The Angel of the Lord – part two

1. Two weeks ago, in a different kind of Advent sermon, we looked at Jesus in the Old Testament. If you missed that sermon, please go back and look for it. It was on the 22nd and was titled "Emmanuel – God with us." Today, we pick up and take a lot at the rest of the scriptures that refer to an Angel that acts like a lot more than just an angel – THE Angel of the Lord.

2. Two weeks ago, we went over the first appearance of this Angel. That was to Hagar, a woman of no standing, power or place. This Angel promised her a future, gave her meaning, and assured her that God saw her. (Genesis16)

3. Then we see the three angels approaching Abraham in Genesis 18 and one of them speaks with authority concerning what he is about to do.

4. Then, in Genesis 22, there is the story of the sacrifice of Isaac that was stopped by this Angel. And we looked forward to see what would happen to Jesus on that very mountain one day.

5. Then we briefly mentioned the Angel of the Lord in Exodus chapters 1-3. Promises have been made and the Angel of the Lord shows up to make sure the promises will be fulfilled. The Angel of the Lord speaks to Moses out of the fiery bush, gives him orders, answers his questions, and says his name: I Am. When Moses speaks of this encounter, he says he has spoken to God. The writer of this story also refers to this Angel as God.

6. Jump forward centuries later and we find this Angel again in Numbers 22. In short, God had promised Israel that He would bless them and not curse them. Balaam was a prophet who took money to curse Israel instead. God stops him on the road in the form of an Angel. Listen to how this story is told in Numbers 22:31-35. The angel speaks as one with authority who has been opposed and opposes in return.

7. That brings us to Judges 2:1-5. Look at this phrasing! Now, remember that Paul said in I Cor. 10 that Jesus Christ was with the

Israelites in the desert. Exodus 13:21 says that the Angel of the Lord was the pillar of cloud and fire that guided them. See it?

8. In Judges 6:11-12, The Angel of the Lord appears to Gideon and makes him a mighty warrior. Then comes Judges 13-16 where the Angel of the Lord engages with the parents of Samson…before they were parents. He appears first to the wife of Manoah. She tells her husband that she has seen a man of God who looked like an angel, awesome in power, who told her that she is going to have a baby.

9. Manoah prays to Yahweh for help in raising a promised child. The Angel of the Lord appeared to Manoah's wife again the next day. She ran to get her husband. During their discussion, Manoah asks the angel's name and he says "Why? It is too awesome for you." We miss the point here but names were very important and this is just the angel saying "you can't handle it so I'm not telling you."

10. Then look at this: Judges 13:20-23. They understood the Angel of the Lord to be God.

11. The Angel of the Lord appears in the punishment of Israel when they numbered their people at the wrong time for the wrong reason. He is there as the punishment is cut short and the angel of death is told to stop. Then, he appears three times in the story of Elijah. He is the Angel that gave Elijah food and drink after the battle on Mount Carmel. Second, he sends Elijah to deliver a death sentence to King Ahazaiah. Third, when soldiers of the king come to arrest Elijah, it is the Angel of the Lord who sends down fire to kill them.

12. In 2nd Kings 19:32-35, God tells Hezekiah that He will defend Jerusalem. It is the Angel of the Lord who goes down and puts to death 185,000 Assyrian soldiers that night.

13. Look at Psalm 34:7. 35:5,6. This Angel of the Lord is no pushover and neither is Jesus. We rely on the grace and mercy of Jesus but let's not forget that he sometimes shows up as a warrior (re Revelation).

14. Last, in Zechariah chapters 3 and 12, the Angel of the Lord promises that HE will restore them and HE will promise them

salvation. Then…the curtain comes down and we do not hear from the Angel of the Lord until angels appear over Bethlehem and fill the sky with the good news of the birth of Immanuel, God with us.

John 1:1-4
John 14:1-9