

## “MOSES AND ANGELS”

All the people saw the pillar of cloud standing at the tabernacle door, and all the people rose and worshiped, each man in his tent door. So the LORD spoke to Moses face to face, as a man speaks to his friend. And he would return to the camp, but his servant Joshua the son of Nun, a young man, did not depart from the tabernacle. (Exodus 33:10-11 NKJV)

Now Joshua the son of Nun was full of the spirit of wisdom, for Moses had laid his hands on him; so the children of Israel heeded him, and did as the LORD had commanded Moses. But since then there has not arisen in Israel a prophet like Moses, whom the LORD knew face to face, (Deuteronomy 34:9-10 NKJV)

In the sermon on Abraham we learned that the LORD spoke directly to Abraham without the intermediation of angels except the one time when Isaac was also present. Generally, it was when God spoke or dealt with members of Abraham's family such as Hagar and Lot that He sent His Word to them by angels. In the case of Jacob, God generally spoke to him through angels except in the case when Jacob wrestled with a Man. Afterward Jacob named the place Peniel because he said, "I have seen God face to face."

In the case of Moses, God Himself declared, on several occasions, that He spoke to other prophets through dreams and visions, but that He spoke to Moses face to face. In Moses' prophecy of the coming of the Christ, he said that the LORD would send a prophet like unto himself. When Christ came into the world, He prayed to the Father as one speaking face to face.

In our study of Moses and angels, our challenge is to ask why God uses angels on occasion in His dealings with Moses. When God sends an angel or angels to Moses what is the reason?

You may wonder why I am preaching a series of sermons on angels. I am wondering why I never preached on them before this. The Bible has hundreds of references to angels. In going through these references, we are also doing a survey of the important events and teachings in the Bible.

"O come, angel band, come and around me stand..."

1.) Now Moses was tending the flock of Jethro his father-in-law, the priest of Midian. And he led the flock to the back of the desert, and came to Horeb, the mountain of God. And the Angel of the LORD appeared to him in a flame of fire from the midst of a bush. So he looked, and behold, the bush was burning with fire, but the bush was not consumed. Then Moses said, "I will now turn aside and see this great sight, why the bush does not burn." So when the LORD saw that he turned aside to look, God called to him from the midst of the bush and said, "Moses, Moses!" And he said, "Here I am." Then He said, "Do not draw near this place. Take your sandals off your feet, for the place where you stand is holy ground." Moreover He said, "I am the God of your 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. And the LORD said: "I have surely seen the oppression of My people who are in Egypt, and have heard their cry because of their taskmasters, for I know their sorrows. "So I have come down to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians, and to bring them up from that land to a good and large land, to a land flowing with milk and honey, to the place of the Canaanites and the Hittites and the Amorites and the Perizzites and the Hivites and the Jebusites. "Now therefore, behold, the cry of the children of Israel has come to Me, and I have also seen the oppression with which the Egyptians oppress them. "Come now, therefore, and I will send you to Pharaoh that you may bring My people, the children of Israel, out of Egypt." (Exodus 3:1-10 NKJV)

We think of angels as beings that wear long white gowns and have wings. Notice that the Angel of the LORD took the form of a flame of fire from the midst of a bush. Moses had fled Egypt at the age of forty. He had now been tending the sheep of Jethro, priest of Midian for forty years. He was eighty years old. At Horeb, he sees a strange sight, a bush is burning but the fire does not consume it. He turns aside to look at it. The angel's assignment is now complete. He has attracted Moses' attention. Moses turns aside to see this great sight. Then God speaks to him.

The LORD tells Moses that He has seen the oppression of His people in Egypt and He is going to send Moses to Pharaoh that he may bring the children of Israel, out of Egypt. The LORD tells Moses the holy name of God and its meaning. He gives Moses a rod to use to give signs to convince.

Sometimes the angel that God sends to get our attention may take the form of an automobile, an appliance, or a bank account. I knew a man whose car stopped right outside a church. He went inside to ask to use the telephone. He came back outside a man who had just accepted Christ.

2.) And Moses said to the people, "Do not be afraid. Stand still, and see the salvation of the LORD, which He will accomplish for you today. For the Egyptians whom you see today, you shall see again no more forever. "The LORD will fight for you, and you shall hold your peace." And the LORD said to Moses, "Why do you cry to Me? Tell the children of Israel to go forward. "But lift up your rod, and stretch out your hand over the sea and divide it. And the children of Israel shall go on dry ground through the midst of the sea. "And I indeed will harden the hearts of the Egyptians, and they shall follow them. So I will gain honor over Pharaoh and over all his army, his chariots, and his horsemen. "Then the Egyptians shall know that I am the LORD, when I have gained honor for Myself over Pharaoh, his chariots, and his horsemen." And the Angel of God, who went before the camp of Israel, moved and went behind them; and the pillar of cloud went from before them and stood behind them. So it came between the camp of the Egyptians and the camp of Israel. Thus it was a cloud and darkness to the one, and it gave light by night to the other, so that the one did not come near the other all that night. Then Moses stretched out his hand over the sea; and the LORD caused the sea to go back by a strong east wind all that night, and made the sea into dry land, and the waters were divided. So the children of Israel went into the midst of the sea on the dry ground, and the waters were a wall to them on their right hand and on their left. (Exodus 14:13-22 NKJV)

When the LORD sent the various plagues on Egypt, He always made a distinction between the Egyptians and the people of Israel. The plagues did not afflict the land or the animals or the persons of the Israelites. In the final plague, the deaths of every first born son, God instructed His people with a sign to mark the entrances of their homes so that they would be passed over when God brought death to every first born of the Egyptians.

After the people of Israel followed Moses in leaving Egypt, Pharaoh pursued them with his army. Moses and the people followed the Angel of God who took the form of a pillar of cloud by day and of fire by night. The Angel did not have a human appearance with wings. It was a pillar of cloud or a pillar of fire. Just as God made a distinction between the Israelites and the Egyptians when He sent the plagues, so He made a distinction between them with the Angel of God. At night, it was light for the Israelites, but darkness for the Egyptians. When the Israelites crossed the Red Sea, they crossed on dry land. When the Egyptians tried to follow them, they became mired in mud and the sea waters returned and drowned all of them.

3.) Then the LORD said to Moses, "Depart and go up from here, you and the people whom you have brought out of the land of Egypt, to the land of which I swore to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, saying, 'To your descendants I will give it.' "And I will send My Angel before you, and I will drive out the Canaanite and the Amorite and the Hittite and the Perizzite and the Hivite and the Jebusite. "Go up to a land flowing with milk and honey; for I will not go up in your midst, lest I consume you on the way, for you are a stiff-necked people." ... Then Moses said to the LORD, "See, You say to me, 'Bring up this people.' But You have not let me know whom You will send with me. Yet You have said, 'I know you by name, and you have also found grace in My sight.' Now therefore, I pray, if I have found grace in Your sight, show me now Your way, that I may know You and that I may find grace in Your sight. And consider that this nation is Your people." And He said, "My Presence will go with you, and I will give you rest." Then he said to Him, "If Your Presence does not go with us, do not bring us up from here. For how then will it be known that Your people and I have found grace in Your sight, except You go with us? So we shall be separate, Your people and I, from all the people who are upon the face of the earth." So the LORD said to Moses, "I will also do this thing that you have spoken; for you have found grace in My sight, and I know you by name."(Exodus 33:1-3,12-17)

Moses went up on the mountain to meet with God. While on the mountain God gave Moses two stone tablets with the Ten Commandments inscribed on the tablets by God Himself. While Moses was on the mountain, the people pressured Aaron to make them a golden calf as an image to worship. Aaron gave in to their demands. Moses came down the mountain. He heard the revelry of the people, saw the golden idol which Aaron made before which they worshiped, sat down to feast, and rose up to play.

Moses threw the stone tablets to the ground, smashing them. He ground the gold idol into powder, threw it in the water and made the people drink it. At first God told Moses that He would destroy all the people and make a great nation from Moses' descendants. Moses prayed and begged for mercy for the people. Then the LORD said that He would no longer lead the people, but would send an angel to lead them to the Promised Land.

Moses prayed that if the Presence of the LORD did not go with them, he didn't want to go any further. So the LORD said to Moses, "I will also do this thing that you have spoken; for you have found grace in My sight, and I know you by name."

“The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.” (James 5:16 KJV)