



Angel Appearances and Other Visions

“Now it came about, while he was performing his priestly service before God...an angel of the Lord appeared to him, standing to the right of the altar of incense. And Zacharias was troubled when he saw him, and fear gripped him. But the angel said to him. ‘Do not be afraid, Zacharias...’ And Zacharias said to the angel, ‘How shall I know this for certain? For I am an old man, and my wife is advanced in years.’ And the angel answered and said to him, ‘I am Gabriel, who stands in the presence of God; and I have been sent to speak to you, and to bring you this good news.’...”

“Now in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a city in Galilee, called Nazareth to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph...and the virgin’s name was Mary. And coming in, he said to her, ‘Hail, favored one! The Lord is with you.’ But she was greatly troubled... And the angel said to her, ‘Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God... And the angel departed from her.’ (Luke 1:8-19)

“Now the Lord appeared to [Abraham] by the oaks of Mamre... And when he lifted up his eyes and looked, behold, three men were standing opposite him... Then the men rose up from there, and looked down toward Sodom; and Abraham was walking with them to send them off... Then the men turned away from there and went toward Sodom, while Abraham was standing before the Lord... the Lord departed;... Now two angels came to Sodom that evening as Lot was sitting at the gate of Sodom...” (Gen 18:1-2:1)

“And [Jacob] had a dream, and behold, a ladder was set on the earth with its top reaching to heaven; and behold, the angels of God were ascending and descending on it.” (Gen 28:12)

“He said, ‘Hear now my words: If there is a prophet among you, I the LORD shall make myself known to him in a vision, I shall speak with him in a dream.’” (Numbers 12:6)

“...Peter went up on the housetop about the sixth hour to pray. And he became hungry, and he was desiring to eat; but while they were making preparations, he fell into a trance; and he beheld the sky opened up, and a certain object like a great sheet coming down, lowered by four corners to the ground, and there were in it all kinds of four-footed animals...And a voice came to him, ‘Arise, Peter, kill and eat!’ But Peter said, ‘By no means, Lord... (Acts 10:9-14)

“I was in the Spirit on the Lord’s day, and I heard behind me a loud voice like the sound of a trumpet... And I turned to see the voice that was speaking with me...” (Rev 1:10-12)

These are but a few of the many examples recorded in the Bible of angelic appearances, dreams and visions. The question we have to deal with is, do these things still occur today, and if they do, how do we know they are from God?

WHO ARE THE ANGELS?

The word “angel” means “messenger”. This host of spirit creatures was created by God possibly even before the creation of the heavens and the earth. We know from the Biblical record that a very important angel rebelled against God and took a host of followers with him. This angel is known as Satan and his spirit followers are the fallen angels called demons. Apparently various ranks exist in the spirit world among the unfallen angels and the demons which indicate that some have more power and authority than others. It is also clear that angels are very powerful beings—a case in point being the removal of the stone that covered Jesus’ tomb. The record indicates that the angel just casually flipped it out of the way and calculations by some people indicate the mass of this stone around 4,000 kilogrammes. It is possible that unfallen angels retained this power.

ANGELS IN THE WORLD TODAY:

“Sally a woman who attends my church, could not restrain her tears as she poured out her heart to Pastor Dave. After a series of medical tests, Sally’s doctor had called to inform her that the baby she was expecting would be born with Down’s syndrome. Pastor Dave shared Sally’s grief at the news. He vowed to help Sally and her husband, Jim, in any way he could.

“The following day Pastor Dave decided to send Sally and Jim a postcard with a word of encouragement. On the card, Dave assured them of how much God loved them and their soon-to-be-born little baby.

“The postcard ended up being delivered to a wrong address several miles from Sally and Jim’s house. Sue—who lived at the house the card was mistakenly delivered to—decided to take the postcard to Sally personally.

“When Sally opened the door, Sue said, ‘This card from your Pastor was delivered to my house by mistake. I wanted to come by and deliver the card personally because, I too, have a child with Down’s syndrome and I want to help you through this if you’ll let me. God has shown me so much that I would like to share with you.’

“Did the God of all comfort send one of His angels to ‘reroute’ the mail to Sue’s house? We can’t know for sure, but it seems a good possibility. While the world would tell us that this was just a freak accident, I see the supernatural at work here.

“Angels are real. Angels are alive. And, though we rarely perceive it, angels are very much with us here on planet earth...”

“In recent years many believers have spoken of actual encounters with angels. And many of these reports come from quite reliable sources, having a ring of authenticity.” (Ron Rhodes, *Angels Among Us*, Harvest House Publishers, 1994, pp.15-16)

Not only does Ron Rhodes cite many more examples of what seems to be angelic encounters in this book but many South Africans also know of someone who has had some or other encounter that cannot be explained rationally. We, however, need to tread carefully in this area and not get carried away by people who are out to teach us to find our own guardian angel through some or other method that can be learned.

ANGELMANIA:

The television series *Touched by an Angel* and various movies over the years have added to this awareness and in some instances even caused what can be termed *angelmania*. We read in *Time* magazine December 1993:

“In the past years [angels] have lodged in the popular imagination, celestial celebrities trailing clouds of glory as they come. There are angel-only boutiques, angel newsletters, angel seminars, angels on Sonya Live. A *TIME* poll indicates that most Americans believe in angels. Harvard Divinity School has a course on angels; Boston College has two. Bookstores have had to establish angel sections. In the most celebrated play on Broadway, Tony Kushner’s Pulitzer-prize-winning *Angels in America*, a divine messenger ministers to a man with AIDS. In *Publishers Weekly*’s religious bestseller list, five of 10 paperback books are about angels.”

“*Newsweek* magazine, in similar tone, asserted in late 1993 that ‘angels are appearing everywhere in America.’ The article noted that ‘those who see angels, talk to them, and put others in touch with them are prized guests on television and radio talk shows. Need inspiration? There are angel workshops that will assist you in identifying early angel experiences or unleashing your ‘inner angel.’ Tired of your old spirit guide? New Age channelers will connect you with Michael the Archangel. Have trouble recognizing the angels among us? Join an angel focus group.’” (Rhodes, pp.26-27) This leads us to...

MAKING CONTACT WITH ANGELS:

When the Biblical records are considered it is pretty clear that not one of the appearances of angels to mortals was the result of human intervention. Angels always appeared to man on command of God, their Creator and “usually as ordinary human beings, even touching and conversing with witnesses who are in normal consciousness.” (Dave Hunt, *Occult Invasion of the Church*, Harvest House Publishers, 1998, p.384) It was always to convey a message from God or to perform some function God wanted. It would, therefore, be safe to conclude that when man succeeds in causing an angel to appear or even when he meets his own guardian angel this was achieved through suspect means—methods that “involve mysticism and various forms of occultism... When people depart from the objective truth recorded in God’s Word—the Bible—and replace it with mystical intuition, the door is wide open for new ideas to come from ‘the other side’. What about occultism? Alma Daniel, Timothy Wylie, and Andrew Ramer—in their book *Ask Your Angels...* say that techniques used to contact angels include Eastern meditation, visualization, breath control, exercises with chakras (alleged energy centers in the body), tuning into angel frequencies, channeling and divination.” (Rhodes, pp.37-38) These are all methods that are forbidden in God’s Word: “When you enter the land which the Lord your God gives you, you shall not learn to imitate the detestable things of those nations. There shall not be found among you anyone who makes his son or his daughter pass through the fire, one who uses divination, one who practices witchcraft, or one who interprets omens, or a sorcerer, or one who casts a spell, or a medium, or a spiritist, or one who calls up the dead. For whoever does these things is detestable to the Lord... For those nations, which you shall dispossess, listen to those who practice witchcraft and to diviners, but as for you, the Lord your God has not allowed you to do so.” (Deut 18:9-14) It can have disastrous effects (1 Chron 10:13). Islam and Mormonism specifically sprang from angel visitations which are condemned by God (Gal 1:6-9). Now let us briefly deal with some of the methods:

1. Channeling: Channeling is also known as spiritism or mediumship (practiced as seances), which as we have seen are forbidden by God. Nevertheless, “Alma Daniel, Timothy Wylie, and Andrew Ramer say channeling is one of the best means for making angel contact...Once you tune into the angels, you may find yourself receiving...voices of guides, extraterrestrials, and nature spirits...Other New Agers claim the ability to act as a channel so you can communicate with your guardian angel.” (Rhodes, p.39)

2. Meditation: “Angels are always on call, and meditation is one of the best ways by which we can commune with them...” According to Jane Howard as quoted by Rhodes, p.41. Advice to this effect comes from Terry Lynn as quoted in Rhodes (p.41): “Let your attention focus on angels. At this point you may want to use the word angel as a form of mantra, [a word that is mystically chanted over and over again thus creating an altered state of consciousness]. Allow the word to take you wherever it will...feel yourself lifted and surrounded by white light. Ask the angels to lift you into heaven so that you can meet them.” (Brackets in original)

It is important to note that there is a difference between Eastern meditation and Christian meditation: The Christian meditates on God’s Word—he thinks it over and through with objective contemplation and deep reflection. Eastern meditation involves the emptying of the mind and waiting for... And this is where the danger lies! Meditation forms the heartbeat of all the different methods or paths as it brings about the desired trance-like state or altered state of consciousness. Alice Baily puts it so clearly in her, *The Externalization of the Hierarchy*, p.17, “[T]he emphasis in all esoteric (hidden; secret meanings reserved for a select few) schools is necessarily, and rightly laid upon meditation.” (Constance E. Cumbey, *The Hidden Dangers of the Rainbow*, Bet-El Publishers, 1991, p.55)

3. New Age Visualization: “[I]n a typical workshop the conventional techniques of ‘guided meditation’ to silence the mind and unlock the imagination [is used]. Once they’d settled into their [the students] personal sacred spaces, [they] were invited to listen for messages. In your mind’s eye see a bridge appear before you—a bridge of light. Get up and walk across the bridge that leads you into the angelic realm. Don’t be just a spectator and see yourself walking across the bridge—actually feel and imagine it as you get up and walk. Focus your awareness on walking across the bridge and, if you need to, say to yourself, ‘I am walking across the bridge with my Guardian Angel.’ Once on the other side of the bridge acknowledge that you have crossed over into the angelic realm.” (Rhodes, p.43)

To the Christian there is danger in such forms of visualization. He realizes that his senses, especially his imagination, has been tainted by sin. Guided imagery or visualization can induce altered states of consciousness with extremely dangerous consequences. Any altered state of consciousness makes a person vulnerable to demonic influence, even possession.

4. New Age Crystals: Even crystals, especially so-called cherubic crystals can be used to make contact with angels. “A cherubic crystal is one that you have activated in meditation and which has been charged by the Cherubim: ‘Once you have selected the crystal, hold it between the palms of your hands. Ask out loud for the wisdom vibration emanated by the Cherubim to flow through your hands so that the stone will become charged with the Cherubim’s vibration. Prepare the crystal once in this manner and you will never have to do it again.’ Jane Howard as quoted by Rhodes, p.43 also says: ‘she can feel [the crystal] become warm as it is being ‘charged’ and ‘blessed’ by angels.” In contrast, let us listen to an ex-New Ager, now Christian, who has been called to a higher duty:

“One night while in the Ascension Chamber [a special room in his house and meditating with crystals under a pyramid structure], my spirit was roaming some of the farthest reaches of ‘heavenly light’ that I had ever perceived. That night I had an experience that would change my life forever.

“During this experience I was surrounded by a virtually overwhelming luminosity—it was as if I was looking straight into the sun. Waves of bliss radiated through my spirit. I was totally captivated by the power.

“Suddenly another force stepped in. It took me by complete surprise. In the twinkling of an eye, it was like a supernatural hand had taken me behind the scenes of the experience I was having. I was taken behind the outer

covering of the dazzling luminosity and there saw something that left me literally shaking for a full week.

“What I saw was the face of devouring darkness! Behind the glittering outer facade of beauty lay a massively powerful, wildly churning face of absolute hatred and unspeakable abominations—the face of demons filled with the power of Satan.

“For a moment that seemed like an eternity, I realized that I was in major league trouble, for this devouring force was now closing in on me.

“In absolute, stark terror I felt powerless to stop what appeared to be inevitable doom. Horror filled me like a consuming flame.

“Then, miraculously, the same supernatural hand as before delivered from the jaws of this consuming darkness, and hours later, I found myself waking up the next morning in the Ascension Chamber. It felt like I had a peaceful night’s sleep...What I didn’t know at the time was that it was JESUS who had intervened by His greater grace into my life...

“What I knew at the time was that I had made some serious errors in my New Age involvements. I also knew that if those errors were not corrected that I might face the same horrific experience again. And quite possibly the next time I wouldn’t get away.

“An openness to reconsider my New Age involvements arose in me out of desperate need. This openness would help me, over the following months, to find a Way, a Truth and a Life that I had never known before—Jesus Christ.” (Randall N. Baer, *Inside the New Age Nightmare*, Huntington House Inc., 1989, pp.55-56)

5. Astral Travel or Projection: These words also signify Out-of-Body-Experiences. “[I]t involves the body remaining stationary while one’s soul or spirit allegedly leaves the body and travels around to different locations—even (so occultists claim) into outer space. Occultists often speak of a thin gray cord that remains connected between one’s soul and the body.” (Ron Rhodes, *Alien Obsession*, Harvest House Publishers, 1998, p.121)

Others believe, and it makes more sense, that these so-called-out-of-body-experiences are nothing else than demons planting images in the mind/brain of the person, while in an altered state of consciousness, so that he believes his soul had in fact left his body and was roaming the outer reaches of the universe. When one bears in mind that a person is dead when his soul leaves his body it does not rhyme that he could live through an experience like this anyway.

DEMONS MASQUERADING AS ANGELS:

“And no wonder, for even Satan disguises himself as an angel of light. Therefore it is not surprising if his servants also disguise themselves as servants of righteousness...” (2 Cor 11:14)

“...[A]ngels should be ignored because not all angels are good. People need to know this today more than ever before. The Bible reveals the number of evil angels is very large (Rev 12:3-4,7-9); one out of every three may be malicious (Rev 12:4).

“For most people the idea of an evil angel is a self-contradictory, like dry water or cold heat. Aren’t all angels good? Given their numbers and influence, if we don’t take time to consider at least the possibility of evil angels, any of us may suffer for it.” (John Ankerberg & John Weldon, *Encyclopedia of New Age Beliefs*, Harvest House Publishers, 1996, pp.27-28) To find out we need to listen to the message of these modern-day angels.

Satan, being the chief fallen-angel, deceived Eve and this ancient old lie of his (Gen 3:1-5) is still being preached by his subordinates, the demons, or evil spirits. Man is still being led to believe that:

- * He is inherently divine, in fact that he is God and must just aspire to it.
- * He is the Christ; all is part of this cosmic “Christ principle” and he must just learn to realise it. Jesus Christ is not The Christ, he merely aquired the “Christ Principle”.
- * He did not die on the cross, did not pay for the sins of the world and was neither resurrected.
- * Sin does not exist.
- * Hell does not exist.
- * Heaven does not exist.
- * God is all and in all.

These are just a few of their deceptions. Another important aspect being their manifestations as UFO’s and extraterrestrials and the various experiences, like abductions for instance, that go along with it. We do not have the space to go into this now, but suffice it to say that sufficient scientific research in this area exists to prove this. French UFO investigator, Jaques Vallee a non-Christian says: “...there may be a link between UFO and ‘occult’ phenomena.” (Rhodes, *Alien*, p.122)

Lenny Goldberg tells his story: “When it came time to write the book (a specific New Age book revealed to him earlier)...the ‘highest spirit’...entered me to begin dictation. His name was ‘the christ’...Over time...the voices of my invisible ‘friends’ became...threatening that I would stop their communication if I did not obey their increasing demands...The ‘miracles’ that were taking place in my life assured me that I must persevere.” Then Lenny was told that he was ready to take the next step: “I was to join them where they were—in heaven”, I asked. ‘Wouldn’t I have to be dead to go there?’ The spirit answered affirmatively and offered some creative suggestions as to how to kill myself. At this I fell on my knees in tears and pleaded that there might be some other way that I could serve God and remain with my family...then I did something that as a Jew I’d never done before. Somewhere I had heard that Jesus...could help...I found myself praying to this unknown Jesus, ‘...please show me how I can live and serve God...’ Suddenly I heard a different voice telling me...that the spirit I was channeling was Satan...! I felt confused, scared, angry, and dirty. I called for my ‘guardian angel’ who had told me he would always protect me. And he said, ‘Yes, I am Satan. Certainly you knew all along that you were serving me.’” (Dave Hunt, p.389)

SOME ASSURANCE:

“[W]e must acknowledge that even though a Christian cannot be possessed, he can still be oppressed or influenced by demonic powers. But the oppression or influence is external to the Christian, not internal. The demons seek to work from outside the Christian to hinder him; they do not work from within him.” (Rhodes, *Angels*, p.206). Your protection lies in being fully clothed in the Armour of God (Eph 6:11-18).



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