

# Wellspring

June – July 2008 Isaiah 58.6

*All things are possible with God*

[A publication of Broken Yoke Ministries, Inc.]



## An Angel in Disguise?

By Bob Van Domelen

<sup>20</sup> See, I am sending an angel ahead of you to guard you along the way and to bring you to the place I have prepared." (Exodus 23.20)

At first glance over my shoulder, it would be too simple to reject the notion that I have been visited by an angel. There have not been any blinding lights, no unearthly vision waking me from a deep sleep, and to my knowledge, only a handful of times when I felt myself in a real conversation with God. I don't say that last part often, though, because such things can make people wonder. And before you think it, no, I am no more special to God than any of you reading this.

My education in the matter of angels, however, is pretty limited to what I learned as a child, but maybe it's time to re-visit the topic—especially in light of this journey you and I are on.

Part of this topic comes because of something I heard in a talk given at a prayer meeting I attended. Before starting his talk, the speaker told us to close our eyes and imagine ourselves in a state of peace.

After about fifteen seconds, we were told to open our eyes and then raise our hand if our experience of peace included the absence of stress, tension, anxiety, or of the removal of specific situations. Most of us raised our hands.

He then he went on to quote these words:

*Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.* (John 14.27)

The peace we all thought was so wonderful, he shared, was the kind of peace the world offered, a peace that was defined by the *absence* of negative things. God's peace, he went on, was to be in the midst of a negative situation knowing that God was *with* us regardless of the outcome.

If peace means to be separated from tension, then nothing changes with this kind of peace in our lives or in the lives of those we love because all we do is run from the tension. But if we acknowledge God's presence in ALL situations, we have the ability to come through tension and strife with the possibility of positive change.

Being separated from tension is not merely a matter of finding a place to hide and being completely alone. Being separated from tension can also be achieved by choosing belief patterns that have the least amount of resistance or make the fewest demands on us.

For some, this means choosing a church where the message is about God's love but rarely, if ever, about the manner in which they are to love their neighbors, to deal

with social injustice, or to confront their own failings. These people leave church feeling affirmed but life doesn't change much for them. The office might still be the same old battleground, money is still short—especially for the items on the "I want" list—and painful secrets or memories they might carry inside haven't really gone away.

Okay, so what happened to the angels I mentioned at the beginning of this article?

In Scripture, angels are often spoken of as messengers of God. We also read that Jesus told those who came for Him in the Garden of Gethsemane, "*Do you think I cannot call on my Father, and he will at once put at my disposal more than twelve legions of angels?*" so we can presume that they are especially powerful.

"Touched by an Angel," a popular TV series, made angels a little more human and involved them more actively in the lives of people. And lest I forget, I can still hear my grandmother say, "Be an angel, Bob," followed by a request to do something for her.

When I came across the opening verse, I actually saw angels as a bit of all three—not really a Scriptural position to take but if viewed as a way God often speaks to us, my focus is reasonable. And if what I share sounds a lot like my grandma's use of the word angel, that's okay. She was a good woman.

During my teen years, no one was really talking about the issue of homosexuality very much—at least not in the manner it is today. My denominational beliefs certainly included the notion that same-sex behaviors were immoral but in some ways that's like seeing a posted speed limit on the highway and knowing that sooner or later the sign will mean little or nothing. After all, don't most police allow for a small margin of sinning in this respect?

The angels in this time frame were those who knew something of my struggle but didn't allow that knowledge to influence their ability to treat me with compassion, respect, and encouragement. Have you met someone like this?

One day I met another angel but I didn't think of him that way at the time. You see, this person had written a booklet describing his freedom from homosexual behavior, a freedom that had been in effect for more than eight years. It was the first time I had heard that such a freedom was even possible.

I wrote him a letter explaining my excitement and desire to learn more. I eventually received information that he had not only fallen once, but several times. Not much of an angel if you ask me. But he was an angel of the Lord despite his fallen nature because for the first time I started

to believe that I *could* change. *He* was not the way to change, only an announcement that one could. Have you met someone like this?

Then I met a man who felt led by God to start a support group system for those with same-gender attractions, corresponded with him, and eventually attended meetings he led.

This “angel” had a family to support and ministry wasn’t paying his bills, so he made the difficult decision to resign. I really wanted him to continue the ministry, but we both knew that he was serving as he felt called by the Lord to serve. The fact that he stepped away did not make him any less the angel introduced to me. He was an encourager with a heart and love for the work of God and, like the other angel, was not the path I and others were to follow. Both men were directional signs the Lord placed in our lives. Have you met someone like this?

My first Leanne Payne Pastoral Care Ministries conference was followed by my first Exodus International conference—literally the gathering place of hundreds of angels. Those in attendance offered one another (and me) hope and encouragement as well as a true joy in seeking the Lord in all things. Far from perfect (and who but Christ is), God used each of them in His fashion to draw me closer to His will, His way, and His love. Have you met people like these?

There is a common thread that all of these “angels” have. They all reminded me that some decisions I would need to make would be difficult decisions. They reminded me that I needed to be able to say no to certain behaviors and relationships even though I really wanted them.

The tension-free message others offered pointed out that I was born with same-gender attractions and that I did myself a disfavor by refusing the path they believed God had given me. Some times I was led to believe that I could never have true happiness unless my belief system was in tune with theirs. Have you met people like this?

*“See, I am sending an angel ahead of you to guard you along the way and to bring you to the place I have prepared.”*

I believe that God keeps His promises and I believe that “angels” have been sent to bring me to the place God has prepared for me, although they did not always make me feel comfortable. Through them I am reminded that change and growth are a matter of the kind of self-discipline clearly evident in God’s word. If you look closely, you’ve met and still meet your own angels. The question is, are you paying attention? □

**Broken Yoke Ministries is a nonprofit 501 (c) (3) corporation and operates solely on the contributions of people such as you. All donations to this ministry are tax deductible and will be recognized. While there is no charge for this newsletter, it can only be published if there are funds available to make that possible.**

Send your donations to:

**Broken Yoke Ministries, Inc  
PO Box 5824  
De Pere, WI 54115-5824**

## Important Notice

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**If you know of individuals who once received this newsletter and have wondered why their copy of this June issue was not in their mailbox, tell them to write and request being put back on our *Wellspring* mailing list.**

## Wisconsin Ministry Locations

### Broken Yoke

P.O. Box 5824  
De Pere, WI 54115-5824  
262-751-1128  
Bob@brokenyoke.org

### Meetings in Pewaukee:

**Support Group** (weekly)

Tuesday, 7:00PM

**Website:**

<http://www.brokenyoke.org>

**Newsletter:**

*Wellspring* (published bimonthly)

*Note: This newsletter and some back issues are available in pdf format on our website. If you don't have Adobe Acrobat Reader, there are links that allow you to download that program free.*



### Redeemed Ministries

A support system for women  
Support Group (bi-weekly)  
Call 414-607-1935 for info

### Reclamation Resources

P.O. Box 1062  
Oshkosh, WI 54902  
920-303-1041  
<http://www.reclamationrc.org>

## Our Prayer Corner



*Because we care about one another,  
we pray . . .*

- For all those who struggle with same-gender attractions, that they accept the identity God had in mind for them from the beginning.
- For those who will be attending the Exodus International Freedom Conference, that they find angels all over the place.
- For the staff of Exodus International and those who will be speaking or teaching workshops, that they are protected from any design Satan might have to create problems.
- For the preparations and planning of our regional conference (October 24-26), that the efforts of those involved will truly be blessed.
- For today's youth, that they balance the mixed messages they receive about homosexuality against God's word.

- For those on this mailing list, that they know they are welcome to continue receiving *Wellspring* and can do so by sending Bob a note to that effect.
- For Bob and Cathie, that this time of transition is a blessing and that the ministry is stronger for its future.
- For those unable to financially support this ministry, that they pray regularly for Broken Yoke Ministries and all whose lives are affected by it.

*All things are possible with God!*



## Women's Resources

### SE Wisconsin Support Groups:

- Redeemed (see page 2)
- Grace Group

### Books: (see Note below)

- *Out of Egypt* by Jeanette Howard
- *Into the Promised Land* by Jeanette Howard
- *Restoring Sexual Identity* by Anne Paulk
- *Please Don't Say You Need Me* by Jan Silvious

### Workbooks:

- *Taking Back Ground* produced by The Portland Fellowship
- *Beginnings: Healing the Wounded Soul* by Robert Taylor

Call 414-607-1935 for more information

**Note:** Go to <http://exodusbooks.org/Books/> for women's resources including workbooks as well as a women's resource package which includes many of the books listed above along with some others at a discounted price.

## Remember:

Beginning in June, the mailing address for letters and requests for the newsletter will change. The new address will be:

**Broken Yoke Ministries  
PO Box 5824  
De Pere, WI 54115-5824**



## Clinical Counseling

Though some feel that professional counseling offers only a worldly view, there are agencies whose Bible-based practices have proven to be effective resources for those with same-gender attractions.

Some of the Individuals who regularly attend our support group meetings make use of one-on-one counseling knowing that a group setting is not the most effective way to deal with specific same-gender attraction issues they might have. Professional counseling is not mandatory for group participation, but we make clear that our support group facilitators are not professional therapists and should not be seen as such by group members.

If you are reading this article, there is a likelihood that you live with a Christian perspective, deal with the issue of homosexuality personally, know someone who does, or minister in a setting where the issue might surface. If you've been reading this and other newsletters with a similar view over a period of time, you'll also know that we believe change is a process that involves strong commitment, personal motivation, and faith to see the end result.

Finding appropriate professional counseling can be a bit difficult in some areas of the country. To help assist, Exodus International offers links and information on its website ([www.exodus.to](http://www.exodus.to)).

Click on "Find a ministry, counselor, or church in your area" in either of the first two panels and read through the options available. Then explore the links available by clicking on a specific state. This website is a wealth of information, testimonies, and resources available free or for purchase.

Exodus International is also working to see both its professional network and its church network increase in number. If you are interested in becoming a part of either network, contact them at 888-264-0877 or write them at:

**Exodus International  
P.O. Box 540119  
Orlando, FL 32854**

Another source of online information to consider is [www.narth.com](http://www.narth.com) (National Association for Research and Therapy of Homosexuality). This organization of professional therapists believes that the research and understanding of same-gender attractions is far from over and they "uphold the right of individuals with unwanted homosexual attraction to receive effective psychological care, and the right of professionals to offer that care."

Should you contact *any* counseling service, it is always recommended that the issue be clearly stated in the first contact (i.e. "I am seeking freedom from same-gender attractions and/or behaviors") as well as the simple question: "Can you help me achieve my goal?" A response that states such change is not possible is a signal to look elsewhere.

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**Dated Material**

### ***A Little Humor***

A drill sergeant had just chewed out one of his cadets, and as he was walking away, he turned to the cadet and said, "I guess when I die you'll come and dance on my grave." The cadet replied, "Not me, Sarge...no sir! I promised myself that when I got out of the Army I'd never stand in another line!"

