

THE ANGEL OF THE LORD WHO GAVE THE LAW

This lesson examines one of the most surprising truths in scripture: the One who spoke to Moses on Mount Sinai was not a created angel, but the divine Angel of the Lord—Jesus in His pre-incarnate form. By tracing the Angel's identity through the Old Testament, and by following the inspired testimony of Stephen and the New Testament writers, we will see that the Angel who appeared, spoke, received worship, bore God's name, and delivered the law is none other than Yahweh (Jesus) Himself.

Introduction:

1. Many believers assume the law was given directly by God the Father, yet scripture presents a more detailed and surprising picture that must be examined carefully.
2. Throughout the Old Testament, the Angel of the Lord appears repeatedly as a divine Person, distinct from the Father yet fully possessing God's authority and identity.
3. The New Testament writers, especially Stephen, provide inspired commentary that identifies the Angel as the One who spoke to Moses on Mount Sinai, revealing the true identity of the divine Speaker.

1. The Identity Of The Angel Of The Lord:

a. The Angel Of The Lord Appears Throughout Scripture As A Divine Person (Genesis 16:7–13).

- 1) In His encounter with Hagar, the Angel speaks with full divine authority, and Hagar recognises Him as God when she says, "Thou God seest me."
- 2) No created angel in scripture is addressed as God or treated as God. Hagar's response shows she understood the Angel to be more than a messenger.
- 3) This establishes from the beginning that the Angel Of The Lord is a divine Person who appears repeatedly in the Old Testament.

b. The Angel Of The Lord Speaks With God's Authority And Uses God's Name (Genesis 22:11–18).

- 1) In stopping Abraham from sacrificing Isaac, the Angel speaks directly as Yahweh, declaring, "By myself have I sworn."
- 2) Created angels never swear by themselves or take God's name upon their own authority; they speak *for* God, not *as* God.
- 3) This shows again that the Angel Of The Lord is divine and acts with God's own authority.

c. The Angel Of The Lord Accepts Worship, Which Created Angels Strictly Forbid (Judges 13:15–22).

- 1) When Manoah and his wife offered sacrifice, the Angel Of The Lord accepted it and ascended in the flame, causing Manoah to say, "We shall surely die, because we have seen God."
- 2) In contrast, created angels *refuse* worship: twice John attempts to worship an angel in Revelation, and both times the angel commands, "See thou do it not... worship God" (Revelation 19:10; 22:8–9).
- 3) Paul also warns against "worshipping of angels" (Colossians 2:18), proving that angels are not to receive worship. Since the Angel Of The Lord *does* receive worship, He cannot be a created angel but must be divine.

d. The Angel Of The Lord Reveals God Yet Is Distinguished From God (Exodus 3:1–6).

- 1) At the burning bush, the Angel Of The Lord appears in the flame, but the voice that speaks is the voice of God Himself.
- 2) Moses hides his face because he fears to look upon God, recognising the presence as divine.
- 3) The Angel appears, yet God speaks, showing a distinction within the Godhead and preparing us to identify this Angel as the pre-incarnate Christ.

2. The Angel Of The Lord Gave The Law On Mount Sinai:

a. The Angel Of The Lord Has God's Name And Authority (**Exodus 23:20–23**).

- 1) God declares that His name is *in* the Angel, meaning the Angel shares His identity and authority.
- 2) The Angel can refuse to pardon sin, a divine prerogative belonging only to God.
- 3) God commands Israel to obey the Angel's voice, confirming that the Angel speaks with divine authority and is Yahweh in a distinct Person.

b. God Commands Moses To Come Up To Yahweh, Not Merely To Himself (**Exodus 24:1–2**).

- 1) God says, "Come up unto the Lord," referring to Yahweh as Someone distinct from the Speaker.
- 2) If God meant Himself alone, He would have said, "Come up to Me"; instead, He identifies another divine Person as Yahweh.
- 3) This supports the distinction within Yahweh and matches the identity of the Angel revealed earlier.

c. Stephen Confirms That The Angel Spoke To Moses On Mount Sinai (**Acts 7:37–38**).

- 1) Stephen states that Moses "was in the church in the wilderness with the angel which spake to him in the mount Sinai."
- 2) This identifies the Speaker of the law as the Angel, the same divine Person seen throughout the Old Testament.
- 3) Stephen's inspired testimony unites Exodus 23, Exodus 24, and the giving of the law under one divine Person—the Angel Of The Lord.

d. These Passages Together Show That Jesus, As The Angel Of The Lord, Delivered The Law.

- 1) The divine Angel of Exodus 23, the Yahweh of Exodus 24, and the Angel of Acts 7 all refer to the same Person.
- 2) This Person is divine, bears God's name, and is distinct from the Father—identifying Him as the pre-incarnate Christ.
- 3) Therefore, Jesus is Yahweh, and the giving of the law reveals plurality within the Godhead, supporting the doctrine of the Trinity.

3. Why The New Testament Says The Law Was Given Through Angels:

a. The New Testament Describes Angelic Participation Without Denying A Principal Speaker (**Hebrews 2:2**).

- 1) Hebrews speaks of the word "spoken by angels," referring to the presence of multiple heavenly beings at Sinai.
- 2) This does not claim that all angels spoke the law; it simply acknowledges their involvement.
- 3) The statement fits perfectly with the Old Testament picture of one divine Angel delivering the law while others attended.

b. Paul States The Law Was Ordained By Angels In The Hand Of A Mediator (**Galatians 3:19**).

- 1) Paul's use of the plural "angels" describes the heavenly host present at the giving of the law.
- 2) He does not contradict Stephen, who names the specific Angel who spoke.
- 3) The plural form reflects the broader heavenly scene, not the identity of the chief Speaker.

c. Stephen Also Refers To Angels In The Plural (**Acts 7:53**), While Earlier Naming The Angel Who Spoke.

- 1) Stephen says Israel received the law "by the disposition of angels," acknowledging the presence of many heavenly beings.

2) Earlier, he specifically stated that “the Angel” spoke on the mount.

3) Stephen distinguishes between the divine Speaker and the attending angels, making both statements consistent.

d. The Angel Of The Lord Spoke While Other Angels Attended.

1) One divine Angel—the pre-incarnate Christ—delivered the law on Sinai.

2) Other angels were present, as the New Testament affirms, without sharing the role of spokesman.

3) This fully explains the plural references and harmonises all passages without contradiction.

Conclusion:

1. The Old Testament consistently presents the Angel of the Lord as a divine Person who bears God’s name, speaks with God’s authority, and receives worship that belongs only to God.
2. The New Testament confirms that this same divine Angel was the One who spoke to Moses on Mount Sinai, revealing Jesus’ pre-incarnate work in giving the law to Israel.
3. When all passages are taken together, they reveal a unified picture of divine plurality within the Godhead, showing that Jesus is Yahweh and that the giving of the law testifies to the truth of the Trinity.

Applications:

1. Recognising Jesus as the divine Angel of the Lord deepens our appreciation of His eternal nature and reminds us that His work did not begin in Bethlehem but stretches back through all the dealings of God with His people.
2. Understanding that Jesus gave the law on Sinai helps us see the unity of scripture, showing that the same Lord who redeemed us by grace also delivered the commandments that teach us holiness.
3. Seeing divine plurality in the Old Testament strengthens our confidence when explaining the Trinity, allowing us to show others that this doctrine is not a late invention but rooted in the earliest pages of God’s revelation.

Questions:

1. Who appeared to Hagar in the wilderness, and how did she identify the One who spoke to her (**Genesis 16:7–13**)?
2. What did the Angel of the Lord declare to Abraham after stopping him from sacrificing Isaac (**Genesis 22:11–18**)?
3. How do we know the Angel of the Lord is not a created angel when He appeared to Manoah and his wife (**Judges 13:15–22**)?
4. How does Exodus 24:1–2 show plurality within Yahweh (**Exodus 24:1–2**)?
5. According to Stephen, who spoke to Moses on Mount Sinai (**Acts 7:37–38**)?

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Questions & Answers:

1. Who appeared to Hagar in the wilderness, and how did she identify the One who spoke to her (**Genesis 16:7–13**)?

Answer: Hagar recognised the Angel of the Lord as God Himself, saying, “Thou God seest me” (**Genesis 16:7–13**).

2. What did the Angel of the Lord declare to Abraham after stopping him from sacrificing Isaac (**Genesis 22:11–18**)?

Answer: The Angel spoke as Yahweh, saying, “By myself have I sworn,” revealing His divine authority (**Genesis 22:11–18**).

3. How do we know the Angel of the Lord is not a created angel when He appeared to Manoah and his wife (**Judges 13:15–22**)?

Answer: He accepted worship and sacrifice, which created angels refuse, proving He is divine (**Judges 13:15–22**).

4. How does Exodus 24:1–2 show plurality within Yahweh (**Exodus 24:1–2**)?

Answer: God tells Moses to “come up unto the Lord,” referring to Yahweh as Someone distinct from the Speaker (**Exodus 24:1–2**).

5. According to Stephen, who spoke to Moses on Mount Sinai (**Acts 7:37–38**)?

Answer: Stephen says Moses was with “the angel which spake to him in the mount Sinai,” identifying the divine Speaker (**Acts 7:37–38**).