Angel” who is clearly divine. This is *The Angel of the Lord*.

In the KJV, “angel” (from the Hebrew *mal’ak*) simply means *messenger*. It can refer to both divine and human messengers, depending on the context. But “*The Angel of the LORD*” stands out immediately by **His actions, His speech, and the reactions of those who see Him.**

Created angels consistently **refuse worship** (Revelation 22:8-9), act only by divine command, and never speak as God in the first person. Yet *The Angel of the Lord* does all of these. He **receives worship, makes divine covenants, promises descendants, and judges sin** — prerogatives that belong only to **YHWH**, the self-existent God.

### III. Key Traits: Speaks as God, Receives Worship, Forgives Sin

The unique identity of *The Angel of the Lord* is confirmed through several consistent characteristics:

#### 1. He Speaks as God

Unlike created angels who say, “Thus saith the Lord,” *The Angel of the Lord* says, “I will.” He speaks in the first person with divine authority.

- In **Genesis 16:10**, He says to Hagar, “*I will multiply thy seed exceedingly.*” No created being has the authority to promise descendants, especially to a bondmaid of Abraham.
- In **Exodus 3:6**, He declares, “*I am the God of thy father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.*”

#### 2. He Receives Worship

All through Scripture, men are forbidden to worship angels (Colossians 2:18; Revelation 22:9). Yet this Angel accepts worship without rebuke.

- When Gideon realizes whom he’s seen, he fears for his life, saying, “*Alas, O Lord GOD! for because I have seen an angel of the LORD face to face.*” (Judges 6:22)
- Manoah and his wife worship after seeing the Angel ascend in the flame of their offering (Judges 13), and they declare they have seen God.

#### 3. He Forgives Sin

Only God can forgive sins (Mark 2:7), and this Angel demonstrates divine prerogatives:

- In **Zechariah 3**, He rebukes Satan and justifies Joshua the high priest by removing his filthy garments — a type of the imputed righteousness of Christ.

Each of these traits — divine speech, acceptance of worship, and authority to forgive — all testify that this Angel is more than a created being. He is divine. He is the **pre-incarnate Christ**.

### IV. Key Passages that Reveal the Angel of the Lord

Let us explore three foundational passages where *The Angel of the Lord* appears and demonstrates His unique nature. These are pillars upon which this doctrine rests.

### **Genesis 16:7–13 – Hagar and the God Who Sees**

*“And the angel of the LORD found her by a fountain of water in the wilderness...”* (v. 7)

The first appearance of *The Angel of the Lord* is to Hagar, the Egyptian handmaid. She is cast out, pregnant, and alone. Yet *The Angel* finds her and commands her to return.

- **Verse 10:** *“I will multiply thy seed exceedingly.”* — No angel promises this. This is divine speech.
- **Verse 13:** Hagar responds, *“Thou God seest me.”* She identifies the Angel as **God** and names the place *Beerlahairoi* — *“The well of Him that liveth and seeth me.”*

This is not merely an angel delivering a message. This is **Christ**, comforting the castaway and revealing His nature as the Shepherd who seeks the lost (Luke 19:10).

### **Exodus 3:2–6 – The Burning Bush and the Great I AM**

*“And the angel of the LORD appeared unto him in a flame of fire out of the midst of a bush...”* (v. 2)

Moses, drawn to the miraculous sight, is met by *The Angel of the LORD*. Yet in verse 4, the narrative shifts:

*“God called unto him out of the midst of the bush...”*

- **Verse 6:** *“I am the God of thy father, the God of Abraham...”*
- **Verse 14:** He identifies Himself as **I AM THAT I AM**.

Jesus Himself references this moment in **John 8:58**, declaring, *“Before Abraham was, I am.”* He links His divine identity with the one in the bush. The Angel of the Lord here is **not merely a servant**, but **God Himself**, calling Moses to be a deliverer — a type of Christ.

### **Judges 13:18 – Manoah and the “Wonderful” Name**

In this passage, *The Angel of the Lord* appears to Manoah and his wife, foretelling the birth of Samson.

*“Why askest thou thus after my name, seeing it is secret?”* (Judges 13:18)

The Hebrew word translated “secret” in the KJV is **“pili”** — elsewhere rendered “wonderful.”

Compare this to **Isaiah 9:6**:

*“And his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.”*

The name “Wonderful” is a messianic title. The Angel accepts their offering and ascends in the flame, prompting Manoah to cry out:

*“We shall surely die, because we have seen God.”* (v. 22)

They recognized this was no ordinary angel. This was **God**.

## **V. Why Appear Before the Incarnation?**

A natural question arises: *Why would Christ appear before His incarnation?* What purpose did these Christophanies serve?

### **1. To Reveal God’s Character**

God is not distant. These appearances show that He enters into human affairs. Christ, even before Bethlehem, was already revealing the **Father’s heart**, ministering to outcasts like Hagar, strengthening leaders like Moses and Gideon, and announcing miraculous births.

### **2. To Foreshadow His Future Work**

These Christophanies often serve as **types and shadows** of the gospel. The substitute ram on Mount Moriah (Genesis 22), the flame-ascended offering in Judges 13 — these all point forward to Calvary, where the pre-incarnate Christ would become the incarnate sacrifice.

### **3. To Prepare for the Incarnation**

Each appearance builds anticipation for the day when *The Word would be made flesh* (John 1:14). The Angel’s temporary appearances would one day give way to a permanent dwelling among men — Emmanuel, *God with us*.

## **VI. The King James Bible’s Emphasis and Consistency**

Unlike modern versions that often obscure or generalize these references, the **King James Bible consistently preserves the definite article “The Angel of the LORD.”**

This distinction is doctrinally crucial.

- **“An angel of the Lord”** (used in other versions) implies just any messenger.
- **“The Angel of the LORD”** (KJV) identifies a specific, recurring, and divine figure.

The KJV's faithfulness here preserves the thread of continuity that runs from Genesis through Judges, from Hagar to Manoah — painting a cohesive portrait of the pre-incarnate Christ.

Further, the capitalization “LORD” indicates the Hebrew name *YHWH*, underscoring the divine nature of this Angel.

The **KJV translators**, guided by God's providence, retained this precision, making the Christophanies in the Old Testament unmistakable.

## **VII. Conclusion: The Veiled Glory of Christ in the Old Testament**

The Angel of the Lord is no ordinary angel. He is not Michael or Gabriel, nor is He a nameless messenger. He is the **pre-incarnate Word**, stepping into history to comfort, call, and covenant with mankind. From the desert with Hagar to the burning bush with Moses, He appears again and again — not in His full glory, but in veiled brilliance.

These Christophanies stir our hearts to awe. They remind us that **Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever** (Hebrews 13:8). He is not new in Matthew. He has been present, working, and revealing the Father since the beginning.

As we continue this series, we will examine individual Christophanies in depth. But this doctrinal foundation must remain firm: *The Angel of the LORD* is none other than the **Lord Jesus Christ**, revealing Himself before He was born, because He is eternal.

Let those with eyes to see, behold His glory — even in the wilderness.

### **2 of 7: The Angel of the Lord Appears to Hagar (Genesis 16)**

#### ***The First Christophany: God Sees the Outcast***

In the first book of the Bible, within the unfolding story of God's covenant with Abraham, there lies a moment of divine encounter that is both intimate and revolutionary. It does not involve a patriarch or a prophet, but a castaway woman, alone and pregnant in the wilderness. This moment marks the very first time *The Angel of the Lord* is mentioned in Scripture. His appearance to Hagar in Genesis 16 sets the tone for how the pre-incarnate Christ deals with the rejected, the hurting, and the outsider. Through this Christophany, the Lord reveals His omniscience, His covenantal authority, and His heart for the lowly.

This essay explores the significance of The Angel of the Lord's encounter with Hagar, revealing the first biblical Christophany and laying the theological groundwork for how Christ, even before His incarnation, personally ministered to the broken.

## **I. The First Mention: Genesis 16 – A Divine Appearance in the Desert**

The principle of first mention in Bible study is of great importance. It often sets the precedent for the character, nature, or purpose of a thing throughout the rest of Scripture. Thus, the first appearance of *The Angel of the Lord* in Genesis 16:7-13 is not incidental; it is intentional. It unveils the nature of the Angel and offers us a clear portrait of divine compassion wrapped in majesty.

*“And the angel of the LORD found her by a fountain of water in the wilderness, by the fountain in the way to Shur.”* (Genesis 16:7, KJV)

The backdrop is one of heartbreak. Hagar, the Egyptian maidservant of Sarai, has been used to bear a child for Abram due to Sarai's impatience with God's promise (Genesis 16:1-4). After conceiving, Hagar is treated harshly by Sarai and flees into the wilderness, possibly attempting to return to her homeland in Egypt.

There, alone and vulnerable, she is found — not by a man, not by a created angel, but by *The Angel of the LORD*.

This phrase in the King James Bible is not a general term. It refers specifically to the divine Messenger, the pre-incarnate Christ. He is not *an* angel (a created being), but *The Angel* — one who speaks with divine authority, performs divine acts, and is later recognized as God Himself.

## **II. A Divine Promise: “I Will Multiply Thy Seed”**

The identity of the Angel is revealed unmistakably in what He says. He does not relay a message from God; He speaks **as God**.

*“And the angel of the LORD said unto her, I will multiply thy seed exceedingly, that it shall not be numbered for multitude.”* (Genesis 16:10, KJV)

No created angel has the authority to declare such a promise. The phrase **“I will multiply thy seed”** echoes directly the type of language God uses when speaking to Abraham in Genesis 13:16 and 15:5. Only the **Creator** can speak promises into being.

This divine claim is not only authoritative; it is **personal**. It is tailored to Hagar — a woman with no covenant, no rights, and no status in the eyes of men — yet seen and spoken to by the God of heaven.

The Angel goes further, foretelling the future of her unborn son:

*“Behold, thou art with child, and shalt bear a son, and shalt call his name Ishmael; because the LORD hath heard thy affliction.”* (Genesis 16:11)

The name *Ishmael* means “God hears.” Even the naming of the child is a divine act, a pattern repeated when God names Isaac (Genesis 17:19), Solomon (1 Chronicles 22:9), and Jesus (Luke 1:31). The authority to name is reserved for the Creator and Redeemer.

The promise to Hagar contains mercy and mystery. Her son will not be the son of promise (that will be Isaac), but he will still be blessed in a significant way. This demonstrates God’s **justice and compassion**—His ability to work within a broken situation and still extend His purposes.

### III. Hagar’s Revelation: “Thou God Seest Me”

No theological discussion of Genesis 16 can be complete without highlighting Hagar’s reaction — an utterance so profound that it becomes the first recorded naming of God by a human in the Bible.

*“And she called the name of the LORD that spake unto her, Thou God seest me: for she said, Have I also here looked after him that seeth me?”* (Genesis 16:13)

The Hebrew name she uses is **El Roi**, meaning “the God who sees.”

This is remarkable for several reasons:

1. **She Recognizes Him as God.** The verse says *“the LORD that spake unto her”* — clearly identifying the Angel as **YHWH**, the covenant God of Israel. This is not Gabriel or Michael. This is the Lord Himself.
2. **She Names God Based on Personal Experience.** In a culture where women were often marginalized, it is stunning that an Egyptian servant girl becomes the first person in Scripture to give God a name. It reveals that **God sees beyond status**, and values the broken-hearted.
3. **She Realizes She Has Seen God and Lived.** Her rhetorical question — *“Have I also here looked after him that seeth me?”* — reflects the awe and wonder of realizing she has encountered the Divine and survived. Later, others like Gideon and Manoah would fear for their lives after seeing the Angel of the Lord, confirming again that this Angel is **God** (Judges 6:22, Judges 13:21-22).

This moment becomes a theological wellspring: **God sees, God hears, and God cares.** Hagar, the rejected servant, becomes a type of all those who feel invisible to the world — yet fully seen by God.

#### **IV. Typology: Christ Comforts the Outcast**

Genesis 16 is not just a historical narrative. It is a living **picture of Christ's character and mission** — revealed long before His incarnation. This encounter with Hagar becomes one of the most beautiful typological portraits of Christ in the Old Testament.

##### **1. Christ Finds the Lost**

Just as *The Angel of the Lord* “found her by a fountain of water in the wilderness” (v. 7), Jesus declared that He came “*to seek and to save that which was lost*” (Luke 19:10). He does not wait for the broken to find Him; **He finds them.**

##### **2. Christ Ministers with Compassion**

He does not rebuke Hagar. He gently calls her by name and asks, “*Whence camest thou? and whither wilt thou go?*” (v. 8) — questions not for information, but for restoration. Christ's questions in Scripture are often invitations to confession, healing, and truth.

##### **3. Christ Provides Hope**

By promising Hagar a future, He gives her a reason to return and endure. The wilderness becomes a place of **divine appointment**, not abandonment.

##### **4. Christ is Not Limited by Boundaries**

Hagar is not part of the covenant family of Israel. She is a Gentile, a servant, and a woman — all strikes against her culturally. Yet the Lord appears to her. This typifies the **universal scope of Christ's grace**, foreshadowing the New Testament truth that in Christ there is “*neither Jew nor Greek... bond nor free... male nor female*” (Galatians 3:28).

In Hagar, we see every outcast soul — broken, discarded, unseen. In *The Angel of the Lord*, we see the Savior who sees them, hears them, and gives them a name.

#### **V. Application: Grace Beyond the Covenant Line**

Perhaps the most theologically unsettling — and simultaneously comforting — aspect of this encounter is that God's grace is extended **outside** the covenant family. Hagar was not part of the Abrahamic promise. She was Egyptian by birth and functioned as a servant. Yet God appears **to her.**

This sets the stage for multiple themes carried into the New Testament:

## 1. God's Grace Is Not Limited by Lineage

Romans 9-11 deals extensively with the theme that salvation is not based on physical descent but on God's mercy. Hagar's experience is an early clue that God's heart beats for more than one ethnic group.

## 2. The Gospel Reaches the Outsider

Jesus regularly ministered to outsiders — the Samaritan woman, the Syrophenician woman, Roman centurions. Hagar is an Old Testament prototype of these New Testament stories.

## 3. God Sees the Afflicted

For all who feel invisible — abused, abandoned, or misunderstood — the name El Roi speaks volumes: **God sees**. He sees injustice. He sees pain. He sees tears. Hagar didn't need to climb a mountain, enter a temple, or follow a ritual. She met God beside a well in the wilderness.

## 4. Divine Appointments in Desperate Places

How many times has God met His people at their lowest — at a well, in a prison, in the wilderness, in a fiery furnace? The God of Genesis 16 is consistent. He shows up not only on mountaintops but also in deserts.

## VI. Literary and Doctrinal Impact

The story of Hagar and *The Angel of the Lord* leaves a profound literary and doctrinal mark on the rest of Scripture:

- **The Place Name:**

*"Wherefore the well was called Beerlahairoi; behold, it is between Kadesh and Bered."*  
(Genesis 16:14)

Beerlahairoi means "the well of Him that liveth and seeth me." It becomes a permanent memorial to the encounter — a literal and spiritual oasis in the wilderness. Later, Isaac would dwell by this very well (Genesis 24:62), showing that this place became a meaningful spot in redemptive history.

- **Doctrinal Clarity of The Angel's Identity:**

This first Christophany sets the tone for recognizing *The Angel of the Lord* throughout the Old Testament. Because this figure speaks as God, receives worship, and performs divine acts, it provides the foundation for identifying similar appearances as pre-incarnate manifestations of Christ.

- **God’s Heart for the Marginalized:**

Hagar’s story, often overlooked, reveals a major theme in the character of God — He is *the God of the forgotten*. Whether it’s a slave girl or a Gentile soldier, the Lord moves toward the margins.

## **VII. Conclusion: God Sees and Still Speaks**

The appearance of *The Angel of the Lord* to Hagar is a theological diamond set in the rough wilderness of human failure. In a story birthed out of impatience, strife, and mistreatment, we find mercy, presence, and promise. This is the way of Christ.

Though He had not yet been born in Bethlehem, He was already active in history — not only with patriarchs and prophets, but with servant girls and sinners. The first Christophany is not with a king, but with an outcast — a divine statement that **no one is beyond the gaze of God.**

As the series continues, we will see *The Angel of the Lord* speak to Abraham, Moses, Gideon, and others. But it all begins here — with a woman by a well who learns the most comforting truth of all:

*“Thou God seest me.”*

May every weary soul find strength in those words, and may every believer remember that long before He walked the roads of Galilee, **Jesus walked the wilderness to find the forgotten.**

### **3 of 7: The Angel of the Lord Appears to Abraham (Genesis 22)**

#### ***God Will Provide Himself a Lamb***

Few scenes in all of Scripture contain such dramatic tension, emotional weight, and prophetic depth as Genesis 22. It is here, on Mount Moriah, that Abraham — the father of faith — raises a knife to slay his promised son. Yet at the climax of this moment, *The Angel of the Lord* speaks from heaven and stops him. This is not only a turning point in Abraham’s journey but a theological monument pointing straight to Calvary.

The appearance of *The Angel of the Lord* in this passage is one of the most decisive Christophanies in the Old Testament. He speaks with divine authority, receives Abraham’s reverence, and reaffirms the covenant blessings God gave years earlier. More than that, this

moment reveals a prophetic shadow of the gospel — the Father offering His beloved Son, and a substitute being provided in His place.

This essay will examine this divine encounter in Genesis 22 to reveal not only the identity of *The Angel of the Lord* but also the eternal purpose behind His timely appearance.

## **I. The Context: God’s Command to Abraham**

Genesis 22 opens with what seems to be an unfathomable test:

*“And it came to pass after these things, that God did tempt Abraham, and said unto him, Abraham: and he said, Behold, here I am.*

*And he said, Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest, and get thee into the land of Moriah; and offer him there for a burnt offering upon one of the mountains which I will tell thee of.”* (Genesis 22:1–2)

The wording is deliberate and deeply emotional. God identifies Isaac as Abraham’s “*only son*” — though Ishmael was also his son by Hagar, Isaac was the son of promise, born miraculously through Sarah. Isaac represents the covenant line — the very fulfillment of God’s promises. To offer him as a sacrifice would not only break Abraham’s heart but seem to undermine the very covenant God had made.

Yet Abraham obeys — early in the morning, without hesitation, and with faith in God’s power to raise the dead (Hebrews 11:19). This background sets the stage for one of the most profound Christophanies in Scripture.

## **II. The Christophany: The Angel of the Lord Intervenes**

After a three-day journey, Abraham reaches the appointed place. He and Isaac ascend the mountain, with Isaac carrying the wood. The imagery is deeply symbolic. As Isaac innocently asks, “*Where is the lamb for a burnt offering?*” Abraham responds with a prophetic declaration:

*“My son, God will provide himself a lamb for a burnt offering.”* (Genesis 22:8)

What follows is sacred. Abraham builds the altar, lays the wood in order, binds Isaac, and places him atop the altar. As he raises the knife, ready to plunge it into the heart of his son in obedience to God’s command, the heavens break open:

*“And the angel of the LORD called unto him out of heaven, and said, Abraham, Abraham: and he said, Here am I.”* (Genesis 22:11)

*“And he said, Lay not thine hand upon the lad, neither do thou any thing unto him: for now I know that thou fearest God, seeing thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son from me.”* (v. 12)

This is *The Angel of the Lord* — and He speaks as **God**. He doesn’t say, “You have not withheld your son from God.” He says, “*from me.*” He identifies Himself as the One to whom the sacrifice would have been made. No created angel has ever demanded such allegiance or spoken with such divine authority.

Then Abraham lifts his eyes and sees a ram caught in a thicket. He sacrifices the ram **in the stead of his son.**

*“And Abraham called the name of that place Jehovahjireh: as it is said to this day, In the mount of the LORD it shall be seen.”* (v. 14)

This name — *Jehovahjireh* — means “*The LORD will provide.*” It stands as a testimony that God does not demand from man what He does not also provide. And here, it is *The Angel of the Lord* who reveals this truth.

### **III. Divine Identity: The Angel Speaks as God and Reaffirms the Covenant**

In verses 15–18, *The Angel of the Lord* again calls out from heaven and delivers the covenantal blessing, mirroring the language God used in Genesis 12 and Genesis 15:

*“By myself have I sworn, saith the LORD, for because thou hast done this thing, and hast not withheld thy son, thine only son:*

*That in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven...”* (Genesis 22:16–17)

This is a strong Christophany — undeniable in its divine tone and content:

1. **He swears by Himself** — a prerogative that belongs to God alone (Hebrews 6:13).
2. **He reaffirms the Abrahamic Covenant** — a foundational promise upon which the entire plan of redemption rests.
3. **He receives obedience and devotion** — Abraham was about to offer Isaac *to Him*.

This is no ordinary angel. This is the pre-incarnate **Word**, appearing in time to reveal the timeless purpose of God: **to provide a substitute in the place of the sinner.**

### **IV. Mount Moriah: The Prophetic Site of Calvary**

Genesis 22 does not merely record a test of faith; it lays down the very pattern that would be fulfilled two thousand years later on another hill in the same region. Mount Moriah is more than geography — it is prophecy in stone.

### 1. The Location Matters

- **2 Chronicles 3:1** reveals that Solomon later built the temple in Jerusalem on **Mount Moriah**.
- **Calvary**, the site of Jesus' crucifixion, is located in the same mountainous region.
- Thus, the very mountain where Abraham was to offer Isaac is the **same region** where God would later offer His Son.

### 2. The Pattern Matches Calvary

- A **father** offers his **beloved son**.
- The **son carries the wood** on his back (Genesis 22:6; compare with John 19:17).
- The son is **bound and laid on the altar** willingly (Isaac, like Christ, did not resist).
- At the moment of death, **God provides a substitute** — a ram for Isaac, but **Christ would become the Lamb for all**.

Abraham's prophetic words echo across history:

*"God will provide himself a lamb."* (Genesis 22:8)

Indeed, He did. At Calvary, God not only **provided** a Lamb, but **became** the Lamb.

## V. Typology: The Father Offers the Son — and Provides a Substitute

Genesis 22 is a masterpiece of **typology** — a prophetic picture using real historical events to foreshadow spiritual truth. The entire event is a shadow of the gospel:

### 1. Abraham as a Type of God the Father

- Abraham's love for Isaac mirrors the love of the Father for the Son.
- He does not withhold his son — even though Isaac was the promised seed.
- He willingly offers him — just as the Father *"spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all"* (Romans 8:32).

### 2. Isaac as a Type of Christ

- Isaac is the **only begotten son**, born of promise, and deeply beloved.

- He carries the wood up the hill.
- He submits to his father's will.
- He is bound, laid on the altar, and prepared to die.

Though Isaac was spared, Christ was not. Isaac was a **type**, but Jesus was the **reality** — the true Lamb of God.

### 3. The Ram as a Substitute

- The ram caught in the thicket is a **divine provision**.
- It dies **in the place of** Isaac.
- This substitution is the heart of the gospel — that Christ died in our place (2 Corinthians 5:21).

### 4. The Prophetic Proclamation: “It Shall Be Seen”

- Abraham names the place *Jehovahjireh*, adding: “*In the mount of the LORD it shall be seen.*”
- What will be seen? **The ultimate provision** — God Himself providing the Lamb.

This is not a promise limited to Abraham's day. It points forward to Christ, declaring: **One day, on this very mountain, the Lamb will be revealed.**

## VI. Christ in the Shadows: The Angel's Role in Redemption History

This Christophany is more than a divine interruption — it is an unveiling of God's redemptive purpose. From this point forward, the concept of **substitutionary sacrifice** becomes the centerpiece of biblical theology.

- In Egypt, a **lamb's blood** saves the firstborn (Exodus 12).
- In the Tabernacle, a **goat** bears the sins of the people (Leviticus 16).
- In the prophets, **He is led as a lamb to the slaughter** (Isaiah 53:7).
- In the Gospels, **John declares**, “*Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.*” (John 1:29)

All of this begins — prophetically and visually — on Mount Moriah, when *The Angel of the Lord* reveals that **God will provide a substitute**.

## VII. Application: Faith, Obedience, and the Gospel in the Shadow of the Cross

Genesis 22 is not merely a theological roadmap. It is an invitation to trust and obey the God who provides.

### **1. Faith is Tested but Rewarded**

Abraham's faith was not theoretical. It was proven through action. He believed God could raise Isaac from the dead (Hebrews 11:17–19), and his obedience was credited as righteousness. Likewise, faith today must go beyond lip service and result in trust that **God will provide** — even when the path seems illogical or painful.

### **2. God's Provision is Always Timely**

*The Angel of the Lord* intervened **at the last possible moment**. God often waits until our hands tremble and the knife is raised — not to torment us, but to **teach us trust**. His provision is never late, never early, but always on time.

### **3. God is Both Judge and Provider**

He is holy and demands justice — thus the command for sacrifice. Yet He is merciful and provides a substitute. At the cross, the justice and mercy of God meet. The same One who stayed Abraham's hand would not stay His own — but delivered up His Son for us all.

### **4. True Worship Involves Sacrifice**

Genesis 22 is the first place in the Bible where the word *worship* is used:

*“Abide ye here... and I and the lad will go yonder and worship.”* (Genesis 22:5)

Worship, in the biblical sense, is not merely singing or praying — it is *offering back to God what is most precious*, in trust and obedience.

## **VIII. Conclusion: The Voice from Heaven Still Speaks**

When *The Angel of the Lord* called out to Abraham, He stopped a death and unveiled a future. He reaffirmed the covenant, revealed substitutionary sacrifice, and foreshadowed the gospel.

This Christophany is central to understanding not only who *The Angel of the Lord* is, but who **Jesus Christ** has always been — not merely a man born in Bethlehem, but the **eternal Son**, appearing throughout Scripture, revealing the Father's heart and preparing the way for the cross.

*“God will provide himself a lamb.”* He did — on Moriah, on Calvary, on a hill called Golgotha.

May every believer, like Abraham, lift up their eyes and behold **the Lamb caught in the thicket** — the Savior who died in our place.

#### **4 of 7: The Angel of the Lord in the Burning Bush (Exodus 3)**

##### ***I AM That I AM: The Angel Who Sends and Saves***

The third chapter of Exodus stands as one of the most iconic moments in all of Scripture. A bush burns but is not consumed. A man stands on holy ground. A voice calls from within the flames. But this is no ordinary fire, no ordinary voice, and no ordinary angel. It is *The Angel of the Lord*, appearing to Moses to reveal the name, nature, and mission of God.

In this encounter, *The Angel of the Lord* reveals Himself as **I AM THAT I AM** — a name that signifies eternal self-existence and absolute sovereignty. This is more than a divine introduction; it is a Christophany — a pre-incarnate appearance of the Lord Jesus Christ, who would later confirm this very identity in the New Testament.

This essay will explore Exodus 3 in depth, showing that *The Angel of the Lord* is not a created being, but God Himself, manifesting to call and commission Moses to deliver Israel. It will also trace the thread of divine identity from the burning bush to the lips of Jesus, where the “I AM” speaks once again.

##### **I. The Setting: A Burning Bush in the Desert**

*“Now Moses kept the flock of Jethro his father in law... and he led the flock to the backside of the desert, and came to the mountain of God, even to Horeb.”*  
(Exodus 3:1, KJV)

Moses, once the prince of Egypt, is now an 80-year-old shepherd in exile. He has fled Pharaoh’s wrath after killing an Egyptian and has spent four decades tending sheep in the wilderness. In human terms, he is forgotten — a has-been, living out his days in obscurity.

But to God, Moses is being prepared.

And it is there, on the “backside of the desert,” that God appears to him:

*“And the angel of the LORD appeared unto him in a flame of fire out of the midst of a bush: and he looked, and, behold, the bush burned with fire, and the bush was not consumed.”*  
(Exodus 3:2)

This is the third major appearance of *The Angel of the Lord* in the Old Testament — and the most theologically revealing to this point.

## II. The Angel Appears — But God Speaks

The passage is careful in its wording. It begins by stating that *The Angel of the LORD* appeared to Moses “in a flame of fire.” But then the language shifts:

*“And when the LORD saw that he turned aside to see, God called unto him out of the midst of the bush...”*

*(Exodus 3:4)*

The Angel appears, but **God speaks**. In fact, the terms *LORD* (YHWH) and *God* (Elohim) are used interchangeably with *The Angel of the Lord* throughout the passage.

This cannot be an ordinary angelic being. No created angel is ever identified this way. The Angel **is** God — not merely a representative or a voice, but **the visible manifestation of the invisible God**.

Later in the chapter:

*“Moreover he said, I am the God of thy father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. And Moses hid his face; for he was afraid to look upon God.”*

*(Exodus 3:6)*

Moses knows who he is speaking with. He is not speaking to an intermediary. He is standing in the presence of **the God of his fathers**.

This proves once again that *The Angel of the Lord* is a Christophany — a pre-incarnate appearance of the eternal Son of God. Just as in Genesis 22 and Judges 13, the Angel speaks in the first person as God, receives reverence, and commissions men for divine tasks.

## III. God’s Name Revealed: I AM THAT I AM

The heart of Exodus 3 lies in the divine self-revelation of God’s name:

*“And Moses said unto God, Behold, when I come unto the children of Israel... what shall I say unto them?”*

*“And God said unto Moses, I AM THAT I AM: and he said, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you.”*

*(Exodus 3:13–14)*

This name — **I AM THAT I AM** — is unlike any name revealed before. It speaks of:

- **Eternal existence** — God has no beginning and no end.
- **Self-sufficiency** — God depends on nothing and no one.
- **Unchanging nature** — God is the same yesterday, today, and forever.

The Hebrew phrase (*Ehyeh asher Ehyeh*) communicates the idea of continual, present existence. “I am the One who is.” This sets the God of Israel apart from the false gods of Egypt and Canaan. They are tied to objects, places, or forces. But **the LORD simply is**.

This is the very name that Jesus will later invoke in John 8, which we will examine shortly.

#### **IV. The New Testament Connection: Jesus and the “I AM”**

Centuries later, in the Gospel of John, Jesus makes a statement so bold, so unmistakable, that His audience immediately picks up stones to kill Him:

*“Verily, verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham was, I am.”*  
(John 8:58)

This is not bad grammar — it is divine proclamation. Jesus did not say, “I was before Abraham.” He said, “*I AM*.”

By using this phrase, Jesus identifies Himself with **the voice from the burning bush**. His audience understood this clearly — they knew He was claiming to be **the same “I AM”** who spoke to Moses.

This connection is further supported by Jesus’ repeated use of “I am” statements in the Gospel of John:

- *“I am the bread of life”* (John 6:35)
- *“I am the light of the world”* (John 8:12)
- *“I am the good shepherd”* (John 10:11)
- *“I am the resurrection and the life”* (John 11:25)
- *“I am the way, the truth, and the life”* (John 14:6)

Each of these statements echoes the name first revealed in Exodus 3. The burning bush encounter was not only a commissioning of Moses — it was a **revelation of the eternal Son**, foreshadowing His incarnation.

#### **V. God Calls and Commissions**

Many people remember the burning bush as a comforting encounter — and it is. But it is also a **calling** and a **commissioning**. The presence of God is not only for comfort, but for **purpose**.

After revealing His identity, God gives Moses a mission:

*“Come now therefore, and I will send thee unto Pharaoh, that thou mayest bring forth my people the children of Israel out of Egypt.”*

*(Exodus 3:10)*

God does not appear to Moses simply to console him. He appears to **call him**. Comfort is not the final goal; commission is.

This is consistent with every Christophany in Scripture. When *The Angel of the Lord* appears, He almost always gives instructions:

- To **Hagar**: Return and submit (Genesis 16:9)
- To **Abraham**: Do not harm the lad (Genesis 22:12)
- To **Gideon**: Go in this thy might (Judges 6:14)
- To **Moses**: Go to Pharaoh (Exodus 3:10)

The divine presence is a prelude to divine action.

## **VI. Moses’ Objections and God’s Reassurance**

Despite the awe of the encounter, Moses responds with hesitation. He asks:

*“Who am I, that I should go unto Pharaoh, and that I should bring forth the children of Israel out of Egypt?”*

*(Exodus 3:11)*

And God answers:

*“Certainly I will be with thee.”* (v. 12)

Here is the key: **God’s presence, not Moses’ ability, is the assurance of success**. The Angel who speaks from the bush is the One who will go with him — just as Christ promised in Matthew 28:20, *“Lo, I am with you alway.”*

This reassurance doesn’t erase Moses’ fears, but it sets the foundation for trust.

## **VII. Theological Implications of This Christophany**

This encounter teaches vital truths about God and His redemptive work:

## **1. God Reveals Himself Progressively**

Prior to this moment, God had spoken to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. But now He reveals His **name** — “I AM.” Revelation in Scripture is progressive, and each Christophany builds toward the ultimate unveiling of God in the person of Jesus Christ.

## **2. God’s Presence Is Fire, But Not Destruction**

The bush burns, but is not consumed. God’s holiness is like fire — it purifies, it draws attention, it inspires awe — but to His people, it does not destroy. This anticipates the tongues of fire at Pentecost (Acts 2), when the Spirit descends to empower without consuming.

## **3. God Chooses the Weak to Do His Will**

Moses is an old man, insecure in speech, and full of doubt. But God calls him anyway — not because of his strength, but because **He is I AM**.

## **VIII. Application: Hearing the Call of I AM Today**

The encounter at the burning bush is not merely a theological moment in history. It is a template for how God works in the lives of His people today.

### **1. God Still Speaks Through the Fire**

He meets us in desert places — seasons of obscurity, loneliness, or failure. Like Moses, we may think our time has passed. But God uses wildernesses to prepare leaders. The fire still burns, and the voice still calls.

### **2. God Calls Us to Purpose**

The presence of God is never just for our comfort. It is a call to action — to stand, to speak, to go. God doesn’t just heal wounds; He sends warriors.

### **3. God’s Name Is Our Strength**

In a world full of shifting identities and failing promises, God says, “*I AM*.” He is not “I was” or “I might be.” He is the eternal present tense — always enough, always near.

### **4. Christ Is Still the I AM**

The One who spoke from the bush now speaks through His Word. Jesus is still the bread, the light, the way, the truth, the life. And He still says, “*Come unto me.*”

## **IX. Conclusion: The Flame That Never Dies**

In Exodus 3, *The Angel of the Lord* speaks from the flame — a fire that burns but does not consume. From this flame, God reveals His name, His nature, and His purpose. He calls an old shepherd to confront the most powerful empire on earth — not with sword or army, but with a **promise**: “*I AM hath sent me unto you.*”

This Angel is more than a messenger. He is **God in the fire** — the eternal Son, revealing the Father and preparing the way for the ultimate deliverer. This same “I AM” would walk the roads of Galilee, calm the sea, raise the dead, and die on a cross. And when questioned by the Pharisees, He would say, without hesitation: “*Before Abraham was, I AM.*”

In every generation, God still calls from the fire. Will we turn aside and listen, as Moses did? Will we remove our shoes, bow our hearts, and say, “*Here am I*”?

The flame still burns.

## **5 of 7: The Angel of the Lord Goes Before Israel (Exodus 14 & 23)**

### ***The Shepherd and Judge in the Wilderness***

As Israel journeys from the bondage of Egypt toward the freedom of the Promised Land, they are not alone. A divine guide — visible, powerful, and holy — goes before them. He is not merely an angel in the common sense, but *The Angel of the LORD* who leads, protects, and judges. His presence is unmistakably divine, and His role mirrors that of the Lord Jesus Christ, the Shepherd of His people and the righteous Judge of all the earth.

In Exodus 14 and 23, we find two major references to *The Angel of the LORD* acting on Israel’s behalf during their wilderness journey. These appearances go beyond angelic assistance — they reveal a Christophany, a pre-incarnate appearance of Jesus Christ. This Angel bears God’s name, wields His authority, forgives sin, and delivers divine justice.

This essay explores the rich theological significance of these passages, showing how *The Angel of the LORD* is not only the guide of Israel’s exodus but also a picture of Christ’s ongoing role as Shepherd, Deliverer, and Judge over His people.

### **I. The Angel of the Lord Goes Before Israel (Exodus 14)**

The first key passage is found in Exodus 14, at the Red Sea crossing. Israel has left Egypt, but Pharaoh’s army pursues them with chariots and vengeance. Fear overwhelms the people, and Moses declares God’s coming salvation.

Then Scripture introduces *The Angel of God*:

*“And the angel of God, which went before the camp of Israel, removed and went behind them; and the pillar of the cloud went from before their face, and stood behind them.”*  
(Exodus 14:19, KJV)

Here, *The Angel of God* is associated with the **pillar of cloud and fire**, the visible manifestation of God’s presence. He moves from leading the people to **protecting them**, standing between Israel and Egypt.

The dual mention — *The Angel of God* and *the pillar of cloud* — is not coincidental. This Angel is not merely a created being; He is the divine Presence. He manifests in glory, leads the people forward, and becomes their shield when danger arises.

### **1. The Angel Moves With Purpose**

- When Israel marches, He leads.
- When Egypt attacks, He defends.
- When confusion arises, He makes the way clear.

This divine flexibility reflects the nature of Christ — the One who both goes before and stands behind (Isaiah 52:12). He is not only the **Author** but also the **Finisher** of faith (Hebrews 12:2).

### **2. He Stands in the Gap**

*“It was a cloud and darkness to them, but it gave light by night to these: so that the one came not near the other all the night.”*  
(Exodus 14:20)

This verse is deeply symbolic: the same presence that is **light to God’s people** is **darkness to His enemies**. Just as Christ is the Light of the World to believers (John 8:12), He is also a **stone of stumbling** to those who reject Him (1 Peter 2:8).

The Angel of the LORD in Exodus 14 is the dividing line — a protector to the faithful, a hindrance to the wicked. This duality reveals His nature as both **Shepherd and Judge**.

## **II. The Angel of the Lord Bears God’s Name (Exodus 23:20–23)**

The second foundational passage is found in Exodus 23, where God speaks to Moses about the future conquest of Canaan. Here, He makes a bold declaration:

*“Behold, I send an Angel before thee, to keep thee in the way, and to bring thee into the place which I have prepared.*  
*Beware of him, and obey his voice, provoke him not; for he will not pardon your*

*transgressions: for my name is in him.”*  
(Exodus 23:20–21)

This passage is one of the strongest in all of Scripture supporting the view that *The Angel of the LORD* is **no mere messenger**, but a **manifestation of God Himself** — a Christophany.

Let’s break it down:

### 1. “I send an Angel before thee”

This Angel is sent **by God**, yet is distinct in personhood and function. He leads the people **into the land God has prepared** — a role that anticipates Jesus leading His people into eternal rest (Hebrews 4:8–10).

### 2. “Obey his voice... provoke him not”

No one is commanded to **obey** a created angel’s voice. Even when angels speak in Scripture, they often say, *“Thus saith the Lord.”* But this Angel speaks **as God**, and the people are commanded to heed **His own voice**.

This parallels Christ’s repeated call in the Gospels: *“He that hath ears to hear, let him hear.”* (Matthew 11:15)

### 3. “He will not pardon your transgressions”

This is crucial. Forgiveness is a divine prerogative. No angel can forgive sin. Yet this Angel has the authority to withhold or grant pardon — something only God can do (Mark 2:7).

That makes Him more than a servant — it makes Him **the Lord**.

### 4. “My name is in him”

This phrase seals the matter. In Hebrew culture, a name carries the full weight of one’s character, authority, and essence. To have God’s name **in Him** is to possess **divine identity**.

This is foreshadowed in Isaiah 9:6:

*“And his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.”*

And fulfilled in Jesus:

*“Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name...”*

(Philippians 2:9)

The Angel in Exodus 23 is **Christ**, bearing the name, authority, and attributes of God.

### III. The Angel of the Lord as Both Protector and Judge

Throughout the wilderness journey, *The Angel of the LORD* fulfills a dual role — guiding Israel forward in safety, but also **executing judgment when provoked**.

#### 1. Protector of the Covenant People

- He leads them by day and night (Exodus 13:21–22).
- He stands between them and danger (Exodus 14:19).
- He drives out enemies ahead of them (Exodus 23:23).

This aligns with Jesus' declaration in John 10:11:

*"I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep."*

Christ is both **the way and the guide** along that way. He protects His people, watches over them, and never leaves them — just as *The Angel of the LORD* never left Israel in the wilderness.

#### 2. Judge of Rebellion

But when provoked, this Angel also becomes a source of judgment. As Exodus 23 warns, *"Provoke him not, for he will not pardon your transgressions."*

This reflects Jesus' role as **Judge**:

*"For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son."*  
(John 5:22)

And again in Revelation:

*"Out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations..."*  
(Revelation 19:15)

*The Angel of the LORD* is not just a gentle guide. He is holy. He demands obedience. He tolerates no rebellion. He is both Savior and Sovereign — Shepherd and Judge.

### IV. Christ in the Wilderness: The Greater Fulfillment

The role of *The Angel of the LORD* in the Exodus narrative foreshadows **Jesus Christ**, who would fulfill all these roles in the New Testament:

#### 1. Christ Goes Before His People

Jesus is called our **Forerunner** (Hebrews 6:20). Just as the Angel led Israel into the land, Jesus leads believers into **eternal inheritance**.

*“I go to prepare a place for you...”*  
(John 14:2)

## **2. Christ Bears the Name of God**

In John 17:6, Jesus prays:

*“I have manifested thy name unto the men which thou gavest me...”*

Jesus does not just speak for God — **He is God**. The Angel bore God's name. Jesus **is** the fullness of the Godhead bodily (Colossians 2:9).

## **3. Christ Is Obeyed or Resisted**

Jesus demands a response. Just as Israel had to obey *The Angel of the LORD*, so must we obey the Son.

*“He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life... and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him.”*  
(John 3:36)

## **4. Christ Protects and Judges**

To His people, He is a shepherd who lays down His life (John 10:11). To His enemies, He is the Lamb who breaks the seals and unleashes judgment (Revelation 6). These dual roles mirror the Angel's actions in Exodus.

## **V. Application: Following the Angel Today**

The truths found in these Christophanies are not relics of history — they are **living patterns** for the believer.

### **1. Trust the One Who Goes Before You**

Just as Israel followed the cloud and fire, we are called to follow Christ. He is not only the destination — He is the **path** (John 14:6). His guidance may not always seem logical, but it is always perfect.

### **2. Revere the Holiness of Christ**

Exodus 23 reminds us that disobedience to the Angel brings consequences. Jesus is loving — but He is also holy. Grace does not excuse sin; it **calls us to holiness** (1 Peter 1:15–16).

### **3. Rest in the Protection of the Shepherd**

Christ stands between His people and every enemy. As the Angel shielded Israel from Pharaoh, so Christ shields us from judgment. We are kept by His power (1 Peter 1:5).

#### **4. Live With the Urgency of Judgment**

The same Angel who leads into the Promised Land also executes judgment on the disobedient. Let this stir us to evangelism, repentance, and holy living.

#### **VI. Conclusion: The Angel Who Leads, Loves, and Judges**

In Exodus 14 and 23, *The Angel of the LORD* is more than a glowing guide. He is the very presence of God — leading Israel with authority, protecting them with power, and warning them with holiness. His name carries divine weight. His actions reveal divine character.

This is none other than the pre-incarnate Christ — the eternal Son, moving through history to prepare a people for Himself.

He goes before us still. He leads in mercy. He protects in power. And one day, He will return in glory — not as an Angel in the cloud, but as **King of kings and Lord of lords** (Revelation 19:16).

Until then, may we follow faithfully, obey reverently, and rejoice that the same One who stood between Israel and Egypt now stands between us and judgment — and leads us into life everlasting.

#### **6 of 7: The Angel of the Lord Appears to Gideon (Judges 6)**

##### ***The Lord Is With Thee, Thou Mighty Man of Valour***

The story of Gideon is one of fear, doubt, and insecurity — yet also of divine encounter, supernatural calling, and transforming grace. In the sixth chapter of Judges, Israel is in crisis, oppressed by the Midianites and spiritually wandering. Into this turmoil, *The Angel of the LORD* appears — not to a king or a seasoned warrior, but to a hesitant and uncertain man hiding in fear.

The Angel's appearance to Gideon is one of the most personal and profound Christophanies in the Old Testament. He does not merely deliver a message — He speaks with authority, receives worship, performs supernatural signs, and is ultimately recognized as **the LORD** Himself. This is a striking manifestation of the pre-incarnate Christ, meeting weakness with strength and fear with faith.

This essay explores Judges 6 in detail, revealing how *The Angel of the LORD* initiates Gideon's transformation and how this appearance foreshadows the character of Jesus

Christ, who likewise calls the lowly, empowers the timid, and reveals Himself as the God who is present.

## I. Historical and Spiritual Context: Israel in Distress

Judges 6 opens with a grim declaration:

*“And the children of Israel did evil in the sight of the LORD: and the LORD delivered them into the hand of Midian seven years.”*

*(Judges 6:1, KJV)*

Israel, once again, has turned from God, and as a result, they suffer oppression. The Midianites invade their land, destroy their crops, and impoverish the people. Israel cries out to God for deliverance.

Instead of sending immediate military help, God sends a prophet (Judges 6:8–10) to remind them why they are suffering — their disobedience.

But then, in the most unexpected way, *The Angel of the LORD* appears — not with an army, but with a call — not to a general, but to Gideon, a fearful man hiding from the enemy.

## II. The Angel Sits Under the Oak and Speaks to Gideon (Judges 6:11–13)

*“And there came an angel of the LORD, and sat under an oak which was in Ophrah, that pertained unto Joash the Abiezrite: and his son Gideon threshed wheat by the winepress, to hide it from the Midianites.”*

*(Judges 6:11)*

This scene is intimate and almost casual. *The Angel of the LORD* comes and **sits** under a tree — not in flaming glory, not with thunder and lightning, but in human-like form. He approaches Gideon while he’s threshing wheat **in secret**, in a winepress, trying to avoid detection.

This choice of setting is significant. Threshing wheat is typically done on high ground so the wind can separate the grain from the chaff. But Gideon is in a winepress — a hole in the ground — to stay hidden. He is not acting like a “mighty man” — yet that’s exactly what the Angel calls him:

*“The LORD is with thee, thou mighty man of valour.”*

*(Judges 6:12)*

This declaration is both ironic and prophetic. Gideon sees himself as a nobody — but God sees a warrior.

Gideon responds with skepticism:

*“If the LORD be with us, why then is all this befallen us?”*

*(Judges 6:13)*

This honest question reveals his doubt — not just about himself, but about God’s involvement in Israel’s suffering. Like many people today, Gideon wonders: *If God is real, where is He now?*

But God is standing right in front of him.

### **III. The Angel Commissions Gideon (Judges 6:14–16)**

*“And the LORD looked upon him, and said, Go in this thy might, and thou shalt save Israel from the hand of the Midianites: have not I sent thee?”*

*(Judges 6:14)*

Note the shift: the text now says **“the LORD”** looked on him. This is no ordinary angel. The writer of Judges equates *The Angel of the LORD* with **YHWH** — the covenant God of Israel.

Gideon protests again, declaring his inadequacy:

*“Oh my Lord, wherewith shall I save Israel? behold, my family is poor in Manasseh, and I am the least in my father’s house.”*

*(Judges 6:15)*

But God reassures him with the same words He used with Moses:

*“Surely I will be with thee.”*

*(Judges 6:16)*

This is the pattern of divine calling — God doesn’t look for the strong, but for the willing. He chooses the weak so that His strength is made perfect in them (2 Corinthians 12:9).

### **IV. The Angel Receives Sacrifice and Performs a Miracle (Judges 6:17–21)**

Gideon, still unsure, asks for a sign to confirm the identity of this visitor:

*“Shew me a sign that thou talkest with me.”*

*(Judges 6:17)*

He prepares an offering — a young goat, unleavened cakes, and broth — and presents it to the Angel.

What happens next is unmistakably divine:

*“Then the angel of the LORD put forth the end of the staff that was in his hand, and touched the flesh and the unleavened cakes; and there rose up fire out of the rock, and consumed*

*the flesh and the unleavened cakes.”*  
(Judges 6:21)

This is not merely a sign — it is **an act of accepted worship**. Only God can receive offerings and consume them with supernatural fire. The Angel **does not correct Gideon** for offering worship — He affirms it by fire.

This matches previous Christophanies:

- With **Abraham** in Genesis 22, *The Angel of the LORD* accepts devotion.
- With **Manoah** in Judges 13, *The Angel* ascends in the flame of an offering.

In every instance, this Angel behaves as **God**, not merely as a representative.

### **V. Gideon Realizes the Truth and Fears for His Life (Judges 6:22–23)**

After the fire, *The Angel of the LORD* disappears. Gideon immediately understands who He was:

*“Alas, O Lord GOD! for because I have seen an angel of the LORD face to face.”*  
(Judges 6:22)

Gideon believes he is going to die. This reaction is consistent with others in Scripture who encounter *The Angel of the LORD*:

- **Jacob** feared after wrestling with the Angel (Genesis 32:30).
- **Moses** hid his face at the burning bush (Exodus 3:6).
- **Manoah** said, “We shall surely die, because we have seen God” (Judges 13:22).

Gideon is not confused. He has just seen **God** — and he knows it.

But God, in mercy, speaks peace:

*“Peace be unto thee; fear not: thou shalt not die.”*  
(Judges 6:23)

The grace of God shines here. Though holy, He is merciful. Though powerful, He is gentle with the fearful.

### **VI. Typology: Christ Strengthens the Weak and Calls the Fearful**

Gideon’s encounter is more than a historical event. It is a **living picture of how Christ calls and empowers His people**. The Angel’s actions reveal the character of Jesus:

#### **1. He Meets People Where They Are**

Gideon was hiding. Christ came to him — not in judgment, but in invitation. Jesus does the same in the New Testament:

*“The Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost.”*  
(Luke 19:10)

## **2. He Sees What We Cannot**

Gideon saw himself as the least. God called him a “mighty man of valour.” Jesus called uneducated fishermen to be apostles, and a former zealot to write half the New Testament. Christ **sees potential where others see problems.**

## **3. He Accepts Worship and Offers Peace**

Just as the Angel accepted Gideon’s offering, Jesus accepted worship repeatedly:

- From the blind man He healed (John 9:38)
- From Thomas: “My Lord and my God” (John 20:28)

And like the Angel, He often said, *“Peace be unto you.”*

## **4. He Empowers the Weak**

Gideon was timid, uncertain, and skeptical — yet became a leader and deliverer. Jesus does the same:

*“My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness.”*  
(2 Corinthians 12:9)

## **VII. Application: God’s Call Still Comes to the Lowly**

The account of Gideon is an encouragement to every believer who feels too small, too weak, or too unworthy to be used by God.

### **1. God’s Strength is Perfected in Our Weakness**

God doesn’t need our ability — He desires our availability. Gideon had no army, no courage, and no influence. But he had ears to hear — and feet to go.

### **2. God Uses the Humble**

Gideon’s humility and doubt didn’t disqualify him — it made room for God’s power to shine. The Lord exalts the humble (James 4:10).

### **3. God Calls the Fearful**

If you're afraid, unsure, or feel unqualified — you're in good company. Most of God's servants started there. He doesn't call the qualified; He **qualifies the called**.

#### **4. Christ Still Accepts Our Sacrifice**

Gideon brought what he had — and God accepted it. Bring your offering — your time, your heart, your service — and lay it before Christ. He is still the consuming fire (Hebrews 12:29).

#### **VIII. Conclusion: The Face of God in the Winepress**

*The Angel of the LORD* did not appear in a palace or a temple, but by an oak tree, to a man hiding in a winepress. There, God revealed Himself — not in thunder, but in presence; not in power alone, but in peace.

This is the God we serve — one who steps into our fears, speaks to our hearts, and calls us to rise.

Gideon's life was never the same. The one who trembled in the winepress became the warrior who shattered Midian's grip. But it began with a moment — a Christophany — where the eternal Son of God revealed Himself to one man, and turned his weakness into strength.

*“The LORD is with thee, thou mighty man of valour.”*

May we, like Gideon, hear that call — and believe that *the God who calls us is also the God who goes with us*.

#### **7 of 7: The Angel of the Lord Appears to Manoah and His Wife (Judges 13)**

##### ***The Giver of Life and Foreteller of Salvation***

The final Christophany in our seven-part series brings us to the thirteenth chapter of Judges — a chapter filled with mystery, prophecy, and divine presence. Here, *The Angel of the LORD* appears not once but twice — first to an unnamed barren woman, and then to her husband, Manoah. Through these interactions, He reveals the coming birth of Samson, a child who would begin to deliver Israel from the Philistines.

But more importantly, this appearance of *The Angel of the LORD* encapsulates every hallmark of a true Christophany: He speaks with divine authority, delivers prophecy, accepts worship, causes fire to consume an offering, ascends in flame, and identifies Himself with the name *“Wonderful.”*

This encounter is not only a sign of God's mercy to a childless couple or a nation in bondage. It is a **powerful foreshadowing** of Christ Himself — the giver of life, the One whose name is Wonderful, the One who accepts sacrifice, and then disappears, having fulfilled His purpose.

## **I. Historical Context: A Nation in Spiritual Decline**

Judges 13 begins with a familiar refrain in Israel's tragic cycle of sin:

*“And the children of Israel did evil again in the sight of the LORD; and the LORD delivered them into the hand of the Philistines forty years.”*

*(Judges 13:1, KJV)*

The nation had once again fallen into apostasy. God, in His justice, delivered them into enemy hands — this time, to the Philistines. But in His mercy, He also prepared a deliverer — not through military might, but through the birth of a miraculous child to a previously barren woman.

## **II. The First Appearance: A Message of Life (Judges 13:3–5)**

*“And the angel of the LORD appeared unto the woman, and said unto her, Behold now, thou art barren, and bearest not: but thou shalt conceive, and bear a son.”*

*(Judges 13:3)*

The first person to receive this divine visitation is Manoah's wife, whose name is never given. She is barren — a condition viewed in ancient Israel as a mark of disgrace. But it is to this humble woman that *The Angel of the LORD* appears, bearing a message of hope and miraculous life.

This pattern of announcing miraculous births is not new. We've seen it with:

- Sarah and the birth of Isaac (Genesis 18)
- Hannah and the birth of Samuel (1 Samuel 1)
- Elizabeth and the birth of John the Baptist (Luke 1)
- Mary and the birth of Jesus (Luke 1:26–38)

These all point to God's sovereign intervention in human history — and here, *The Angel of the LORD* proclaims:

*“For, lo, thou shalt conceive, and bear a son; and no razor shall come on his head: for the child shall be a Nazarite unto God from the womb: and he shall begin to deliver Israel out of*

*the hand of the Philistines.”*

*(Judges 13:5)*

This is no mere prediction. It is a **divine promise** that God will raise up a deliverer. And it is spoken not by a prophet, but by the pre-incarnate Christ.

### **III. The Second Appearance: Manoah’s Request and the Angel’s Return (Judges 13:8–16)**

After hearing the message from his wife, Manoah prays for the messenger to return:

*“O my Lord, let the man of God which thou didst send come again unto us...”*

*(Judges 13:8)*

God hears, and *The Angel of the LORD* appears again — but once more, only to the woman. She quickly runs to get her husband, and they both stand before the divine visitor.

Manoah, unaware of the Angel's true identity, asks what they should do with the child. The Angel repeats the instructions about Samson’s Nazarite vows — no wine, no unclean food, no razor. Then Manoah, showing respect but still unaware of who he is dealing with, offers to make Him a meal:

*“Let us detain thee, until we shall have made ready a kid for thee.”*

*(Judges 13:15)*

But the Angel refuses the food — instead, He points Manoah toward **worship**:

*“If thou wilt offer a burnt offering, thou must offer it unto the LORD.”*

*(Judges 13:16)*

This is a turning point. It reveals that this visitor is **not just a man** or a prophet. He is not there to eat — He is there to receive **sacrifice**. And only God is worthy of sacrifice.

### **IV. “Why Askest Thou After My Name... Seeing It Is Secret?” (Judges 13:17–18)**

At this point, Manoah becomes more curious. He asks:

*“What is thy name, that when thy sayings come to pass we may do thee honour?”*

*(Judges 13:17)*

The Angel replies with a cryptic yet profound answer:

*“Why askest thou thus after my name, seeing it is secret?”*

*(Judges 13:18)*

The Hebrew word for “secret” here is **“pili”** — meaning **wonderful, incomprehensible, beyond understanding**. This exact word is found in Isaiah 9:6:

*“And his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.”*

This is no coincidence. The Angel’s name — *Wonderful* — is the very name given to **the coming Messiah**. This connection reveals the true identity of the Angel: **He is the pre-incarnate Christ**, the One whose name is beyond comprehension, yet will one day be revealed.

### **V. The Sacrifice and the Ascension in the Flame (Judges 13:19–21)**

Manoah prepares a sacrifice and lays it on a rock. What happens next seals the divine nature of the Angel beyond any doubt:

*“For it came to pass, when the flame went up toward heaven from off the altar, that the angel of the LORD ascended in the flame of the altar.”*  
*(Judges 13:20)*

This supernatural act is both symbolic and literal:

- **Literal** — The Angel **ascends in the flame**, visibly showing that He is divine and has accepted the offering.
- **Symbolic** — It foreshadows the ultimate sacrifice, when **Christ would ascend** not just in fire, but in resurrection glory, having fulfilled the offering for sin once for all (Hebrews 10:12–14).

Manoah and his wife immediately fall on their faces:

*“And Manoah said unto his wife, We shall surely die, because we have seen God.”*  
*(Judges 13:22)*

He now realizes that this was not a prophet, not an angel, but **God Himself**. His wife reassures him:

*“If the LORD were pleased to kill us, he would not have received a burnt offering... nor would he have shewed us all these things.”*  
*(Judges 13:23)*

This woman, unnamed yet full of faith, perceives the grace of God more clearly than her husband. She knows they have not seen God to perish — but to receive **life and promise**.

### **VI. Key Christophany Markers Repeated**

This appearance of *The Angel of the LORD* repeats all the major signs of a true Christophany:

### **1. He Speaks as God**

He gives instructions not *from* the LORD, but **as** the LORD.

### **2. He Receives Worship**

He does not stop Manoah and his wife from offering a burnt offering. In fact, He accepts it.

### **3. He Performs a Supernatural Act**

He ascends in the flame — something no created angel does anywhere else in Scripture.

### **4. He Identifies with the Name “Wonderful”**

This connects Him directly to the prophecy of Isaiah 9:6 — further proving His identity as the pre-incarnate Christ.

### **5. He Vanishes After the Offering**

Just as He did with Abraham, Jacob, and Gideon, once His divine purpose is fulfilled, He disappears. His work is done.

## **VII. Christ: Giver of Life and Foreteller of Salvation**

In this passage, we find Christ in a deeply personal and prophetic role.

### **1. He Gives Life**

The woman was barren, but the Angel brought a promise of life. This mirrors Christ's identity:

*“I am the resurrection, and the life.”*

*(John 11:25)*

Just as He brought life to a dead womb, Christ brings spiritual life to dead souls.

### **2. He Foretells a Deliverer**

Though Samson would ultimately fall short of his potential, his role as a deliverer foreshadowed **Jesus Christ**, the true Deliverer of Israel and the world.

Samson's birth is miraculous. He is dedicated from the womb. He judges Israel. He stretches out his arms to defeat the enemy in death. These parallels are shadows of the greater Deliverer — **Jesus Christ**, who stretched out His arms on the cross and crushed the power of sin and death.

### **3. He Reveals the Heart of God**

The Angel does not bring condemnation, but **hope**. He speaks life, calls for consecration, and shows that even in the darkest days, **God is still working** to redeem His people.

### **VIII. Application: Meeting the Wonderful Counselor**

The account of Manoah and his wife teaches us profound truths that apply to our own walk with God today:

#### **1. God Often Speaks First to the Humble**

It was Manoah's wife — unnamed, barren, and culturally insignificant — who first saw the Angel. God often chooses the lowly to receive His greatest revelations (Luke 1:48).

#### **2. God's Name is Wonderful**

The name of Christ is beyond full comprehension, yet fully trustworthy. We may not understand all His ways, but we can trust His heart.

#### **3. God Accepts Sacrifice That Comes From Faith**

Manoah's offering was not perfect — but it was accepted. Why? Because it came from a heart that believed. Christ still receives the offerings of our hearts today.

#### **4. Christ's Presence Often Vanishes After the Work is Done**

The Angel disappeared after ascending in the flame — a pattern seen repeatedly in Scripture. Christ does not linger for curiosity or comfort. He reveals Himself to **commission and confirm**.

#### **5. God's Work Continues Through the Promised Son**

Just as the Angel foretold the birth of Samson, the Spirit foretold the birth of Christ. That promise, fulfilled in Bethlehem, remains the greatest message ever given: **unto us a Son is born** (Isaiah 9:6).

### **IX. Conclusion: The Flame That Points to the Cross**

Judges 13 concludes with a vision of fire, a disappearing Angel, and a family left in reverent awe. They have met the *Wonderful One* — the Angel of the LORD — the eternal Son of God before He was born of Mary.

From a barren woman came Samson — a flawed deliverer. But from a virgin came Christ — the perfect Redeemer.

*The Angel of the LORD* who ascended in flame would one day descend in flesh. He would not only deliver prophecies of salvation — He would **be** that salvation. And He would not vanish in fire, but rise in glory.

May we, like Manoah and his wife, fall on our faces in awe and declare:

*“We have seen God.”*

And may we, like them, rise with faith, knowing that **God has not appeared to destroy us — but to save us.**