

Entertaining Angels Unaware

(When quoting scriptures, from the Rotherham Emphasized Bible New Testament, I will substitute the Hebrew words *Yahoshua* (yeh-ho-shoo'- ah) for Jesus, *Yahweh* and *Elohim* for God and the LORD and *ruah* for pneuma (spirit).

A popular UFO (unidentified flying objects) movie was, “Close Encounters of the Third Kind.” The story was based upon aliens contacting human beings. The science fiction term, ‘close encounter,’ means contact with alien life in some form, either by seeing an alien aircraft, which is called a ‘first encounter,’ up to observing an alien which is called a ‘close encounter of the third kind.’ ‘Close encounter of the fifth kind’ is communication with benevolent aliens, which will be our topic. This science fiction terminology will be useful for our study of the unseen world. Our contacts, for this study, will be with terrestrial and celestial beings. The majority of us have already entertained messengers (angels) unaware! Do you realize that you have already been approached by angels (messengers) of Yahweh, who have given you messages from Yahweh? As a child of Yahweh, do you realize that you could be called to be an angel (messenger) of Yahweh?

The Greek word from which we get our English word, ‘angel’ is ‘aggelos,’¹ the Hebrew word being, ‘mal’ak.’² They both mean “a messenger, envoy, representative or one who

¹ 32 ἀγγελος *aggelos ang'-el-os*; usages: Matt 1:20, 24; 2:13, 19; 4:6, 11; 11:10; 13:39, 41, 49; 16:27; 18:10; 22:30; 24:31, 36; 25:31, 41; 26:53; 28:2, 5; Mark 1:2, 13; 8:38; 12:25; 13:27, 32; Luke 1:11, 13, 18f, 26, 30, 34f, 38; 2:9f, 13, 15, 21; 4:10; 7:24, 27; 9:26, 52; 12:8f; 15:10; 16:22; 22:43; 24:23; John 1:51; 5:4; 12:29; 20:12; Acts 5:19; 6:15; 7:30, 35, 38, 53; 8:26; 10:3, 7, 22; 11:13; 12:7ff, 15, 23; 23:8f; 27:23; Rom 8:38; 1 Cor 4:9; 6:3; 11:10; 13:1; 2 Cor 11:14; 12:7; Gal 1:8; 3:19; 4:14; Col 2:18; 2 Thess 1:7; 1 Tim 3:16; 5:21; Heb 1:4ff, 13; 2:2, 5, 7, 9, 16; 12:22; 13:2; Jas 2:25; 1 Pet 1:12; 3:22; 2 Pet 2:4, 11; Jude 1:6; Rev 1:1, 20; 2:1, 8, 12, 18; 3:1, 5, 7, 14; 5:2, 11; 7:1f, 11; 8:2ff, 8, 10, 12f; 9:1, 11, 13ff; 10:1, 5, 7ff; 11:15; 12:7, 9; 14:6, 8ff, 15, 17ff; 15:1, 6ff; 16:1, 5; 17:1, 7; 18:1, 21; 19:17; 20:1; 21:9, 12, 17; 22:6, 8, 16

² 04397 מַלְאָךְ *mal'ak mal-awk'*; usages: Gen 16:7, 9ff; 19:1, 15; 21:17; 22:11, 15; 24:7, 40; 28:12; 31:11; 32:1, 3, 6; 48:16; Exod 3:2; 14:19; 23:20, 23; 32:34; 33:2; Num 20:14, 16; 21:21; 22:5, 22ff, 31f, 34f; 24:12; Deut 2:26; Josh 6:17, 25; 7:22; Judg 2:1, 4; 5:23; 6:11f, 20ff, 35; 7:24; 9:31; 11:12ff, 17, 19; 13:3, 6, 9, 13, 15ff, 20f; 1 Sam 6:21; 11:3f, 7, 9; 16:19; 19:11, 14ff, 20f; 23:27; 25:14, 42; 29:9; 2 Sam 2:5; 3:12, 14, 26; 5:11; 11:4, 19, 22f, 25; 12:27; 14:17, 20; 19:27; 24:16f; 1 Kgs 13:18; 19:2, 5, 7; 20:2, 5, 9; 22:13; 2 Kgs 1:2f, 5, 15f; 5:10; 6:32f; 7:15; 9:18; 10:8; 14:8; 16:7; 17:4; 19:9, 14, 23, 35; 1 Chr 14:1; 19:2, 16; 21:12, 15f, 18, 20, 27, 30; 2 Chr 18:12; 32:21; 35:21; 36:15f; Neh 6:3; Job 1:14; 4:18; 33:23; Ps 34:7; 35:5f; 78:49; 91:11; 103:20; 104:4; 148:2; Prov 13:17; 16:14; 17:11; Eccl 5:6; Isa 14:32; 18:2; 30:4; 33:7; 37:9, 14, 36; 42:19; 44:26; 63:9; Jer 27:3; Ezek 17:15; 23:16, 40; 30:9; Hos 12:4; Nah 2:13; Hag 1:13; Zech 1:9, 11ff, 19; 2:3; 3:1, 3, 5f; 4:1, 4f; 5:5, 10; 6:4f; 12:8; Mal 2:7; 3:1

(1068a) מַלְאָךְ (*mal'ak*) messenger, representative.

mal'ak. Messenger, representative, courier, angel. ‘Messenger’ is an inadequate term for the range of tasks carried out by the OT *mal'ak*. These were 1) to carry a message, 2) to perform some other specific commission, and 3) to represent more or less officially the one sending him. There were both human and supernatural *mela'kîm*, the latter including the Angel of Yahweh (i.e. the Angel of the Lord).

Human messengers. The human *mal'ak* could be a message bearer. {#Ge 32:2} The kinds of messages varied. They may have announced good news, {#1Sa 6:21} threats, {#1Ki 19:2} or requests. {#Nu 20:14 Nu 22:5 Jud 7:24} However, the term was applied to courtiers or retainers sent for other purposes. They could spy {#Jos 6:25} or kill. {#1Sa 19:11 2Ki 6:32} David sent ‘messengers’ to summon Bathsheba. {#2Sa 11:4} The *mela'kîm* could serve as diplomatic representatives. {#Jud 11:12-14 2Sa 5:11 1Ki 20:2}

Men, particularly the prophets, could serve as God’s messengers. For the prophets, the term implied official representation of God as well as message bearing. {#2Ch 36:15-16 Hag 1:13} David is called an ‘angel/messenger of God.’ A possible interpretation is that David represented God in that he represented some particular divine attribute: innocence, {#1Sa 29:9} wisdom, {#2Sa 14:17} or hoped-for graciousness. {#2Sa 19:27} In Isaiah, God’s messenger is seen in weakness. {#Isa 42:19}

Supernatural messengers, (This section deals only with the term *mal'ak*, not with the broader area of angelology.) Supernatural messengers represented the same general range of functions as human messengers. Message-bearing might be

is sent.” The context of the scripture determines whether the messenger is a human being (terrestrial) or a celestial, ministering ruah.³ An example of a celestial being delivering a message from Yahweh is presented in Genesis 22:11; “Then called out unto him the messenger [mal’ ak] of Yahweh, out of the heavens, and said, Abraham, Abraham! And he said, Behold me!” An example of a human being, a prophet filled with ruah (spirit), delivering a message from Yahweh is presented in Haggai 1:13; “Then spake Haggai the angel [mal’ ak = messenger] of Yahweh, in the message [mal’akuwth] of Yahweh, to the people saying,—I, am with you, Declareth Yahweh.”

Yahweh and Christ need angels (messengers) to give messages to members of the Body of the Christ and to the unbelievers. One example of a messenger was Nathan the prophet. David had sinned in the case of Bath-sheba and Uriah; “So then Yahweh sent Nathan the prophet unto David...” with a message (2 Sam. 12:1). Nathan the prophet had been anointed with the ruah of Yahweh. Ruah, the invisible force from Yahweh, enables people to receive messages from Yahweh.⁴ Prophets are Yahweh’s angels (messengers) or spokesmen, giving messages to the people. John the Immerser is an example of an angel (messenger) of Yahweh. It was said of John, “This, is he, concerning whom it is written,—Lo! I, send my messenger [aggelos] before thy face, who shall make ready thy way before thee” (Mt. 11:10)!⁵ A priest was also called a messenger of Yahweh; “For, the lips of a priest, should keep knowledge, and, a deliverance, should men seek at his mouth,— for, the angel [mal’ ak = messenger] of Yahweh of hosts, he is” (Mal. 2:7).

Ruah (spirit) has been poured out upon those who believe, enabling us to be messengers for Yahweh and Christ. Cornelius received a message from a celestial being to fetch

central. {#Zec 1:9 Zec 5:5} More often they performed some particular commission such as guarding a human effort like the search for Isaac’s bride {#Ge 24:40} or protecting the Hebrews in the wilderness. {#Ex 23:20} They executed judgment, {#2Sa 24:17 Ps 78:49} delivered, {#Ge 19:12-17} and protected. {#Ps 91:11}

A special function of supernatural messengers/angels is that they, by their very presence, present an aspect of God’s glory (#Ge 28:12-17; cf. angels in #Isa 6,eze 1,re 4:6-8, and the cherubim in the Holy of Holies). In addition they join in active praise to God (#Ps 148:2; cf. #Isa 6:3).

The Messenger/Angel of Yahweh. This figure has the same general range of functions as other messengers. He brought messages, good {#Ge 16:10-13} and threatening. {#Jud 5:23} He performed specific commissions of judgment {#2Ki 19:35 Ps 35:5-6} and deliverance (#Ge 22:11 Ps 34:7 [H 8]). He could also be called the ‘angel of God’ (#Jud 13:6,9, cf. v. 3), though this title is not exclusively his. He alone had the ministry of intercession with God in behalf of men. {#Zec 1:12 Zec 3:1-5}

There has been extensive discussion of his identity. He seems to be God, since those who see him marvel that they have seen God {#Jud 13:21-22} and he speaks for God in the first person. {#Ge 16:10 Ex 3:2,6 Jud 2:1}

³ Ps 104:4 Making His messengers [mal’ak], winds [ruahs], His attendants, a flaming fire; Heb. 1:13-14 But, to which of the messengers [aggelos], hath he said, at any time—Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thy foes thy footstool? Are they not, all, ruahs (spirits), doing public service,—for ministry, sent forth, for the sake of them who are about to inherit salvation?

⁴ Then said Yahweh unto Moses—Gather thou unto me seventy men, from among the elders of Israel, of whom thou knowest that they are elders of the people, and their overseers,—then shalt thou take them unto the tent of meeting, and they shall station themselves there, with thee. Then will I come down, and speak with thee there, and will take of the ruah (spirit) that is upon thee, and put upon them,—and they shall carry, with thee, the burden of the people, and, thou, shalt not carry it, by thyself...Then Yahweh, came down, in the cloud, and spake unto him, and took of the ruah (spirit) that was upon him, and gave unto the seventy men—the elders. And it came to pass, that, when the ruah (spirit) rested upon them, they prophesied, and then did so no more. (Nu. 17:16-17, 26) (Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament)

⁵ “Behold me! sending my messenger [mal’ ak], who will prepare a way before me...Lo! he cometh! saith Yahweh of hosts” (Mal. 3:1);

Simon who is surnamed Peter, who would give them the full message from Yahweh.⁶ Peter received the message to give to Cornelius while he was on a housetop praying. The message did not come to Peter by a celestial being but rather from a vision; the ruah then saying, "...Lo! two men, seeking thee. But rise, go down, and be journeying with them, nothing, doubting; because, I, have sent them" (Acts 10:19-20). The angel (messenger) of Yahweh is now Peter, who will give the message to the house of Cornelius on how to receive salvation and the holy ruah.

Heavenly messengers and earthly messengers are fellow laborers, sons of Elohim. John bowed down to the celestial messenger who was giving him the message but the messenger said to John, "...See *thou do it* not! A fellow-servant, am I, of thee, and of thy brethren the prophets, and of them who keep the words of this scroll..." (Rev. 22:9). We, as fellow servants, as fellow messengers, work together to give Yahweh's messages of love, guidance, reproof and instruction to those to whom we have been sent. Our duty, as was Christ's, is to reconcile people back to Yahweh, one of the ways being giving a message from Yahweh.⁷

Reproof is probably the most important message to receive as well as the most difficult. Proverbs says, "For, a lamp, is the commandment, and, the instruction, a light, and, the way of life, are the reproofs of correction" (Pr. 6:23), but most people say, "...How I hated correction! and, reproof, my heart disdained" (Pr. 5:12). People have a tendency to draw towards pleasure and away from pain, reproof being painful. People are also reluctant to give messages of reproof as well as being its recipient. A messenger of Yahweh said to Hagar, "...Whence hast thou come, and whither wouldst thou go? And she said: From the face of Sarai, my lady, am, I, fleeing. And the messenger of Yahweh said to her, Return unto thy lady,—and humble thyself under her hands" (Gen. 16:8-9). This message from Yahweh from a heavenly messenger for Hagar's benefit was reproof and correction. If she had not have heeded this message, her life would never have been as glorious as it was.

Many of us would love to be approached by a heavenly, shining messenger but what if the message were words of rebuke as are given in the book of Revelations? "And, another, a third messenger, followed them, saying with a loud voice—If anyone doeth homage unto the beast and his image, and receiveth a mark upon his forehead, or upon his hand, he also, shall drink of the wine of the wrath of Yahweh, which is prepared, unmixed, in the cup of his anger; —and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone, before holy messengers and before the Lamb" (Rev. 14:9-10). We, like the heavenly messenger, or a prophet may also be called upon to give a message of rebuke. The prophet Agabus, as an angel

⁶ Acts 10:1-8

⁷ The all things, moreover, are of Yahweh,—who hath reconciled us unto himself, through Christ, and hath given, unto us, the reconciling ministry:—How that, Yahweh, was in Christ, reconciling, a world, unto himself, not reckoning, unto them, their offences,—and hath put, in us, the reconciling discourse. In behalf of Christ, therefore, are we ambassadors,—as if Yahweh were beseeching through us: we entreat, in behalf of Christ,—be reconciled unto Yahweh! (2 Cor. 5:18-20)

(messenger), gave a message to the Apostle Paul saying, "...Thus, saith the holy ruah (spirit), the man whose this girdle is, shall the Jews thus bind in Jerusalem, and deliver up into the hands of Gentiles" (Acts 21:11). If Paul would have heeded this message from Yahweh, he, possibly, would not have been imprisoned for two years. Likewise, Yahweh will send messengers to reprove us when we have taken a wrong road. The messengers being used, will, most likely, be earthly messengers, like you and I. We should not reject reproof from a friend or a stranger but rather ponder and consider whether their message is from Yahweh or Christ. The message will be hard to hear because it is reproof but if it is from Yahweh then it will produce the peaceful fruit of righteousness.⁸

We can and should be angels (aggelos = messengers) of Yahweh. We will be approached by angels (messengers from Yahweh) through out our lives. They will give us instructions, reproof, comfort and anything else Christ desires. These messengers will predominately be people, rather than ministering ruahs; children of Yahweh, in whom Christ abides and through whom Christ will speak. The message from Yahweh or Christ is the important thing and not the vehicle through whom it is transported. We should be just as excited receiving a message from Yahweh through a person as we would be through a ministering ruah. Each day we should expect to receive messages from Christ, to give to those to whom we have been sent; a message of love: of hope, of instruction, of guidance, of deliverance, of comfort, of rebuke and of truth. We should also expect to receive a message from a human messenger who may be a friend or a stranger. We must ask Yahweh to give us a message of reproof when we have erred. This message can come through His Word or through an earthly or heavenly messenger. The important point is that we get the message. These messages will enable us to glorify our Father and complete our mission in life.⁹ We must remember to, "Let brotherly love continue. Of the entertaining of strangers, be not forgetful, for, hereby, unawares, have some entertained, messengers [aggelos]" (Heb. 13:1-2).

⁸ But, no discipline, for the present, indeed, seemeth to be of joy, but of sorrow: afterwards, however—to them who thereby have been trained, it yieldeth peaceful fruit, of righteousness. (Heb. 12:11)

⁹ Jn. 17:4 I, glorified thee on the earth, The work, finishing, which thou hast given me that I should do. Mt 5:16 In like manner, let your light shine before men,—that they may see your good works,—and glorify your Father who is in the heavens.