

## THE “MESSENGER” OF יהוה!

The purpose of this short article is to simply reveal the clear truth, as given plainly through Scripture in the original Hebrew text, that יהוה is His own Messenger!

Many have tried to argue away that the ‘Messenger’ of יהוה is another person and not יהוה Himself. Is this true, or are these assumptions being made through erroneously taught beliefs that have a crippling way of interpreting the text according to inherited beliefs, rather than understanding and interpreting the text in its original construction and meaning? Let us look at some critical texts, that can often be misinterpreted, and even seem contradictory, when wrongly viewed.

**The Messenger of יהוה – מַלְאָךְ יהוה – ‘Mal’ak YHWH’:**

מַלְאָךְ Mal’ak – Strong’s H4397 means, ‘*messenger, envoy, ambassador*’.

The first time we see this word being used is used in conjunction with יהוה in:

**Berēshith/Genesis 16:7 “And the Messenger of יהוה found her by a spring of water in the wilderness, by the spring on the way to Shur”**

Who was this that met Hagar in the wilderness? Was it יהוה, or was it simply an ambassador of יהוה?

מַלְאָךְ Mal’ak is found also in Phoenician, and is a nominal construction from the root לָאךְ (la’ak) of which there are no examples in Hebrew (Arabic, *la’aka* means, “to send with a commission”). The basic element of meaning, in the nominal, is that of one who is sent. In the BDB (Browns Driver Briggs Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon) we are able to see that the word מַלְאָךְ Mal’ak comes from the child root לָאךְ (la’ak). The term ‘messenger’ is often an inadequate term for the range of tasks carried out by the various uses of מַלְאָךְ Mal’ak in the Tanak (O.T.). This word occurs 214 times in 197 verses, and is used to describe one who would: **a)** carry a message; **b)** perform some other specific commission; **c)** to represent more or less officially the one sending him. This term is used both of natural men, as well as ‘supernatural’ as in ‘messenger of יהוה’. When used in reference to the ‘Messenger of יהוה’, as seen in a number of passages, it is often difficult to differentiate between **The Messenger** and יהוה Himself. The One who speaks or acts, i.e., יהוה or the מַלְאָךְ Mal’ak, is obviously one and the same person. When the reference is to Elohim apart from man, יהוה is used; when Elohim enters the apperception of man, the מַלְאָךְ Mal’ak is introduced. We can therefore see that when Elohim hears the cry of Hagar, the מַלְאָךְ Mal’ak of יהוה calls to her, and יהוה Elohim opens her eyes!

As we look at the Hebrew word for מַלְאָךְ Mal’ak, we are able to gain some great insight from its child root - לָאךְ (la’ak)

in the ancient script, which would be pictured as follows: 

לָ – This is the letter ‘lamed’, which in the early script is pictured as  , which is a ‘*shepherd’s staff*’, can give the meaning of ‘*to or toward*’ and can represent that which pushes or pulls a flock in a direction, and can speak of *authority* or a yoke that is used to lead and guide, as well as the ability to bring back by Authority.

אָ – this is first letter of the Hebrew alphabet and is called ‘aleph’ and in the ancient script is pictured as -  - which is the head of an ox and represents *strength*, meaning ‘muscle’ and the ox is the strongest of the livestock animals. This also carries the meaning of ‘yoke’ as an ox is placed in a yoke in order to plough or pull a heavy load in the right direction. This can also picture for us the ‘red heifer’ sacrifice that יהושע Messiah fulfilled!

כָּ – this is the latter ‘kaph’ – which in the ancient script is pictured as –  – which is a picture of an open palm of a hand and can symbolise that to which submission is given – ‘under the hand’

From this root we are able to see how the messenger would describe the person bringing a specific message, as the staff/authority of the strength of the yoke or message that is brought by the hand of the sent one!

Therefore the מַלְאָךְ Mal’ak is ‘the one who walks for another’. This can be one who walks for another man, or it can be used for the One who walks for Elohim!

Let us now look at a very revealing couple of verses when Yisra’el blessed his son Yosēph:

**Berēshith/Genesis 48:15-16 “And he blessed Yosēph, and said, “The Elohim before whom my fathers Abraham and Yitshaq walked, the Elohim who has fed me all my life long to this day, 16 the Messenger who has redeemed me from all evil – bless the youths! And let my name be called upon them, and the name of my fathers Abraham and Yitshaq. And let them increase to a multitude in the midst of the earth.”**

Here in the above two verses there lies a very critical and valuable clue in discovering a powerful revelation, from a true Hebraic perspective, of who the Messenger of יהוה is. We must recognise from this passage that when Yisra'el blesses Yosēph, he clearly calls Elohim a מַלְאָךְ Mal'ak. Yisra'el uses some wonderful Hebrew poetry of parallelism, by repeating his declaration that Elohim is his deliverer and redeemer in three distinctive ways: He states that the Elohim of his fathers, is the Elohim who fed him, and this same Elohim is the Messenger who redeemed him – this Messenger, who is Elohim, he called upon to bless the sons of Yosēph!

To put it very simply and very plain – Yisra'el called Elohim THE מַלְאָךְ Mal'ak. What can be very confusing to some is the notion of whether יהוה can send Himself as His own Messenger!

Can יהוה send Himself as His own Messenger??? The obvious answer is – of course He can!!!

This is a fact and a critical truth that so many fail to recognise and see; and so we will give further evidence from Scripture how this is in fact the case!

**Shemoth/exodus 3:7-8** “**And יהוה said, “I have indeed seen the oppression of My people who are in Mitsrayim, and have heard their cry because of their slave-drivers, for I know their sorrows. 8 “And I have come down to deliver them from the hand of the Mitsrites, and to bring them up from that land to a good and spacious land, to a land flowing with milk and honey, to the place of the Kena'anites and the Hittites and the Amorites and the Perizzites and the Hivwites and the Yebusites.”**”

As you will above I have highlighted the ‘And I’ at the beginning of verse 8, simply because it is יהוה who is speaking here, and He makes it clear in His discourse to Mosheh that He Himself has come down to deliver Yisra'el! He hears their cry from bondage in Mitsrayim and He promises to bring them out and lead them to the Promised Land. When יהוה met Mosheh at the ‘burning bush’ He made it clear to Mosheh His plan of deliverance. After Yisra'el is delivered out of Mitsrayim, they are led through the Wilderness to mount Sinai and they continually grumble against יהוה. And we once again see a clear promise of יהוה in:

**Shemoth/Exodus 23:20-21** “**See, I am sending a Messenger before you to guard you in the way and to bring you into the place which I have prepared. 21 “Be on guard before Him and obey His voice. Do not rebel against Him, for He is not going to pardon your transgression, for My Name is in Him.”**”

**Shemoth/Exodus 33:2-3** “**And I shall send My Messenger before you, and I shall drive out the Kena'anite and the Amorite and the Hittites and the Perizzites and the Hivwites and the Yebusite, 3 to a land flowing with milk and honey. For I do not go up in your midst because you are a stiff-necked people, lest I consume you on the way.”**”

After these prophetic declarations that יהוה makes in saying that He will send His Messenger who will lead them into the Promised Land, we see later in Scripture the clear truth that it is יהוה who goes before them to prepare the way!

**Bemidbar/Numbers 14:13-14** “**And Mosheh said to יהוה, “Then the Mitsrites shall hear it, for by Your power You brought these people up from their midst, 14 and they shall say to the inhabitants of this land they have heard that You, יהוה, are in the midst of these people, that You, יהוה, are seen eye to eye and that Your cloud stands above them, and You go before them in a column of cloud by day and in a column of fire by night.”**”

**Debarim/Deuteronomy 1:32-33** “**Yet in this matter you are putting no trust in יהוה your Elohim, 33 who is going before you in the way to seek out a place for you to pitch your tents, to show you the way you should go, in fire by night and in a cloud by day.”**”

**Debarim/Deuteronomy 9:3** “**And you shall know today that יהוה your Elohim is He who is passing over before you as a consuming fire – He does destroy them and subdue them before you. So you shall dispossess them and destroy them quickly, as יהוה has said to you.”**”

What seems to appear from these passages is that יהוה promises to take Yisra'el into the Promised Land, yet because of their stiff necks, He says that He will send His Messenger; then again we read that it is יהוה Himself who goes before Yisra'el to prepare the way for them. So here we seem to have what many describe as a contradiction, as it appears that it is not יהוה who goes with them, but rather it is The Messenger יהוה who goes!!!

There is another account which for many seems contradictory, yet when understood correctly, is proved to not be contradictory at all, but rather makes perfect sense. And this is the account that Mosheh had when he met יהוה ‘face to face’:

**Shemoth/exodus 33:11** “**Thus יהוה spoke to Mosheh face to face, as a man speaks to his friend. And he would return to the camp, but his servant Yehoshua son of Nun, a young man, did not leave the Tent.”**”

יהוה Himself was speaking to Mosheh, face to face, like a man speaks to man!!! What we must recognise here is that Mosheh is clearly telling us that he spoke physically to יהוה, and engaged in a physical dialogue with a physical Elohim!

What seems to be a contradiction is what follows:

**Shemoth/Exodus 33:20-23** “But He said, “You are unable to see My face, for no man does see Me and live.” 21 And יהוה said, “See, there is a place with Me! And you shall stand on the rock. 22 “And it shall be, while My esteem passes by, that I shall put you in the cleft of the rock and cover you with My hand while I pass by. 23 “Then I shall take away My hand and you shall see My back, but My face shall not be seen.”

So, did Mosheh speak with יהוה face to face or did he not?

When interpreting text one must be very careful to not interpret the text solely based on one's preconceived beliefs and biased opinions. Interpreting the Hebrew text according to our inherited traditions and twisted beliefs can often cause us to stumble in our growing in pure knowledge and understanding of the Truth. We need to 'learn' what the Scripture is saying, and adjust our beliefs according to Scripture and not let erroneous belief shape our understanding and interpretation. Having said that, we also recognise that there will always be a level of one's perception and understanding having a role in deciphering contradictory texts, that stems from one's upbringing and culture – and this of course is a continual struggle for most of us who have grown up in a Westernised Greek cultural mind-set.

When one reads Chapter 33 from Shemoth, it simply renders to us very plainly that Mosheh spoke face to face with יהוה, yet he was not allowed to see יהוה's face!!! While there could be multiple ways to attempt interpreting this contradiction theologically, what we must make clear note of here is that there is a 'Messenger of יהוה' who is called יהוה!!!

In Scripture we not only see that the Messenger of יהוה is called יהוה, but also the Messenger is called 'ELOHIM'!

Once again we come to an account where Hagar is met by the 'Messenger':

**Berēshith/Genesis 21:17** “And Elohim heard the voice of the boy, and the messenger of Elohim called to Haḡar from the heavens, and said to her, “What is the matter with you, Haḡar? Do not fear, for Elohim has heard the voice of the boy where he is.”

Here we have the words – מַלְאֲכֵי אֱלֹהִים – 'Mal'ak Elohim'. You will remember that at the beginning of this article I quoted from **Berēshith/Genesis 16:7** that the Mal'ak יהוה found Haḡar by the stream of water, and now here in this chapter the Mal'ak Elohim calls to her from the heavens! This same 'voice' of the Messenger of Elohim that called to Haḡar here is the very same voice of the 'physical' 'Messenger of יהוה' who found her in **Chapter 16!!!**

Let us go back to the 'burning bush' account, where Mosheh 'saw' the Messenger:

**Shemoth/Exodus 3:1-2** “And Mosheh was shepherding the flock of Yithro his father-in-law, the priest of Midyan. And he led the flock to the back of the wilderness, and came to Ḥorēb, the mountain of Elohim. 2 And the Messenger of יהוה appeared to him in a flame of fire from the midst of a bush. And he looked and saw the bush burning with fire, but the bush was not consumed.”

The Messenger 'appeared' to Mosheh in a flame of fire! The phrase is literally rendered 'and he appeared – the messenger of יהוה' and the phrase 'and He appeared' is נִרְאָה – 'vayyeraḥ' and comes from the root word רָאָה ra'ah – Strong's H7200 – meaning, 'to see, look, observe, pay close attention, consider, appear, provide'.

This verb is written in the 'niph'al passive' tense and therefore is understood as rendering, 'to appear, present oneself, to be seen, to be visible'. What is very important for us to understand here is that יהוה literally 'made himself visible' to Mosheh!

The Messenger being in a flame of fire can also cause us to think of another event where the Messenger of יהוה when up to the heavens in a flame of fire after having spoken to the parents of Shimshon, telling them they would have a son:

**Shophetim/Judges 13:20-22** “And it came to be, as the flame went up toward the heavens from the altar, that the Messenger of יהוה went up in the flame of the altar. And Manowah and his wife were watching, and they fell on their faces to the ground. 21 And the Messenger of יהוה did not appear any more to Manowah and his wife. Then Manowah knew that He was a Messenger of יהוה. 22 And Manowah said to his wife, “We shall certainly die, because we have seen Elohim!”

I firmly believe that it was יהושע who appeared to Manowah, and ascended to the heavens from the altar – a clear shadow picture of the deliverance He would bring; and here too at the burning bush we can also see the clear pointing to it being יהושע – The Deliverer of Yisra'el – that appeared to Mosheh!

The question that many often ask, as they wrestle with inherited belief systems that cause confusion, is whether or not this Messenger of יהוה is indeed Elohim Himself or is This Messenger simply a messenger sent on behalf of Elohim. Well let us go back to the burning bush:

**Shemoth/Exodus 3:3-6** “And Mosheh said, “Let me turn aside now, and see this great sight, why the bush does not burn.” 4 And יהוה saw that he turned aside to see, and Elohim called to him from the midst of the bush and said, “Mosheh! Mosheh!” And he said, “Here I am.” 5 And He said, “Do not come near here. Take your sandals off your feet, for the place on which you are standing is set-apart ground.” 6 And He said, “I am the Elohim of your father, the Elohim of Abraham, the Elohim of Yitshaq, and the Elohim of Ya’aqob.” And Mosheh hid his face, for he was afraid to look at Elohim.”

Here in this above passage we can see very clearly that this ‘Messenger of יהוה’ is clearly referred to as ‘Elohim’, the ‘Elohim’ of his fathers! Mosheh now knew that this was יהוה and he hid his face for he knew that he could not look at the face of Elohim and live!

In this clear conversation between Mosheh and this ‘Messenger of יהוה’ who was in the midst of the burning bush we again see:

**Shemoth/Exodus 3:15** “And Elohim said further to Mosheh, “Thus you are to say to the children of Yisra’el, יהוה Elohim of your fathers, the Elohim of Abraham, the Elohim of Yitshaq, and the Elohim of Ya’aqob, has sent me to you. This is My Name forever, and this is My remembrance to all generations.”

This ‘Messenger of יהוה’ that was speaking was none other than יהוה Elohim, the Elohim of Abraham, Yitshaq and Ya’aqob!

What is very clear from Scripture is the plain evidence that The ‘Messenger of יהוה’ is Elohim, and we also see here that from this passage above, that יהוה is Elohim. Logical conclusion – The Messenger of יהוה is יהוה Himself!!!

Another note worth recognizing is that as we are told in:

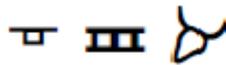
**Debarim/Deuteronomy 6:4** “Hear, O Yisra’el: יהוה our Elohim, יהוה is one!”



Excuse all the ‘colours’ but I simply wanted to show the clear message given in this text – and that is: יהוה our Elohim is ONE!!!

The Hebrew word here for ‘one’ is אֶחָד ‘ehad’ – Strong’s H259

The ancient pictographic letter render this word as:



א – this is first letter of the Hebrew alphabet and is called ‘aleph’ and in the ancient script is pictured as - א - which is the **head of an ox** and represents **strength**, meaning ‘**muscle**’ and the ox is the strongest of the livestock animals. This also carries the meaning of ‘yoke’ as an ox is placed in a yoke in order to plough or pull a heavy load in the right direction. This can also picture for us the ‘red heifer’ sacrifice that יהושע Messiah fulfilled!

ה – This is the letter ‘het’, which in the early script is pictured as ה, which is a ‘**tent wall**’, and carries a meaning of ‘**separation**’ as a tent wall separates two halves of the tent, or can also reflect the outside walls that separate the people inside from that which is outside and so can also symbolise protection and security.

ד – This is the letter ‘dalet’ which in the ancient script is pictured as ד, which is a ‘**tent door**’. It can also have the meaning of a back and forth movement as one goes back and forth through a tent door and so speaks of an access point. It can also carry the meaning of ‘dangle’ or hanging as the tent door would hang from the roof pole of the tent. It speaks a great deal in terms of understanding the door of the tent of appointment and the only means of access.

All of the above pictographic letters point us to Messiah our Elohim, in who we are built up into His body and dwelling place of Elohim, and this term expresses the many powerful ‘characteristics’ of Elohim, that collectively represent who He is as One Elohim.

Many typically use the argument that the word Elohim, which means ‘Mighty One’, or ‘mighty ones’, represents plurality in person and work, yet this is not so when referred to יהוה the Redeemer and Saviour of Yisra’el.

In **Bereshith/genesis 1:1** we are given clear proof that this Elohim is ONE and not more!:

“In the beginning Elohim created the heavens and the earth.”

בְּרֵאשִׁית בָּרָא אֱלֹהִים אֶת הַשָּׁמַיִם וְאֶת הָאָרֶץ  
Bereshith bara Elohim et hashamayim v’et ha’erets

The word I want to highlight here is the word for **'created'** which in Hebrew is בָּרָא **bara** – **Strong's H1254** which means, **'to shape, fashion, create (always with Elohim as subject)'**.

What many do not realise here is that this word is written in the singular verb tense, meaning that the one performing the action is also in the singular and not plural. In Hebrew the verb will be written in the plural tense if the subject/s doing the action is plural; and if Elohim here was to be in the plural the word for **'created'** would have been written as follows: בָּרְאוּ – **'baru'** - which would render – **'they created'**!

Why I wanted to highlight this, is to make it clear that Elohim is One, and He has sent Himself as His own Messenger; and that Messenger, which is Elohim Himself, is the Word made flesh - יְהוֹשֻׁעַ Messiah, through whom all was created and came to be!!!