

## The Mysterious Angel Identified by Omar Henry

**NOTE:** (All Scripture references are in the New King James Version, **for the purpose of clarity**. KJV is used next to a verse to indicate that the verse is in the King James Version of the Bible.)

In our study today, we are going to look at AN INTERESTING PASSAGE found in the Old Testament. But before we do so, we need to look at the historical context of the passage in question, namely, Exodus 23:20-23.

### Historical Context

Israel had not too long ago **come up out of the land of Egypt** “...by trials, by signs, by wonders, by war, by a mighty hand and an outstretched arm, and by great terrors” (Deuteronomy 4:34). In fact, Israel had come out of Egypt on the 15<sup>th</sup> day of Abib/Nisan (compare Exodus 12:17; 23:15 with Leviticus 23:6). Two months later, they reached the Wilderness of Sinai (Exodus 19:1), where God, three days later (see Exodus 19:11, 15), spoke the Ten Commandments from Mount Sinai **before all the people**. After this solemn event, **Moses went up into the mountain where God was**, and he received statutes and judgements “...that [the Israelites] might **observe them in the land** which [they were crossing] over to possess” (Deuteronomy 4:14). **It was TOWARD THE END of this discourse** that God stated the words which we find in Exodus 23:20-23:

Exodus 23:20-23—**Behold, I send an Angel BEFORE YOU to KEEP YOU IN THE WAY and TO BRING YOU INTO THE PLACE** which I have prepared. Beware of Him and **obey His voice**; do not provoke Him, for He will not pardon your transgressions; **for My name is in Him**. But if you **indeed obey His voice and do all that I speak**, then I will be an enemy to your enemies and an adversary to your adversaries. **For My Angel will go before you** and bring you in to **the Amorites** and **the Hittites** and **the Perizzites** and **the Canaanites** and **the Hivites** and **the Jebusites**; and I will cut them off.

**NOTE:** This angel must be supernatural, as it was to continue the trend of supernatural signs and wonders, that had followed Israel up to this point. In other words, for this angel to fit in with the supernatural history of Israel, it must also do something supernatural, and this was to be accomplished by bringing God's people into the land, which, according to Scripture, would be considered a SUPERNATURAL EVENT at the time when it would occur (Deuteronomy 4:32-38). A simple reading of this passage reveals that this is no ordinary angel. But you may ask, “If this **IS NOT** an ordinary angel, **then who could it be?**” Before we can identify this angel **we must understand how this word ‘angel’** (Hebrew: Mal'âk) is used. Now, it is very important that we REMOVE ALL PRECONCEIVED NOTIONS, as this will greatly affect our interpretation of the verses in Exodus 23. We will now consult the Bible to see how it uses this term:

### How is the word “mal'âk” used in the Old Testament?

1 Samuel 25:5, 14, 15—**David SENT ten young MEN**; and David said to **the young men**, Go up to Carmel, go to Nabal, and **GREET HIM in my name**...Now one of the young men told Abigail, Nabal's wife, saying, “Look, **David SENT messengers [mal'âk] from the wilderness TO GREET our master; and he reviled them**. **BUT THE MEN [the messengers of verse 14] were very good to us, and we were not hurt, nor did we miss anything as long as we accompanied them, when we were in the fields.**”

Genesis 32:3—**Then Jacob sent messengers [mal'âk] before him to Esau his brother** in the land of Seir, the country of Edom.

Isaiah 33:7—Surely **their valiant ones** shall cry outside, **The ambassadors [mal'âk] of peace shall weep bitterly.**

Genesis 28:12—Then he dreamed, and behold, **a ladder was set up on the earth,** and its top reached to heaven; and **there the angels [mal'âk] of God were ascending and descending on it.**

Psalms 91:11—For He shall give **His angels [mal'âk] charge over you, To keep you in all your ways.**

Exodus 3:2, 4, 6—And **the Angel [mal'âk] of the LORD appeared to him [Moses] in a flame of fire from the MIDST OF A BUSH.** So he looked, and behold, **the bush was burning with fire,** but the bush was not consumed... **So when the LORD saw** that he turned aside to look, **GOD CALLED to him from THE MIDST OF THE BUSH** and said, “Moses, Moses!” And he said, “Here I am.”...Moreover 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 UPON GOD.**

**NOTE:** As we can see, **“mal'âk” DOES NOT ALWAYS refer to heavenly angels,** as we know them today (see for example: Psalms 104:4; 148:2; Matthew 24:31; 26:53; Acts 1:9-11). Rather, **“mal'âk” can refer to human beings as well as to God Himself. Many sincere Christians seem to have a hard time believing that God is an Angel (and that’s understandable.)** However, **it is VERY CLEAR from Exodus 3 that the Angel of the LORD appeared IN A FLAME OF FIRE FROM THE MIDST OF A BUSH; BUT THEN IT STATES that it was GOD who spoke to Moses out of THE BURNING BUSH! To be more specific, this angel was actually Jesus Christ (who is God: John 1:1-3; Hebrews 1:8-10) who appeared as the messenger (or mal'âk or angel) of the covenant, that was made with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob** (compare Exodus 3:14 with John 8:58, and Exodus 14:19 with Exodus 14:24).

**(SIDE NOTE: No, I DO NOT BELIEVE that God is a created being, that’s blasphemy. GOD IS ETERNAL (read Genesis 21:33; Deuteronomy 33:27; Psalm 90:2; Isaiah 40:28; 1 Timothy 1:17). My point is that God, or Jesus, is referred to as a mal'âk, or a messenger, not some created god or being.)**

The following quotes will show that **Jesus can be referred to as a “mal'âk”** (angel or messenger):

**“In verse 4 the angel is called both ‘Jehovah’ and ‘Elohim,’ whence it is concluded, with reason, that it was THE SECOND PERSON OF THE TRINITY [Jesus Christ] who appeared to Moses.”—Ellicott, C., n.d. A Bible Commentary for English Readers, Vol.1. London, Paris, New York & Melbourne: Cassell and Company, Limited, p.198.**

**“Leading his flocks one day near Horeb, ‘the mountain of God,’ Moses saw a bush in flames, branches, foliage, and trunk, all burning, yet seeming not to be consumed. He drew near to view the wonderful sight, when a voice from out of the flame called him by name. With trembling lips he answered, “Here am I.” He was warned not to approach irreverently: ‘Put off thy shoes from off thy feet; for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground.... I am the God of thy father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.’ It was He [God] who, as the Angel of the covenant, had revealed Himself to the fathers in ages past. ‘And Moses hid his face; for he was afraid to look upon God.’”—Ellen G. White, Patriarchs and Prophets, p.251**

We now have **three options to choose from** when it comes to **identifying the angel** found in Exodus 23:20-23:

1. An angelic being
2. A human being
3. Jesus Christ

**What are some of the functions that a “mal'âk” carries out?**

2 Chronicles 36:15-16—And the **LORD God of their fathers SENT WARNINGS TO THEM by His messengers [mal'âk]**, rising up early and sending them, **because He had compassion on His people and on His dwelling place**. But **they mocked the messengers [mal'âk] of God, despised His words,** and **scoffed at His prophets, UNTIL the wrath of the LORD arose against His people, till there was no remedy**.

Zechariah 1:12-13—Then the Angel [mal'âk] of the LORD answered and said, “O LORD of hosts, how long will You not have mercy on Jerusalem and on the cities of Judah, against which You were angry these seventy years?” And **the LORD answered the angel [mal'âk] who talked to me, WITH GOOD AND COMFORTING WORDS**.

1 Kings 19:5-6—Then as he [Elijah] lay and slept under a broom tree, **suddenly an angel [mal'âk] touched him,** and said to him, **“ARISE AND EAT.”** Then he looked, and **there by his head was a cake baked on coals, and a jar of water**. So he ate and drank, and lay down again.

Malachi 2:7—**For the lips of a priest should keep knowledge,** And people should **seek the law from his mouth;** For **HE IS THE MESSENGER [mal'âk]** of the LORD of hosts.

**NOTE:** It is evident from the verses above that a “mal'âk” is involved in a variety of different tasks. They **send warnings** to God's people (2 Chronicles 36:15-16); they also **speak good and comforting words** (Zechariah 1:12-13); at times they are involved in **feeding those who are hungry** (1 Kings 19:5-6) and most importantly, they **speak the truth and uphold the law of God before the people of God, to prevent them from falling INTO APOSTASY AND REBELLION** (Malachi 2:7). **We will come back to these points when we identify who the angel of Exodus 23:20-23 is.** In the New Testament, **there isn't that much of a difference in the role of a messenger, but it would be wise** to look at how the Greek equivalent of “mal'âk” (*aggelos*) is used in the New Testament.

### **How is the word 'angel' or 'messenger' (aggelos) used in the New Testament?**

Matthew 2:13—Now when they had departed, behold, **an angel [aggelos] of the Lord** appeared to Joseph **in a dream**, saying, “Arise, take the young Child [Jesus] and His mother, flee to Egypt, and stay there **until I bring you word;** for Herod will seek the young Child to destroy Him [this angel, or messenger, came to give **a message of warning** to Joseph].”

Matthew 4:1—Then the devil left Him, and behold, **angels [aggelos] came and ministered [comforted or assisted] to Him [Jesus]**.

Mark 1:2, 4—As it is written in the Prophets: **Behold, I send My messenger [aggelos] before Your face,** Who will **prepare** Your way before You. ‘... **John came baptizing in the wilderness and preaching a baptism of repentance for the remission of sins [breaking God's holy law: 1 John 3:4; Romans 7:7; James 2:8-11]**.

Luke 2:15—So it was, when **the angels [aggelos] had gone away FROM THEM INTO HEAVEN,** that the shepherds said to one another, ‘Let us now go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has come to pass, which the Lord has made known to us.’

Revelation 2:1—**To the angel [aggelos] of the church of Ephesus write,** These things says He who holds the seven stars in His right hand, who walks in the midst of the seven golden lampstands:

**NOTE:** In the **New Testament,** the **Greek word** for ‘angel’ or ‘messenger’ is “aggelos.” “Aggelos” is used some **185 times in 180 verses** to refer to a MESSENGER of some kind. In the verses quoted above, we can see that it is primarily used **to refer to a heavenly angel,** with the **possible exception** of Revelation 2:1 in reference to **the angel of the church of Ephesus** as well as Mark 1:2, 4 in reference to **John the Baptist**. As a matter of fact, **aggelos,** as it relates to **the seven churches,** can actually refer to **the MINSTERS or LEADERS of those various churches:**

...Dr. Prideaux observes, that the MINISTER of the synagogue, who officiated in offering the public prayers, being the mouth of the congregation, delegated by them, in prayer for them, was in Hebrew called sheliack-zibbor, that is, THE ANGEL of the church; and that from hence the chief MINISTERS of the seven churches of Asia are in the Revelation, by a name borrowed from the synagogue, called ANGELS OF THOSE CHURCHES.—[Brown, J. and Edwards, B., 1835. Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge. Battleboro: Fessenden & Co, pp.82, 83.](#)

Thus, in the letters addressed by St. John to the seven churches in Asia Minor, THE BISHOPS OF THOSE CHURCHES ARE ADDRESSED AS ANGELS; MINISTERS not appointed by the people but by God.—[Hook, W., 1854. A Church Dictionary. 7th ed. London: John Murray, Albemarle Street, p.27.](#)

Now that we've had a fairly extensive look at the usage of both "mal'āk" and "aggelos," we will now proceed to identify the angel of Exodus 23:20-23.

### **This angel was to go before God's people (Exodus 23:20). Who is this angel that went before the Israelites?**

Exodus 14:19, 24—And the Angel of God, who WENT BEFORE the camp of Israel, moved and WENT BEHIND THEM; and THE PILLAR OF CLOUD went from BEFORE THEM and STOOD BEHIND THEM... Now it came to pass, in the morning watch, that THE LORD LOOKED DOWN upon the army of the Egyptians through THE PILLAR OF FIRE AND CLOUD, and He troubled the army of the Egyptians.

NOTE: Exodus 14 states, with the clearest language possible, that the "Angel of God" was in the pillar of cloud; but then in verse 24 it states that it was the LORD who was in the pillar of cloud. It is too clear to be misunderstood! Even though Exodus 14 is referring to the Exodus, it nevertheless contains the same idea of an Angel going BEFORE God's people. Furthermore, this Angel represents Jesus Christ, as HE WAS THE ONE WHO LED ISRAEL throughout their wilderness wanderings, just like how this Angel would go BEFORE God's people:

1 Corinthians 10:1-4—Moreover, brethren, I do not want you to be unaware that all our fathers were UNDER THE CLOUD, all passed through the sea, all were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea, all ate the same spiritual food, and all drank the same spiritual drink. For they drank of that SPIRITUAL ROCK that FOLLOWED THEM, and that ROCK WAS CHRIST.

Acts 7:37-38—This is that Moses who said to the children of Israel, 'The LORD your God will raise up for you a Prophet like me from your brethren. HIM YOU SHALL HEAR.' This is he [Moses] who was in the congregation [Literally: the church—Matthew 18:17; Acts 11:26; 1 Corinthians 1:2] in the wilderness with THE ANGEL WHO SPOKE TO HIM ON MOUNT SINAI, AND WITH OUR FATHERS [who spoke with Moses ON Mount Sinai, and with the Israelites FROM Mount Sinai?: see Leviticus 7:37-38 and Numbers 3:1, for Moses; and Deuteronomy 33:1-2 and Nehemiah 9:13, for the Israelites], the one who received the living oracles to give to us,

"IN ALL THESE REVELATIONS OF the divine presence the glory of God was MANIFESTED THROUGH CHRIST. Not alone at the Saviour's advent, but through all the ages after the Fall and the promise of redemption, 'GOD WAS IN CHRIST, reconciling the world unto Himself.' 2 Corinthians 5:19. Christ was the foundation and center of the sacrificial system in both the patriarchal and the Jewish age. Since the sin of our first parents there has been NO DIRECT COMMUNICATION between God and man [see Genesis 3:22-24; Exodus 33:20; Isaiah 59:2]. The Father has given the world into the hands of Christ [see 1 Corinthians 15:23-25], that through His mediatorial work [see 1 Timothy 2:5] He may redeem man and vindicate the authority and holiness of the law of God [see Isaiah 42:21]. All the communion between heaven and the fallen race has been THROUGH Christ [see Genesis 28:12; John 1:51; 14:6-11]. It was the Son of God that gave to our first parents the promise of redemption. It was He who revealed Himself to the patriarchs. Adam, Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Moses

understood the gospel. **They looked for salvation through man's Substitute and Surety.** These holy men of old **held communion with the Saviour who was to come** to our world in human flesh; and **some of them TALKED WITH CHRIST and heavenly angels face to face.**—[Ellen G. White, Patriarchs and Prophets, p.366](#)

**“Christ was not only THE LEADER OF THE HEBREWS IN THE WILDERNESS—THE ANGEL in whom was the NAME OF JEHOVAH, and who, veiled in the CLOUDY PILLAR, WENT BEFORE THE HOST—but it was He who gave the law to Israel.** Amid the awful glory of Sinai, Christ declared in the hearing of all the people **the ten precepts of His Father's law.** It was He who gave to Moses the law engraved upon the tables of stone.”—[Ellen G. White, Patriarchs and Prophets, p.366](#)

**Furthermore, this Angel was to bring God's people into the land that He had prepared for them (Exodus 23:23). Who was the One who did this?**

Exodus 3:7-8—**And the LORD said:** I have surely seen **the oppression of My people** who are in Egypt, and **have heard their cry** because of their taskmasters, **for I know their sorrows.** So I have come down **to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians,** and **TO BRING THEM UP FROM THAT LAND TO A GOOD AND LARGE LAND,** to a land flowing with milk and honey, **TO THE PLACE OF THE Canaanites** and the **Hittites** and the **Amorites** and the **Perizzites** and the **Hivites** and the **Jebusites.**

Exodus 13:5—And it shall be, **WHEN THE LORD BRINGS YOU INTO THE LAND of the Canaanites and the Hittites and the Amorites and the Hivites and the Jebusites,** which He swore to your fathers to give you, **a land flowing with milk and honey,** that you shall keep this service in this month.

Exodus 34:11—Observe what **I command you this day.** **Behold, I AM DRIVING OUT from before you the Amorite and the Canaanite and the Hittite and the Perizzite and the Hivite and the Jebusite.**

Deuteronomy 7:1—**When the LORD your God brings you into the land which you go to possess,** and has cast out many nations before you, the **Hittites** and the **Girgashites** and the **Amorites** and the **Canaanites** and the **Perizzites** and the **Hivites** and the **Jebusites,** seven nations greater and mightier than you.

**NOTE: If you COMPARE the words in Exodus 23:23 with that of the verses above, you will discover that the Angel in Exodus 23:23, is the LORD of Exodus 3:7-8; 13:5; 34:11 and Deuteronomy 7:1. THEREFORE, we can conclude that the LORD was the Angel that was going to lead God's people into the land that He had sworn to give to the descendants of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.** We've already studied that the LORD mentioned in these verses was in fact Jesus Christ Himself, **before He came** to this earth as a human being. **But you may be wondering:**

**“If Jesus Christ is the One speaking to Moses in Exodus 23:20-23 (see Exodus 20:22; Numbers 1:3; Acts 7:37-38), then how could Jesus Christ send this Angel; when the Angel is Jesus Christ Himself? How can Jesus Christ send Himself?”**

**That's a logical question, and it deserves an answer.** Jesus Christ is **the spokesperson** for His Father. In other words, **God the Father is the One who speaks through Jesus Christ** (who is a **“mal'âk”**). Do not forget that a **“mal'âk” is a messenger WHO IS SENT TO GIVE A MESSAGE TO SOMEONE** (read Genesis 32:3-5) **and therefore, they DO NOT speak their OWN WORDS, but the words of the one who sent them.** The same is true of this Angel in Exodus 23:20-23, which we have shown (and will further show) to be Jesus Christ, **before He came to this earth as a human being.** Jesus Christ **received His messages directly** from His Father, **and therefore He never spoke HIS OWN WORDS:**

John 3:31-34 [John the Baptist is speaking about Jesus]—**He who comes from above is above all;** he who is of the earth is earthly and speaks of the earth. **He who comes from heaven is above all. And WHAT HE [Jesus] HAS SEEN AND HEARD, THAT HE TESTIFIES;** and no one receives His testimony. He

who has received His testimony has certified that God is true. **For He whom God has sent SPEAKS THE WORDS OF GOD,** for God does not give the Spirit by measure.

John 5:19, 30—**Then JESUS ANSWERED and said to them,** Most assuredly, I say to you, **the Son can do nothing of Himself, BUT WHAT HE SEES THE FATHER DO;** for whatever He does, **THE SON ALSO DOES IN LIKE MANNER...I can of Myself do nothing.** As I hear, I judge; and My judgment is righteous, because **I DO NOT SEEK MY OWN WILL but the will of THE FATHER WHO SENT ME.**

John 5:43—**I HAVE COME IN MY FATHER'S NAME,** and you do not receive Me; if another comes in his own name, him you will receive.

John 8:26—I have many things to say and to judge concerning you, but He who sent Me is true; and **I speak to the world those things WHICH I HEARD FROM HIM.**

John 8:38—**I speak what I have seen with My Father [compare with John 3:31-34],** and you do what you have seen with your father.

John 12:49—**For I HAVE NOT SPOKEN on My own authority;** but **the Father who sent Me gave Me a command, what I should say and what I should speak.**

**NOTE:** So to answer the question above, **we must therefore conclude,** based on the verses above, that the words which Christ spoke in Exodus 23:20-23, **were not His words but the words of His Father,** as Jesus said that His Father **gave Him the words that He should speak.** In other words, **Jesus Christ was speaking the EXACT words as they had come out of His Father's mouth.** So, when Jesus said "I send an Angel before you to keep you in the way and to bring you into the place which I have prepared," He was simply **REPEATING THE PLANS THAT HIS FATHER HAD,** in sending Jesus Christ (who was the Angel) **to bring Israel into the land that He had prepared for them.** **Jesus spoke the words of His Father, on His Father's behalf.** These were **His Father's words;** not Jesus' words:

**"His name shall be called Immanuel....GOD WITH US."** **"The light of the KNOWLEDGE of the glory of God" is seen "in the face of Jesus Christ."** From the days of eternity the **Lord Jesus Christ was ONE WITH THE FATHER; He was "the IMAGE of God,"** the image of His greatness and majesty, "the outshining of His glory." **It was to manifest this glory that He came to our world.** To this sin-darkened earth He came **to reveal the light of God's love, — to be "God with us."** Therefore it was prophesied of Him, "His name shall be called Immanuel." By coming to dwell with us, **Jesus was to reveal God both to men and to angels. HE WAS THE WORD OF GOD, — GOD'S THOUGHT MADE AUDIBLE.** — [Ellen G. White, The Desire of Ages, p.19](#)

**This Angel was to have the name of God in Him (Exodus 23:21). What does this mean?**

Exodus 34:5-7—**Now the LORD descended in the cloud** and stood with him there, and **PROCLAIMED THE NAME OF THE LORD.** And the LORD passed before him **AND PROCLAIMED, The LORD, the LORD God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abounding in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, FORGIVING iniquity and transgression and sin, by no means clearing the guilty, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children and the children's children to the third and the fourth generation.**

Leviticus 20:3—I will set My face against that man, and will cut him off from his people, because he has given some of his descendants to Molech, **to defile My sanctuary and profane MY HOLY NAME.**

Psalms 33:21—For our heart shall rejoice in Him, Because **we have trusted in HIS HOLY NAME.**

**NOTE:** The Angel in Exodus 23:20-23 would **have the name of God.** In other words, **He would have the CHARACTERISTICS of God.** If Jesus Christ is the Angel (which He is) **surely He would have the characteristics of God in every particular.** Does He?:

Jesus Christ is merciful:

Exodus 20:6—**but SHOWING MERCY to thousands**, to those who love Me and keep My commandments.

Isaiah 16:5—**IN MERCY THE THRONE will be established**; And **One will sit on it** in truth, **in the tabernacle of David**, Judging and **seeking justice** and **hastening righteousness**.

Luke 1:31-33—And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bring forth a Son, **and shall call His name JESUS**. He will be **great**, and will be called **the Son of the Highest**; and **THE LORD GOD WILL GIVE HIM THE THRONE OF HIS FATHER DAVID**. And **HE WILL REIGN over the house of Jacob forever, and of His kingdom there will be no end**.

Acts 2:29-30—Men and brethren, let me **speak freely to you of the patriarch David**, that he is both dead and buried, and his tomb is with us to this day. **Therefore, being a prophet**, and knowing that **God had sworn with an oath to him [David]** that of the **fruit of his [David's] body**, according to the flesh, **He would raise up the CHRIST TO SIT ON HIS [David's] THRONE**,

**NOTE:** Isaiah 16:5 makes it very clear that, **the One who sits on the throne will establish it WITH MERCY**. **Luke 1:31-33 and Acts 2:29-30 make it clear that Jesus Christ** was the One who would **sit on the throne of David**. Therefore, in order for **Jesus to establish the throne of David with mercy**, **He Himself WOULD HAVE TO BE MERCIFUL!** Furthermore, in Scripture being merciful **is closely linked** with being **righteous** (see Psalm 116:5). **Jesus is righteous, and therefore merciful** (see Isaiah 11:1-5; 53:11; Jeremiah 23:5-6; 2 Timothy 4:8).

Jesus Christ is gracious:

Luke 4:20-22—Then **He [Jesus] closed the book [of the prophet Isaiah]**, and gave it back to the attendant and sat down. And the eyes of all who were in the synagogue were fixed on Him. And He began to say to them, **Today this Scripture [Isaiah 61:1-2] is fulfilled in your hearing**. So all bore witness to Him, **and marveled AT THE GRACIOUS WORDS which proceeded out of His mouth**. And they said, **Is this not Joseph's son?**

John 1:14, 16-17—And **the Word became flesh and dwelt among us**, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, **full of grace and truth**....And **of His fullness** we have all received, **and grace for grace**. For the law was given through Moses, **BUT GRACE AND TRUTH CAME THROUGH JESUS CHRIST**.

Romans 1:3-5—**concerning His Son Jesus Christ our Lord**, who was born of **the seed of David according to the flesh**, and **declared to be the Son of God** with power according to the Spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead. **THROUGH HIM WE HAVE RECEIVED GRACE** and apostleship for obedience to the faith among all nations for His name,

1 Peter 2:2-3—as newborn babes, desire the pure milk of the word, that you may grow thereby, **if indeed you have tasted that THE LORD [Jesus Christ: see Matthew 8:5-9] IS GRACIOUS**.

**NOTE:** The verses above **very much indicate that Jesus isn't just gracious; but that He is the definition of grace**. By the way, Jesus came to show us the Father. Therefore, if Jesus is gracious, **so is the Father**, and vice versa (John 10:30; 14:7-11; 2 Corinthians 4:4; Colossians 1:15; Hebrews 1:1-3).

Jesus Christ is long-suffering:

1 Timothy 1:15-16— This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief. However, for this reason I obtained mercy, that in me first JESUS CHRIST MIGHT SHOW ALL LONGSUFFERING, as a pattern to those who are going to believe on Him for everlasting life.

2 Peter 3:9— The Lord [Jesus Christ] is not slack concerning His promise, as some count slackness, but is LONGSUFFERING toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to REPENTANCE.

**NOTE:** Jesus Christ shows us His long-suffering for two reasons, (1) so that through us the character of God may be revealed to others, and (2) to give us the opportunity to “Cast away from [us] all the transgressions which [we] have committed, and [to] get [ourselves] a new heart and a new spirit” (Ezekiel 18:31). It stands to reason then, that God’s grace and long-suffering were not given to us so that we could CONTINUE IN OUR SINS while claiming that, “It doesn’t matter what I do I can’t be lost, because I’m saved by grace!” The Bible teaches us that God’s long-suffering and grace teaches “us that, DENYING ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in the present age” (Titus 2:12).

#### Jesus Christ is good:

Mark 3:1-6— And He entered the synagogue again, and a man was there who had a withered hand. So they watched Him closely, whether He would heal him on the Sabbath, so that they might accuse Him. And He said to the man who had the withered hand, ‘Step forward.’ Then He said to them, ‘Is it lawful on the Sabbath TO DO GOOD or to do evil, to save life or to kill?’ But they kept silent. And when He had looked around at them with anger, being grieved by the hardness of their hearts, He said to the man, ‘Stretch out your hand.’ And he stretched it out, and HIS HAND WAS RESTORED as whole as the other. Then the Pharisees went out and immediately plotted with the Herodians against Him, how they might destroy Him.

John 10:32— Jesus answered them, “MANY GOOD WORKS I have shown you from My Father. For which of those works do you stone Me?”

Acts 10:38— how God anointed JESUS OF NAZARETH with the Holy Spirit and with power, WHO WENT ABOUT DOING GOOD and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with Him.

**NOTE:** These Scriptures testify to the GOODNESS of Jesus Christ. He went about healing the sick and casting out devils, to demonstrate the principles of the kingdom of God, which, at the heart of those principles, is the principle of liberty (Psalm 119:44-45; Matthew 12:28; 2 Corinthians 3:17; James 1:25; 2:8-12).

#### Jesus Christ is full of truth:

Mark 12:32— So the scribe said to Him, Well said, Teacher [Jesus Christ]. You have spoken THE TRUTH, for there is one God, and there is no other but He.

John 1:14, 17— And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and TRUTH....For the law was given through Moses, but grace and TRUTH came THROUGH JESUS CHRIST.

John 8:32, 36— And YOU SHALL know the truth, and the truth SHALL MAKE YOU FREE....Therefore if the SON makes YOU FREE, YOU SHALL BE FREE indeed.

**NOTE:** John 8:32 states that “the truth shall make you free”; but then in verse 36, it states that the Son shall make you free. When we study and compare the two verses together, we arrive at the



conclusion that, **Jesus is the truth that makes one free.** This idea is **brought out clearly** in verses 21-58, where **Jesus is trying His utmost** to open the eyes of the people around Him, **as to His true identity.** It would, therefore, be logical for Jesus to identify Himself as **the truth** in John 8:31-36, to help **open the eyes** of those around Him (especially the Jews) **as to His true identity and mission.**

John 1:1-3, 14—In the beginning **was the Word,** and **the Word was with God,** and **the Word was God.** He was in the beginning with God. **All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made....**And **the Word became flesh** [see 1 Timothy 3:16] and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, **full of grace and truth.**

John 8:45—**But because I TELL THE TRUTH,** you do not believe Me.

John 17:17—Sanctify them by Your truth. **YOUR WORD IS TRUTH.**

**NOTE: Jesus Christ is the Word.** If, therefore, **Jesus Christ is the Word; and the Word is truth,** **THEN** Jesus, the Word, **is also truth.**

John 14:6—Jesus said to him, **I AM the way, THE TRUTH, and the life.** No one comes to the Father except through Me.

#### Jesus is forgiving:

Mark 2:5—**When Jesus saw** their faith, He said to the paralytic, **Son, your sins are forgiven you?**

Mark 2:10—But that you may know that **the Son of Man has power on earth TO FORGIVE SINS**—He said to the paralytic,

Luke 12:10—**And anyone who speaks a word against the Son of Man, it will be forgiven him;** but to him who blasphemes against the Holy Spirit, it will not be forgiven.

John 8:11—She said, “No one, Lord.” And Jesus said to her, **Neither do I condemn you; go and SIN NO MORE.**”

#### Jesus is a judge:

John 5:22—For the Father judges no one, **but has committed all judgment to the Son.**

John 5:26-27—For as the Father has life in Himself, so He has granted the Son to have life in Himself, and **has given Him authority to execute judgment also, because He is the Son of Man.**

John 8:30—I can of Myself do nothing. **As I hear, I judge; and My judgment is righteous,** because I do not seek My own will **but the will of the Father who sent Me.**

2 Timothy 4:8—Finally, there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, **which the Lord, the righteous Judge,** will give to me on that Day, and not to me only but also to all who have loved His appearing.

1 John 2:1—My little children, these things I write to you, so that you may not sin. And if anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, **Jesus Christ the righteous.**

**NOTE: Wait a minute!** I thought Jesus **didn't judge** anyone. In John 3:17 we read, **For God DID NOT SEND His Son into the world TO CONDEMN THE WORLD,** but that the world through Him might be saved.” Is this a contradiction? Of course not! Allow me to explain. If we read on from John 3:17, Jesus

will explain what He meant by the phrase, "God DID NOT SEND His Son into the world TO CONDEMN THE WORLD." In John 3:17-21 we read:

John 3:17-21—For God DID NOT SEND His Son into the world TO CONDEMN THE WORLD, but that the world through Him might be saved. He who believes in Him is not condemned; but he who does not believe is condemned ALREADY, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. And THIS IS THE CONDEMNATION, that the light has come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. For everyone practicing evil hates the light and does not come to the light, lest his deeds should be exposed. But he who does the truth comes to the light, that his deeds may be clearly seen, that they have been done in God.

**NOTE:** If you read the verses above very carefully, you will notice that Jesus Christ is not the One doing the condemning. It is the person who rejects Christ that condemns himself. The point that Jesus is making is that He doesn't need to come into the world to judge us, as we, through sinning, have already condemned ourselves. Hence, those who do not believe in Jesus are "condemned ALREADY." The verse does not say that the unbeliever 'will be [future tense] condemned,' but rather "is condemned [Perfect Passive Indicative. Literally: "has been condemned."] already." Thus giving us, as readers, the impression that Jesus DOES NOT NEED to further condemn us, as our consciences do a pretty good job at condemning us at times! You will also notice that Jesus is referring to condemnation, as it relates to His mission here on earth (that is to say, His mission was not to condemn, but to save) and THEREFORE, His words should not be misinterpreted to mean that, He does not judge AT ALL. The point that Jesus is making has to do with why condemnation exists in the first place. It is due to the rejection of the light which Jesus has shone on this earth.

Jesus is holy:

Mark 1:23-24—Now there was a man in their synagogue with an unclean spirit. And he cried out, saying, "Let us alone! What have we to do with You, Jesus of Nazareth? Did You come to destroy us? I know who You [Jesus] are—the HOLY One of God!"

Leviticus 11:45—For I am the LORD who brings you up out of the land of Egypt, to be your God. You shall therefore BE HOLY, FOR I AM HOLY.

2 Corinthians 4:4—whose minds the god of this age has blinded, who do not believe, lest the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the IMAGE of God, should shine on them.

Colossians 1:15— He [Jesus] is THE IMAGE of the invisible God, the firstborn [or, pre-eminent one] over all creation.

Hebrews 1:3—who being the brightness of His glory and the express IMAGE of His person, and upholding all things by the word of His power, when He had by Himself purged our sins, sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high,

**NOTE:** If God is holy (which He is), and Jesus is the express image of God, then Jesus too must be holy.

As has been shown from Scripture, Jesus fulfils ALL the requirements that are required for one to have the name of God in them (that is, the character of God).

The Israelites were to obey all that God and the Angel spoke to them (Exodus 23:22). Who was this Angel that Israel were meant to obey?

Deuteronomy 18:18-19—I will raise up for them a Prophet like you [Moses] from among their brethren, and will put My words in His mouth, and He shall speak to them all that I command Him.

And it shall be that **WHOEVER WILL NOT HEAR MY WORDS**, which He speaks **in My name**, I will require it of him [the person who disobeys the voice of the Prophet].

Acts 3:22-26—**For Moses truly said to the fathers**, The LORD your God **will raise up for you a Prophet** like me from your brethren. **Him you shall hear in all things, whatever He says to you**. And it shall be that **every soul who will not hear that Prophet** shall be utterly **destroyed** from among the people. Yes, and all the prophets, from Samuel and those who follow, as many as have spoken, **have also foretold these days**. You are sons of the prophets, and **of the covenant which God made** with our fathers, saying to Abraham, **And in your seed** all the families of the earth **shall be blessed**. To you first, God, **HAVING RAISED UP His Servant Jesus**, sent Him to bless you, **in turning away every one of you from your iniquities**.

**NOTE:** Exodus 23:21-22 **is parallel to** Deuteronomy 18:18-19. To identify the voice of the Angel **we must identify the Prophet**, whose voice was **meant to be obeyed, in the same way** as the Angel's voice was meant to be **obeyed**. Acts 3:22-26 **identifies** the Prophet of Deuteronomy 18:18-19, and therefore **identifies the Angel's voice** in Exodus 23:21-22, as this passage and the one in Deuteronomy **are parallel**. Acts 3:22-26 identifies the **Prophet** as Jesus. Therefore, Jesus' voice is the voice that **was meant to be obeyed** in Exodus 23:21-22. Also, in Exodus 23:22 **the voice of the Angel** (being Jesus Christ) has the **same authority** as God's voice, which means that **the Angel is also God**, thus proving that **Jesus Christ is God**.

### **Does Jesus meet the criteria for a "mal'āk"?**

**Jesus sent messages of warning:**

Matthew 23:14—**WOE TO YOU, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites!** For you devour widows' houses, and for a pretense make long prayers. **Therefore you will receive greater condemnation**.

Matthew 23:32-36—**FILL UP, THEN, the measure of your fathers' guilt**. Serpents, brood of vipers! How can you escape the condemnation of hell? **Therefore, indeed, I SEND YOU [Present tense: I am sending you] prophets, wise men, and scribes: some of them YOU WILL KILL [Future tense] and crucify, and some of them YOU WILL SCOURGE [Future tense] in your synagogues and persecute from city to city**, that on you may come all the righteous blood shed on the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel to the blood of Zechariah, son of Berechiah, **whom you murdered between the temple and the altar**. **ASSUREDLY, I SAY TO YOU, ALL THESE THINGS WILL COME UPON THIS GENERATION [the generation to whom this applies. Read Luke 17:34: The Greek word for 'this' in Matthew 23:36, is translated as 'that' in Luke 17:34]**.

Matthew 26:24—The Son of Man indeed goes just as it is written of Him, **BUT WOE TO that man by whom the Son of Man is betrayed!** **It would have been good for that man if he had not been born**.

Revelation 2:4-5—Nevertheless I have this against you, that you have left your first love. Remember therefore from where you have fallen; **repent and do the first works, OR ELSE I WILL COME TO YOU QUICKLY AND REMOVE your lampstand from its place—unless you repent**.

**The tears which Christ shed on the crest of Olivet were for the impenitence and ingratitude of every individual to the close of time. He sees His love despised. The soul's temple courts have been converted into places of unholy traffic. Selfishness, mammon [riches], malice, envy, pride, passion, are all cherished in the human heart. HIS WARNINGS ARE REJECTED AND RIDICULED**, His ambassadors [one who speaks on Christ's behalf; they speak the words of Christ] are treated with indifference, **their words seem as idle tales**. Jesus has spoken by mercies, but these mercies have been unacknowledged; **He has spoken by SOLEMN WARNINGS, BUT THESE WARNINGS have been rejected**.—[Ellen G. White, Testimonies for the Church, vol. 5, p.72](#)

Jesus gave messages of comfort:

Matthew 5:4—Blessed are those who mourn, **For they shall be COMFORTED.**

Matthew 9:22 KJV—But Jesus turned him about, and when he saw her, he said, **Daughter, be of good comfort;** thy faith **hath made thee whole.** And the woman was made whole from that hour.

Matthew 14:26-27—And when the disciples saw Him walking on the sea, they were troubled, saying, It is a ghost! **And they cried out for fear.** But immediately **Jesus spoke to them,** saying, **Be of good cheer!** It is I [Literally: I AM]; **do not be afraid.**

John 14:27—Peace I leave with you, My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. **Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.**

He fed those who were hungry:

Matthew 14:19-21—Then He [Jesus] commanded the **multitudes** to sit down on the grass. And He took the five loaves and the two fish, and looking up to heaven, **He blessed and broke and gave the loaves to the disciples; and the disciples gave to the multitudes. SO THEY ALL ATE AND WERE FILLED,** and they took up twelve baskets full of the fragments that remained. **Now those who HAD EATEN were about five thousand men, besides women and children.**

He upheld the law of God:

Isaiah 42:21 [A prophecy about Jesus Christ: Compare Isaiah 42:1-7 with Matthew 12:15-21]—The LORD is well pleased for His righteousness' [see Isaiah 42:6-7] sake; **HE WILL EXALT THE LAW and make it honorable.**

Psalms 40:8 [A prophecy about Jesus Christ: see Hebrews 10:5-10]—**I DELIGHT to do Your will,** O my God, **And YOUR LAW is within my heart.**

Psalms 89:34—My covenant I will not break, **Nor alter the word that has gone out of My lips** [see Exodus 20:1-17; Deuteronomy 4:12-13].

Psalms 111:7-8—The **works of His hands** [see Exodus 31:18; 32:15-16; Deuteronomy 9:10-11] are verity and justice; **All His precepts are sure. They stand fast forever and ever,** And are done in truth and uprightness.

Psalms 119:44—So shall I keep **Your law continually, Forever and ever.**

Psalms 119:89—Forever, O LORD, **Your word is settled in heaven.**

Malachi 2:7—For the lips of a priest should keep knowledge, And **people should SEEK THE LAW from his [the priest's] mouth;** For he is the messenger of the LORD of hosts.

Hebrews 3:1—Therefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and **High Priest of our confession, Christ Jesus.**

Hebrews 4:14—Seeing then that we have a great High Priest who has passed through the heavens, **Jesus the Son of God,** let us hold fast our confession.

Hebrews 9:11—**But Christ came as High Priest of the good things to come,** with the greater and more perfect tabernacle not made with hands, that is, not of this creation.

**NOTE:** The prophecies that pointed to Jesus Christ predicted that He would “exalt the law and make it honorable.” Jesus never came to remove, change or even tweak the law of God; rather He came to expound upon it, and to show mankind that the law of God can be kept, through the power of the Holy Spirit (see Romans 8:3-4, 9-11). The priest in the Old Testament was instructed to speak the law of God to the people. Jesus Christ would have obviously carried out the same command as the priests in the Old Testament did, as He is our High Priest (Matthew 5:17-20). In a previous question, I stated that I would show that the roles of a “mal’âk,” were also the roles that Jesus did as well. The Scriptures above show beyond a shadow of a doubt that Jesus fulfilled the functions of a “mal’âk” listed previously in this article. This would show, of course, that Jesus was a “mal’âk” (a messenger or an angel).

### **Is there anyone else who holds the view that Jesus is the Angel of Exodus 23:20-23?**

**In fact I’m not alone on this point,** as most scholars refer to these instances, where God reveals Himself to men, as “theophanies.” You will notice that the word “theophany,” or “theophanies,” sounds much like the word “epiphany,” or “epiphanies” which, according to Webster’s Dictionary, refers to “an appearance or manifestation especially of a divine being.” Take a look at these statements:

[A theophany is an] appearance or transient **manifestation,** unsought, **OF A DIVINE BEING OR OF GOD TO MAN.**—[Buttrick, G., Kepler, T., Knox, J., May, H., Terrien, S. and Bucke, E., 1990. The Interpreter’s Dictionary of the Bible. Vol. 4. Nashville: Abingdon, p.619.](#)

No doubt, in many of these **angel-of-the-Lord stories** [the author is referring to Exodus 3], the angel is a later interpretation and **the story was FIRST TOLD of Yahweh himself.**—[Buttrick, G., Kepler, T., Knox, J., May, H., Terrien, S. and Bucke, E., 1990. The Interpreter’s Dictionary of the Bible. Vol. 4. Nashville: Abingdon, p.619.](#)

**“In verse 4 the angel is called both ‘Jehovah’ and ‘Elohim,’ whence it is concluded, with reason, that it was THE SECOND PERSON OF THE TRINITY [Jesus Christ] who appeared to Moses.”**—[Ellicott, C., n.d. A Bible Commentary for English Readers, Vol.1. London, Paris, New York & Melbourne: Cassell and Company, Limited, p.198.](#)

[The phrase ‘Angel of the LORD’] is considered, by some, **one of the common titles of Christ** in the Old Testament.—[Schaff, P., 1885. A Dictionary of the Bible, including Biography, Natural History, Geography, Topography, Archaeology, and Literature.. 4th ed. Philadelphia: American Sunday-School Union, p.51.](#)

In many passages “the angel of God,” “the angel of Jehovah,” **is a manifestation of God himself.**—[Barnum, S., 1871. A Comprehensive Dictionary of the Bible. New York: D. Appleton and Company, p.41.](#)

[A] title, as is supposed, **of Christ in his appearances** to the patriarchs and others **in the Old Testament.** For example, when **the angel of the Lord found Hagar** in the wilderness, “she called the name of Jehovah that spake to her, **THOU GOD SEEST ME.**” The angel of the Lord appeared to Moses in a flame of fire; but this same angel “called to him out of the bush, and said, I am the God of thy fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob; and Moses hid his face, **for he was afraid to look upon God.**” To omit many other passages, St. Stephen, **in alluding to the history of Moses,** in his speech before the council says, “There appeared to Moses in the wilderness of Mount Sinai, an angel of the Lord in a flame of fire,” showing that **the phraseology was in use among the Jews in his day,** and that **this angel and Jehovah were regarded AS THE SAME BEING;** for he adds, “Moses was in the church in the wilderness with the angel which spoke unto him in mount Sinai.” **There is one part of the history of the Jews in the wilderness, which so fully shows that they distinguished this angel of Jehovah FROM ALL CREATED ANGELS,** as to observe **particular attention.** In Exod. 23:20, God makes this promise to Moses and the Israelites: “Behold, I send an angel before thee to keep thee in the way, and to bring thee into the place which I have prepared. Beware of him, and obey his voice; provoke him not; for he will not pardon your transgressions, **for my name is in**

him.” Of this angel let it be observed, that **he is here represented as the guide and protector of the Israelites**; to Him they were to **owe their conquests and their settlement in the promised land**, which are in other places often **attributed to the immediate agency of God**; that they are cautioned to “beware of him,” **to reverence** and stand in dread of him; that the pardoning of transgressions belong to him; finally, “that the name of God was in him.” This name must be understood of **God's own peculiar name, JEHOVAH, I AM**, which he assumed as his distinctive appellation at his first appearing to Moses; and **as the names of God are indicative of HIS NATURE**, he who had a right to bear the peculiar name of God, **MUST ALSO HAVE HIS ESSENCE...**The **Jews held** this Word, or Angel of the Lord, **to be the future Messiah**, as appears from the **writings of their older Rabbins**. So that he appears as the Jehovah of all the three dispensations, and **yet is invariably described as a separate person** from the unseen Jehovah, **who sends him**. He was then the Word **TO BE MADE FLESH**, and **to dwell for a time among us**, to open the way to God **by his sacrifice**, and to rescue the race, **whose nature he should assume, from sin and death**.—[Edwards, B. and Brown, J., 1835. Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge. Battleboro: Fessenden and CO, p.83.](#)

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