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# Judges 13

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## Judges 13:1–25

## Samson's Birth

### Outline of Chapter 13:

- v. 1 **Oppression by the Philistines**
- vv. 2–7 **The Angel of Jehovah tells the barren wife of Manoah that she will bear a son**
- vv. 8–10 **Manoah prays to Jehovah and the Angel reappears to his wife**
- vv. 11–18 **Manoah speaks to the Angel of Jehovah and tries to detain Him**
- vv. 19–20 **The Angel of Jehovah (Jesus Christ) performs a miracle which points to the cross**
- vv. 21–23 **Manoah thinks that they are going to die and his wife straightens him out**
- vv. 24–25 **The birth of Samson and the Holy Spirit stirs him**

### Charts:

- v. 21 **Why Is This Appearance a Theophany?**

**Introduction:** When I first began my study of this portion of the book of the Judges, I thought that I had a pretty good idea just who Samson was. All of us have heard Bible stories about Samson when we were children, and I even still had a mental image of my youth of this big, long-haired dude, with no eyes, collapsing the pillars of a building and killing the Philistines around him. It is even possible that Thieme taught me about Samson as well. However, none of that prepared me for what was to come. I had no idea what Samson was like until I began this study; and there were times I even wanted to write him off as apocryphal; however, his appearance in the hall of faith (Heb. 11:32) precludes that.

Keil and Delitzsch give us a good introduction to this book and to the next few chapters: *[While] Jephthah, in the power of God, was delivering the tribes on the east of the Jordan from the oppression of the Ammonites, the oppression on the part of the Philistines continued uninterruptedly for forty years in the land to the west of the Jordan (ch. 13:1), and probably increased more and more after the disastrous war during the closing years of the high-priesthood of Eli, in which the Israelites suffered a sad defeat, and even lost the ark of the covenant, which was taken by the Philistines (I Sam. 4). But even during this period, Jehovah the God of Israel did not leave himself without witness, either in the case of His enemies the Philistines, or in that of His people Israel. The triumphant delight of the Philistines at the capture of the ark was soon changed into great and mortal terror, when Dagon their idol had fallen down from its place before the ark of God and was lying upon the threshold of its temple with broken head and arms; and the inhabitants of Ashdod, Gath, and Ekron, to which the ark was taken, were so severely smitten with boils by the hand of Jehovah, that the princes of the Philistines felt constrained to send the ark, which brought nothing but harm to their people, back into the land of the Israelites, and with it a trespass-offering (I Sam. 5–6). At this time the Lord had also raised up a hero for His people in the person of Samson, whose deeds were to prove to the Israelites and Philistines that they God of Israel still possessed the power to help His people and smite His foes.*<sup>1</sup>

Keil and Delitzsch continue: *The life and acts of Samson, who was to begin to deliver Israel out of the hands of the Philistines, and who judged Israel for twenty years under the rule of the Philistines (ch. 13:5 and 15:20), are described in ch. 13–16 with an elaborate fulness which seems quite out of proportion to the help and deliverance which he brought to his people. His birth was foretold to his parents by an appearance of the angel of the Lord, and the boy was set apart as a Nazarite from his mother's womb. When he had grown up, the Spirit of Jehovah began to drive him to seek occasions for showing the Philistines his marvelous strength, and to inflict severe blows upon them in a series of wonderful feats, until at length he was seduced by the bewitching Delilah to make known to her the secret of his supernatural strength, and was betrayed by her into the power of the Philistines, who deprived him*

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<sup>1</sup> Keil & Delitzsch's *Commentary on the Old Testament*; ©1966 Hendrickson Publishers, Inc.; Vol. 2, p. 288.

of the sight of his eyes, and compelled him to perform the hardest and most degraded kinds of slave-labour. From this he was only able to escape by brining about his own death, which he did in such a manner that his enemies were unable to triumph over him, since he killed more of them at his death than he had killed during the whole of his life before. And whilst the small results that followed from the acts of this hero of God do not answer the expectations that might naturally be formed from the miraculous announcement of his birth, the nature of the acts which he performed appears still less to be such as we should expect from a hero impelled by the Spirit of God.<sup>2</sup> In other words, with the background of Samson, we expect so much more. We expect him not to just defeat the Philistines, but to utterly and completely crush them, and to then judge over Israel for then next fifty years in a judgship marked by peace and prosperity. We instead find a man whose head was turned by a pretty face and whose life was ruined because he was unable to fully follow Jehovah, the God of Israel. His failure would result in the incomplete deliverance of Israel.

In the next three chapters, we will study Samson, who, like Ehud who went into Moab alone and assassinated their king (Judges 3:13–30), Samson is also a man who opposed the enemy alone, without an army. Samson is a picture of Jesus Christ, a foreshadowing of our Lord. In this chapter, Samson will be born to parents who do not expect to have a child. This child's birth will be prophesied. The Angel of Jehovah deals primarily with the wife and not with the husband, just as the angel Gabriel will deal primarily with Mary and not with Joseph (Luke 1:26–38). At the end of Judges 16, we will summarize the parallels between the birth and life of Samson and that of our Lord.

Samson, on the other hand, is also a picture of Israel. The NIV Study Bible sets up the analogy for us: *He typifies the nation of Israel—born by special divine provision, consecrated to the Lord from birth and endowed with unique power among his fellowmen. The likeness is even more remarkable in light of his foolish chasing of foreign women, some of ill repute, until he was cleverly subdued by one of them. In this he exemplified Israel, who during the period of the judges constantly prostituted herself to Canaanite gods to her own destruction.*<sup>3</sup> Keil and Delitzsch express the same sentiments: *But just as his strength depended upon the faithful observance of his vow, so his weakness became apparent in his natural character, particularly in his intrigues with the daughters of the Philistines; and in this weakness there was reflected the natural character of the nation generally, and of its constant disposition to fraternize with the heathen.*<sup>4</sup>

Now you may wonder how on earth could one man represent both our Lord Jesus Christ and unfaithful Israel—Samson was somewhat of a dichotomy. In fact, we should be careful to separate in our minds the two Samson's that we meet in the chapters to come—we have the Samson who is a Nazirite, who has been dedicated to God, who is willing even to sacrifice his own life for the many. Then we also have the Samson who would yield to his carnal lusts, who was drawn uncontrollably toward women outside the tribe of Israel—who would reveal the secret of his strength to a woman simply because she was beautiful. Samson was a man of great strength and great weakness—*his strength lay in being a Nazirite; his weakness in yielding to his carnal lusts, and thereby becoming unfaithful to his calling. In both respects he was not only a type of Israel, but, so to speak a mirror in which Israel could see itself and its history. Israel, the Nazirite people—no achievement, however marvellous, that it could not and did not accomplish! Israel, unfaithful to its vows and yielding to a spiritual adultery—no depth of degradation so low, that it would not descend to it! The history of Israel was the history of Samson; his victories were like theirs, till, like him yielding to the seductions of a Delilah, Israel betrayed and lost its Nazirite strength.*<sup>5</sup> Edersheim continues, and relates why such a parallel existed: *Then it was, that once more the Angel of Jehovah came, to teach the people, through Samson, that deliverance could only come by recalling and realising their Nazirite character as a priestly kingdom unto Jehovah; and that the Lord's Nazirite, so long as he remained such, would prove all-powerful through the strength of his God.*<sup>6</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Keil & Delitzsch's *Commentary on the Old Testament*; ©1966 Hendrickson Publishers, Inc.; Vol. 2, p. 288.

<sup>3</sup> *The NIV Study Bible*; ©1995 by The Zondervan Corporation; p. 346.

<sup>4</sup> Keil & Delitzsch's *Commentary on the Old Testament*; ©1966 Hendrickson Publishers, Inc.; Vol. 2, p. 290.

<sup>5</sup> Alfred Edersheim, *Bible History Old Testament*; ©1995 by Hendrickson Publishers, Inc.; p. 382.

<sup>6</sup> Alfred Edersheim, *Bible History Old Testament*; ©1995 by Hendrickson Publishers, Inc.; p. 383.

McGee gives this negative view of Samson's life: *Samson, called to be a judge for his people, called to deliver his people from the oppression of the Philistines, is a carnal man...He never raised an army. He never won a battle. He never rallied the men of Israel to him. Sex was the ruin of this man—this man chosen by God!*<sup>7</sup>

Scofield summarizes Samson's life, which I think would be apropos to quote here: *The character and work of Samson are alike enigmatical. Announced by an angel (13:2–21), he was a Nazirite (Num. 6; Jud. 13:5) who constantly defiled his Nazirite separation through fleshly appetites. Called by God to judge Israel, and endued wonderfully with the Spirit, he accomplished no abiding work for Israel and perished in captivity to his enemies, the Philistines. What was real in the man was his mighty faith in the Lord is a time of doubt and spiritual declension, and this faith God honored (Heb. 11:32).*<sup>8</sup>

There are times throughout the study of these chapters to come that I really came to dislike Samson and some of the really lame things that he did. And there were times when I admired him. We do not fully realize how important it is to be dependent upon God the Holy Spirit. As believers, we could pretty much be diagnosed as having bi-polar disorder. We have the times when we are controlled by our old sin nature and the times when we are filled with the Spirit. Now, many of us believers lead quiet, and relatively moral lives, and the contrast, although extremely important, is not noticeable to those around us. However, there are others of us whose old sin nature is particularly lascivious, making the contrast between being in and out of the Spirit more recognizable. I recall a young female student of mine whom I knew for a year as a believer and interested in God's Word, and quite obviously filled with the Holy Spirit; and the next year I knew her as she had fallen away from God, who had grieved the Holy Spirit. It was like talking to two different people. Samson will be like that to us. He will accomplish a couple of great things in his life and he will instigate a number of lame things in his life. His life is a study in contrasts, a contrast between being filled with the Spirit of God and then acting as a natural man. So few believers grasp how important it is to be filled with the Holy Spirit. Or, if they understand that, they have no clue as to the mechanics. Your life as a believer is meaningless apart from God the Holy Spirit. Your 70 or so years on this earth mean next to nothing if you spend no time filled with the Holy Spirit. I am not talking about some goofy holy roller experience—I am talking about silently naming your sins to God, as you commit sins. **If we acknowledge our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all wrongdoing** (I John 1:9). This is how we walk in light as opposed to walking in darkness (I John 1:5–7). With Samson, we get to see clearly the difference between his walking in the light and walking in darkness. He will act as a preview of coming attractions—the working of the Holy Spirit in his life is a preview of the working of the Holy Spirit in the Church Age.

Judges 13 is the prequel to the birth of Samson. We have very little in the book of the Judges which deals with burnt offerings or anything else in the Mosaic Law; however, in this chapter, we will have a burnt offering made to God. More importantly, we will have the Angel of the Lord, Jesus Christ, make His appearance in the Book of the Judges essentially mid-book, just as He appeared in human history, mid-history. And, one of the most amazing scenes in the book of the Judges, we will have an incredible foreshadowing of the cross. Manoah and his wife, who will become the parents of Samson, cause a burnt offering to ascend to God and suddenly, in the midst of the flames we have the Angel of Jehovah appear and rise up to God in the flames themselves. It is a very powerful image of the judgment which is to come, the judgment for our sins which the Lord Christ Jesus will bear on our behalf.

I should mention that some detractors of Scripture have suggested that Samson was more or less a real person whose life and deeds were exaggerated somewhat for the sake of a good story. There are essentially two reasons given for this viewpoint: (1) Samson performs exactly twelve acts, which carries with it some literary significance; and, (2) some of what Samson does is supernatural or borders on the supernatural. Now me, certainly, I would like to get rid of this story of Samson; however, there is no way that I can. We have no reason to think that this is apocryphal apart from the two reasons just cited. Therefore, let's examine those two objections to the historicity of Samson. First of all, Scripture has to be carefully bent in order to get exactly twelve acts from Samson. He will break the bands that Delilah places on him three times and these will be considered to be three separate acts. Furthermore, some of the great acts of Samson are simply just childish. He sets fire to a bunch of Philistine fields

<sup>7</sup> J. Vernon McGee, *Joshua Judges*, ©1976 by Thru the Bible Books; p. 199.

<sup>8</sup> *The New Scofield Reference Bible*; Dr. C.I. Scofield; ©1967 New York-Oxford University Press; p. 309.

by using some foxes (possibly, jackals). If you are so inclined, after studying the next couple of chapters, let me recommend Keil and Delitzsch, who go into great detail on this point.<sup>9</sup> The second objection reflects a predisposition. Some people are predisposed to say that there is nothing which has ever occurred which is supernatural; and therefore, much of what Samson did, because it is extraordinary, could not have really occurred. That is, they already have determined that the supernatural does not exist, and therefore draw their conclusions based upon this premise. The Bible, by its very nature and purpose, records God's hand in the history of mankind—therefore, supernatural acts will be recorded. If God is unable to perform extraordinary acts, then God is not God.

This portion of the book of Judges picks up without the language which would indicate that we have herein a continuation of Israel's history from the previous chapter. For the past three or four judges, we had the phrase *and after him*. We do not find that phrase here in this chapter. What we do is go back to Judges 10:11, which reads: **And the anger of Jehovah burned against Israel, and He sold them into the hands of the Philistines, and into the hands of the sons of Ammon.** However, after that, the Philistines are not mentioned again until now. The indication is that this chapter should be set down side by side the previous couple chapters, occurring during the same time period, but in a different part of Israel. This provides us with somewhat of a foreshadowing of what is to come. Israel, barely a nation at this point in time, will be carved into two nations, the northern and southern kingdoms, and the history of each will be recorded side-by-side. When we arrive at that portion of Scripture (the book of II Kings and of Chronicles), we will continue to jump back and forth between the two nations, and maintaining a strict chronological approach will become impossible at that point. We have the same thing occur here. The events of these next few chapters run parallel to the events of the previous few—however, it would do an injustice to either history to try to place these in some sort of strict chronological order, even if such an order could be determined. Such an approach would violate the integrity of the individual histories, which is why we deal with them separately.

## Oppression by the Philistines

*Judges 10:7–8*

Slavishly literal:

**And so continued sons of Israel to do the evil in eyes of Y<sup>e</sup>howah and so gave them Y<sup>e</sup>howah into a hand of Philistine—forty years.** Judges 13:1

Moderately literal:

**However, the sons of Israel continued to do evil in the eyes of Y<sup>e</sup>howah, so Y<sup>e</sup>howah gave them into the hand of the Philistines [for] forty years.**

**The people of southern Israel continued to do that which was wrong in the sight of Jehovah, so Jehovah gave them into the hands of the Philistines for forty years.**

Although the Qal imperfect can be used to express continuous action, insofar as it is incomplete action, it can be interpreted in several different ways. Therefore, the Hebrew language has a verb to indicate continuing action and that is *yâçaph* (יָצַף) [pronounced *yaw-SAHPH*], which means *to add, to augment, to continue to do a thing*. Strong's #3254 BDB #414. The Israelites would do evil in the sight of God and then they would correct their evil ways; then they would fall into evil again. This time, God did not step in and solve their problems immediately. **Then the sons of Israel again did evil in the sight of the Jehovah, served the Baals and the Ashtaroth, the gods of Syria, the gods of Sidon, the gods of Moab, the gods of the Philistines; thus they forsook Jehovah and they did not serve Him. And the anger of Jehovah burned against Israel, and He sold them into the hands of the Philistines and into the hands of the sons of Ammon** (Judges 10:6–7). Ammon would afflict Israel on the north and east for eighteen years (Judges 10:7–8) and the Philistines would afflict Israel on the south and the west for forty years. It appears as though the oppression of the Ammonites and the Philistines occurred at the same time. Samuel will later recall these days: **“But they forgot Jehovah their God, so He sold them into the hand of isera, the captain of the army of Hazor, and into the hand of the Philistines and into the hand of the king of Moab, and they fought against**

<sup>9</sup> See Keil & Delitzsch's *Commentary on the Old Testament*; ©1966 Hendrickson Publishers, Inc.; Vol. 2, pp. 290–291 for further discussion on both points..

them. And they cried out to Jehovah and said, 'We have sinned because we have forsaken Jehovah and have served the Baals and the Ashtaroth; but now deliver us from the hands of our enemies, and we will serve You.' " (I Sam. 12:9–10).

Where *the evil* is done is *in*, and then we have the feminine plural construct of 'ayin (אֵינַי) [pronounced *GAH-yin*], which means eyes in this context. Strong's #5869 (and #5871) BDB #744 (and BDB #745). What is actually evil is determined by the norms and standards of God.

Coterminous with the time that Israel was experiencing problems with Ammon on the east, in the south and southwest portions of Israel (primarily Judah, Simeon and Dan) they were plagued by the Philistines, who stood between the coast of the Mediterranean and the tribe of Judah. The Philistines have already been mentioned in Judges 3:31 where Shamgar, a savior of Israel, struck down 600 of them with an ox-goad (which incident is recalled in Judges 10:11). This is a continuation of the mention of the Philistines as found in Judges 10:7. *Zodhiates: The Philistines were a group of people from the Aegean Sea area. Called "the sea people," they had been present in Canaan for centuries in small numbers (Gen. 20, 21, 26). In the thirteenth century B.C., a large number of these "sea people" attempted to conquer Egypt, but were defeated and afterward settled on the coast of Canaan. Even Samson's victory against them (Judg. 16:30) was not the final time that the Philistines were mentioned in regard to Israel. They were evidently still a plague to Israel even in David's day (2 Sam. 5:17–25).*<sup>10</sup>

We also have archeological evidence which confirms the Biblical record here. The Philistines had a very peculiar type of pottery, called, surprisingly enough, *Philistine ware*. From the distribution of this pottery in the land of Palestine found in archeological digs, we find that this confirms the Biblical record found in Judges and I Samuel about the concentration and influence of the Philistines.<sup>11</sup>

One of the problems which we have in dating the book of Judges is the date given by several Biblical scholars for the attack of Barak and Deborah against Jabin is c. 1224 B.C. whereas a date given by ZPEB for this battle is c. 1125 B.C.<sup>12</sup> It is just very difficult to fit in all the subsequent judges and their time periods, even when allowing for some overlapping (like the reigns of Tola in the west and Jair in the east—Judges 10:1–5). Some of the years may be gained back by the date of the oppression of the Philistines. Many want to cut this off at the end of the book of Judges; however, we still find altercations between a very powerful Philistine group and the Israelites in I Sam. 4–7, with the final deliverance from the Philistines occurring in I Sam. 7. If Saul is appointed king in 1043 B.C., then roughly 1050 B.C. would mark the end of Philistine oppression. Although this does not gain for us a century, it does put these dates about 20 years closer.

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## The Angel of Jehovah Tells the Barren Wife of Manoah that She Will Bear a Son

**And so he was, a man certain from Zorah from a tribe of the Danite and his name, Manoah; and his wife [was] barren and she did not bear.**

Judges  
13:2

**And so it was, a certain man from Zorah from the tribe of Dan, and his name [was] Manoah; and his wife [was] barren and she did not bear [children].**

**Now, there was this certain man from Zorah from the tribe of Dan whose name was Manoah, and whose wife was unable to bear children.**

The tribe of Dan is immediately north of Judah and has the Mediterranean coast as its border. Zorah is one of Dan's southernmost cities which had originally been assigned to the tribe of Judah (Joshua 15:33 19:41). Samson was born there and he would be buried near there (Judges 16:31). For some odd reason, the men of Dan, when

<sup>10</sup> *The Complete Word Study Old Testament*; Dr. S. Zodhiates; ©1994 AMG Publishers; p. 682.

<sup>11</sup> *The Zondervan Pictorial Encyclopedia of the Bible*; ©1976; Vol. 3, p. 740.

<sup>12</sup> *The Zondervan Pictorial Encyclopedia of the Bible*; ©1976; Vol. 3, p. 740.



it came to acquiring some additional property in the far north, their point of departure was Zorah. It is possible that this was simply a well-known place in which to gather; it is likely that from there, that the tribe of Dan decided to go northward.

The man is given the description *ʿechâd* (אֶחָד) [pronounced *eh-KHAWD*] and it means *one, first*, but it can also be used in the sense of a *certain* man or *one* [particular] man. Strong's #259 BDB #25. What he has is the feminine singular of *ʿishshâh* (אִשָּׁה) [pronounced *eesh-SHAWH*], which means *woman, wife*. Strong's #802 BDB #61. What we have here is *ish* and *ishah*, much like Adam and the woman. She is given the adjectival description *ʿâqâr* (עָקָר) [pronounced *gaw-KAWR*], and it means *barren*. Strong's #6135 BDB #785. This is followed by the *wâw* conjunction, the negative and the Qal perfect of *yâlad* (יָלַד) [pronounced *yaw-LAHD*], which means *to bear, to be born, to bear, to bring forth, to beget*. Strong's #3205 BDB #408. You might wonder why we have the adjective and then the verb—is the writer of Scripture rubbing this in? Is he making a point? A woman can become barren after she has borne children. This was not the case. This woman had never had children.

So, from the tribe of Dan we have a married couple who have not borne children. The problem here, according to Scripture, is the woman. She had been biologically unable to produce children up until that point in time. This same condition existed, prior to divine intervention, in Sarah, Abraham's wife and Isaac's mother (Gen. 11:30 16:1); Rebekah, wife of Isaac, mother of Jacob (Gen. 25:21); Hannah, mother of Samuel (I Sam. 1:2); and Elizabeth, mother of John the Baptizer (Luke 1:7).<sup>13</sup>

**And so appeared an Angel of Y<sup>e</sup>howah unto the woman and so He said unto her, “Behold, please, you [are] barren and you have not borne and you will conceive and you have borne a son.**

Judges  
13:3

**Then the Angel of Yehowah appeared to the woman and He said to her, “Observe, please, [that] you [are] barren and you have not borne [children]. However, you will conceive and you will bear a son.**

**Suddenly the Angel of Jehovah appeared to this woman and He said to her, “Listen, if you will—you are barren and you have no children. However, you will conceive shortly and bear a son.**

We are not given any details here, other than the Angel of Jehovah, Jesus Christ, appeared to this woman, told her that she was barren and had had no children, but that she would conceive and *bear* a child. In fact, it was so certain, our Lord used the perfect tense.

Now, you may be concerned that I rendered this *an* Angel of Jehovah. Literally, in the Hebrew, there is no definite article, because a noun in the construct state—in this case, *angel*—and nouns in the construct state do not ever take a definite article.<sup>14</sup> When a definite article is applied, it is applied to the noun that the construct is *affixed* to. However, *Y<sup>e</sup>howah* is a proper name, so it will not take on a definite article. Therefore, the Hebrew does not allow for a definite article here. However in v. 6, we will have *the Angel of God*.

We have a similar announcement for the births of Isaac: **Now Jehovah appeared to him by the oaks of Mamre, while he was sitting at the tent door in the heat of the day...and He said, “I will certainly return to you this time next year, and, listen, Sarah your wife will have a son.”** (Gen. 18:1, 10a). Both Isaac and Samson were *types* of our Lord, their births and birth announcements foreshadowing His: **Therefore the Lord Himself will give you a sign: Listen, a virgin will be with child and she will bear a son, and she will call His name Immanuel [which means *God with us*].”** (Isa. 7:14). **Now in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a city in Galilee called Nazareth to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the descendants of David; and the virgin's name was Mary...And the angel said to her, “Do not be afraid, Mary; for you have found grace with God. And listen, you will conceive in your womb, and bear a son, and you will name Him Jesus.”** (Luke 1:26–27, 30–31).

<sup>13</sup> Paraphrased from *The NIV Study Bible*; ©1995 by The Zondervan Corporation; p. 346.

<sup>14</sup> Menahem Mansoor, *Biblical Hebrew Step by Step*, ©1980; Baker Book House; Vol. 1; p. 175.

**“And now take heed please and do not drink wine and strong drink and do not eat all of [the] unclean.**

Judges  
13:4

**“Therefore, please [continue to] take responsibility and do not drink wine or strong drink and do not eat any unclean thing.**

**“Therefore, please continue to act responsibly and with integrity and do not drink alcohol and do not eat that which is unclean.**

Our Lord begins by telling this woman the wâw conjunction and the adverb ʿattâh (אֵתָּהּ) [pronounced *gaht-TAWH*], which is the adverb of time meaning *now*. Sometimes, the idea of time is lost when it is used as a word of incitement, especially when followed by an imperative; it can describe a present state with the wâw conjunction and be translated *and so, thus, things being so, therefore*. Literally, it is *and now*. Strong's #6258 BDB #773.

The imperative which follows is the Niphal imperative of shâmar (שָׁמַר) [pronounced *shaw-MAR*] and it means *keep, guard, watch, preserve*. In the Niphal, which is used far less than the Qal stem, we can better render this as *take heed, take care, be careful to, take responsibility to*. Although the Niphal is generally the passive stem, it is also used to stress the individual effect upon the group. The Niphal also describes an action in progress, so the verb can be accompanied by the word *being* or *continue to*. Strong's #8104 BDB #1036.

At the end, she is told not to eat, and then we have the masculine singular construct of kôl (כֹּל) [pronounced *kole*], which means *the whole, all of, the entirety of, all, every*. When used with a plural noun, we often translate it *all of* and with a singular noun, we translate it *every* or *any*. The Hebrew mind uses the word *every* to mean what we mean when we say *any*. Strong's #3605 BDB #481. The noun associated with this is the masculine singular adjective ʾāmê' (אָמֵא) [pronounced *taw-MAY*], which means *unclean*. Strong's #2931 BDB #379.

Obviously, prior to birth, there are certain health aspects which could be asserted here; however, the key is keeping this child separate from the world and separate from that which is unclean. This was a part of the Nazirite vows (Num. 6:3, 20), which were not unlike the behavior of John the Baptizer (Luke 1:15). More of this is ceremonial and fraught with shadow meaning rather than being a consideration of the woman's and the baby's health. Samson foreshadowed our Lord (which we will take up in detail in a couple of chapters) and John the Baptizer was an herald to our Lord. A similar command was given to Aaron and his sons—as priests, they also foreshadowed our Lord, as well as heralded His coming.

I am hoping that so far, it is obvious that there is a parallel here—right in the middle of all of this darkest of the times of the judges, when life for Israel appears to be its most bleak, an angel comes to a childless couple and promises them that a child will be born to them, a child who must be set apart from all other children, a child who will deliver his people. Now, we did not see this type of thing with Jephthah nor with Gideon, despite the fact that these were great men in a time of great degeneracy. This is very similar to the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ, Whose birth was announced to His mother prior to her conception, also in the midst of very dark times for Israel—the Child to be born would deliver His people from their sins.

**“For, behold you, conceived and bearing of a son and a razor he will not ascend upon his head for a Nazirite of God will be the boy from womb and he [even] he will begin to deliver Israel from a hand of [the] Philistine.”**

Judges  
13:5

**“For, listen you, pregnant, and bearing a son. Furthermore, he will not ascend a razor on his head for a Nazirite of God the boy will be from womb. Then he [even] he, will begin to deliver Israel from the hand of the Philistines.”**

**“For let me inform you that you are pregnant with a son and you will not bring a razor to his head for your boy will be a Nazirite to God (separated to God) from the womb. He will then begin to deliver Israel from the hand of the Philistines.”**

This is not a difficult verse from the standpoint of what it says, but the sentence structure is unusual, which draws great attention to what is being said. I will first give you what some others have done:

<i>The Emphasized Bible</i>	...for lo! thou are about to conceive and bear a son and no razor shall come on his head, for one separate unto God shall the boy be from his birth, and he shall begin to save Israel out of the hand of the Philistines.
NASB	“For behold, you shall conceive and give birth to a son, and no razor shall come upon his head, for the boy shall be a Nazirite to God from the womb; and he shall begin to deliver Israel from the hands of the Philistines.”
<i>Young's Lit. Translation</i>	‘...for, lo, thou art conceiving and bearing a son, and a razor doth not go up on his head, for a Nazirite to God is the youth from the womb, and he doth begin to save Israel out of the hand of the Philistines.’

This verse begins with the explanatory conjunction *kîy* (כִּי) [pronounced *kee*], which means *when, that, for, because*. Strong's #3588 BDB #471. This is followed by the demonstrative particle *hinnêh* (הִנֵּה) [pronounced *hin-NAY*], which means *lo, behold, or, more freely, with observe, look here, look, listen*. Strong's #2009 (and #518, 2006) BDB #243. Affixed to this particle is the feminine singular suffix (which we would have expected to be part of the next verb, or said by itself as an pronoun). This gives us, so far, *for, behold you...*

This is followed by the feminine singular adjective *hârâh* (הָרָה) [pronounced *haw-RAW*], which means *pregnant, with child, having conceived*. The adjective and the verb are spelled alike, although both Owen and Zodhiates identify this as the adjective. Strong's #2030 BDB #248. Jesus Christ speaks to this woman, who formerly was barren. This is followed by the *wâw* conjunction and the feminine singular construct, Qal active participle of *yâlad*, again; (יָלַד) [pronounced *yaw-LAHD*], means *to bear, to be born, to bear, to bring forth, to beget*. Strong's #3205 BDB #408. This is followed by the noun *son*.

The next noun is *razor* (which is a feminine singular), followed by the negative and the 3<sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect of *‘âlâh* (עָלָה) [pronounced *gaw-LAWH*], which means *to go up, to ascend, to rise*. Strong's #5927 BDB #748. In the English, you would think that *razor* is the subject of the verb, but that is not the case. *He* refers to the son. This is followed by *upon* [or, *on*] *his head*.

Then we are given the explanation: “...for a Nazirite of God will be the boy from the womb.” What he will be a Nazirite to God will be from the feminine singular of *beṭen* (בֶּטֶן) [pronounced *BEH-ten*], which means *womb*. Strong's #990 BDB #105. We bypassed this doctrine when we were in Num. 6, so now we will cover it more formally in the **Doctrine of the Nazirite**.

In the second line, we have the Hiphil imperfect of *châlal* (חָלַל) [pronounced *khaw-LAHL*], which means, in the Hiphil, *to begin*. Strong's #2490 BDB #320. This is followed by the phrase: *to deliver Israel from a hand of [the] Philistine*. Notice that there is a precision to this language—Samson will not completely deliver Israel from the oppression of the Philistines—he will begin to deliver them, a deliverance which will be completed later during the time of Samuel the prophet.

Obviously, this means that Samson was born during the subjugation of Israel to the Philistines. Since the Philistines dominated Israel for forty years, we know that Samson's entire life fell within these forty years.

Now, I need to warn you up front that many commentators treat Manoah and his wife as if they were one person in action, thought and deed. Throughout their commentaries, they write *Manoah and his wife did this; Manoah and his wife did that*. Edersheim writes, for instance: *And when the Angel...ascended in the flame that consumed the burnt-offering, then Manoah and his wife, recognising His nature, fell worshipping on the ground.*<sup>15</sup> To the casual reader (you and everyone else who has decided to read the Bible for yourselves), never grasp the fact that Manoah

<sup>15</sup> Alfred Edersheim, *Bible History Old Testament*; ©1995 by Hendrickson Publishers, Inc.; p. 383. Edersheim does note some slight differences between them in that same context.



and his wife are vastly different in what they see, what they comprehend and how they react. These differences are stated in this passage, but with subtlety, which is why you never caught them in the first place.

**And so came the woman and so she spoke to her man, to say, “A man of the God came unto me and his appearance like an appearance of an Angel of the God—frightful, very. And I did not ask Him where from whence He [was] and His name He did not declare to me.**

Judges  
13:6

**And the woman came in and she spoke to her husband, saying, “The man of God came to me and His appearance was like the appearance of the Angel of God—extremely fearful. And I did not ask Him from where He [came] and He did not tell me His name.**

**Then the woman went into her home and said to her husband, “A man of God came to me and He appeared to be the Angel of God—His appearance was extremely fearful. I did not ask Him where He came from and He did not tell me His name.**

Let's see how others have rendered this:

<i>The Emphasized Bible</i>	So the woman came in and told her husband, saying, A man of God came unto me, and his appearance was as the appearance of the messenger of God, reverend exceedingly, —and I asked him not whence he was, and his name he told me not.
NASB	Then the woman came and told her husband, saying, “A man of god came to me and his appearance was like the appearance of the angel of God, very awesome. And I did not ask him where he <i>came</i> from, nor did he tell me his name.
<i>Young's Lit. Translation</i>	And the woman cometh and speaketh to her husband, saying, ‘A man of god hath come unto me, and his appearance <i>is</i> as the appearance of a messenger of God, very fearful, and I have not asked him whence he <i>is</i> , and his name he hath not declared to me;...

What we need to deal with here first is the definite article in the Hebrew. A noun in the construct state—e.g., a *man* of the God or an *angel* of the God—do not take on definite articles. In the Hebrew, the definite article precedes the noun to which the construct is tied. However, that definite article is applied to the entire phrase. So properly, in English, the words in this verse should be rendered **the Man of God** and **the Angel of God**.<sup>16</sup> This is why several translations either render this as *the Angel of God* (NASB, NJB) or footnote it as such (NRSV, REB). In previous and subsequent verses, since Jehovah is a proper noun, the phrase *Angel of Jehovah* will not have a definite article because a construct does not have a definite article before it nor is a proper noun preceded by a definite article. The point in all of this is that this is not just simply an angel from God (which in itself, would be incredible). This is *the Angel of God*, Jesus Christ, the second person of the trinity, the revealed member of the Godhead (see also Gen. 32:24–30 Num. 22:22–35 Judges 6:11). I should point out, so no one goes off the deep end, that the expression, *the man of God*, can refer simply to a person under God's specific direction (e.g., Deut. 33:1 I Sam. 2:27 9:6–10 I Kings 12:22 13:1–10 17:18 I Tim. 6:11 II Tim. 3:17).

When speaking of this man's appearance, the woman twice used the term mar`eh (מַרְעָה) [pronounced *mahr-EH*], which means *the act of seeing, sight, appearance, that which is seen*. Strong's #4758 BDB #909. She describes it further with the Niphal participle of *yârê`* (יָרַע) [pronounced *yaw-RAY*] means *to fear, to fear-respect, to reverence, to have a reverential respect*. In the Niphal, we have a veritable potpourri of meanings: (1) *terrible, dreadful*, used of the desert wilderness in Deut. 1:19 8:15 and of the day of judgment in Joel 2:11 3:4; (2) *Venerable, August* (Gen. 28:17 Psalm 99:3 Job 37:22 Ezek. 1:22); (3) *stupendous, admirable* (Ex. 15:11 Psalm 66:3, 5). In the plural, it can refer to *illustrious deeds*. I'm thinking we should go with *fearful*. Strong's #3372 BDB #431. This is modified by the adverb *m`ôd* (מְאֹד) [pronounced *m<sup>e</sup>-ODE*], which means *exceedingly, extremely, greatly, very*. Strong's #3966 BDB #547. For unusual appearances, see Matt. 28:3 Luke 9:29 Acts 6:15.

<sup>16</sup> This is different from an adjective which follows a noun; they both have the definite article or both do not. Demonstrative adjectives and their nouns always have definite articles.

What she did not do was the Qal perfect of *shâ`al* (שׂאֵל) [pronounced *shaw-AHL*], which means *to ask, to petition, to request, to inquire, to question, to interrogate*. Strong's #7592 BDB #981. This is appended by the 3<sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular suffix and followed by the adverb *ʿêy* (אֵי) [pronounced *āy*], which means *where*. When prefixed to the *mîn* preposition and the masculine singular demonstrative adjective, together they mean *whence, from where*. *ʿêy* = Strong's #335 BDB #32. This is followed by the 3<sup>rd</sup> person masculine personal pronoun, which often implies the verb *to be*. Literally, this is: "...and I did not ask him where from whence He [was]."

You will note their relationship—Manoah and his wife's. She knows exactly the first things her husband is going to ask, and these are the unimportant things. He will want to know *who was this guy?, what did he look like?, where did he come from?* So she tells him what he wants to know immediately, and then she quickly moves on to what is important. Surely you know someone who can finish your sentences for you and can tell what you are thinking by looking at you. Manoah and his wife had been married a long time. When Manoah runs into the Angel of God, the first thing he will ask is what His name is (Judges 13:17).

Now, a minor question: did Manoah's wife know that this was the Angel of God? In this verse, she tells her husband that she spoke to a Man of God, which can be applied to a prophet or to someone in an intercessory position, e.g., Moses (Deut. 33:1). When we come into contact with something or some event which is truly miraculous, we tend to under-report what occurred as opposed to over-exaggerate. The idea that the Angel of God could appear to her was beyond her imagination. She is not going to tell her husband that this was the Angel of Jehovah. She will tell him that He is the Man of God whose appearance is like that of the Angel of God. Bear in mind that she has never seen the Angel of Jehovah before, so how she determined that He looked like the Angel of Jehovah is not a question which Manoah asked himself. However, he took what she said at face value and was unaware of Who this Person was. We know that Manoah did not know Who He was, whereas his wife did. In Judges 13:17–18, the man asks the name of the Angel of Jehovah. In Judges 13:16, the Angel refuses to fellowship with Manoah. In Judges 13:19–21, there are three separate occasions when Manoah is mentioned in conjunction with his wife and the events which transpired. However, in v. 21, it is Manoah who realizes that He is the Angel of Jehovah and in v. 22, he exclaims that they are both going to die because they have seen God. Manoah's wife, without missing a beat, explains to him why Jehovah is not going to kill them. Now this explains what Manoah did not catch originally—why didn't she ask this Person Who He was? Because she knew Who He was. She knew He was the Angel of Jehovah. She did not have to ask. However, she is not going to say this to her husband.

So, again, why didn't she just tell her husband that she spoke with the Angel of Jehovah? (1) When faced with an extraordinary experience, she, like many people, under-reported the events. (2) Secondly, she understood that her husband had authority over her and that the Angel of Jehovah appeared to her and not to him. She realized that this could be a problem for him. (3) She knew what he was going to ask (notice how she answers several of his questions before he even asks them); therefore, she also knew roughly what he was going to do. She thought it better for him to find out on his own. (4) She must have known his spiritual condition—either that he was not really a believer or that he was out of fellowship. In either case, telling him that she spoke with the Angel of Jehovah was not the best policy. Telling him that she spoke with a Man of God (which was not inaccurate) Whose name she did not ask, seemed to her to be the best policy. After all, due to his spiritual condition, the Angel of Jehovah might not appear to Manoah, which could then cause a plethora of problems between them.

**"And so He said to me, 'Behold, you [have] conceived and are bearing a son; and so, drink no wine and strong drink and eat not all of an unclean [thing], for a Nazirite of God will be the boy from the birth until a day of his death.'**"

Judges  
13:7

**"So He said to me, 'Listen carefully, you [have] conceived and are bearing a son. Therefore, drink no wine or strong drink and do not eat any unclean [thing], for the boy will be a Nazirite of God from birth until the day of his death.'**"

**"Then He said to me, "Listen carefully, you have conceived and you are bearing a son. Therefore, do not drink wine or strong liquor and do not eat that which is unclean, because this boy is to be a Nazirite of God from birth to the day he dies."**

After he told her she was bearing a son, we have the wâw conjunction and the adverb 'attâh (הַתָּעַ) [pronounced *gâht-TAWH*], which means *now*. With the wâw conjunction, the idea of time is lost when it is used as a word of incitement, especially when followed by an imperative. Together, they mean *and so, thus, things being so, therefore*. Literally, it is *and now*. Strong's #6258 BDB #773.

Several of my sources incorrectly note that Samson was not a Nazirite by choice. Keil and Delitzsch write: *In the case of Samson this consecration of the life to God was not an act of his own free will, or a vow voluntarily taken; but it was imposed upon him by divine command from his conception and birth.*<sup>17</sup> That is only half of the story. Don't you think that Samson had free will? Don't you think that Samson could have chucked all of this at age 16 and decided to be a plumber instead? Use your damn head—Samson definitely had free will; his parents chose for him to be a Nazirite, but he chose to maintain these vows and this lifestyle. It is with this passage, and other similar ones, that we get a better feel for predestination. What if Samson just didn't feel like it? What if he was not even a believer in Jesus Christ? What options did he have at birth? Did the Holy Spirit indwell him and operate him like a robot (which is like demon possession works)? Hopefully, you, even those of you who have struggled and struggled with the idea of predestination and foreordination, realize that Samson was a man who had free will; he was a man who exercised his free will; and he was a believe in Jesus Christ—and that, by choice. He made mistakes and he did some great things. God called him and he responded. Knowing his free will choices from eternity past, God called him even from the womb. What was to happen was foreordained, but Samson's free will played a part.

For those of you with children, you may understand better. There are some things that will set your kids off; and you know their areas of weakness and their areas of strength. You also know pretty much how their free will is going to act in certain situations. There are times when you arrange a scenario or do things knowing full-well what the child's reaction will be. In fact, there are times you expect the reaction to be what it is. You may make a trip to the dentist always followed with some sort of reward—an ice cream cone or whatever—something to look forward to and something to offset the apprehension. There are special things that you do for your son or daughter—theme parks, camping out, buying some toy—that you know will appeal to you child and make them temporarily happy. You have not overruled their free will, per se, you have simply taken their free will into consideration when making plans.

I have personally made a lot of bonehead mistakes—things which I knew were wrong and I went ahead and did them anyway. Many of these mistakes have resulted in things in my life being the way they are. There are decisions which I made that resulted in great pain and turmoil. Believe it or not, God knew well in advance every wrong choice that I would make, and He planned for that. He planned my punishment, He planned the way for me to get through it, and He planned the results that would occur when I chose to become filled with the Holy Spirit again. At no time did I ever catch God by surprise with some dull move on my part. God never looked down from heaven and said, "Holy crap, I never thought Kukis was going to do that. I guess that I will just have to kick his butt or something." God knew from eternity past every single good and every single poor decision that I would make and He planned for it.

God knows our free will and He respects it, even though there are times it would have been better had He reached into my soul and turned my negative into positive. You have a teenage son or daughter. In a few years, they will be living out on their own making their own decisions. Although you have exercised a lot of control and discipline in their lives for the past 10+ years, you give them a little rope. You allow them to make some bad decisions. You stand back, even though it is difficult to watch them do what is wrong and then suffer the consequences. For some children, this is the only way that they learn. They have to make a thousand bad decisions, bump their heads into a wall a thousand times, and, at some point, recognize what they did was wrong and fix it or do it right. Some time in the teen years, you have to allow for them to make some bad decisions. God allows for us to make a lot of bad decisions and to learn from them.

What kind of provisions does He provide for us? Just what you would expect; He sees to it that we can learn His Word, if we so choose. Every believer, regardless of geographical location and logistical barrier, can, if he is

<sup>17</sup> Keil & Delitzsch's *Commentary on the Old Testament*; ©1966 Hendrickson Publishers, Inc.; Vol. 2, p. 289.

positive, gain access to the teaching of God's Word. Oft times, when it appears as though such a thing is impossible, it is more of a reflection upon their free will. After all, there are some believers in the United States who do not even own a Bible; or own a Bible and haven't looked at it in years. There are a lot of believers in the United States who haven't been to church for a month, or a year or several years.

The second thing which God gives to us is the Holy Spirit. Every believer is baptized into Christ and every believer is baptized and indwelt by the Holy Spirit. We do not have a bunch of half-Christians wandering around who need to get the Holy Spirit in order to function in their lives. Now, what some believers need is to be filled with the Holy Spirit; however, that can be accomplished apart from any weird ceremonies and apart from going to scary churches. Any believer who desires to be filled with the Spirit has merely to name his sins to God and he will be instantly filled with the Holy Spirit.

These two things—God's Word and God's Spirit—go hand-in-hand. One is almost worthless without the other. It does you no good whatsoever to attempt to learn God's Word and to not name your sins to God. It is like hearing the gospel when you are not ready—you may for a moment grasp what it says, and then, thirty minutes later, you forget what was said. And becoming filled with the Spirit apart from God's Word—do you not realize that you cannot use your old norms and standards from your old life once you become a believer in Jesus Christ? Don't you realize that you are in full-tilt rebellion against God and that many of the things that you hold so dear and believe are so right, are actually so wrong in God's eyes. A lot of hippies believed in Jesus Christ. Some of them felt that most of their hippy ways were the ways of Jesus and some will even defend that to you. This is because they lack discernment and that is because they lack God's Word. Being filled with the Holy Spirit will only last a few seconds until they sin again and commit some act which they do not even realize is a sin. Some homosexuals believe in Jesus Christ and are delivered from the wrath that is to come—but instead of taking God's Word at face value, they twist or ignore Scripture to accommodate their own sins. As a result, we have *homosexual* churches where some of the people who attend are actually believers in Jesus Christ, yet they continue to practice sin. Some of these might be occasionally filled with the Spirit; however, they lose that almost immediately due to their hard-heartedness.

Now, with regards to Samson: in the great preparations for Samson's birth, God knew exactly what would happen. You must understand that there is more to the birth and life of Samson than the simple partial deliverance of Israel. Samson would be a shadow-figure of our Lord to come, and we will cover that in partial detail in this chapter and in great detail to come. We often tend to focus on that which is unimportant; or upon that which is less important. Some of the commentators which I read focused upon the works of Samson in relation to the deliverance of Israel and concluded that he really didn't do all the much when you come right down to it. That is absolutely correct. His deliverance of Israel was partial and ill-fated. However, what he did in his life—actually, what God did with his life—is far greater than the killing of a few thousand Philistines. In Samson, we will see a shadow of our Lord Jesus Christ to come—this was the true greatness and impact of his life. You might be thinking: *Yeah, but he didn't do anything*. One of the greatest things that Abraham ever did was *offer* his son Isaac to Jehovah God. Abraham did not ever complete this human sacrifice and human sacrifice is against everything taught in Scripture. However, what was painted was a very careful picture of the sacrifice of Jesus Christ, God's only Son, on the cross. You have no idea how many Jews have heard the gospel, were directed to the offering of Abraham's only Son and the great substitution which took place—and, God caused them to understand this passage for the first time in their lives and they believed in Jesus Christ. Abraham never actually sacrificed his son Isaac—in that non-act, Abraham did the one of the greatest things in his entire life. Believe it or not, your life will have a great spiritual impact often when you don't even realize it. You might not feel as though you have done anything—however, God does all of the work. Oft times, we can sit back, enjoy the ride, and receive eternal rewards for it.

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## **Manoah Prays to Jehovah and the Angel Reappears to His Wife**



And so made petition Manoah unto Y<sup>e</sup>howah and so he said, “Please, O Lord, a Man of the God Whom You sent, He will come in please again unto us and He will inform us what we [are to] do for the boy, the one being born.”

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13:8

So Manoah appealed [by prayer] to God, and he said, “Please, O Lord, a Man of God Whom You sent, let Him please come in again to us and He will teach us what we [are to] do for the boy—the one being born.”

Therefore, Manoah went to God in prayer, saying, “Please, O Lord, the Man of God Whom You sent—please send Him back to us so that He may teach us what we are to do for our boy who is to be born.”

My first thoughts were: *God knew that Manoah would react in this way—that he would react with positive volition toward this message and that he would call upon God for guidance.* Then I began to think about this somewhat. God appeared to Manoah’s wife, but not originally to Manoah. Manoah will not realize to Whom he is speaking until later in this chapter. Manoah desires for this Man to have fellowship with him (v. 16), yet He will refuse. All indications are that Manoah is an unbeliever up until the sacrifice that he makes in this chapter. Either that, or he is a believer out of fellowship. In either case, Jesus Christ refuses to closely associate with him, and appears to him later only by grace and when he is with his wife.

The first verb is the Qal imperfect of *ʿâthar* (עִתַּר) [pronounced *aw-THAHR* or *gaw-THAHR*], and it means *to pray, to supplicate, to appeal, to petition, to entreaty*. This verb is always directed toward God. Strong’s #6279 BDB #801.

With the particle of entreaty, we can infer the request that the man of God return to Manoah and his wife, hence the addition of the word *let*. What this man of God will do is the Hiphil imperfect of *yârâh* (יָרָה) [pronounced *yaw-RAWH*], which means *to throw, to shoot*. In the Hiphil, this is almost a different word. It is generally translated *teach, instruct, enumerate* (Ex. 24:12 Deut. 33:10 Judges 13:8 Job 6:24); although, a superficial glance seems to indicate that *inform* might be a better translation. However, in the Hiphil, we are dealing with the word *teach*, perhaps in the connection of throwing something down in front of someone else. In the Hiphil, this word can still be used to mean *shoot, throw* (Job 30:19 I Sam. 20:20 II Sam. 11:20). Strong’s #3384 BDB #434. In any case, this appears to be a good sign that this man wants to know what to do—however, keep reading...

This is all being done on behalf of the masculine singular of the noun *naʿar* (נֶעָר) [pronounced *NAH-ġahr*], which means *boy, youth, young man*. It is applied to infants in Ex. 2:6 Judges 13:5, 7 or to a youth in Gen. 34:19 41:12. It can also refer to a slave or a servant, as in Gen. 24:2 II Kings 5:20. This is much like the word *boy* in our language, which, in the South, was applied both to young men and to slaves and later to descendants of slaves. Strong’s #5288 & 5289 BDB #654.

God did not willy-nilly pick any family and drop this young man’s soul into their son. He carefully chose a husband and wife who were believers (or, in the case of the husband, would become a believer) and who would dedicate themselves to the spiritual development of their son.

Now, I don’t want you to go away with the wrong impression here. This prayer of Manoah’s sounds all nice and holy, but the Angel of God has already told his wife what was going to happen and what they were supposed to do. In other words, this was a done deal. So, what is he praying about? What has happened is a tad bit far-fetched, as far as Manoah is concerned and he wants some supernatural confirmation. He does not even appear to be a believer (obviously many unbelievers pray; for some of them, it is the first step toward believing in Jesus Christ). If this is true, then Manoah might even be somewhat concerned that God did not follow the proper protocol by appearing to him first. God knows all of this and what He does is rather humorous—He answers Manoah’s prayer by appearing to the woman again, apart from Manoah.

**And so listened the God in a voice of Manoah and so came in an Angel of the God again unto the woman and she [was] sitting in the field and Manoah, her husband, [was] not with her.**

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13:9

**And God listened [and acted upon] the voice of Manoah and the Angel of the God came again to the woman while she [was] sitting in a field; Manoah, her husband, [was] not with her.**

**And God listened to the voice of Manoah and the Angel of God returned to the woman while she was sitting her their field without her husband.**

The first verb is our old friend *shâma* (שָׁמַע) [pronounced *shaw-MAH*], which means *to listen, listen intently, to listen and obey, to listen and give heed to, to hearken to, to be attentive to, listen and take heed to, listen and take note of, listen and be cognizant of*; and, in this case, *to listen and act upon*. Strong's #8085 BDB #1033. This is followed by a *bêyth* preposition, which is usually rendered *in, into, with*; however, here it is permissible to render it *to*. Direction and proximity are the key. What God listens to is the masculine singular noun *qôwl* (קוֹל) [pronounced *kohl*], which means *sound, voice*. Strong's #6963 BDB #876.

You will note that God listened to the prayer of Manoah and sent back the Angel of God—Jesus Christ—to the woman. Note that this was done apart from the man. Recognize that God does listen to your prayers and He often answers these prayers as we would like, although we do not always know that they have been answered. The fact that God heard Manoah indicates that Manoah was possibly a believer; the fact that God would not closely associate with him indicates that Manoah was probably out of fellowship (from what he says, we can reasonably guess that he was a very religious believer). However, God does hear the prayers of unbelievers—indications would be that He hears certainly the prayers asking for salvation from unbelievers and that He hears prayers closely associated with positive volition (e.g., foxhole promises).

What the angle did was the Qal imperfect of *bôw* (בָּוֹ) [pronounced *boh*], which means *to come in, to come, to go in, to go*. Strong's #935 BDB #97. In three early printed editions, we have *appeared* rather than *bôw*.<sup>18</sup>

**And so hastened the woman and so she ran and so she declared to her husband and so she said unto him, “Behold, appeared unto me the Man Who came in the day unto me!”**

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13:10

**So the woman hastened and ran and made known to her husband and said to him, “Listen, the Man Who came in the [other] day to me appeared to me [again]!”**

**The woman quickly got to her feet and ran to her husband, saying, “Listen, listen—that Man from the other day—He appeared to me again!”**

What we have here are a series of *wâw* consecutives, which give a frenzied pace to the action. The verb prior to husband is the Hiphil imperfect of *nâgad* (נָגַד) [pronounced *naw-GAHD*], which means *to make conspicuous, to make known, to expound, to declare, to inform*. Strong's #5046 BDB #616.

God heard the prayer of Manoah, but chose to appear to his wife instead. This is a further indication that Manoah is either an unbeliever or a believer out of fellowship.

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<sup>18</sup> About 95% of these alternate readings come from Joseph Bryant Rotherham's *The Emphasized Bible*; ©1971 by Kregel Publications; (p. 275, here). Rotherham took these from Ginsburg's Hebrew Notes to his edition of the Hebrew Bible. My point in providing this information is that some people have the mistaken impression that the Bible is weak because it has been so long since the original manuscripts and that what we have is far from the original. In most places, you will note that these alternate readings do not appreciably affect the meaning of the passage.

## Manoah Speaks to the Angel of Jehovah and Tries to Detain Him

And so he arose and so he went Manoah after his woman and so he came unto the Man and so he said to him, “Are you the Man Who spoke unto the woman?” And so He said, “I [am].”

Judges  
13:11

Then he arose and Manoah went after his wife and then he came to the Man and he said to him, “Are you the Man Who spoke to the woman?” And He said, “I [am].”

Then Manoah arose and he followed after his wife. When he came to the Man, he said to Him, “Are you the Man Who was just speaking to the woman?” And he answered, “I am.”

What we have in this verse is not yet a clear statement of deity. In Ex. 3:14 and John 8:58 we have a somewhat different set of words. In this verse, we have the simple answer *ʾānîy* (אֲנִי) [pronounced *aw-NEE*], which is the 1<sup>st</sup> person, singular pronoun in the Hebrew; it simply means *I*; by itself, in answer to a question, it means *I am, it is I*. Strong’s #589 BDB #58. I don’t think that any sort of case could be made here for the divinity of the Angel of God with this answer; it appears to be a simple answer to Manoah’s question.

And so said Manoah, “Now come in Your word what will be a judgment of the boy and [what is] his work?”

Judges  
13:12

Then Manoah said, “Now Your word will come [to pass]; what will be the manner [of life] of the boy and [what is] his work?”

Then Manoah said, “Now, when Your word comes about, what kind of life should we have for the boy and what will be his vocation?”

Let’s see what others have done with this verse:

Bullinger <i>The Emphasized Bible</i>	...what shall be the ordering of the child, and what shall we do with reference to him? And Manoah said, Now let thy words come to pass,— What shall be the rule for the boy and his work?
NASB	And Manoah said, “Now when your words come to pass, what shall be the boy’s mode of life and his vocation?”
Owen’s Translation	And Manoah said, “Now when your words come true, what is to be the boy’s manner of life and what is he to do?”
<i>Young’s Lit. Translation</i>	And Manoah saith, ‘Now let thy words come to pass; what is the custom of the youth—and his work?’

The first thing that Manoah says is the very common adverb *ʿattâh* (עַתָּה) [pronounced *gáht-TAWH*], which means *now*. Strong’s #6258 BDB #773. This is followed by the 3<sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect of the very common verb *bôwʾ* (בּוֹא) [pronounced *boh*], which means *to come in, to come, to go in, to go*. Very loosely, we could render this *come to pass*; bearing in mind that Manoah is out of breath and excited. He uses the most common word in his vocabulary, not because it necessarily fits, but it’s the first thing he can say. Strong’s #935 BDB #97. You will note that two different nuances are given to this statement; Owen and the NASB gives the idea that what has been said will come to pass; Rotherham and Young both ask that these words come to pass. I don’t think that we can impute doubt on the part of Manoah, as he immediately runs out to speak with this man and asks for further direction. I think that the idea of *when* is better suited here, even though it is not outrightly stated in that way.

Then Manoah uses the interrogative (which will apply to the next to statements), and he says, with the verb *to be*, the definite article and the masculine singular noun *mishpâṭ* (מִשְׁפָּט) [pronounced *mish-PAWT*], which means *judgement, a verdict rendered by a judge, the act of deciding a case, the place where a judgement is rendered, manner, custom, fashion*. Strong’s #4941 BDB #1048.

From here we go directly to a wâw conjunction and the masculine singular noun (with a 3<sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular suffix) of The substantive cognate of ʿâsâh, maʿăseh (הַשְׂעִי) [pronounced *mah-ġa-SEH*], which means *deed, work, that which is done*. Strong's #4631 BDB #795. You have to understand that Manoah is asking this question, as, insofar as we know, no one has ever been a Nazirite before. Therefore, even with some knowledge of Scripture, this is still unexplored territory.

What Manoah has to say here is interesting. He sounds as though he has a bona fide spiritual interest in what happens to the child and how they should raise young Samson. However, it is also clear that the Angel of God has chosen to primarily deal with the wife of Manoah. Now, part of that is to give us a correct foreshadowing of the incarnation. Mary, the mother of the humanity of our Lord, had a virgin pregnancy so that her child would not be contaminated by the old sin nature which is passed down through the father. Therefore, the Holy Spirit dealt primarily with her in the conception. Similarly, the Angel of God chooses to deal primarily with Manoah's wife in regards to the birth of Samson. The other reason, as we have discussed, is that Manoah is either an unbeliever or a believer out of fellowship. To go off on a tangent here: we often think that when a believer acts religious and holy that they must be in fellowship. Being in fellowship is simply a matter of being filled with the Holy Spirit, which occurs because a person has recently confessed their sins to God and has not sinned since. Whether they sound or act holy overtly is not the issue. Manoah speaks directly to the Angel of God (vv. 11–16) but he does not realize Who He is (vv. 16–18); it will not be until they make a sacrifice to God when Manoah will realize (vv. 20–21).

It is also important to note that these questions have already been answered. The child is to be brought up a Nazirite and what he should begin to do, at the proper time, is to deliver Israel. The wife already knows this and the husband could have easily asked her (in fact, we don't know whether he did or not or whether his wife told him or not). In any case, these topics have been covered.

**And so said an Angel of Y<sup>e</sup>howah unto Manoah, "That [which] I said unto the woman, she will take responsibility [for]."**

Judges  
13:13

**Then the Angel of Y<sup>e</sup>howah said unto Manoah, "That [which] I said to the woman, she will take responsibility [for]."**

**But the Angel of Jehovah explained to Manoah, "That which I said to the woman, she will personally take responsibility for."**

The Angel of God has already given this information that Manoah requests to Manoah's wife. He stresses here that is her responsibility now. "Dude, step back; we've got it all under control already."

This is quite interesting here; you will note that consistently, the Angel of Jehovah has left the man out of the picture. He appeared at first only to the woman; when the man prayed, He again only appears to the woman. And now, once the man is standing face-to-face with Him asking for direction, the Angel replies that his wife is in charge of this program.. Our parallel is that the virgin birth of Jesus Christ, which this is a foreshadowing of, did not involve the man whatsoever. The woman immaculately conceived our Lord, as He was born of the Holy Spirit. Without going into any detail, when a child is born, he receive 23 chromosomes from each parent; the chromosomes from the man, because he willfully sinned, carry the contamination of the old sin nature. The woman does not contribute to the old sin nature of the child. Therefore, when a Child was immaculately conceived of the Holy Spirit, then He did not carry within Him the decadent old sin nature. In other words, our Lord was born without the indwelling sin nature and could only be tempted from without, the same as Adam and the woman.<sup>19</sup>

**"From all which comes from a vine of wine she will not eat and wine and strong drink she will not drink and all of an unclean thing she will not eat; all that I commanded her, she will take responsibility [for]."**

Judges  
13:14

**"She will not eat from all that comes from a vine of wine; furthermore, she will not drink wine or strong drink; and she will not eat any unclean thing. All that I have commanded her, she will take responsibility [to do]."**

<sup>19</sup> This is a topic which Thieme has gone into great detail about.

**“She will not eat anything which comes from a grape vine (from which wine is made). Furthermore, she will not drink wine or alcohol and she will not eat that which is unclean. Everything which I commanded her to do, she will take responsibility for.”**

In this verse, we have the Piel perfect of *tsâwâh* (נָצַו) [pronounced *tsaw-WAW*], which means *to commission, to mandate, to lay charge upon, to give charge to, charge, command, order*. This is a verb found only in the Piel. In this passage, and in Deut. 4:23, it refers to that which God commanded someone *not to do*. Strong's #6680 BDB #845.

You will note that the Angel of God makes it clear to the man that he is not a participant in the birth or the preparation of the birth of his son. Again, this is to set up an analogy between Samson and Jesus Christ.

The vine of the grape represents the pleasantries of the earth—both the grapes and the wine made from the grapes (you will recall that in Numbers, when the spies returned from spying out the land, they also brought back with them a huge stem of grapes which they carried on poles supported by two men—Num. 13:23). There was to be a separation from these earthly pleasures, both for the mother of Samson and for Samson himself. There were other vines in Israel—e.g., the wild cucumber vine; so the vine *of wine* distinguished it from the other vines in Israel. The progeny of Aaron were also to avoid wine and strong drink (Lev. 10:9) as one sign of separation from the pleasures of the earth.

Apparently, the alpha Septuagint has *he* here instead of *she*.<sup>20</sup> All of the translations which I have and my beta Septuagint have *she*.

**And so said Manoah unto an Angel of Y<sup>h</sup>owah, “Let us detain, please, you and we will make for you a kid of goats.”**

Judges  
13:15

**So Manoah said to the Angel of Y<sup>h</sup>owah, “Let us detain you, please, and prepare for you a kid from the goats.”**

**Then Manoah said to the Angel of Jehovah, “Please, allow us to detain you in order to prepare for you a kid from our goats.”**

The first verb in what he says is the 1<sup>st</sup> person plural, voluntative Qal imperfect of *ʿâtsar* (אָצַר) [pronounced *aw-TSAHR* or *gaw-TSAHR*], which means *to confine, to restrain, to detain, to refrain to shut, to surround, to enclose, to hold back, to restrain by rule*. Strong's #6113 BDB #783. With this verb is the *hê* suffix, which denotes direction. *Let us detain*, is the way we will render this. This is followed by the particle of entreaty, the untranslated notation of a direct object with a 2<sup>nd</sup> person masculine singular suffix.

Obviously, Manoah does not know Who this is. He does not fall down on the ground in fear; he does not worship Him. He does not ask to bring an offering to Him. What Manoah is offering is simply common, mid-eastern hospitality (for those times; see also Gen. 18:1–8 Judges 6:18–19). Killing a kid from the goats was pretty much like offering veal—it was a delicacy. Now, understand, what Manoah was offering was a meal; what the Angel of Jehovah will suggest in the next verse is that it would be more appropriate to offer Him (or, God the Father) a burnt offering.

**And so said an Angel of Y<sup>h</sup>owah unto Manoah, “If you detain me, I will not eat at your food and if you make a burnt offering to Y<sup>h</sup>owah, you will cause her to go up.” (For he did not know Manoah that an Angel of Y<sup>h</sup>owah He [was]).**

Judges  
13:16

**Then the Angel of Y<sup>h</sup>owah said to Manoah, “Though you detain me, I will not eat of your food; and if you prepare a burnt offering, [the n] you will cause it to ascend Y<sup>h</sup>owah.” (For Manoah did not know He [was] the Angel of Y<sup>h</sup>owah).**

<sup>20</sup> *New English Bible*; Oxford University Press, © 1970, p. 342.



**Then the Angel of Jehovah said to Manoah, “Even though you detain Me, I will not eat of your food; instead, you ought to prepare a burnt offering and cause it to ascend to Jehovah.” (For Manoah did not know that He was the Angel of Jehovah).**

This verse has some minor difficulties and some amazing things are to follow, so we will need to get this right.

*The Emphasized Bible* But the messenger of Yahweh said unto Manoah— Though thou detain me yet will I not eat of thy food, and though thou make ready an ascending-sacrifice unto Yahweh must thou cause it to ascend. For Manoah had not discerned that the angel of Yahweh he was.

NASB And the angel of the LORD said to Manoah, “Though you detain me, I will not eat your food, 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.

*Young's Lit. Translation* And the messenger of Jehovah saith unto Manoah, ‘If thou detain me—I do not eat of thy bread; and if thou prepare a burnt-offerings—to Jehovah thou dost offer it;’ for Manoah hath not know that He *is* a messenger of Jehovah.

Twice, in what the Angel of Jehovah says, he uses the hypothetical particle  $\text{`im}$  (אִם) [pronounced *eem*], which generally means *if*. Actually, it can be used as a demonstrative, an interrogative, and as a conditional particle, although the Hebrew does not distinguish these as obviously as does the Arabic. My thinking is that most of the time we could render this with an *if*, unless the second related clause has a negative in it, in which case we would render it *though*. Strong's #518 BDB #49. Therefore, the first phrase could be rendered: “*Though you detain me, I will not eat at your food.*” *Your bread* is preceded by the *bêyth* preposition, which generally means *in, into, with, at, against*. Proximity is the key. *Bread* is a metonymy for a meal; even if Manoah detained the Angel of Jehovah, He would not sit down *at* a meal with them. The key is the fact that Manoah is not a believer in Christ Jesus. He does not really recognize who this Person was.

We have the use of the hypothetical particle again, and this time it is properly rendered *if*. This is followed by the 2<sup>nd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect of  $\text{`asâh}$  (אָשָׂא) [pronounced *gaw-SAWH*] which means *to do, to make, to construct, to fashion, to form, to prepare*. Strong's #6213 BDB #793. What he is to prepare is the feminine singular of  $\text{`ôlâh}$  (אֹלָה) [pronounced *gô-LAW*], which means *burnt offering*. Strong #5930 BDB #750. This is followed by *to Y<sup>e</sup>howah*, which is followed by the 2<sup>nd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect of  $\text{`âlâh}$  (אָלָה) [pronounced *gaw-LAWH*], which means *to go up, to ascend, to rise*. Here, in the Hiphil<sup>21</sup> infinitive construct (in Job 5:26), it would mean *a rising of, an ascending of, a climbing of, a springing up, a shooting forth of*. In the Hiphil, it means *to cause to go up, to lead up, to take up, to bring up*. Strong's #5927 BDB #748.

At first, what the Angel is saying about the offering does not make a whole lot of sense. He tells Manoah that *if he prepares an offering to Jehovah, then he will cause that offering to ascend to Jehovah*. In all actuality, Manoah ought to make an offering to the Angel to Whom he is speaking—this Angel of God is a *theophany*, which is a physical manifestation of God to man. Since the visible member of the Godhead is Jesus Christ, this would be our Lord speaking to Manoah.

What immediately follows, in the next phrase, is a parenthetical statement—Manoah did not realize to Whom he was speaking. Since he does not realize to Whom he is speaking, it would be inappropriate to suggest that Manoah offer a burnt offering to the Angel (see, for instance, Acts 10:25–26 Rev. 19:10 22:8). However, what is appropriate is to offer a burnt offering to God. Either this does not occur to Manoah or he does not take this seriously.

Now you will note that this is not the response which we have had before with the Angel of Jehovah when He spoke to Gideon. When the Angel of Jehovah spoke to Gideon, Gideon also asked for the Angel to remain, which He did, even though Gideon would ask Him for a sign. **And he said to Him, “O Sir, how can I deliver Israel? Observe, my family is the last in Manasseh, and I am the youngest in my father’s house.”** But Jehovah said to him, “I will certainly

<sup>21</sup> If you are following along in Owen’s 4 volume set, he mistakenly calls this a Qal imperfect.

be with you, and you will defeat Midian as one man.” So Gideon said to Him, “If now I have discovered grace in Thy sight, then show me a sign that it is You Who speaks with me. Please do not depart from here, until I come back to You and bring out my offering and lay it before You.” And He said, “I will remain until you return.” Then Gideon went in and prepared a kid and unleavened bread from an ephah of flour; and he placed the meat in a basket and the broth in a pot, and brought them out to Him under the oak and presented them. Then the Angel of God said to him, “Take the meat and the unleavened bread and lay them on this rock, and pour out the broth.” And he did so. Then the Angel of Jehovah put out the end of the staff that was in His hand and touched the meat and the unleavened bread; and fire sprang up from the rock and consumed the meat and the unleavened bread. Then the Angel of Jehovah vanished from his sight. When Gideon saw that He was the Angel of Jehovah, he said, “Alas, O Jehovah God! For now I have seen the Angel of Jehovah face to face!” (Judges 6:15–22). You will note several similarities here. Both Gideon and Manoah desire for the Angel of God to remain with them and neither one fully grasps, at first, Who the Angel of Jehovah is. However, with Gideon, the Angel remains and is gracious to him; with Manoah, the Angel avoids contact and fellowship with him. Again, the most logical reason is that Manoah is either way out of fellowship or he is an unbeliever. Because of the offerings that he offers, my educated guess is that he is an unbeliever.

**And so said Manoah unto an Angel of Y<sup>h</sup>owah, “What [is] your name? When come in Your words and we have honored you?”**

Judges  
13:17

**So then Manoah said to the Angel of Y<sup>h</sup>owah, “What [is] your name, so that when [or, if] Your word comes [to be] that we will honor you.”**

**Then Manoah said to the Angel of Jehovah, “Just what is Your name, so that we may honor you when Your word comes about.”**

The gist of this verse is a bit difficult, so let me include some other translations here:

<i>The Emphasized Bible</i>	Then said Manoah unto the messenger of Yahweh, What is thy name,—that when thy word cometh to pass we may do thee honour?
KJV	And Manoah said unto the angel of the LORD, What <i>is</i> thy name, that, when thy sayings come to pass, we may do thee honor?
NASB	And Manoah said to the angel of the LORD, “What is your name, so that when your words come <i>to pass</i> , we may honor you?”
<i>Young's Lit. Translation</i>	And Manoah saith unto the messenger of Jehovah, ‘What <i>is</i> thy name? when thy words come to pass, then we have honoured thee.’

After Manoah asks Him His name, he throws in the very common conjunction *kîy* (כִּי) [pronounced *kee*], which means *when, that, for, because*. One of the uses of this connective is that it is a reference to time and be rendered *at that time, which, what time, when*. You will note that many of the translators rendered this one short word *so that when* or *that when*. Strong's #3588 BDB #471. Although you don't quite catch it, there is a tinge of doubt; the word *kîy* can also be translated *if* when followed by an imperfect (it is a more certain *if* than *ʾim*; one might consider it a polite *if*). Again, this confirms that Manoah really has no idea just to Whom he is speaking.

When it comes to honoring this person, Manoah is not thinking of animal sacrifices, as that would be inappropriate. It is more likely he is thinking along the lines of presents and the like—that is, in the off chance that this person is right (I speak for the thoughts of Manoah here). It was customary to give gifts to prophets and seers (Num. 12:17 I Sam. 9:7–8 II Kings 5:5, 15). This is not unlike a person coming to you out in the street and handing you what he calls *the winning lottery ticket*. You figure him for half-crazy, but you take it just the same, asking their name in the off-chance that they are correct.

We had a similar situation with Jacob when he wrestled the Angel of God and was body slammed into a permanent injury. However, in this case, Jacob was a believer and when he asked the name of the Angel of Jehovah, he actually suspected Who He was. **Then Jacob asked Him and said, “Please tell me Your name.” But He said, “Why is it that you ask My name?” And He blessed him there. So Jacob named the place Penuel, for *he said*, “I have seen God face to face, yet my life has been preserved.”** (Gen. 32:29–30).

So there is no misunderstanding here, Manoah does not quite get it. He does not realize to Whom he is speaking nor does he fully believe what he has been told. He is probably not a believer in Jesus Christ. This is why the Angel of God chose to deal directly with his wife.

**And so said to him Angel of Y<sup>h</sup>owah, “For what this—you are asking for My name, and he [it] [is] Wonderful?”**

Judges  
13:18

**Then the Angel of Y<sup>h</sup>owah said to him, “Why [is] this? You are asking for My name and it [is] Extraordinary.”**

**Then the Angel of Jehovah replied, “Why are you asking My name? It is Extraordinary.”**

Let's look at a couple of other renderings first of this verse:

<i>The Emphasized Bible</i>	And the messenger of Yahweh said unto him, Wherefore is it that thou shouldst ask after my name, —seeing that it is Wonderful?”
NASB	But the angel of the LORD said to him, “Why do you ask my name, seeing it is wonderful [i.e., incomprehensible]?”
<i>Young's Lit. Translation</i>	And the messenger of Jehovah saith to him, ‘Why <i>is</i> this—thou dost ask for My name? —and it <i>is</i> Wonderful.’

The Angel begins with the lamed prefixed participle and the interrogative particle m<sup>h</sup> (ה מ) [pronounced *maw*], which means *what, how*. Together, they mean *why*. Strong's #4100 BDB #552. This is followed by the masculine singular demonstrative adjective zeh (ה ז) [pronounced *zeh*], which means *here, this*. Strong's #2063, 2088, 2090 BDB #260. This is followed by the 2<sup>nd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect of *to ask*, followed by the lamed preposition and *my name*.

In the final line, the Angel of Jehovah uses the masculine singular, personal pronoun h<sup>u</sup>w<sup>h</sup> (הוּ) [pronounced *hoo*], which refers to His Name. Strong's #1931 BDB #214. Often with the prepositions, the verb *to be* is implied. Then we have the masculine singular adjective ph<sup>l</sup>l<sup>o</sup>y (פִּלְאוֹ) [pronounced *pil-EE*], which means *wonderful, incomprehensible, extraordinary*. It is only found here and in Psalm 139:6, where it is a reference to God's knowledge and being too high for the author of the psalm. This comes from the verb, which means *to be surpassing, to be extraordinary*, which is a verb often applied to God. Strong's #6383 BDB #811. (Verb = Strong's #6381 BDB #810). It is the use of this word in relationship to the Angel's name which tells us that we are speaking of God. **For a child will be born to us, a son will be given to us; and the government will rest upon His shoulders. And His name will be called Wonderful (or, Extraordinary), Counselor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, Prince of Peace. There will be no end to the increase of His government or of peace on the throne of David and over his kingdom—to establish it and to uphold it with justice and righteousness from then on and forevermore. The zeal of Jehovah of the armies will accomplish this.** (Isa. 9:6–7). The few times that an Angel of God is not a Theophany in the Bible, his name is often given (e.g., Michael, the archangel—Jude 9 Rev. 12:7; see Luke 1:26 as well).

Now, this is not the proper name for the Angel of Jehovah. Keil and Delitzsch, after saying something about the Hebrew words found here, write: *The word therefore is not the proper name of the angel of the Lord, but expresses the character of his name; and as the name simply denotes the nature, it expresses the peculiarity of his nature also. It is to be understood in an absolute sense—“absolutely and supremely wonderful” (Seb. Schmidt)—as a predicate belonging to God alone...and not to be toned down as it is by Bertheau, who explains it as signifying “neither easy to utter nor easy to comprehend.”*<sup>22</sup> Edersheim writes: *...in the parallel passage, Isa. 9:6, such names refer not to the being and nature of the Messiah, but to His activity and manifestation—not to what He is, but to what He does.*<sup>23</sup>

We suddenly leave this scene with Manoah and the Angel of God and go to Manoah's home:

<sup>22</sup> Keil & Delitzsch's *Commentary on the Old Testament*; ©1966 Hendrickson Publishers, Inc.; Vol. 2, p. 294.

<sup>23</sup> Alfred Edersheim, *Bible History Old Testament*; ©1995 by Hendrickson Publishers, Inc.; p. 383.

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## The Angel of Jehovah (Jesus Christ) Performs a Miracle Which Points to the Cross

And so took Manoah a kid of the goats and the tribute offering and so caused to ascend upon the rock to Y<sup>h</sup>owah and acting extraordinary to do and Manoah and his woman were looking.

Judges  
13:19

Then Manoah took the kid of the goats and the tribute offering and he caused [the m] to ascend upon the rock to Y<sup>h</sup>owah. And an extraordinary [thing] was done while Manoah and his wife were watching.

**So Manoah took a young goat and a tribute offering and was offering them upon the rock to Jehovah, when a most extraordinary thing occurred while Manoah and his wife looked on.**

We will definitely need to unravel this verse with the help of other translators:

<i>The Emphasized Bible</i>	So Manoah took the kid and the meal-offering, and caused them to ascend upon the rock unto Yahweh, who was about to do wondrously while Manoah and his wife were looking on.
NASB	So Manoah took the kid with the grain offering and offered it on the rock to the LORD, and He performed wonders while Manoah and his wife looked on.
<i>Young's Lit. Translation</i>	And Manoah taketh the kid of the goats, and the present, and offereth on the rock to Jehovah, and He is doing wonderfully, and Manoah and his wife are looking on,...

The second thing that Manoah took was the feminine singular minchâh (מִנְחָה) [pronounced *min-KHAWH*], which means *tribute offering, gift, present*. Strong's #4503 BDB #585. Then, literally, we have *and so he caused to ascend upon the rock to Jehovah*.

Then we have the wâw conjunction the Hiphil participle of pâlà' (פָּלַא) [pronounced *paw-LAW*], which means, in the Hiphil imperfect, *to separate* (it is only found in Lev. 27:2 Num. 6:2\*); in the Hiphil perfect, it means *to do that which is extraordinary, to act or to do that which is distinguishing* (Duet. 28:59 II Chron. 26:15 Psalm 31:21 Isa. 28:29\*); it also appears to have that meaning in the Hiphil infinitive (I Chron. 2:9 Isa. 29:14 Joel 2:26\*) and in the Hiphil participle (Judges 13:19\*). Strong's #6381 BDB #810. This is followed by the lâmed preposition and the Qal infinitive construct of *to do, to make, to prepare*.<sup>24</sup> If you have given this much thought, this simple short phrase is quite difficult to render in the English. A participle often acts as a verbal noun or an adjectival noun. Being followed by the Qal infinitive constructs is difficult, as you would expect them to be the other way around, even in the Hebrew. This gives us *...and acting extraordinarily to do and Manoah and his woman were watching*. This participle lacks number or gender. The two verbs together are rendered *and He performed wonders* (NASB); *and [the angel] did wondrously* (KJV); *And He did a wondrous thing while* (NKJV); *the Angel working wonders* (*The Amplified Bible*); *and the Lord did an amazing thing while* (NIV). What we do not have with these verbs is a clear subject and they are not in the order that we would expect. We might loosely say *and a most extraordinary thing occurred*; however, the writer recognized that it did not *just happen*, but something was actually done, so another loose rendering might be *and a most extraordinary thing was done*. My thinking is that what was to follow was so unusual, as to even cause the *expression* of that occurrence to be unusual.

The final verb is the masculine plural, Qal active participle of râ'âh (רָאָה) [pronounced *raw-AWH*], which means *to see, to look*. Strong's #7200 BDB #906. This last phrase, *Manoah and his wife looking on*, is not found in the alpha Greek manuscript text,<sup>25</sup> although it is found in the beta version. The extraordinary thing which occurred is found in the next verse.

<sup>24</sup> It is not an infinitive in the Greek or in the Latin, which were both translated from the original Hebrew.

<sup>25</sup> According to the NRSV found in *The Complete Parallel Bible*; NRSV, REB, NAB, NJB; Oxford University Press; ©1993; p. 538.

And so was to go up the flame from upon the altar [to] the heavens and so went up an Angel of Y<sup>o</sup>howah in a flame of the altar and Manoah and his woman were looking. And so they fell upon their faces [to the] ground.

Judges  
13:20

And so the flame from the altar was ascending toward the heavens and the Angel of Y<sup>o</sup>howah also ascended in the flame of the altar while Manoah and his wife were watching. Therefore, they fell upon their faces toward the ground.

And, while the flame from the altar shot towards the heavens, the Angel of Jehovah also went up with the flames of the altar while Manoah and his wife watched. They immediately prostrated themselves upon the ground.

We have the directional *hê* suffix found twice in this verse; once with *heavens* and once with the *ground*; and these two occurrences give us a good feel for what it means. We can either supply the prepositions *to* or *toward*; of we can affix the suffix *-ward* to get a more literal rendering; i.e., *heavenward*, *groundward*.

We covered the **Doctrine of Burnt Offerings** in Lev. 1:3 and the **Doctrine of the Levitical Offerings** in Lev. 7:38 (in particular, the **Tribute Offering**); however, we should go back and look at the pertinent portion of those doctrines again.

It is in this verse where we find that the Angel of Jehovah is clearly Jesus Christ. Animal sacrifices were offered primarily for the sins of the person offering the sacrifice. An animal sacrifice speaks of our Lord, without sin and without an old sin nature, offering Himself to God, just as the animals offered were both innocent, without spot or blemish, and their offering was substitutionary. As the flames from their sacrifice shoots heavenward, the Angel of Jehovah is suddenly within that flame and then ascending Himself. He was clearly identified with the flames and His ascension into heaven at the conclusion of the sacrifice looks forward to His ascension into heaven before the apostles in Acts 1. The picture is, of course, of Jesus Christ being judged for our sins. He is completely and totally identified with the sacrifice and the flame of the sacrifice. This obviously is a shadow of our Lord's judgment for our sins on the cross followed by His ascension into heaven. **And every priest stands daily ministering and offering time after time the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins; but He, having offered one sacrifice for sins for all time, sat down at the right hand of God waiting from that time onward until His enemies be made a footstool for His feet. For by one offering He has perfected for all time those who are sanctified** (Heb. 10:11–14; Psalm 110:1).

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## Manoah Thinks That They Are Going to Die and His Wife Straightens Him out

And did not continue again an Angel of Y<sup>o</sup>howah to appear unto Manoah and unto his woman. Then knew Manoah that an Angel of Y<sup>o</sup>howah He [was].

Judges  
13:21

And the Angel of Y<sup>o</sup>howah did not continue again to appear to Manoah and to his wife. Then Manoah knew that He [was] the Angel of Y<sup>o</sup>howah.

The angel of Jehovah never again appeared to Manoah or to his wife. At the site of the sacrifice, Manoah realized that He was the Angel of Jehovah.

The first verb is the Qal perfect of *yâçaph* (יָצַף) [pronounced *yaw-SAHPH*], which means *to add, to augment, to continue to do a thing*. It is very often followed by an infinitive to indicate what activity would be continued (or, in this case, discontinued). Strong's #3254 BDB #414. With this verb is the negative and the Niphal infinitive construct of *râ`âh* (רָאָה) [pronounced *raw-AWH*], which means *to see, to look*. It would be reasonable to render this as *to perceive*. The Niphal is the passive voice, and it means *to appear*. Strong's #7200 BDB #906.



All of this time, regardless of what his wife realized, Manoah thought that the person to whom he was speaking was a prophet or something. He did not realize that he had been speaking to a manifestation of God. So that you don't misunderstand or think that I am reading too much into this, Manoah identifies the Angel with Whom he has spoken.

The second sentence begins with the adverb *ʾâz* (אָז) [pronounced *awz*], which means *then, at that time, in that case* (when following an *if* or *though*), *now, as things are; that being so*. Strong's #227 BDB #23.

Several times I have told you that the Angel of Jehovah here is Jesus Christ, our God and our Savior. We have already covered the **Doctrine of the Angel of Jehovah** in Gen. 16:7. However, what we need to cover here is *why* this appearance of the Angel of Jehovah is God (and, in particular, the Second member of the Trinity—Jesus Christ):

### Why Is This Appearance a Theophany?

1. The Angel of Jehovah speaks with an air of complete authority throughout this chapter. Judges 13:3–5
2. The Angel of Jehovah refuses to fellowship with Manoah, indicating that he is not a believer. Judges 13:15–17, 21
3. When Manoah asks the name of the Angel in order to pay him tribute, the Angel acts almost insulted—*"Why do you ask My Name when it is Extraordinary [or, Wonderful]?"* This is the same title applied to the coming Messiah in Isa. 9:6.
4. Manoah, after the sacrifice, recognizes that this person was the Angel of Jehovah (Judges 13:21). This, by itself, is not convincing to some people; however, in the next verse, he will moan and groan that he and his wife will die because *"...we have seen God!"* So, even if we are so hard-hearted as to not recognize to Whom Manoah and his wife were speaking, he finally understood at the end (although he became somewhat melodramatic about it, claiming that they would die; his wife's clearer thinking straightened him out that they were not going to die, but she did not contradict what he said about the Angel being God). Judges 13:23
5. The wife recognizes that the Angel of Jehovah accepted (or, *took*) the sacrifice of their hands. Angels are not the recipients of sacrifices; only God can receive worship, e.g., animal sacrifices. Judges 13:23 Col. 2:18 Rev. 19:10 22:9
6. The close identification of the Angel with the sacrifice (that is, He ascended in the flames as a part of the sacrifice) clearly points to Jesus Christ. Judges 13:20

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**And so said Manoah unto his woman, "A death we will die for God we have seen." Judges 13:22** **Then Manoah said to his wife, "We will certainly die, for we have seen God."**

**Then Manoah exclaimed to his wife, "We will certainly die because we have seen God."**

He begins with the Qal infinitive absolute of *mûwth* (מוֹת) [pronounced *mooth*], the simple word for *die*. The infinite absolute is a verbal noun which can serve as a noun, verb or adverb. When it precedes the same verb in a different stem, it serves to intensify the meaning of the verb, and we often insert the words *surely, certainly, indeed*. Strong's #4191 BDB #559. This was exactly what God had warned Adam in the garden of Eden; the Qal infinitive absolute followed by the Qal imperfect of *mûwth*. You will note that Manoah had a tendency to over-dramatize the situation. Obviously, he and his wife had been speaking to the Angel of God for some time, and no harm had come to them. My thinking is that Manoah was even attempting to quote the little Scripture that he knew. He possibly even knew Ex. 33:20: *But He said, "You cannot see My face, for no man can see Me and live!"* This just means that he had an incomplete understanding of that passage.<sup>26</sup>

<sup>26</sup> God did allow Abraham the ability to see Him as He passed by, so long as Abraham hid himself in a cleft of a rock, which represented being in Jesus Christ, our Rock.

It is normal, when confronted with a manifestation of God, to be filled with awe and dread. We are filthy in God's sight, and we have a fuller realization of that in His presence. Great believers of the past have felt the same way. **When Gideon saw that He was the Angel of Jehovah, he said, "Alas, O Lord Jehovah! For now I have seen the Angel of Jehovah face to face."** (Judges 6:22). Less than great believers have also felt this way. When God began to speak to the exodus generation and to Moses, giving them the Ten Commandments, the people begged Moses to stand between them and God and to not allow them to hear God's voice (Ex. 20:18–21 Deut. 5:22–28).<sup>27</sup>

**And so said to him his woman, "If willed Y<sup>e</sup>howah to kill us, He would not have taken from our hand a burnt offering and a tribute offering and he would not have caused us to see all of these things and as the time he would not have caused us to hear [things] as these."**

Judges  
13:23

**Then his wife said to him, "If Y<sup>e</sup>howah had purposed to kill us, He would not have taken from our hand the burnt offering and the tribute offering; and, He would not have let us see all of these things; and, furthermore, as to [the] time, He would not have let us hear [things] as these."**

**Then his wife explained to him, "If Jehovah had chosen to kill us, then He would not have taken the burnt offering from our hand; nor would he have caused us to see all of these things, nor would He have let us hear what we heard regarding the time [of birth]."**

It is pretty easy to see why God appeared to Manoah's wife rather than to Manoah. Manoah was wrong only 5 ways to Sunday, and his wife explained to him why exactly he was wrong—in fact, she enumerated several reasons why they were not going to die. (1) God is not going to accept a burnt offering and a tribute offering from someone that He is going to execute; (2) God would not have allowed them to see everything that they saw in relation to His ascension into heaven; and (3) God is not going to tell them in advance that they will bear a son. We can add to this: if God was going to kill them, then He would not have promised them that a son would be born to them eight or ten months hence. That is stupid. How can Manoah's wife have a child within the next year if she is dead. Why on earth would God have appeared to them in the first place and then suddenly strike them dead? God would have contradicted Himself to promise them this child and then for her not to give birth, meaning that He would not be God. About the only thing that Manoah's wife didn't say is she forgot to say, "You idiot; you lame imbecile; get a clue."

The wife of Manoah has some vocabulary, even though her sentence structure is fairly simple (and she might keep it simple in order to communicate with her husband). She begins with the conjunction *lû* (לִּי) [also written *lû'* (אֵל) ] [pronounced *lue*] and it means *O that, would that, if only, if*. Strong's #3863 BDB #530. She follows this with the 3<sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal perfect of *châphêts* (יָפֵט) [pronounced *khaw-FATES*], which means *to will, to desire, to take pleasure in, to long to, to be inclined to*. Strong's #2654 BDB #342.

This gives us: **And so said to him his woman, "If willed Y<sup>e</sup>howah to kill us..."** Then we have the negative and the Qal perfect of *lâqach* (לָקַח) [pronounced *law-KAHKH*] which means *to take, to take from, to take in marriage, to seize*. Strong's #3947 BDB #542. This is followed by *from our hand*. Then we have the two types of offerings brought to Him: a burnt offering and a tribute offering. This gives us reason #1—if God is going to kill them, then He would not take the burnt offering and the tribute offering from their hand (what they saw was proof positive that God accepted their burnt offering and their tribute offerings).

In the second reason, we have the negative and the 3<sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, with a 1<sup>st</sup> person plural suffix, Hiphil perfect of *to see*. This would be, then, *he would not have let us see*; or, *He would not have caused us to see*. This is followed by the untranslated Hebrew word which indicates a direct object and the masculine singular construct of *kôl* (כֹּל) [pronounced *kole*], which means *the whole, all of, the entirety of, all, every*. When used with a plural noun, we often translate it *all of* and with a singular noun, we translate it *every*. Strong's #3605 BDB #481. With this is the plural demonstrative adjective *êlleh* (אֵלֶּה) [pronounced *EEHL-leh*], which means *these, these things*. Strong's #428 BDB #41. The second reason is that God would not be intending to kill them if they were allowed to see all that they saw, both the Angel of God originally and the Angel of God in the fire of the burnt offering.

<sup>27</sup> Actually, this was one of the few great things that the exodus generation did.

Then we have the wâw conjunction, the kaph preposition, the definite article and the feminine singular of ʿêth (תַּי) [pronounced *gayth*], and it means *time, the right time, the proper time*. Strong's #6256 BDB #773. Here, they mean *as the time* or *as [to] the time*. Then we have the 3<sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, 1<sup>st</sup> person plural suffix, Hiphil perfect of shâma' (וּנַשַׁ) [pronounced *shaw-MAHG*], which means *to listen, listen intently*. In the Hiphil, it means *to cause to hear, to let hear, to announce, to tell [anything]* (the latter two is when this is followed by an accusative as it is here); or, *to call, to summon*. Strong's #8085 BDB #1033. This is followed by *as these things* (there is no definite article this time). The third reason is that the Angel of Jehovah has announced to them that Samson would be born to them; why would God announce a time off in the future for a child to be born, and then kill the parents? Manoah is being overly dramatic about God going to kill them and his wife brings him back down to earth.

Now, since there can be nuances of meaning, particularly in this verse with the definite article and then the lack of the definite article, let me insert the renderings which others have given:

<i>The Emphasized Bible</i>	But his wife said unto him, If Yahweh had been pleased to put us to death he would not have received at our hand an ascending sacrifice and a meal-offering, nor would he have shewed us all these things, —and at such a time have let us hear the like of this!
NASB	But his wife said to him, "If the LORD had desired to kill us, He would not have accepted a burned offering and a grain offering from our hands, nor would He have shown us all these things, nor would He have let us hear <i>things</i> like this at this time."
<i>Young's Lit. Translation</i>	And his wife saith to him, 'If Jehovah were desirous to put to death, he had not receive from our hands burnt-offering and present, nor shewed us all these things, nor as <i>at this time</i> caused us to hear <i>anything</i> like this.'

Now believers in the past who have been faced with a manifestation of God did fall with their faces to the ground; they were filled with reverential fear and awe. Hagar, the maid of Sarah, cried out, "Have I even remained alive here after seeing Him?" (Gen. 16:13b). Jacob, after he had wrestled with the Angel of God realized with Whom he had fought, and then he named that place Peniel, for he realized that "I have seen God face to face, yet my soul has been preserved." (Gen. 32:30b). Moses, when he first saw God (i.e., a manifestation of God), fell on his face on the ground (Ex. 3:6). So reverential fear is reasonable—however, Manoah was being overly dramatic. The key here is reverential awe rather than histrionics. *The secret of Jehovah is to those who reverence Him and He will make them know His covenant* (Psalm 25:14). The calm reasoning and intelligence of his wife causes us to realize why God chose to principally appear to her.

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## The Birth of Samson and the Holy Spirit Stirs Him

**And so bore the woman a son and so she called his name Samson and so grew the boy and so blessed him Y<sup>h</sup>owah**

Judges  
13:24

**So the wife bore a son and she called his name Samson. And the boy grew and Y<sup>h</sup>owah blessed him.**

**So his wife did bear a son and she named him Samson. The boy grew up and was blessed by Jehovah.**

The result is that the woman did bear a son and named him Samson. He was dedicated to Jehovah and Jehovah blessed him. In the Hebrew, the name is Shîm<sup>o</sup>shôwn (יִשְׁמֹן) [pronounced *shim-SHOHN*], which we simply call *Samson*. Shîm<sup>o</sup>shôwn in the Hebrew is closest to is the word for *sun* (Strong's #8121 BDB #1039). This name is variously thought to mean *distinguished hero, solar, like the sun*.<sup>28</sup> The NIV Study Bible suggests that this might even be a reference to the nearby town of Beth Shemesh (which means *House of the sun-god*).<sup>29</sup> I doubt that, given the background information that we have concerning Manoah's wife that she would have named Samson with

<sup>28</sup> See Joseph Bryant Rotherham's *The Emphasized Bible*; ©1971 by Kregel Publications; p. 275 for references.

<sup>29</sup> *The NIV Study Bible*; ©1995 by The Zondervan Corporation; p. 347.

any intention of indicating a relationship between him and any heathen god. Barnes suggests<sup>30</sup> that this might have something to do with the verb *to minister*, relating Samson to his Nazirite vows; however, the word for *minister* only has one letter in common with *Samson*. In the Greek, the name is spelled Sampson (Σαμψών) [pronounced *samp-SOHN*] and our English transliteration is obviously closer to the Greek version. Strong's #8123 BDB #1039.

There is a time for being a boy and a time for being a man. We have Samson's youth alluded to here, just as we have Samuel's in I Sam. 2:21, 26 3:19 and our Lord's in Luke 1:80 2:52. Once the child grew to the proper age, then God blessed him and the Spirit of God began to work in his life.

**And so began a Spirit of Y<sup>e</sup>howah to compel him in Mahaneh-dan between Zorah and between Eshtaol.**

Judges  
13:25

**Then the Sprit of God began to compel him in Mahaneh-dan, [which is] between Zorah and Eshtaol.**

**Then the Spirit of God began to compel Samson while he was living in Mahaneh-dan, which is between Zorah and Eshtaol.**

The first verb is the Hiphil imperfect of *châlal* (חָלַל) [pronounced *khaw-LAHL*], which means, in the Hiphil, *to begin*. Strong's #2490 BDB #320. What the Spirit of God begins to do is the Qal infinitive construct of *pâ'am* (פָּאַם) [pronounced *paw-AHM* or *paw-GAHM*], which means *to compel, to impel, to stir*. In the Niphal it means *to be troubled, to be agitated, to be disturbed*. Its root meaning is *to strike, to beat*; as its noun cognate is *anvil*. Because of the noun cognate, I would think that *compel* is a stronger word and more accurate. This is the only time this verb is found in the Qal and it is the only time the Holy Spirit is the subject of the verb (although *spirit* is the subject of the verb in Gen. 41:8 Daniel 2:1, 3). Strong's #6470 BDB #821. We will examine Samson's association with the Holy Spirit when he get to Judges 14:19.

A lot of people are confused about the strength of Samson. McGee explains it clearly, as he always does: *These verses tell us the secret of Samson's strength. Samson's strength was not in his arms, although he killed a thousand Philistines with those arms. His strength was not in his back, although he carried the gates of Gaza on his back, which was a remarkable undertaking. And Samson's strength was not in his hair, although he was weak when it was cut. Samson was strong only when the Spirit of God was moving him. Just cutting his hair off was not actually what weakened him. His hair was the badge of his Nazirite vow. The Spirit of God was not on him when his hair was cut. Why? Because he had failed in his vow.*<sup>31</sup> Our life is the same way—we lose all of our spiritual strength when we lose the Holy Spirit. This is why we are told to **Quench not the Spirit** (I Thess. 5:19). What we do apart from God's Spirit has no eternal impact, no matter how spiritual we think we are. There are a huge number of believers—by far the majority of believers—who will arrive before the judgment seat of Christ and everything that they have produced will be burned right before their eyes. Can you imagine spending several years building your dream house? You hammer in every single nail; you choose each decorative nuance—every color, you have thought about and prayed about. And then, after several years, after working on weekends and throughout your vacations, and after work, you complete the building of your absolute dream house, using every last ounce of energy and every bit of strength that you have—and then, the day before you are to move in, you stand in front of the house to admire your marvelous work, the work you have spent years on—and God, in that instant, burns the house down right before your eyes. This is how many Christians will feel at the Judgment Seat of Christ. We are not going to be cast into hell or even into purgatory—but many of us will see every work and spiritual effort of our burned before our eyes and in heaven, we will be at square one, the lowest peon in heaven, picking cotton on the plantation of some believer whom we looked down upon during our life. If you are not filled with the Holy Spirit while performing whatever works you perform, then you have created nothing more than wood, hay and stubble, which will be burned at the bonfire at the Judgment Seat of Christ. **According to the grace of God which was given to me, as a wise master builder, I laid a foundation and another is building upon it. But let each man be careful how he builds upon it. For no man can lay a foundation other than the one which is laid, which is Jesus Christ. Now if any man builds upon the foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw, each man's work will**

<sup>30</sup> Barnes' Notes, Volume 2, reprinted 1996 by Baker Books; p. 451.

<sup>31</sup> J. Vernon McGee, *Joshua Judges*, ©1976 by Thru the Bible Books; p. 189.

become evident; for the day will show it, because it is to be revealed with fire; and the fire itself will test the quality of each man's work. If any man's work which he has built upon it remains, he will receive a reward. If any man's work is burned up, he will suffer loss; but he himself will be saved, yet so as through fire. Don't you know that you are a temple of God and the Spirit of God dwells in you? (1 Cor. 3:10–16). Now, in case you didn't know, becoming filled with the Holy Spirit is one of the easiest things that we can do in the Christian life; we simply our sins to God. We don't have to feel sorry about them, we don't have to make promises to God concerning these sins; we can just name them to God, and they are forgiven. Our sins are not forgiven because we assume some posture or because we are sincerely sorry or because we vow with all of our hearts never to commit these sins again—our sins are forgiven because Jesus Christ paid for these sins on the cross and when we name them, we both acknowledge that what we did was wrong and that Christ paid for that sin on the cross. **If we name our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all wrongdoing** (1 John 1:9).

Mahaneh-dan means *the camp of Dan* and we run into that name when the tribe of Dan decided to conquer some land which is far, far north of Israel. In Judges 18 (which precedes this chapter in time<sup>32</sup>), the tribe of Dan decides that they are unhappy with the area assigned to them, so that they headed north and captured a small chunk of land between Naphtali and East Manasseh. However, prior to this trek up north, one of their stops was at Kiriath-jearim, a city which is in Judah, but right on the border of Judah and Dan. They called it Mahaneh-dan. Now, whether this referred to an area directly north of Kiriath-jearim, as sort of a twin city, we don't know. Samson obviously was in Mahaneh-dan in his early adult life (perhaps since childhood) and he would be buried here as well (Judges 16:31).

Eshtaol and Zorah are border towns between Judah and Dan, and we will cover them in more detail in Judges 18. Both the territories of Judah and Dan had Philistines between them and the Mediterranean Sea. For the next three chapters, we will examine the life and work of Samson, and his opposition to the Philistines.

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<sup>32</sup> The last several chapters of this book focus on the people and the tribes rather than on the judges themselves. The incidents which were recorded occurred throughout the time period of the judges.