



Sunday, December 17, 2017
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Gabriel Live! 1st Person Narrative

It is difficult to come to a clear understanding of angels based on the available biblical data. On one hand, they are almost ubiquitous in the Old Testament, making appearances at key times in the lives of Abraham (Gen. 18, 22), Jacob (Gen. 28, 32), Moses (Ex. 3:2), the Israelites (Ex. 14:19), Gideon (Judg. 6), Isaiah, Daniel, Zechariah, and many others. Yet at the same time, there is a lot of mystery surrounding them.

The word English word “angel” actually comes from a Greek word meaning “messenger.” Often, that is the precise role that they serve in Scripture—they bring a message of either salvation or judgment to human beings. Sometimes they appear as humans themselves, but the nature of their message or their actions reveal that they are, in fact, sent specially by God to perform certain tasks that humans are incapable of doing themselves (for example, see Gen. 18-19).

The most prominent appearance of an angel described in the Bible is the appearance of Gabriel to Mary to announce that she would give birth to Jesus. Gabriel is one of only two angels who are mentioned by name in the Bible (the other being Michael in Dan. 10:13, Jude 9, Rev. 12:7). His name means “God is a mighty warrior.” Like other names in the Bible, his name has significance because the nature of his message is that God is a mighty warrior who fights on behalf of His people (see Mary’s reflection on Gabriel’s message in Luke 1:46-55).

In any event, the main role that they play is to convey a direct message from the Lord. Thankfully, we have a full and complete revelation from God in the Bible. That contains the whole message that we need for life and godliness (2 Pet. 1:3) and is just as certain as any supernatural appearance might be (2 Pet. 1:21). So, let us be confident in the message we have and be thankful to God for the angels who brought it to us so long ago...

Discuss

- 1) Angels are portrayed in popular culture in movies like *It's a Wonderful Life* and *Angels in the Outfield* and many others. How would you describe the way angels are portrayed in popular culture?

- 2) Read the following passages and for each one, consider the question: what role do angels play in the Bible?
 - a. Psalm 103:20-22
 - b. Daniel 9:21-23
 - c. Luke 15:10
 - d. 2 Corinthians 11:14-15
 - e. 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18
 - f. 2 Thessalonians 1:7-10
 - g. Revelation 12:7-12

- 3) Read Luke 1:26-38. How does Gabriel describe Jesus? When you think about it, what is most striking to you about his description?

- 4) When we pray the way Jesus commanded us to, we pray, "let Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven" (Matt. 6:10). In heaven, right now, angels are the ones who do the will of God. How would you describe the way they carry out the will of God?

- 5) What obstacles lie between where you are right now in your relationship to God and doing His will the way it is done in heaven?