

## **The Power Above**

Brothers and Sisters. There is an unseen power all around us that protects and directs us for good. Although we cannot see it nor always feel it, we know it is there by observation and as taught us from other informed sources. With it we can determine which direction we must go, even when times are dark. It also protects us without us knowing, forming a protective layer on high that buffers us from fiery darts that may come our way.

This power has a name in the scientific world. It is called by them the 'geomagnetic field' or, more commonly, the Earth's magnetic field. Is that the power you were thinking of? You can see the effect of this power yourself by obtaining and observing a simple compass. The needle of a working compass points us toward the magnetic pole. People have used compasses for centuries for navigation by land and sea. Various other organisms ranging from soil bacteria to pigeons are believed able to perceive magnetic force (magnetoception) and use them for migration and navigation. We know also that this field serves to deflect most of the solar wind (energy in the form of plasma and particles from the sun), whose charged particles would otherwise strip away the ozone layer that serves to protect us here on Earth from harmful ultraviolet radiation. The beautiful Northern Lights are but one more evidence of this protection.

In much the same way, there is also an unseen spiritual power all around us that protects and directs us for good. Although we often cannot see it nor feel it, we know it is there by observation and as taught to us from other informed sources – from scripture and from the prophets. You can feel the effect of this power for yourself by praying with faith and real intent. With it we can determine which direction we must go, even when times are dark. It also protects us without us knowing, forming a protective layer from on high that can buffer us from the fiery darts of the adversary that come our way. We call this the power of God, the influence of his Holy Spirit or the 'Holy Ghost'.

## **The Holy Ghost**

We are taught ([lds.org/topics/holy-ghost](https://www.lds.org/topics/holy-ghost)) that: “The Holy Ghost is the third member of the Godhead. He is a personage of spirit, without a body of flesh and bones. He is often referred to as the Spirit, the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of God, the Spirit of the Lord, or the Comforter.” and that “The Holy Ghost works in perfect unity with Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ, fulfilling several roles to help us live righteously and receive the blessings of the gospel.

“He 'witnesses of the Father and the Son' ([2 Nephi 31:18](#)) and reveals and teaches 'the truth of all things' ([Moroni 10:5](#)). We can receive a sure testimony of Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ only by the power of the Holy Ghost. His communication to our spirit carries far more certainty than any communication we can receive through our natural senses. As we strive to stay on the path that leads to eternal life, the Holy Ghost can guide us in our decisions and protect us from physical and spiritual danger. Through Him, we can receive gifts of the Spirit for our benefit and for the benefit of those we love and serve (see [D&C 46:9-11](#)).

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“He is the Comforter ([John 14:26](#)). As the soothing voice of a loving parent can quiet a crying child, the whisperings of the Spirit can calm our fears, hush the nagging worries of our life, and comfort us when we grieve. The Holy Ghost can fill us “with hope and perfect love” and “teach [us] the peaceable things of the kingdom” ([Moroni 8:26](#); [D&C 36:2](#)). Through His power, we are sanctified as we repent, receive the ordinances of baptism and confirmation, and remain true to our covenants (see [Mosiah 5:1-6](#); [3 Nephi 27:20](#); [Moses 6:64-68](#)).

“He is the Holy Spirit of Promise (see [Ephesians 1:13](#); [D&C 132:7, 18-19, 26](#)). In this capacity, He confirms that the priesthood ordinances we have received and the covenants we have made are acceptable to God. This approval depends on our continued faithfulness. All honest seekers of the truth can feel the influence of the Holy Ghost, leading them to Jesus Christ and His gospel. However, the fulness of the blessings given through the Holy Ghost are available only to those who receive the gift of the Holy Ghost and remain worthy.”

### **Ministering Angels**

I would talk today a little further of 'Ministering Angels'. [2 Nephi 32:3](#) teaches us that: “Angels speak by the power of the Holy Ghost; wherefore, they speak the words of Christ [..]”. I believe that the gift and power of the Holy Ghost, the still small voice, is often implemented and felt by us through the ministering of these angels, an unseen power all around us that protects and directs us for good. Although we cannot always see them nor feel them, we know they are there by observation and as taught us from other informed sources.

God sometimes chooses to speak directly to man, to a chosen prophet. In addition, from the beginning of time, messengers have been sent from God to preach the gospel to man. These messengers speak to us by the power of the Holy Ghost. That is how it has always been done. The scriptures recite numerous instances where angels have appeared personally. To name but a few: to Adam, Abraham, Moses, Daniel, and the Old Testament prophets. To Lehi, Nephi and his brothers, Alma the Younger, the Brother of Jared, to all the people at the temple in the Americas when Christ appeared after his resurrection, and to Mormon and Moroni in the Book of Mormon. To Zacharias, Mary, Joseph, and the shepherds watching their flocks, and to Saul/Paul and to Christ himself while in his mortal ministry in the New Testament. To Joseph Smith and prophets in our day. In other words, throughout the ages it has been recorded that ministering angels have been sent to inspire and preach, to guide and teach us.

Elder Dallin H. Oaks in his Oct 1998 conference talk '[The Aaronic Priesthood and the Sacrament](#)' taught further, “But the ministering of angels can also be unseen. Angelic messages can be delivered by a voice or merely by thoughts or feelings communicated to the mind. [..] Nephi described three manifestations of the ministering of angels when he reminded his rebellious brothers that (1) they had “seen an angel,” (2) they had “heard his voice from time to time,” and (3) also that an angel had “spoken unto [them] in a still small voice” though they were “past feeling” and “could not feel his words” ([1 Ne. 17:45](#)) [.. and Elder Oaks concludes with this observation ..] Most angelic communications are felt or heard rather than seen.”

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Ministering angels are sent to guide and direct us when needed, perhaps more often than we know and act under the power of the Holy Ghost. However, this I know: Angels are among us.

Moroni, the last Nephite prophet of his time includes for us to read some powerful and amazing teachings, that he had received from from his father Mormon, on the subject of Faith, Hope and Charity. Within his first topic of Faith he provides deeper teachings and information on the ministering of angels. He was not writing this for his people in his day, for they had already repeatedly rejected his message and had already fallen away or been destroyed. His message instead was directed to us in our day for our benefit. He (Mormon) writes:

[Moroni 7:22](#) “For behold, God knowing all things, being from everlasting to everlasting, behold, he sent angels to minister unto the children of men, to make manifest concerning the coming of Christ; and in Christ there should come every good thing. 23 And God also declared unto prophets, by his own mouth, that Christ should come. 24 And behold, there were divers ways that he did manifest things unto the children of men, which were good; and all things which are good cometh of Christ; otherwise men were fallen, and there could no good thing come unto them. 25 Wherefore, by the ministering of angels, and by every word which proceeded forth out of the mouth of God, men began to exercise faith in Christ; and thus by faith, they did lay hold upon every good thing; and thus it was until the coming of Christ.”

In modern scripture we are made to understand that the Lord uses various means to get his message to us; [D&C 20:35](#) “And we know that these things are true and according to the revelations [.. which come ..] by the gift and power of the Holy Ghost, [or by] the voice of God [directly to his prophets], or [by] the ministering of angels.” [D&C 43:25](#) “How oft have I called upon you by the mouth of my servants, and by the ministering of angels, and by mine own voice, and by the voice of thunderings, and by the voice of lightnings, and by the voice of tempests, and by the voice of earthquakes, and great hailstorms, and by the voice of famines and pestilences of every kind, and by the great sound of a trump, and by the voice of judgment, and by the voice of mercy all the day long, and by the voice of glory and honor and the riches of eternal life, and would have saved you with an everlasting salvation, but ye would not!”

Mormon then asks us ([Moroni 7:29](#)) “.. have miracles ceased? Behold I say unto you, Nay; neither have angels ceased to minister unto the children of men. 30 For behold, they are subject unto him, to minister according to the word of his command, showing themselves unto them of strong faith and a firm mind in every form of godliness. 31 And the office of their ministry is to call men unto repentance, and to fulfill and to do the work of the covenants of the Father, which he hath made unto the children of men, to prepare the way among the children of men, by declaring the word of Christ unto the chosen vessels of the Lord, that they may bear testimony of him. 32 And by so doing, the Lord God prepareth the way that the residue of men may have faith in Christ, that the Holy Ghost may have place in their hearts, according to the power thereof; and after this manner bringeth to pass the Father, the covenants which he hath made unto the children of men.”

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Elder James E. Faust in his Apr 2006 talk '[A Royal Priesthood](#)' said, "I would like to say a word about the ministering of angels. In ancient and modern times angels have appeared and given instruction, warnings, and direction, which benefited the people they visited. We do not consciously realize the extent to which ministering angels affect our lives. President Joseph F. Smith said, 'In like manner our fathers and mothers, brothers, sisters and friends who have passed away from this earth, having been faithful, and worthy to enjoy these rights and privileges, may have a mission given them to visit their relatives and friends upon the earth again, bringing from the divine presence messages of love, of warning, or reproof and instruction, to those whom they had learned to love in the flesh.' [Elder Faust continues:] Many of us feel that we have had this experience."

And finally, we are taught in modern scripture ([Doctrine and Covenants 107:20](#)) that "the power and authority of the lesser, or Aaronic Priesthood, is to hold the *keys of the ministering of angels*, and to administer in outward ordinances, the letter of the gospel, the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins, agreeable to the covenants and commandments." When we fulfill our callings here, we are also acting under the power of the Holy Spirit and become ministering angels to our fellowman, to our loved ones here. Our Father, does not seem to draw a large distinction on whether his angels are not yet born, currently living, or no longer with us, he sees us in a more eternal perspective.

### **Why not today?**

Why then are ministering of angels and other types of miracles talked so little of in our day? I believe there are several reasons but I feel primarily it has to do with our individual agency and the purpose for our time here.

Firstly: Do miracles by themselves create faith? No. As noted when Christ was in Jerusalem by John; "But though he had done so many miracles before them, yet they believed not on him:" ([John 12:37](#)) Blessings and miracles will come to the faithful, and strengthen their faith, but does not often make believers of the unfaithful. Or perhaps we are like the converted Lamanites mentioned by Christ in 3 Nephi, who "because of their faith in me at the time of their conversion, were baptized with fire and with the Holy Ghost, and they knew it not." ([3 Nephi 9:20](#)). Since these messengers are unseen, I suspect we rarely fully recognize all that they have done and are doing for us to help us succeed.

Secondly: The purpose of our time here on Earth would be frustrated. The veil, our forgetting, has a purpose – to 'see if we will do the will of the Lord'. This life is our test. We get to choose without the distraction of too many competing voices urging us this way and that. The choice must be made clear, we need to know what we are choosing, but the Lord keeps it balanced so we can demonstrate our faith through our choices and actions. The Book of Mormon teaches that "there must be opposition in all things" and that "[..] God gave unto man that he should act for himself. Wherefore, man could not act for himself save it should be that he was enticed by the one or the other." ([2 Ne 2:16](#)). We know and often discuss how Satan and his forces are all around us trying to influence us. We sometimes forget that even more corresponding forces for good from God are also at work counteracting those influences and allowing us to make the deciding choices. ([Chronicles 32:7](#)) "Be strong and courageous, be not

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afraid nor dismayed [..]: for there be more with us than with him: 8 With him is an arm of flesh; but with us is the Lord our God to help us, and to fight our battles.”

Thirdly: There is a time and a place. Those receiving these sacred and personal experiences are counseled or perhaps commanded to keep them to themselves. For example, in Jerusalem after the transfiguration on the mountain, “he charged them that they should tell no man what things they had seen, till the Son of man were risen from the dead.” ([Mark 9:9](#)). Besides being sacred and personal, publishing these experiences publicly often would not, on their own, assist others along their path. The bible puts it this way: “Give not that which is holy unto the dogs, neither cast ye your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn again and rend you.” ([Matt 7:6](#)). These experiences are more appropriate for personal journals and histories and only at other public times and places as moved on by the spirit.

And finally: Have miracles really ceased? No, of course not! We are guided in our work in life and in the church. When working on indexing or family history, many of you, like me, have felt guidance or direction in finding the necessary records or information. As missionaries, we have been guided to find individuals and families at the right place and time, ready to hear the gospel. In raising your family or performing your duties at church or as visiting/home teachers, you have often felt guided to say or do things that benefit those you are called to care for and teach. We pray for these things in our daily prayers – for safety, health and direction and guidance for ourselves and for our loved ones. Are we now surprised that we received them? Looking back, we see how the Lord has blessed us despite our imperfections and trials.

I testify today that there are unseen powers all around us that protect and direct us for good. Although we cannot see them nor always feel them, we know they are there by observation and as taught us from other informed sources, by living prophets and in the scriptures. If we are faithful, perhaps one day we will be assigned to assist in these duties ourselves for our loved ones taking their test here on earth, or perhaps that is also your current calling ..