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Judges 13

(2020)

Bible House of Grace contains an easy to read New and Old Testament commentary full of spiritual treasures and pearls, complete with an insightful resource guide illuminating God's love and grace.



Although I believe my aim is pure and God's will perfect this document is still the product of a human man, as to such I neither claim perfect knowledge or perfect understanding.

Judges 13.

Topics.

- Israel sins again, and the angel of the LORD appears to Manoah's wife.
- The angel of the LORD tells Manoah's wife she will give birth to a son.
- Manoah's wife tells Manoah that a man of God visited her.
- The Angel of the LORD appears to Manoah and his wife.
- Manoah invites the angel to stay for a meal and he ascends in a flame.
- Manoah's wife gives birth to Samson.
- An overview of Samson's Nazarite vow.

INTRODUCTION TO THE BOOK OF JUDGES

The Israelites forgot the LORD, and worshipped false gods, so the LORD removed His protection and blessings from them, which resulted in them being oppressed by their enemies and crying to the LORD for deliverance. In answer to their prayer the LORD raised up twelve Judges to deliver them, but not Judges as we think of Judges today or preachers of righteousness, but rather military leaders and fighters, that led Israel to triumph over their enemies and delivered them from their wicked behaviour. Most suppose that Samuel (considered by some to be the last Judge) wrote some parts of the book, while other parts were written at a later time by someone of his generation or a later generation. The primary purpose of the Judges is best articulated in the following words, "The LORD raised up Judges, who saved them out of the hand of those who plundered them. (Judges 2:16). For an overview of the entire book see the title:

- Overview of the Book of Judges (at the beginning of the index).

THE PREVIOUS CHAPTER

Ephraim threatened to burn Jephthah's house over him, so Jephthah attempts to explain to him why he never called them to battle, sometime later, Jephthah with the Gileadites fight against Ephraim, capture the fords of the Jordan river and slay forty-two thousand Ephraimites. Jephthah judged Israel, after him Ibzan judged Israel, after him, Elon judged Israel and after him Abdon judged Israel.

ISRAEL SINS AGAIN

JUDGES 13:1

- **Judges 13:1:** And the people of Israel again did what was evil in the sight of the LORD, so the LORD gave them into the hand of the Philistines for forty years.

The people of Israel again did what was evil as they did in previous times (Judges 3:7) (Judges 4:1) (Judges 6:1) (Judges 10:6). They forsook God's law and turned from the LORD to worship idols and serve pagan gods. For these reasons, God used the Philistines as a staff in his hand, to oppress and afflict them.

The LORD gave them into the hand of the Philistines: up to this point, the nation of the Philistines has only been fleetingly mentioned as oppressors of Israel (Judges 3:31) (Judges 10:7) (Judges 10:11). But from this time to the reign of David they continued to be the prominent enemies of Israel until the time of David. The word, "Philistines" means "emigrants," though they had five major cities, they were not Canaanites, but foreign conquerors. Israelite worship of the gods of the Philistines is briefly spoken of in (Judges 10:6), here in this story of Samson, is the first time that we have any detailed history in connection with the Philistines.

Forty years: It is very likely that Jephthah's great slaughter of the Ephraimites encouraged the Philistines to rise up against Israel, sometime later, when they saw that one of Israel's greatest and strongest tribes was greatly weakened. Their dominion over Israel began before the birth of Samson (Judges 13:5) and continued during Samson's twenty years as Judge of Israel (Judges 15:20), which means the forty years are concurrent with Samson's life. (Judges 14:4). This is the longest oppression that the Israelites ever suffered.

THE ANGEL OF THE LORD APPEARS TO MANOAH'S WIFE

JUDGES 13:2-5

- **Judges 13:2-5:** There was a certain man of Zorah, of the tribe of the Danites, whose name was Manoah. And his wife was barren and had no children. ³ And the angel of the LORD appeared to the woman and said to her, "Behold, you are barren and have not borne children, but you shall conceive and bear a son. ⁴ Therefore be careful and drink no wine or strong drink, and eat nothing unclean, ⁵ for behold, you shall conceive and bear a son. No razor shall come upon his head, for the child shall be a Nazirite to God from the womb, and he shall begin to save Israel from the hand of the Philistines."

2

Zorah: (v2) means "place of hornets." It was a Danite town that belonged to the tribe of Dan (Joshua 19:40-41) lying on the common boundary of Judah and Dan and near the Philistine border. It was from this town and this tribe that Manoah and his son Samson came from.

Manoah: signifies "rest" and was well known in those times among his people, his wife, also referred to as Samson's mother is not named.

Barren women: for a long time, his parents had been childless, as many mothers were who had given birth to those who became renowned for their faith before God, such as Isaac, Jacob, Samuel and John the Baptist all these came from barren mothers, signifying that their calling and Israel's deliverance came only from God, and not by man's power. It is interesting to note, the strongest man that was ever born was born of a barren woman. The following verses show that many renowned women of the Bible were barren:

Sarah.

- Now Sarai, Abram's wife, had borne him no children. She had a female Egyptian servant whose name was Hagar. (Gen. 16:1).

Rebekah.

- Isaac prayed to the LORD for his wife, because she was barren. And the LORD granted his prayer, and Rebekah his wife conceived. (Gen. 25:21).

Hannah.

- He (Elkanah) had two wives. The name of the one was Hannah, and the name of the other, Peninnah. And Peninnah had children, but Hannah had no children. (1 Sam. 1:2).

Elizabeth.

- They (Zechariah and Elizabeth) had no child, because Elizabeth was barren, and both were advanced in years. (Luke 1:7).

Many of the statements used in this chapter are also used in Luke.

- There appeared to him an angel of the Lord standing on the right side of the altar of incense. (Luke 1:11).
- He will be great before the Lord. And he must not drink wine or strong drink, and he will be filled with the Holy Spirit, even from his mother's womb. (Luke 1:15).
- Behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus. (Luke 1:31).
- (As it is written in the Law of the Lord, "Every male who first opens the womb shall be called holy to the Lord") (Luke 2:23).

You shall conceive and bear a son: (v3) the angel of the LORD, appears to Manoah's wife, and tells her that she will bare a son who will begin to deliver Israel out of the hand of the Philistines. This promised child was to be a Nazarite which, means he was to be separated to God's service in a unique manner. When a man or a woman made the vow of a Nazirite (Num. 6:2), to separate themselves to the LORD, they were to observe the following laws:

- Drink no vinegar made from wine or strong drink or drink any juice of grapes or eat grapes, fresh or dried. (Num. 6:3).
- All the days of their separation they were not to eat anything was produced by the grapevine, not even the seeds or the skins. (Num. 6:4).
- To let the locks of their hair of their head grow long (Num. 6:6).
- Not go near a dead body. (Num. 6:6).

3

The following verses show that the time of the Nazirite vow was for a set period of time:

- Until the time is completed for which he separates himself to the LORD, he shall be holy. (Num. 6:5).
- All the days that he separates himself to the LORD he shall not go near a dead body. (Num. 6:6).
- All the days of his separation he is holy to the LORD. (Num. 6:8).
- This is the law for the Nazirite, when the time of his separation has been completed. (Num. 6:13).

The laws of the Nazarite vow are fully laid out in Numbers chapter six. These laws applied to all Israelites, (Lev. 11), who made a Nazarite vow, but was to be especially observed by the wife of Manoah, to impress on her and on the nation the separated character of her son.

Drink no wine or strong drink: (v4) refers to any inebriating and intoxicating alcoholic liquors. (Num. 6:3).

Eat nothing unclean: (v4) refers to all forbidden meats and all other foods that were forbidden. The reason for this was because the child in the womb is nourished with the same food and drink as their mother and since this child was to be a Nazarite from the womb, and even in it, his mother was to abstain both from forbidden food and alcoholic drink according to the Nazarite law.

No razor shall come on his head: (v5) from the time of his birth to the time of his death, this does not mean that he was never to cut his hair, for that would mean his hair would grow to his feet, but that he was never to shave his head bald, for all the days of his vow:

- Samson told Delilah a razor has never come upon my head, for I have been a Nazirite to God from my mother's womb. (Judges 16:17).
- If my head is shaved, then my strength will leave me, and I shall become weak and be like any other man. (Judges 16:17).

Some could take a Nazarite vow for a set period of time:

- All the days of his (anyone who makes a Nazirite vow) of separation, no razor shall touch his head. Until the time is completed for which he separates himself to the LORD, he shall be holy. He shall let the locks of hair of his head grow long. (Num. 6:5)

The following verse clearly shows that Samson was to be under the Nazarite vow for his entire life.

- The child shall be a Nazirite to God from the womb to the day of his death (v7).

He shall begin to save/deliver Israel: (v5), Samson did not completely bring about Israel's full deliverance from the rule and oppression of the Philistines, but after his miraculous strength bought down the Philistines palace killing about three thousand Philistines, and his self-sacrificing death (Judges 16:27-30) greatly afflicted them, their rule and oppression over Israel continued, until, the time of Samuel when the men of Israel struck the Philistines down and repossessed the cities that they had taken from them. (1 Sam. 7:11-14). In this way, God gradually carried on his work against the Philistines, Samson laid the foundation and others that followed built upon it during the times of Eli, Samuel, Saul and especially David.

MANOAH'S WIFE TELLS HIM OF THE ANGELS VISIT

JUDGES 13:6-7

- **Judges 13:6-7:** Then the woman came and told her husband, "A man of God came to me, and his appearance was like the appearance of the angel of God, very awesome (his countenance *was* like the countenance of an angel of God, very terrible). I did not ask him where he was from, and he did not tell me his name, ⁷ but he said to me, 'Behold, you shall conceive and bear a son. So then drink no wine or strong drink, and eat nothing unclean, for the child shall be a Nazirite to God from the womb to the day of his death.'"

In Joshua chapter thirteen the Angel of the LORD is given the following seven titles, showing that this angel was able to appear in different forms.

1. The angel of the LORD.
2. The angel of the LORD whose name is wonderful.
3. A man of God whose appearance was awesome like an angel of God.
4. The man of God.
5. The angel of God.
6. The man.
7. God.

Very terrible: (v6)" in this context these words do not mean that the angel was frightful and struck her with horror, but that he was revered and majestic, which filled her with admiration.

The woman told her husband: (v6), as we observe Manoah's wife words, "a man of God came to me, and his appearance was like the appearance of the angel of God, very awesome," (his countenance *was* like the countenance of an angel of God, very terrible in KJV), and perceive the excitement of her giving her husband the account of the messenger of God's visit, it is clear there is no a hint or doubt in her mind that this messenger was of God. Some may wonder, which version is correct the English Standard Bible translation "awesome" or the King James Bible translation "terrible?" the answer of course is both, for there is no doubt the angel's appearance would have been awesome, and being a sinner

standing before such an awesome and sacred being also terrible, in the sense that when he first appeared she would not know if this awesome being had come to judge her or not. Though she had never seen an angel before, it would be perfectly natural for her to describe the angel as awesome and terrible, since it was the popular and widespread opinion among all people, that celestial beings were more excellent in their nature than mankind, and manifested an extraordinary majesty in their countenances, which struck the human beholder with a sense of awe, admiration and fear.

A man of God: (v6), when angels appeared on earth, they always appeared in human form. Manoah's wife, though awe-struck by the majesty of the angel's countenance and appearance, did not know him to be other than a prophet, or sacred person, sent with a message from God.

I did not ask him where he was from: (v6), any human mind would, at some level, be stunned and shocked, upon seeing the splendour and awe of an angel, and in this overwhelming mental state would not think to ask questions.

A man of God: the following verses show that the expression, "a man of God," refers to a prophet of God.

- There came **a man of God** unto Eli, and said unto him, Thus saith the LORD, etc. (1 Samuel 2:27).
- He said unto him (Saul), Behold now, *there is* in this city **a man of God**, and *he is* an honourable man; all that he saith cometh surely to pass etc. (1 Samuel. 9:6).
- Then said Saul to his servant, But, behold, *if we go*, what shall we bring **the man**? for the bread is spent in our vessels, and *there is* not a present to bring to **the man of God**: what have we? ⁸ And the servant answered Saul again, and said, Behold, I have here at hand the fourth part of a shekel of silver: *that* will I give to **the man of God**. (1 Sam. 9:7-8).
- Then said Saul to his servant, Well said; come, let us go. So they went unto the city where **the man of God was**. (1 Sam. 9:10).
- The word of God came unto Shemaiah **the man of God**, (1 Kings 12:22).
- Behold, there came **a man of God** out of Judah by the word of the LORD etc. (1 Kings 13:1).
- The altar also was rent, and the ashes poured out from the altar, according to the sign which **the man of God** had given by the word of the LORD. ⁶ And the king answered and said unto **the man of God**, Intreat now the face of the LORD thy God, and pray for me, that my hand may be restored me again. And **the man of God** besought the LORD, and the king's hand was restored him again, and became as *it was* before. (1 Kgs 13:5-6).
- Now there dwelt an old prophet in Bethel; and his sons came and told him all the works that **the man of God** had done that day in Bethel: the words which he had spoken unto the king, them they told also to their father. (1 Kings 13:11).

The same expression is applied to Timothy by Paul in the New Testament

- But as for you, **O man of God**, flee these things. Pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, steadfastness, gentleness. (1 Tim. 6:11).
- That **the man of God** may be complete, equipped for every good work. (2 Timothy 3:17).

The woman came and told her husband: after hearing the joyful news, that she would, "conceive and bear a son" (v7), she tells her husband, "A man of God came to her." Even though his countenance was in some manner awesome, he appeared in human form, so she naturally refers to him as a man (i.e., a man of God), which was the common way people in these days referred to a prophet.

Drink no wine or strong drink: (v7) meaning he was to drink nothing with alcohol in it, which was a law of the Nazarite vow.

Eat nothing unclean: (v7) meaning any of the forbidden foods listed in Leviticus that under the law was counted as unclean. For a list of foods and things unclean see Leviticus chapter Eleven.

From the womb to the day of his death: (v7) some were only Nazarites for a set number of days or months according to the length of time they determined for their vow, but Samson's vow was imposed on him from his birth to the day of his death, for he was to be a perpetual Nazarite all the days of his life according to the will of God.

MANOAH PRAYS

JUDGES 13:8

- **Judges 13:8:** Then Manoah prayed to the LORD and said, "O Lord, please let the man of God whom you sent come again to us and teach us what we are to do with the child who will be born."

Notice despite Manoah's wife's long years of barrenness, he did not hesitate or doubt that that a man of God came to her or that the message he spoke would come to pass, but rather immediately goes before the LORD in prayer, desiring that the man of God might appear to them again, to instruct and guide them in how they should raise and train the child.

THE ANGEL APPEARS AGAIN TO MANOAH'S WIFE

JUDGES 13:9

- **Judges 13:9:** And God listened to the voice of Manoah, and the angel of God came again to the woman as she sat in the field. But Manoah her husband was not with her.

God heard Manoah's prayer and graciously answered it, the angel of God came again to his wife as she sat in the field, most likely the same place where he first appeared, in the hope her husband's prayers would be answered, and that the man of God would return to the same spot, which he did, but Manoah was not with her.

MANOAH'S WIFE TELLS HIM OF THE ANGELS VISIT

JUDGES 13:10-11

- **Judges 13:10-11:** So the woman ran quickly and told her husband, "Behold, the man who came to me the other day has appeared to me."¹¹ And Manoah arose and went after his wife and came to the man and said to him, "Are you the man who spoke to this woman?" And he said, "I am."

NOTE: some use the words, "I am," to prove this angel is Jesus, but the reality is, the words, "I am," in this context have no symbolic or mystical meaning, and certainly do not imply that this angel is the Lord Jesus Christ.

For anyone interested in gaining a clear view of the relationship that Our Heavenly Father has with His Son the Lord Jesus Christ, select the title:

- Trinity (the Doctrine of the Trinity), in Various Topics (ON WEBSITE MENU).

It is very likely, when the angel appeared to Manoah's wife, she asked him to wait a moment while she went and brought her husband to him, and he agreed to her request, so with great excitement and joy she ran to her husband and brought him to the angel.

Manoah came to the man: and asks if he is the man his wife spoke to, this question clearly shows that at this time there was no outward awesome or specular manifestation that this man was the Angel of the LORD, which is why at this time, Manoah was not aware it was the Angel of the LORD he was talking to. The man replies, "I am the same man." For though he was an angel and not a man, he appeared in human form and was therefore naturally taken for one.

MANOAH QUESTIONS THE ANGEL

JUDGES 13:12-14

- **Judges 13:12-14:** And Manoah said, "Now when your words come true, what is to be the child's manner of life, and what is his mission?"¹³ And the angel of the LORD said to Manoah, "Of all that I said to the woman let her be careful.¹⁴ She may not eat of anything that comes from the vine, neither let her drink wine or strong drink, or eat any unclean thing. All that I commanded her let her observe."

It is most likely that Manoah was aware of the rules and laws concerning a Nazarite vow for men and women who took upon themselves the vow for a set period of time, but Samson's vow is not a vow he took upon himself, but one that was imposed upon him according to the word of the LORD from his conception. Since the birth of Manoah's son was unique and this angel's visit extraordinary, he was desirous of knowing if there were any further laws and rules that he and his wife should observe as the child grew up.

Manoah words, "Now when your words come true," again show that he had no doubt or hesitation that what this man spoke, was from the LORD.

The words, "what is to be the child's manner of life?" Embrace the following thoughts:

- What type of education should we give him.
- What rules should we teach him?
- What should we do to raise him up as a Nazarite.

And the words, "what is his mission?" Embrace the following thoughts:

- What career path should they guide him on.
- What should they do to make him fit to be the deliverer of Israel?

However, though Manoah deeply desired to know the answers to all these things, the angel never gave him any further information than what he had previously given his wife, which was that he was:

- Not to drink any wine or strong drink. (v4, 7,).
- Not to eat anything unclean. (v4, 7,).
- Never to shave his head bald (i.e., no razor was to come upon his head). (v5).
- He would be a Nazirite to God from the womb to his death. (v5, 7).
- He would begin to save Israel from the Philistines. (v5).

All of the above applies to Samson, but here in verse thirteen the angel of the LORD tells Manoah, that all he has said concerning his child, his wife must also observe, in that she must not eat anything that comes from the vine, neither drink wine or strong drink, or eat any unclean thing. (v14). This is because Samson was to be a Nazirite from the womb (i.e.,

from his conception, prior to his birth) (v5, 7), and that she as his mother would set the example as he grew. Perhaps some of the reasons the angel chose not to give Manoah further information concerning raising his child may have been:

1. He had no doubt Manoah and his wife would teach him the law, rules and statutes of God and raise him up in a godly manner.
2. Had it become public knowledge that his child, was to be a deliverer and saviour of Israel and the Philistines got knowledge of it, they would have plotted to have him killed, much like king Herod plotted to have Jesus killed when he was a child.

NOTICE: though the angel told Manoah's wife that her child would begin to deliver Israel from the Philistines (v5), there is no mention of her telling Manoah of this, nor did the angel repeat it to either of them.

She may not eat anything that comes from the vine: (v14), referring to grape bearing vines, for both her and her child were not only to separate themselves from drinking the vinegar of wine, the liquor from grapes and all types of alcoholic drinks, but were to also separate themselves from eating moist and dried grapes, including the kernels and husks. Summing, it all up, both Samson and his mother were not to drink or eat anything forbidden by the law all the days of Samsons life.

- He (a man or woman that takes upon themselves a Nazarite vow) shall separate himself from wine and strong drink. He shall drink no vinegar made from wine or strong drink and shall not drink any juice of grapes or eat grapes, fresh or dried. ⁴ All the days of his separation he shall eat nothing that is produced by the grapevine, not even the seeds or the skins. ⁵ "All the days of his vow of separation, no razor shall touch his head. Until the time is completed for which he separates himself to the LORD, he shall be holy. He shall let the locks of hair of his head grow long. (Numbers 6:3-5).

MANOAH INVITES THE ANGEL TO STAY FOR A MEAL

JUDGES 13:15-16

- **Judges 13:15-16:** Manoah said to the angel of the LORD, "Please let us detain you and prepare a young goat for you." ¹⁶ And the angel of the LORD said to Manoah, "If you detain me, I will not eat of your food (bread in KJV). But if you prepare a burnt offering, then offer it to the LORD." (For Manoah did not know that he was the angel of the LORD.).

Bread (in KJV) is commonly taken in Scripture for food, and by extension a meal. The words, "prepare a young goat for you" in this context mean prepare a meal for you.

Manoah firstly desired that the man of God would stay and have a meal with him. Remember Manoah still does not realise the man of God he is talking to is the Angel of the LORD, but is still under the impression he is talking to a prophet of God, and as it was the custom of hospitality to invite travellers and strangers in for a meal, Manoah invites him to stay a little longer while he prepared a meal for him. In response, the angel tells him, he will stay for a little longer, but rather than prepare a meal for him, prepare a burnt offering for the LORD, which he did.

THE ANGEL TELLS MANOAH HIS NAME

JUDGES 13:17-18

- **Judges 13:17-18:** ¹⁷ And Manoah said to the angel of the LORD, "What is your name, so that, when your words come true, we may honor you?" And the angel of the LORD said to him, "Why do you ask my name, seeing it is wonderful (secret in the KJV)?"

The words, "we may honour you" if applied to a man, would be manifested by giving gifts of gold, silver and precious jewels etc., and various opulent presents of all kinds, given in gratitude and as a reward for his service, and if to God, it would be by sacrifices, worship and thanksgiving.

What is your name? Manoah may have desired to know his name, and where he lived, so that when he heard his name, he could give a good testimony of him and would be able to send him a message of thanks or gifts of gratitude when the baby was born.

My name, is wonderful (secret in the KJV), which perhaps carries the idea, his name and nature, surpasses knowledge for it is immeasurable and incomprehensible for the human mind to understand, for his being is of divine essence, but by his wonderful and spectacular outward manifestation he makes himself known as far as is needful for us to know.

SNAPSHOT: Manoah asked for instruction in raising his child, but was only given a limited amount of knowledge, not every detail as he wished. This is often the case for many today, God calls, and makes His calling clear to the mind and heart, but does not answer all the questions we might like answered. Certain details are kept secret, of which we must be content to accept, while in this world.

In these times when God is silent, we must walk by faith and trust that God by His Spirit and His word will guide us as we make decisions and choices according to our own godly wisdom.

THE ANGEL ASCENDS IN A FLAME

JUDGES 13:19-21

- **Judges 13:19-21:** So Manoah took the young goat with the grain offering, and offered it on the rock to the LORD, to the one who works wonders, and Manoah and his wife were watching.²⁰ And when the flame went up toward heaven from the altar, the angel of the LORD went up in the flame of the altar. Now Manoah and his wife were watching, and they fell on their faces to the ground.²¹ The angel of the LORD appeared no more to Manoah and to his wife. Then Manoah knew that he was the angel of the LORD.

It was not right for a sacrifice to be offered by anyone other than a priest, nor was it right to offer it in a place God had not appointed, but in this case:

- Though appearing as a man, Manoah took him to be an extra-ordinary prophet, commissioned by God.
- All that Manoah did was done by the order of the angel.
- The angel's presence and his command and authority were sufficient for Manoah to respond in obedience.

The angel of the LORD went up in the flame: (v20) manifesting his supernatural, spiritual and divine nature

The altar: (v20) refers to the part of the very large rock that was used as an altar, and upon where the sacrifice for the burnt offering was laid.

Manoah and his wife fell on their faces: (v20) after seeing the angel go up in a flame Manoah and his wife fell on their faces partly out of the fear of death, for Manoah's response was, "we shall surely die." (v22), and partly out of gratitude and reverence for witnessing such a spectacular, glorious and wonderful manifestation of the Angel of the LORD, for Manoah's wife response was, "the LORD has given us good news and shown us His favour," (v23).

The angel of the LORD appeared no more: (v21) after the angel of the LORD ascended in the flame he did not appear to Manoah or his wife again. After this spectacular, majestic supernatural event Manoah knew that he had been talking to an angel of the LORD.

MANOAH'S FEARS HE WILL DIE

JUDGES 13:22-23

- **Judges 13:22-23:** And Manoah said to his wife, "We shall surely die, for we have seen God."²³ But his wife said to him, "If the LORD had meant to kill us, he would not have accepted a burnt offering and a grain offering at our hands, or shown us all these things, or now announced to us such things as these."

Here Manoah says, we have seen God, yet the Scriptures teach, no man can see God's face and live:

- He said, "I will make all my goodness pass before you and will proclaim before you my name 'The LORD.' And I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will show mercy on whom I will show mercy."²⁰ But," he said, "you cannot see my face, for man shall not see me and live." (Exodus 33:19-20).

Manoah's statement, "we have seen God," does not mean he and his wife literally saw the fulness of God's glory, but rather carries the idea of seeing Him who is invisible, by seeing a manifestation of Him in human form.

We shall surely die: this final manifestation of the Angel of the LORD was so awesome, majestic and spectacular, that Manoah considered it the same as seeing God, and rightly believed, that any man who had seen God's face would not live. (Exod. 33:19-20), however, the Angel of the LORD is not God Himself, but a manifestation of His Spirit in human and angelic form.

The response of Manoah's wife to her husband, shows her to have been less fearful, and a woman of good understanding, for she endeavoured to comfort her husband by saying, if the LORD was pleased to kill them:

1. He would not have received their burnt offering and meat offering which was always a sign of God's acceptance.
2. He would not have shown them his appearance as a divine being in human and angelic form or spoken to them so kindly.
3. He would not have promised them a son who would deliver Israel or told them how to raise him as a Nazarite.

He would never have shown them such favour, if they were to be immediately destroyed.

MANOAH'S WIFE GIVES BIRTH TO SAMSON

JUDGES 13:24-25

- **Judges 13:24-25:** ²⁴ And the woman bore a son and called his name Samson. And the young man grew, and the LORD blessed him. ²⁵ And the Spirit of the LORD began to stir him in Mahaneh-dan, between Zorah and Eshtaol.

Mahaneh Dan (the camp of Dan): refers to the district between Zorah and Eshtaol (Judges 13:25), west of Kirjath-jearim, where the six hundred Danites from Zorah and Eshtaol camped on their way to capture the city of Laish, which they rebuilt and called Dan, after the name of their father. (Judges 18:11-31).

Zorah and Eshtaol: were two cities in the tribe of Dan, that lay upon the borders of the tribe of Judah. The tribe of Dan was prone to Philistine's oppression and ravages, because their territory was near to them, so it was appropriate that God would raise up a deliverer of Israel from their tribe.

The woman bore a son: (v24), after the angel had ascended, Manoah and his wife returned to their home. Soon after she brought forth a son, and gave him the name of Samson. The name "Samson" comes from the Hebrew word (šemeš), which means "sun." In the book of Psalms we read, the LORD God is a sun and shield who bestows favour and honour, and holds no good thing from those who walk uprightly. (Psalm 84:11). It is very possible Manoah's wife gave him this name, because the Angel of the LORD, told her he would be a deliverer of Israel. Even as God delivered and watched over Israel, likewise Samson was called to watch over and deliver his generation and judge the people even as God did.

The young man grew, and the LORD blessed him: (v24) with strength, wisdom, a passion for God's people and a disdain for the Philistines.

The Spirit of the LORD began to stir him: (v24) carries the idea the Spirit aroused:

- His mind with courage and a strong desire to help and deliver God's people.
- His heart and spirit with a zeal and passion for Israel and a strong and devoted sense of patriotism.
- His body with extraordinary strength and military knowledge and skills

SNAPSHOT: prayer is the hearts flame to God, but without Christ, our prayers are but smoke blown in the wind. After seeing the Angel of the LORD'S ascend up in the flame, Manoah's response was one of great fear, saying, "We shall surely die." In contrast to this, his wife's response was one of great faith, saying, "if the LORD had meant to kill us, He would not have accepted a burnt offering from our hands, or blessed us with such good news." (v22-23).

The words of Manoah's wife will bring encouragement to all in Christ, and peace to their heart and mind, if they rest in the confidence that God would not Have given His most beloved Son so that we could be saved, if he intended to forsake us, and leave us to perish when we breath our last breath. When in doubt, we must learn to reason as Manoah's wife did, "if God intended for us to perish under his wrath, He would not have shown us such enormous favour.

OVERVIEW OF SAMSON'S NAZARITE VOW

God imposed the Nazarite vow on Samson from his birth to his death, to identify him as the one appointed to begin Israel's deliverance from the Philistines. (Num. 6:1-21) (Judges 13:4-5).

SAMSON BROKE THE NAZARITE VOW: it did not take Samson long to break the Nazarite vow, showing that Samson, like Jephthah (the Judge before him), would be a Judge with a mixed record of courage and faith, and wise and unwise decisions and choices, nevertheless, though both men were flawed, God used them to rescue His people and commended them for their faith.

- What more shall I say? For time would fail me to tell of Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah, of David and Samuel and the prophets—³³ who through faith conquered kingdoms, enforced justice, obtained promises. (Heb. 11:32-33).

Samson broke the Nazarite vow in the following ways:

- **Taking a Philistine wife:** by taking one of the daughters of the Philistines for his wife, yet, we read in (Judges 14:1-4) that Samson's desire to marry a Philistine woman, was "from the LORD, for he was seeking an opportunity against the Philistines." The apostle James tells us that no one is tempted by God, for God cannot be tempted with evil, and he himself tempts no one. (James 1:13). However, here we see that Samson's sinful action was not outside the scope of God's plan, for God being sovereign is able to work all things according to his plans and purposes according to His will, including our sin.
 - In him we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to the purpose of him who works all things according to the counsel of his will. (Eph. 1:11).
- **Touching a dead body:** he scooped honey out of a dead lion (Judges 14:8-9), but part of the Nazirite vow not only involved never touching a dead body, but even staying away from a dead body. (Num. 6:6).
- **Drinking alcoholic drink:** to celebrate his intended marriage to his Philistine wife he held a feast (Judges 14:10), which always involved alcoholic drink, which was forbidden under the Nazirite vow (Num. 6:3).

Transgressions and sin: the LORD, does not approve of transgressions and sin, but He can use them to accomplish His purposes. Ultimately, God used the sin of Samson to put him in a position where he could slay many of Israel's Philistine enemies, nevertheless though Samson achieved God's purposes, he suffered the consequences of his sin.

This same principle applies to faithful Christians today, our sin and our choices that are contrary to God's word do not prevent Him, from loving us or His ability to work out His sovereign plans and purposes, but it is far better for us if He works out His plan through our obedience, rather than our sin, for though God will not forsake us, our sin and choices that are contrary to His word, will very likely bring grave consequences and pain. For these reasons, it is far better for us, if God works through our obedience to accomplish His purposes, rather than our sin and choices that are contrary to His word, so that we don't have to deal with the suffering and pain such choices may bring.

As the founder of Bible House of Grace, I would like to thank the many Christian scholars, commentators and theologians who have gone before me, and the many today, who have freely made available their works to enhance the knowledge of the Bible to all people worldwide. It is only with the help of these faithful writers that much of Bible House of Grace exists as it does today.