

The Angel of the LORD

Here are a list of passages that talk about “the angel of the LORD” – a person who appears frequently in the Old Testament. Read over each passage and on a separate sheet of paper make a list of information about “the angel of the LORD” – for example, what form does he appear in, how is he addressed by others, what do people do when they see him? After you have looked at each passage, examine your list and see if you can identify “the angel of the LORD.” (There is one important piece of information that you will need to know found on page 2. You can read this either before or after you have read the Bible passages.)

- ❖ Genesis 16:7-14 – Sarai suggests Abraham sleep with her mistress Hagar. Hagar becomes pregnant and flaunts her pregnancy in front of her barren mistress. Sarai persecutes Hagar and so Hagar runs away. “The angel of the LORD” appears to Hagar, tells her to go back to Sarai, and promises Hagar many descendants.



- ❖ Genesis 22:11-18 – The angel of the LORD stops Abraham from sacrificing Isaac, provides a ram for sacrifice, and swears to keep His promise to Abraham about the “seed.”
- ❖ Exodus 3:1-6 – The angel of the LORD is in the burning bush and speaks to Moses.
- ❖ Exodus 14:19-25 – This is the narrative about the crossing of the Red Sea. Note the words “the angel of God” in verse 19. (You might want to compare this passage to Exodus 13:21.)
- ❖ Judges 2:1-5 – “The angel of the LORD” who brought them “out of Egypt” appears to the Israelites. He rebukes them for making covenants with the Canaanites and worshipping their gods. As a result He tells them He will not drive out the Canaanites from the land and they will become thorns in the Israelites side.
- ❖ Judges 6:11-24 – “The angel of the LORD” comes to Gideon.
- ❖ Judges 13:1-23 – “The angel of the LORD” appears to Samson’s parents.
- ❖ 2 Kings 1:3,15 – “The angel of the LORD” gives instructions to Elijah concerning King Ahaziah.

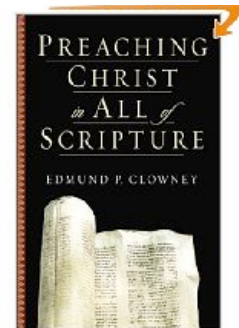
- ❖ 2 Kings 19:35 (parallel passage in Isaiah 37:36) – In answer to King Hezekiah’s prayer, “the angel of the LORD” put to death 185,000 men in the Assyrian camp. This act preserves the remnant of the house of David, so the Davidic covenant is kept.



There is one very important bit of information that you need to know that will help you with the identity of “the angel of the LORD”: The word “angel” in both Hebrew and Greek does not describe a type of nature, a species, such as “a spirit being.” It has nothing to do with being. It is a word that describes someone’s function. The word in both languages simply means “messenger.”

Hence, “the angel of the LORD” in reality means “the messenger of the LORD.”

[For more understanding of “the messenger of the LORD” see the excellent small book Preaching Christ in All of Scripture by Edmund P. Clowney, Crossway Books, 2003. This is not a book on preaching, but rather a collection of sermons by Dr. Clowney preaching about Christ’s presence in the Old Testament.]



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