

The Mystic Ladder

Up to the time of man's rebellion against the government of God, there had been free communion between God and man. But the sin of Adam and Eve separated earth from heaven, so that man could not have communion with his Maker. Yet the world was not left in solitary hopelessness. The ladder represents Jesus, the appointed medium of communication. Had He not with His own merits bridged the gulf that sin had made, the ministering angels could have held no **communion** with fallen man. Christ connects man in his weakness and helplessness with the source of infinite power. [PP 184.2](#)

[Genesis 28:11](#) And he lighted upon a certain place, and tarried there all night, because the sun was set; and he took of the stones of that place, and put *them* for his pillows, and lay down in that place to sleep. [12](#) And he dreamed, and behold a ladder set up on the earth, and the top of it reached to heaven: and behold the angels of God ascending and descending on it. [13](#) And, behold, the LORD stood above it, and said, I *am* the LORD God of Abraham thy father, and the God of Isaac:...

Jehovah had revealed his presence in the cloud of glory above the mercy-seat. There rested the base of that mystic ladder connecting earth with Heaven, [[Genesis 28:12](#); [John 1:51](#).]—that ladder upon which angels of God descended and ascended, and which opened to the world the way into the holiest of all... [GC88 18.2](#)

... “Verily, verily, I say unto you, Hereafter ye shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of man.”(John 1:51) Here the Redeemer identifies himself as the **mystic ladder**, that makes **communication** possible between heaven and earth.” [RH November 11, 1890, par. 4](#)

In the apostasy, man alienated himself from God; earth was cut off from heaven. Across the gulf that lay between, there could be no communion. But through Christ, earth is again linked with heaven. With His own merits, Christ has bridged the gulf which sin had made, so that the ministering angels can hold communion with man. Christ connects fallen man in his weakness and helplessness with the Source of infinite power. [SC 20.1](#)

When Jesus said, “I am the way, the truth, and the life,”(John 14:6) he uttered a truth of wonderful significance. The transgression of man had separated earth from heaven, and finite man from the infinite God. As an island is separated from a continent, so earth was cut off from heaven, and a wide channel intervened between man and God. Jesus bridged this gulf, and made a way for man to come to God...But the only name given among men whereby they can be saved is Jesus(Acts 4:12). Across the gulf that sin has made come his words, “I am the way, the truth, and the life.” There is but one mediator between God and man(1 Timothy 2:5). In heaven this great truth was announced. A voice from the throne was heard, saying, “Sacrifice and offering thou wouldst not, but a body hast thou prepared me.”(Hebrews 10:5) ... [RH November 11, 1890, par. 5](#)

“The angels of God are ever moving up and down from earth to Heaven, and from Heaven to earth. All the miracles of Christ performed for the afflicted and suffering were, by the power of God, through the ministration of angels. Christ condescended to take humanity, and thus he unites his interests with the fallen sons and daughters of Adam here below, while his divinity grasps the throne of God. And thus Christ opens the **communication** of man with God, and God with man. All the blessings from God to man are through the ministration of holy angels.” [2SP 67.1-2](#)

The angels of glory find their joy in giving,—giving love and tireless watchcare to souls that are fallen and unholy. Heavenly beings woo the hearts of men; they bring to this dark world light from the courts above; by gentle and patient ministry they move upon the human spirit, to bring the lost into a fellowship with Christ which is even closer than they themselves can know. [DA 21.1](#)

The experience of Philip, directed by an angel from heaven to go to the place where he met one seeking for truth; of Cornelius, visited by an angel with a message from God; of Peter, in prison and condemned to death, led by an angel forth to safety—all show the closeness of the connection between heaven and earth. [AA 152.3](#)

To the worker for God the record of these angel visits should bring strength and courage. Today, as verily as in the days of the apostles, heavenly messengers are passing through the length and breadth of the land, seeking to comfort the sorrowing, to protect the impenitent, to win the hearts of men to Christ. We cannot see them personally; nevertheless they are with us, guiding, directing, protecting. AA 152.4

Heaven is brought near to earth by that **mystic ladder**, the base of which is firmly planted on the earth, while the topmost round reaches the throne of the Infinite. Angels are constantly ascending and descending this ladder of shining brightness, bearing the prayers of the needy and distressed to the Father above, and bringing blessing and hope, courage and help, to the children of men. These angels of light create a heavenly atmosphere about the soul, lifting us toward the unseen and the eternal. We cannot behold their forms with our natural sight; only by spiritual vision can we discern heavenly things. The spiritual ear alone can hear the harmony of heavenly voices. [AA 153.1](#)

“The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear Him, and delivereth them.” [Psalm 34:7](#). God commissions His angels to save His chosen ones from calamity, to guard them from “the pestilence that walketh in darkness” and “the destruction that wasteth at noonday.” [Psalm 91:6](#). Again and again have angels talked with men as a man speaketh with a friend, and led them to places of security. Again and again have the encouraging words of angels renewed the drooping spirits of the faithful and, carrying their minds above the things of earth, caused them to behold by faith the white robes, the crowns, the palm branches of victory, which overcomers will receive when they surround the great white throne. AA 153.2

It is the work of the angels to come close to the tried, the suffering, the tempted. They labor untiringly in behalf of those for whom Christ died. When sinners are led to give themselves to the Saviour, angels bear the tidings heavenward, and there is great rejoicing among the heavenly host. “Joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine just persons, which need no repentance.” [Luke 15:7](#). A report is borne to heaven of every successful effort on our part to dispel the darkness and to spread abroad the knowledge of Christ. As the deed is recounted before the Father, joy thrills through all the heavenly host. AA 153.3

The principalities and powers of heaven are watching the warfare which, under apparently discouraging circumstances, God's servants are carrying on... All the heavenly angels are at the service of the humble, believing people of God... AA 154.1

We need to understand better than we do the mission of the angels. It would be well to remember that every true child of God has the co-operation of heavenly beings. Invisible armies of light and power attend the meek and lowly ones who believe and claim the promises of God. Cherubim and seraphim, and angels that excel in strength, stand at God's right hand, “all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation.” [Hebrews 1:14](#). [AA 154.2](#)

In a vision of the night he sees a **mystic ladder**, its base resting upon the earth and its top reaching above the starry host to the highest heavens. Angel messengers are ascending and descending this ladder of shining brightness, showing him the pathway of communication between earth and heaven... [4T465.2](#)

... the **mystic ladder**, on which descended and ascended the angels of heaven, was designed to teach a great truth in regard to the plan of salvation... the only name given among men whereby they can be saved is Jesus. Across the gulf that sin has made come his words, “I am the way, the truth, and the life.” There is but one mediator between God and man... We would point you to Christ, the way, the truth, the life—the mystic ladder between heaven and earth... **Christ is the mystic ladder**, the base of which rests upon the earth, and whose topmost round reaches to the throne of the Infinite... Christ has bridged the gulf which sin had made, and has bound earth and heaven together... Christ planted the ladder firmly upon the earth. The ladder reaches unto the highest heaven... angels pass to and fro with messages from God to man, with petition and praise from man to God. Through the divine nature, Christ was one

with the Father; and by assuming humanity, he identified himself with man... In the vision of Jacob was represented the union of the human and the divine in Christ... As the angels pass to and fro on the ladder, God is represented as looking down with favor upon the children of men because of the merit of his Son... All warfare is useless unless Christ's power is combined with human effort. But while we can do nothing without him, we have something to do in connection with him. At no time must we relax our spiritual vigilance... We are to rejoice that the atonement is complete; and believing in Christ as our complete Saviour, we may know that the Father loves us, even as he loves his Son. "The Mystic Ladder" -Ellen White, RH November 11, 1890

What has Christ not done that fallen humanity might be restored to uprightness, and be reconciled to God? Jesus is the great restorer. In consequence of sin, earth was separated from heaven; but Jesus bridged the impassable gulf, united the fallen world with heaven, linked finite man with the infinite God; upon the mystic ladder... RH February 10, 1891, par. 10

Christ virtually says, On the bank of Jordan the heavens were opened before me, and the Spirit descended like a dove upon me. That scene at Jordan was but a token to evidence that I was the Son of God. If you believe in me as such, your faith shall be quickened and you shall see that the heavens will be opened[Jn1:51], and shall never be closed. I have opened them for you, and the angels of God, that are united with me in the reconciliation between earth and Heaven, uniting the believers on the earth with the Father above, will be ascending, bearing the prayers of the needy and distressed from the earth to the Father above, and descending, bringing blessings of hope, courage, health, and life, for the children of men. 2SP 67.1

Christ is the Ladder; the foot on the earth in His human nature, the top in heaven in His divine nature. His human arm encircles the race while His divine arm lays hold upon the Infinite. All the intercourse between heaven and earth since the fall is by the Ladder. 19MR 338.4

What sort of communication between heaven & earth is not by the mystic ladder?

Remembrance

John 14:26 But the Comforter, *which is the Holy Ghost*, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your **remembrance**, whatsoever I have said unto you.

Angels are watching with intense interest to see how man is dealing with his fellow men. When they see one manifest Christlike sympathy for the erring, they press to his side and bring to his remembrance words to speak that will be as the bread of life to the soul. So "God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus." Philippians 4:19. Your testimony in its genuineness and reality He will make powerful in the power of the life to come. The word of the Lord will be in your mouth as truth and righteousness." {COL 148.4}

But angels are round about those who are willing to be taught in divine things; and in the time of great necessity they will bring to their remembrance the very truths which are needed. Thus, "when the enemy shall come in like a flood, the Spirit of the Lord shall lift up a standard against him." Isaiah 59:19. The Great Controversy, p. 600

"Christ has risen from the dead, proclaiming over the tomb, "I am the resurrection and the life." He has sent His Spirit into our world to bring all things to our remembrance." — (Ellen G. White, *Signs of the Times*, June 26, 1901)

Through the ministry of the angels, the Holy Spirit is enabled to work upon the mind and heart of the human agent... YI July 5, 1894, par. 5

Power Outside of Us

The idea of keeping that sin ever before the mind, and offering the blood of the slain lamb as a confession of entire dependence upon a Power outside of himself, was torture to the high spirit of Cain... [10LtMs, Lt 57, 1895, par. 6](#)

“Abide in me.” Do not stand outside of Christ, as many professed Christians of today. To “abide in me, and I in you” is a possible thing to do, and the invitation would not be given if you could not do this. [[John 15:4](#).] Jesus our Saviour is constantly drawing you by His Holy Spirit, working with your mind that you will abide with Christ. You have wandered from Him who is your light, your life, your salvation. The blessings He bestows are all connected with your own individual action. Shall Christ be refused? He says, “Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out.” [John 6:37](#). Of another class He says, “Ye will not come to me, that ye might have life.” [John 5:40](#). The Lord Jesus knew man could not save himself. He must be saved by a power outside of himself. [13LtMs, Ms 194, 1898, par. 9](#)

[Romans 7:18](#) For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing...

Knowledge

[John 17:3](#) And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.

“Grace and peace” will be multiplied “through the knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord.” Here is the Source of all spiritual power, and faith must be in constant exercise, for all spiritual life is from Christ. Knowledge of God inspires faith in Him as the only channel to convey Heaven's blessing to the soul, elevating, ennobling, refining the soul, as—through the knowledge of God—it is brought up to the high attainments of glory and virtue. “According as His divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him that hath called us to glory and virtue: whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.” Here the Christian is encouraged by an assurance of divine help, if he will comply with the conditions. [19MR 339.4](#)

What is the Source of all spiritual power?

[John 6:61](#) When Jesus knew in himself that his disciples murmured at it, he said unto them, Doth this(the idea of eating Me) offend you?... [63](#) It is the spirit that quickeneth(gives life); the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life.

[Romans 8:9](#) But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his. [10](#) And if Christ *be* in you, the body *is* dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness. (It is the words of knowledge that Christ speaks through the inspired writers, His angels, and through believers that are spirit and life)

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“Reach up, my children, higher and still higher, taking hold of one line of faith after another. Walk and work in love to God and the poor oppressed ones, and the Lord will be your helper. “Verily, verily, I say unto you, Hereafter ye shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of man.” Jesus the precious Saviour, the Son of the living God, is the ladder uniting the celestial world with the terrestrial. His divinity lays hold of the throne of God. His humanity touches the earth. His human arm encircles the entire human race. Through Jesus Christ the angelic ministrations in love, in comfort, in reproof, in light, reach us. Oh thank the Lord, for He is good, and His mercies endure forever. [Lt 152-1896.10](#)

Mystic Ladder Addendum

.... As he slept, a strange light broke upon his vision; and lo, from the plain on which he lay, vast shadowy stairs seemed to lead upward to the very gates of heaven, and upon them **angels of God were passing up and down**; while from the glory above, the **divine voice**[from Father in Heaven, at the top of the ladder] was heard in a message of comfort and hope. **Thus was made known to Jacob that which met the need and longing of his soul—a Saviour.** With joy and gratitude he saw revealed a way by which he, a sinner, could be restored to communion with God. **The mystic ladder of his dream represented Jesus, the only medium of communication between God and man.** [SC 19.2](#)

All personal considerations should be laid aside; we must listen for the word of God through his ambassadors. Christ is ever sending messages to those who listen for his voice. On the night of our Saviour's agony in the garden of Gethsemane, **the sleeping disciples heard not the voice of Jesus; they had a dim sense of the angel's presence, but lost the power and glory of the scene by drowsiness and stupor, and thus failed to receive the evidence which would have strengthened their souls** for the terrible scenes before them. Thus **the very men who most need divine instruction often fail to receive it, because they do not place themselves in communication with Heaven. Satan is ever seeking to impress and control the mind, and none of us are safe, except as we have a constant connection with God.** We must momentarily receive supplies from Heaven; and if we would be kept by the power of God, we must be obedient to all his requirements. [T30 30.2](#)

Regarding the above phrase “they do not place themselves in communication with Heaven”, consider that the “The mystic ladder of his[Jacob's] dream represented Jesus, the only medium of communication between God and man.” [SC 19.2](#)

How does Christ do this? The model of the mystic ladder shows us that this communication is through His angels, and so does Zech 4: “Let every soul note the importance of having a supply of oil. Fill your lamps with holy oil from the two olive trees. This oil is the symbol of the Holy Spirit, which is poured[by angels] into the minds of believers, that they may be co-workers with heavenly agencies. {[1888 1761.2](#)}

So, it could be said that “**Christ is ever sending messages to those who listen for his voice**” via the holy angels who pour these messages “into the minds of believers”.

[Psalm 91:11](#) For he shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways.

The angels of glory find their joy in giving,—giving love and tireless watchcare to souls that are fallen and unholy. Heavenly beings woo the hearts of men; they bring to this dark world light from the courts above; by gentle and patient ministry they move upon the human spirit, to bring the lost into a fellowship with Christ which is even closer than they themselves can know. (DA 21.1)

But turning from all lesser representations, we behold God in Jesus. Looking unto Jesus we see that it is the glory of our God to give. “I do nothing of Myself,” said Christ; “the living Father hath sent Me, and I live by the Father.” “I seek not Mine own glory,” but the glory of Him that sent Me. [John 8:28; 6:57; 8:50; 7:18.](#) In these words is set forth the great principle which is the law of life for the universe. All things Christ received from God, but He took to give. So in the heavenly courts, in His ministry for all created beings: through the beloved Son, **the Father's life flows out to all; through the Son it returns, in praise and joyous service, a tide of love, to the great Source of all. And thus through Christ the circuit of beneficence is complete, representing the character of the great Giver, the law of life.** (DA 21.2)

Thus we are to serve God. He only serves who acts up to the highest standard of obedience. **All who would be sons and daughters of God must prove themselves co-workers with God and Christ and the heavenly angels. This is the test for every soul.** Of those who faithfully serve Him the Lord says, “They shall be Mine... in that day when I make up My jewels; and I will spare them, as a man spareth his own son that serveth him.” [Malachi 3:17. COL 283.1](#)