

Studies on YHWH Part 2 - Jesus in the Old Testament: A Survey of the Angel of the LORD

Shema: Deut. 6:4-6 - "Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. ⁵ You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might.

Shema Yisrael, Yahweh elohenu Yahweh yehad

Hear Israel Yahweh our God, Yahweh is one

We affirmed belief in two things: Monotheism as well as the Trinity. But we asked a series of questions....because how can God be ONE like we see in the Shema in Deut 6 and yet YHWH exist as Three Persons: The Father, The Son, and the Spirit? I know it was a bit like drinking from a fire hose, it's difficult to do an exhaustive study in just 40 minutes or so, so I appreciate your time and attentiveness last week. But as we ended our time, I left you with this question: ***How was Jesus present and at work throughout the Old Testament?***

As we saw, if he's truly divine, the Alpha and Omega, eternal etc....then could it be we see him even before we get to the gospel accounts? Well, today we're going to cover that question as we look at the character of the Angel of the LORD in the Old Testament.

TODAY'S TOPIC

- Why study the Angel of the LORD?
- The Angel of the LORD
 - In Genesis 16:7-13; 22:11-18; 31:13
 - In Exodus 3:1-9; 14:19-20
 - In Numbers 22:22-35
 - In Judges 2:1-5; 6:11-24; 13:1-23
 - In 1 Chronicles 21:14-27
 - In Zechariah 1:7-17; 3:1-4
- Jewish Conception of the Angel of YHWH

- Is the Angel of the LORD Jesus?

Why study the Angel of the LORD?

Before moving on, quickly why is this important to study? If I were to make a guess, not many have likely done a study of this figure, but he's important and this topic is important for a number of reasons:

1. **First**, because as a character in the unfolding narrative of Scripture, he really does just leap off the page. He appears quite a few times throughout the Old Testament and at crucial times, as we'll see today.
2. **Second**, because the authors of Scripture closely identify the Angel of the LORD, sharing the divine name - YHWH. His appearances, many believe, provide early evidence of the Trinity as they show two YHWH figures who may be distinguished (two person) but not separated (yet one).
3. **Third**, the Angel of the LORD shows us what the Son of God was doing prior to the Incarnation. As we saw last week, Jesus is eternal. We see the three persons of the Godhead, the Trinity at work in creation, we see the Father at work throughout every book of the Old Testament and we even talked about how the Holy Spirit was at as he indwelt certain individuals to empower them for obedience. But what was the Son doing between Creation and the Incarnation? Is there something to be discovered about his role in heaven, his ministry on earth prior to coming in the flesh?
4. **Finally**, a study of the Angel of the LORD helps us develop a faithful, biblical doctrine of Jesus. Which in turn helps us counter any false doctrines we might encounter. Throughout history, and even today, there have been people who have taught things about Jesus that were contrary to truth. Such as Jesus being a lesser divine being whom God created. Or that Jesus never really came in the flesh. Or on the flip side, Jesus was never divine at all.

So to start this study I'm going to read a few passages of Scripture, which are all there in your handout. We might not read all of these, just due to time constraints. But I want to read through some of them and highlight a few things that will help us study and understand more about the Angel of the LORD. We'll then reflect on how Jews understood these passages and then we'll conclude by reflecting on Christ.

Hagar and the Angel of the LORD (Genesis 16:7–13)

- **Omniscience:** Tells Hagar the future of her descendants

- **Omnipotence:** Promises to make a specific future occur
- **Recognized as God:** Hagar calls the angel "a God who sees"
- **Correlation with Christ:** See John 8:1-11, woman caught in adultery

When God's promise of a child to the aging Abram and Sarai doesn't happen as quickly as they think it should, Sarai suggests that maybe it's God's will that they have a child via her maid, Hagar. Abram agrees, and Hagar gets pregnant. Afterward, Sarai becomes jealous and mistreats her maid. Then the Angel of the LORD finds Hagar by a spring in the desert, and they have this exchange. Let's read Genesis 16:7-13.

⁷ The angel of the LORD found her by a spring of water in the wilderness, the spring on the way to Shur. ⁸ And he said, "Hagar, servant of Sarai, where have you come from and where are you going?" She said, "I am fleeing from my mistress Sarai." ⁹ The angel of the LORD said to her, "Return to your mistress and submit to her." ¹⁰ The angel of the LORD also said to her, "I will surely multiply your offspring so that they cannot be numbered for multitude." ¹¹ And the angel of the LORD said to her, "Behold, you are pregnant and shall bear a son.

You shall call his name Ishmael, because the LORD has listened to your affliction.

¹² He shall be a wild donkey of a man, his hand against everyone and everyone's hand against him, and he shall dwell over against all his kinsmen."

¹³ So she called the name of the LORD who spoke to her, "You are a God of seeing," for she said, "Truly here I have seen him who looks after me."

Note that this figure promises Hagar a promise based on HIS own authority. He tells her, "*I will multiply your descendants.*" And in verse 12, too, he utters that very prophetic statement - showing a bit of omniscience. And after this what is Hagar's response? She calls him the "God who sees". She recognizes that she's speaking to divinity and is even surprised that she's allowed to live after seeing him. As a testimony to this experience, she named the spring "the well of the living one who sees me." This exchange has a familiar tenderness to it that we recognize from Jesus' comforting presence in the gospels. Like the woman caught in adultery ([John 8:1-11](#)),

Hagar has been misused, and the angel comes alongside her in a sympathetic and understanding way.

Abraham and the Angel of the LORD (Genesis 22:11–18)

- **Identifies as God:** The angel links himself as the God who commanded Abraham's sacrifice.

The next time we see the angel, Abraham and Isaac are on their way up Mount Moriah to make a sacrifice. Isaac doesn't know that *he* is going to be the sacrifice. God asked Abraham to sacrifice his son, and Abraham is heading up the mountain to show his obedience. Let's read verses 11-18 from Genesis 22:

11 But the angel of the LORD called to him from heaven and said, "Abraham, Abraham!" And he said, "Here I am." **12** He said, "Do not lay your hand on the boy or do anything to him, for now I know that you fear God, seeing you have not withheld your son, your only son, from me." **13** And Abraham lifted up his eyes and looked, and behold, behind him was a ram, caught in a thicket by his horns. And Abraham went and took the ram and offered it up as a burnt offering instead of his son. **14** So Abraham called the name of that place, "The LORD will provide"; as it is said to this day, "On the mount of the LORD it shall be provided." **15** And the angel of the LORD called to Abraham a second time from heaven **16** and said, "By myself I have sworn, declares the LORD, because you have done this and have not withheld your son, your only son, **17** I will surely bless you, and I will surely multiply your offspring as the stars of heaven and as the sand that is on the seashore. And your offspring shall possess the gate of his enemies, **18** and in your offspring shall all the nations of the earth be blessed, because you have obeyed my voice."

Remember, **God** is the one that asked Abraham to sacrifice Isaac. When the angel stops him, he acknowledges Abraham's compliance by referring to God in the first person: "you have not withheld your son, your only son, from **Me**."

Jacob and the Angel of the LORD (Genesis 31:11-13)

- **Identifies as God:** The angel describes himself as the God who previously interacted with Jacob.

So a bit of context before we read these next verses, in Genesis 28....Abraham's grandson, Jacob, was traveling and stopped for an evening to rest. While he was

sleeping, he had his famous dream about the ladder. During this dream, God spoke to Jacob and told him that the land he was lying on would be given to his descendants. He goes on to promise that his ancestors would be abundant, and that they would be a blessing to the rest of the world. When Jacob awoke the next morning, he put up a pillar of remembrance and called the place Bethel, meaning “the house of God.”

Many years later, Jacob has married the two daughters of an unscrupulous man named Laban. After suffering much at Laban’s hand, Jacob finds himself being cheated out of livestock. In another vision, the angel of God appears to Jacob to help remedy the situation. In the midst of that conversation, the angel says something very curious. Let’s read this from Genesis 31:11-13,

11 Then the angel of God said to me in the dream, ‘Jacob,’ and I said, ‘Here I am!’ **12** And he said, ‘Lift up your eyes and see, all the goats that mate with the flock are striped, spotted, and mottled, for I have seen all that Laban is doing to you. **13** I am the God of Bethel, where you anointed a pillar and made a vow to me. Now arise, go out from this land and return to the land of your kindred.’”

So note here that the angel identifies himself as God—the very God that spoke to Jacob all those years ago, who he memorialized with an altar.

Moses and the Angel of the LORD (Exodus 3:1-6)

- **Identifies as God:** If we weren’t told at the beginning this was an angel, we wouldn’t even know it. The rest of the narrative shows Moses speaking to God.
- **Recognized as God:** Moses turns his face away because he is afraid to look upon God (verse 6).
- **Demands worship:** The angel tells Moses to remove his shoes because the ground in the angel’s presence is holy.
- **Omniscience:** The angel tells Moses he has heard the cries of the afflicted in Egypt (verse 7).
- **Omnipotence:** The angel’s message is that he will use Moses to deliver his people. Throughout the exchange, the angel promises to display his power to Egypt.
- **Omnipresence:** When Moses expresses doubt, the angel promises to be with him (verse 12).

- **Immutability:** When the angel reveals the name of God as "I AM," it signifies God's timeless and unchangeable nature.
- **Correlation with Christ:** Here we see the Angel of the LORD demonstrating a characteristic we recognize from Jesus' ministry. He is empowering Moses to release his people from bondage ([Luke 4:16–21](#)).

So here...after killing an Egyptian for mistreating Jewish slaves, Moses fled and took up a whole new life as a shepherd and husband. One day while pasturing his father-in-law's flock, he had a profound experience with the Angel of the LORD. Let's just read verses 1-6 of Exodus 3...

¹ Now Moses was keeping the flock of his father-in-law, Jethro, the priest of Midian, and he led his flock to the west side of the wilderness and came to Horeb, the mountain of God. ² And the angel of the LORD appeared to him in a flame of fire out of the midst of a bush. He looked, and behold, the bush was burning, yet it was not consumed. ³ And Moses said, "I will turn aside to see this great sight, why the bush is not burned." ⁴ When the LORD saw that he turned aside to see, God called to him out of the bush, "Moses, Moses!" And he said, "Here I am." ⁵ Then he said, "Do not come near; take your sandals off your feet, for the place on which you are standing is holy ground." ⁶ And 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 at God.

If you're not paying attention, it's easy to miss the fact that it's the Angel of the LORD that appears to Moses in the bush. After all, it only mentions the word angel once. But throughout the rest of the exchange, we're told that Moses is speaking to God. In fact, it's during this exchange that God's name is revealed, you may remember we looked at this last week:

Then Moses said to God, "Behold, I am going to the sons of Israel, and I will say to them, 'The God of your fathers has sent me to you.' Now they may say to me, 'What is His name?' What shall I say to them?" God said to Moses, "I AM WHO I AM"; and He said, "Thus you shall say to the sons of Israel, 'I AM has sent me to you'" ([Exodus 3:13–14](#)).

SLIDE 9 - The Angel of the LORD as protector (Exodus 14:19–20) -

- **Identified as God:** At one moment the guiding phenomenon is linked to God, and later identified as the Angel of the LORD.

Before we read Exodus 14, a bit of context....the Israelites might have escaped Egypt, but they're still incredibly vulnerable. In Exodus 13, we're told:

The Lord was going before them in a pillar of cloud by day to lead them on the way, and in a pillar of fire by night to give them light, that they might travel by day and by night. He did not take away the pillar of cloud by day, nor the pillar of fire by night, from before the people (Exodus 13:21–22).

As Pharaoh changes his mind and comes after the Israelites, we see God's strategy shift from leading Israel to standing guard between Egypt's army and Israel. Only this time, the identity of the protector changes:

19 Then the angel of God who was going before the host of Israel moved and went behind them, and the pillar of cloud moved from before them and stood behind them, **20** coming between the host of Egypt and the host of Israel. And there was the cloud and the darkness. And it lit up the night without one coming near the other all night.

The pillars of cloud and fire that had been leading the Israelites were linked to the Lord, but then it's identified with the Angel of the LORD. This is another clear example where the two identities are used interchangeably.

The Angel of the LORD and Balaam (Numbers 22:22–35)

- **Distinct from God:** Here we see both God and the Angel of the LORD as separate agents in the same story.
- **Identified as God:** The angel identifies Balaam's sin as a personal affront.
- **Sovereignty:** The angel talks about potentially taking Balaam's life, but it doesn't appear to be an order. The comment is delivered in a way that indicates the angel's own authority.

So in Numbers 22 we see that Balaam was an unfaithful prophet who used God's power to make money as a soothsayer to Balak, the king of Moab. To Balaam's credit, where Balak wanted him to curse the Israelites, Balaam continually pronounced God's words of blessing over them. At one point in his story, on a trip to visit Balak, the

Angel of the LORD intervenes by blocking his way, blocking his travel. So here, the donkey is aware of the angel's presence as it sees the angel in the road, where apparently Balaam doesn't. So unable to get around the divine obstacle, the donkey lays down. And in his anger to get the donkey to move, Balaam begins hitting the donkey. God opens the mouth of the donkey and immediately the frustrated animal begins chewing out the prophet. Also, God immediately opens Balaam's eyes so he can see what's going on, let's read just verses 31-33 from Numbers 22.....

31 Then the LORD opened the eyes of Balaam, and he saw the angel of the LORD standing in the way, with his drawn sword in his hand. And he bowed down and fell on his face. **32** And the angel of the LORD said to him, "Why have you struck your donkey these three times? Behold, I have come out to oppose you because your way is perverse before me. **33** The donkey saw me and turned aside before me these three times. If she had not turned aside from me, surely just now I would have killed you and let her live."

What's notable here is that the angel takes Balaam's disobedience personally. He doesn't merely speak on God's behalf; he says, "*your way was contrary to me*" (verse 32). To add an extra layer of autonomy and authority to the discussion, the angel says that he planned to kill the prophet if things had gone another way.

While we often see the Angel of the LORD speaking as God—and being recognized as such, we can clearly see a distinction being made between God and the Angel of the LORD here.

The Angel of the LORD confronts Israel (Judges 2:1–5)

- **Identifies as God:** Throughout this passage, the angel takes credit for things the entire biblical witness associates with God.

So Judges is a book that chronicles Israel's tendency toward rebellion. Right out of the gate, the Angel of the LORD rebukes the wayward nation:

1 Now the angel of the LORD went up from Gilgal to Bochim. And he said, "I brought you up from Egypt and brought you into the land that I swore to give to your fathers. I said, 'I will never break my covenant with you, **2** and you shall make no covenant with the inhabitants of this land; you shall break down their altars.' But you have not

obeyed my voice. What is this you have done? ³ So now I say, I will not drive them out before you, but they shall become thorns in your sides, and their gods shall be a snare to you." ⁴ As soon as the angel of the LORD spoke these words to all the people of Israel, the people lifted up their voices and wept. ⁵ And they called the name of that place Bochim. And they sacrificed there to the LORD.

Notice the Angel of the LORD points to himself as the one who delivered Israel from the Egyptians, is the keeper of Israel's covenant, and requires obedience. As a consequence of their insubordination, the angel informs the Hebrew nation that he's withdrawing his protection from them.

The Angel of the LORD commissions Gideon (Judges 6:11-24)

- **Sovereignty:** The angel demonstrates power over creation
- **Identified as God:** The narrator interchangeably uses "YHWH, angel of YHWH and God". Gideon also recognizes the figure before him is YHWH God.
- **Accepts worship:** Gideon builds an altar of worship to God where the angel visited him.

Just a few chapters later, in Judges 6, the angel of the LORD returns. This time to call out Gideon and commission him to carry out judgment against the Midianites. In doing so, Gideon reveals he doesn't quite trust the figure standing before him so he asks the angel to wait there until he returns....so Gideon goes and brings back to the waiting angel of the LORD a gift of some various food...which the angel orders him to place on a rock. Let's pick it up there, in verse 21 of Judges 6....

²¹ Then the angel of the LORD reached out the tip of the staff that was in his hand and touched the meat and the unleavened cakes. And fire sprang up from the rock and consumed the meat and the unleavened cakes. And the angel of the LORD vanished from his sight. ²² Then Gideon perceived that he was the angel of the LORD. And Gideon said, "Alas, O LORD God! For now I have seen the angel of the LORD face to face." ²³ But the LORD said to him, "Peace be to you. Do not fear; you shall not die." ²⁴ Then Gideon built an altar there to the LORD and called it, The LORD Is Peace. To this day it still stands at Ophrah, which belongs to the Abiezrites.

Note that the angel of Yahweh, Yahweh, and God are all interchanged in this story. This is especially noticeable in this final scene where the angel of Yahweh departs

(6:21), but then in 6:23, Yahweh is apparently still standing there talking to Gideon!

The Angel of the LORD commissions Samson (Judges 13)

- **Sovereignty:** The angel informs Manoah and his wife how he plans to use Samson.
- **Identified as God:** Manoah recognizes that they have seen God (verse 22).
- **Accepts worship:** When Manoah offers to sacrifice a goat to the angel, the angel tells him to sacrifice it to the Lord. But the author of Judges tells us that the angel only said that because Manoah didn't understand who he was talking to (verses 15–16). When it's all over and Manoah is worried about being killed for seeing God, his wife tells him "If the Lord had desired to kill us, He would not have accepted a burnt offering and a grain offering from our hands . . ." (verse 23).
- **Correlation with Christ:** The Angel of the LORD refuses to give Manoah his name because it is wonderful (or incomprehensible), which seems to hint to his identity as Wonderful, Counselor, and Mighty God ([Isaiah 9:6](#)).

Before the mighty Samson was born, the Angel of the LORD came to Manoah and his wife to inform them that their son would deliver Israel from the Philistines. He first appeared to Manoah's wife, and she described him to her husband as looking like a man, but having the appearance of an (awesome) angel of God ([Judges 13:6](#)).

So despite the fact that this messenger doesn't have wings, there is something in the angel's appearance and authority that indicates that he's more than human. After an intense experience (I'd encourage you to read all of Judges 13), Manoah tells his wife, "[We will surely die, for we have seen God](#)" (verse 22).

At one point during their exchange, Manoah asked the angel for his name. The angel replied, "Why do you ask my name, seeing it is wonderful?" The word the angel used for wonderful is closely related to the word Isaiah uses to describe the coming Messiah, Isaiah 9:6 says,

*[For a child will be born to us, a son will be given to us;
And His name will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God,
Eternal Father, Prince of Peace](#)*

The Angel of the LORD and David's disobedience (1 Chronicles 21)

- **Correlation with Christ:** The Angel of the LORD executes judgment over Jerusalem—a role associated with Jesus.

We don't have time to read all of this but 1 Chronicles 21 tells us that Satan influenced David to number Israel. It seems that David wanted to celebrate in the strength of his army. In his anger, the Lord allows David to choose from three equally terrifying judgments: three years of famine, three months of being overrun by enemies, or three days of pestilence and destruction in Israel. David chooses the latter ([1 Chronicles 21:11–13](#)).

After 70,000 Israelite males fell to illness, God sent the Angel of the LORD to destroy Jerusalem, but at the last moment called off the destruction (verse 15). [David](#) in seeing the Angel of the LORD with his sword drawn over Jerusalem, repented and begged for God to take his wrath out on David's household and not on Israel.

The Angel of the LORD commanded David to build an altar on the threshing floor of a Jebusite named Ornan. So David negotiated a fair price for the site, built the altar, and offered burnt offerings and peace offerings. When he had done this, God commanded the Angel of the LORD to sheath his sword (verses 18–27).

In this story, we see the Angel of the LORD executing God's judgment. This is in keeping with some of the language and imagery of the New Testament regarding Jesus. In Revelation 19, we see Jesus returning as the earth's judge. And Jesus himself says that the Father doesn't judge anyone, but that judgment belongs to the Son ([John 5:22](#)).

The Angel of the LORD and Zechariah (Zechariah 1:7-17, 3:1-4)

- **Correlation with Christ:** Zechariah portrays the Angel of the LORD as a mediator for Israel, an opponent of Satan, and a purifier of the righteous. These are all ministries associated with Jesus in the New Testament.

Zechariah's prophecies give us the clearest picture of the Angel of the LORD operating in a way we normally associate with Jesus.

The book begins by spelling out God's frustration with Israel. Zechariah experiences a vision of the Angel of the LORD, and at one point, the angel speaks to heaven, then in

verse 12 - ¹² Then the angel of the LORD said, 'O LORD of hosts, how long will you have no mercy on Jerusalem and the cities of Judah, against which you have been angry these seventy years?'

Here we see the Angel of the LORD operating as an intermediary between God and his rebellious people. This is the role that Jesus plays. As Paul tells Timothy, "*For there is one God, and one mediator also between God and men, the man Christ Jesus*" (1 Timothy 2:5).

In Zechariah's third chapter, we see this scene:

¹ Then he showed me Joshua the high priest standing before the angel of the Lord, and Satan standing at his right hand to accuse him. ² And the Lord said to Satan, "The Lord rebuke you, O Satan! The Lord who has chosen Jerusalem rebuke you! Is not this a brand plucked from the fire?" ³ Now Joshua was standing before the angel, clothed with filthy garments. ⁴ And the angel said to those who were standing before him, "Remove the filthy garments from him." And to him he said, "Behold, I have taken your iniquity away from you, and I will clothe you with pure vestments." ⁵ And I said, "Let them put a clean turban on his head." So they put a clean turban on his head and clothed him with garments. And the angel of the Lord was standing by. ⁶ And the angel of the Lord solemnly assured Joshua, ⁷ "Thus says the Lord of hosts: If you will walk in my ways and keep my charge, then you shall rule my house and have charge of my courts, and I will give you the right of access among those who are standing here. ⁸ Hear now, O Joshua the high priest, you and your friends who sit before you, for they are men who are a sign: behold, I will bring my servant the Branch. ⁹ For behold, on the stone that I have set before Joshua, on a single stone with seven eyes, I will engrave its inscription, declares the Lord of hosts, and I will remove the iniquity of this land in a single day. ¹⁰ In that day, declares the Lord of hosts, every one of you will invite his neighbor to come under his vine and under his fig tree."

If there is a more perfect image of Christ's ministry in the Old Testament, I don't know what it is. Here we see the Angel of the LORD standing between Satan's accusations and Joshua the high priest. Then the angel takes away Joshua's iniquity, which is symbolized by the filthy garments.

The prophet Isaiah uses the same metaphor when he says, *"For all of us have become like one who is unclean, And all our righteous deeds are like a filthy garment"* (Isaiah 64:6a). It's Jesus whose righteousness replaces our inequity, and this is expressed with a similar metaphor in Revelation: *He who overcomes will thus be clothed in white garments; and I will not erase his name from the book of life, and I will confess his name before My Father and before His angels* (Revelation 3:5).

So Is the Angel of the LORD Jesus? Well, before we answer that question, lets look at how the Jews understood these passages...

Jewish Conception of the Angel of YHWH

- Certain passages (like these and others) in the OT sounded to the ear like the God of Israel was "two" - an invisible YHWH and a visible YHWH (see Amos 4:11, Gen. 22:1-2, 11-12, Daniel 7:9ff., Exodus 23:20-23, and Exodus 15:3)
- Rabbis took note of this and referred to the idea as the "Two Powers" in heaven.
- This belief was acceptable in Judaism until around 100 AD, when it was declared a heresy.
- One reason was religious response to Christianity

We've already seen a few passages this morning, but there are others too, such as Amos 4:11 where YHWH speaks of himself, GOD, in the third person. All these sorts of passages in Scripture led Jews to this understanding of "Two Powers" in heaven. Philo, a Jewish teacher and philosopher writes,

Philo Quote

"Nothing mortal can be made in the likeness of the Most High One and Father of the universe, but [only] in that of the Second God, who is his Logos." - Philo, 20 BC - 50 AD, *Questions and Answers on Genesis*

Regarding Philo, Jew and religious historian Daniel Boyarin, writes: **"Philo, writing in first-century CE Alexandria for an audience of Jews devoted to the Bible, uses the idea of the Logos as if it were a commonplace. His writings make apparent that at least for some pre-Christian Judaism, there was nothing strange about a doctrine of a manifestation of God, even as a "second God"; the Logos did not conflict with Philo's idea of monotheism...** Other versions of Logos theology, namely notions of the second god as personified Word or Wisdom of God, were present among Aramaic-, Hebrew-, and Syriac-speaking Jews as well. Hints of this

idea appear in Jewish texts that are part of the Bible such as Proverbs 8.22–31, Job 28.12–28." – Daniel Boyarin, LOGOS, A Jewish Word: John's Prologue as Midrash

Another rabbinical scholar, Alan Segal, produced what is still the major work on the idea of Two Powers in Heaven in Jewish thought. He lays out the case that an ancient Israelite knew two Yahwehs—one invisible, a spirit, the other visible, often in human form. The two Yahwehs at times appear together in the text, at times being distinguished, at other times not. There were many Jews who understood this portrayal and its rationale and they believed there was no sense of a violation of monotheism since either figure was indeed Yahweh.

So what happened? Why don't we hear about this thinking among Jews today? Unfortunately for them, the Two Powers idea was deemed heretical in Jewish theology around the 2nd century a.d. Why might that be? Well you and I know why...because of Jesus Christ. In fact, early Christian apologists - who were Jewish by the way - were using this idea to defend Christ's divinity.

Is the Angel of the LORD Jesus?

- He is identified as God.
- He is distinct from God.
- He fulfills many of the roles and ministries we recognize in Jesus.

As for Jesus and the Angel of the LORD. Are the two linked? Is this indeed Christ? Well, I hope through today's survey of the Scriptures you see that this was indeed a pre-incarnate Christ.

He is willing to receive worship in Genesis 22:12, this is unlike every other "angelic" encounter in scripture. Angels in general are VERY clear to those they speak with that they are NOT to be worshipped (Rev. 22:8-9). Yet the Angel of the LORD is okay with it. Also, in Exodus 3:14 he identifies as "I AM"

Yet the Angel of the LORD is his own person - we saw that in Numbers 22:22, 1 Chronicles 21, and Zechariah 1.

And he does the work of Christ, like we saw in Genesis 16, Exodus 3 and Zechariah 3.

Church Father Quotes

Now the Word of God is His Son, as we have before said. And He is called Angel and Apostle; for He declares whatever we ought to know, and is sent forth to declare whatever is revealed....From the writings of Moses also this will be manifest; for thus it is written in them, *And the Angel of God spoke to Moses, in a flame of fire out of the*

bush, and said, I am that I am, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, the God of Jacob, the God of your fathers; go down into Egypt, and bring forth My people (Exodus 3:6). - Justin Martyr, First Apology, Chapter 63

"... even so here, the Scripture, in announcing that the Angel of the Lord appeared to Moses, and in afterwards declaring him to be Lord and God, speaks of the same One, whom it declares by the many testimonies already quoted to be minister to God, who is above the world, above whom there is no other [God]." - Justin Martyr, Dialog with Trypho, Chapter 60

So very early we see the Christian fathers pick up on this idea themselves, and used it to defend their faith in Jesus as God.