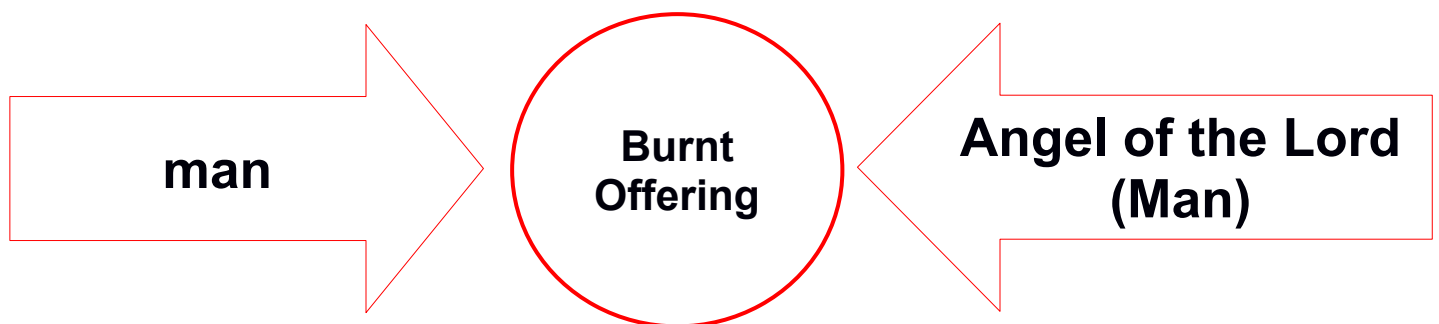


Judges Chapter 13 Part 4
Judges 13:20-25

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Let us review what we encountered from last week to help us get started on this week's lesson.

Judges 13:20 For it came about when the flame went up from the altar toward heaven, that the angel of the Lord ascended in the flame of the altar. When Manoah and his wife saw this, they fell on their faces to the ground.



Below are points without scriptural reference or other development are given as a review. If you want the details behind these points, review last week's lesson.

1. Repeatedly, the text of Judges chapter 13 tells us that Manoah and his wife called the Angel of the Lord a man. They did not know that it was the Angel of the Lord. But His appearance was that of a man.
2. The Angel of the Lord is the 2nd person of the Trinity. Often, as the Angel of the Lord, He is referred to today as the Pre-Incarnate Christ. He eventually takes on flesh and blood, humanity, a real man. He becomes a man in addition to being God, the Hypostatic

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Union. Only God can provide salvation. Only a sin-less man provided by God could be judged for sin.

3. The Levitical sacrifices detailed in Leviticus chapters 1-5 are shadows of the work of Jesus Christ on the cross being judged for our sins. God cannot be judged for sin. Hence, he became a real perfect sin-free man who could. He was judged for all the sins of the world.
4. The Angel of the Lord refused to eat a meal provided by Manoah and his wife. Instead he asked that they offer a Burnt Offering to the Lord/Yahweh. This “most common” of offerings was for atonement and emphasized it’s propitious effect on God.
5. Jesus described his being judged for the sins of the world as a “baptism.” We understand that this word is more than “immersion.” It provides a method of identifying a person with another person(s) or something. In Jesus’ case, identification with our sins.
6. In Judges 13:20, the Angel of the Lord, the 2nd person of the Trinity, the Pre-Incarnate Christ jumps into the flames of the Burnt Offering, identifying what Manoah and his wife call the “man of God” with the Burnt Offering.
7. As a result, the text has provided the reader with an illustration of what Jesus would do on the cross as a perfect sin-free man. He accepts the sins of the world and the resultant judgment from God the Father.
8. It is improbable that Manoah and his wife understood this illustration. But there it is, for us to understand. All through the Old Testament are depictions of the work of Jesus Christ, not just on the cross, but also events in His life. I have drawn some parallels between individual judges and Jesus.

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9. But they did understand, at some point, that they had just witnessed a theophany which was actually a Christophany.
10. It was understood in that culture, that seeing God face-to-face would result in death. Except that is not what happened in this case.

This leads us into this morning's lesson.

Judges 13:21 Now the angel of the Lord did not appear to Manoah or his wife again. Then Manoah knew that he was the angel of the Lord.

Judges 13:22 So Manoah said to his wife, "We will surely die, for we have seen God."

Let us note here before proceeding that the logic of the passage indicates Manoah equated the Angel of the Lord to God. We have studied this and it should not be something new. But, there are many, including some at Dallas Theological Seminary who do not accept this. One of those is Robert Chisholm:

“Manoah’s statement in verse 22 requires closer inspection. He declares, literally, “we will surely die because God we have seen!” Since verse 21 informs us that Manoah finally recognized the messenger as the angel of the Lord, it is odd that here he claims to have seen God. This might suggest that the angel and God are to be equated ontologically [ontological = essence], but this need not be the case. Having taken so long to recognize the messenger’s true identify, perhaps Manoah compensates for his dullness by going to the opposite extreme. This burst of hyperbole is perfectly valid, of course, for the angel represented God and came with full divine authority. When one spoke to him or saw him,

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it was as if one had spoken with or seen the one who sent him (see Judg. 2:1-3).

His comments in a footnote to Judges 2:1-3 are lengthy. So I will extract the essence of his argument:

“A survey of usage suggest that the angel should be equated with God in a representative, not an essential or personal sense. (The passages that distinguish the angel from God in essence must be determinative.) The angel comes with full divine authority and can therefore speak on God’s behalf (sometimes in the first person!). [My comment: So this is like Jesus coming on behalf of the Father. Does that make Jesus just a man representing God and not God, Himself?] Those who encounter the angel realize his authoritative representative status and therefore act appropriately. As Ross states, “It would seem that the question of the messenger’s authority could be answered simply: it is that of the one who sends him. Thus a messenger is to be treated as if he were his master.” [My comment: Doesn’t Jesus repeatedly say that the Father sent Him and that He, Jesus, does the will of the Father and not His own will?]

It is surprising that Robert Chisholm doesn’t realize that is exactly how Jesus describes His relationship to the Father.

John 5:19 Therefore Jesus answered and was saying to them, “Truly, truly, I say to you, the Son can do nothing of Himself, unless it is something He sees the Father doing; for whatever the Father does, these things the Son also does in like manner.”

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John 6:38 “For I have come down from heaven, not to do My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me.”

John 7:16 So Jesus answered them and said, “My teaching is not Mine, but His who sent Me.”

John 8:28 So Jesus said, “When you lift up the Son of Man, then you will know that I am He, and I do nothing on My own initiative, but I speak these things as the Father taught Me.

John 8:29 And He who sent Me is with Me; He has not left Me alone, for I always do the things that are pleasing to Him.”

Back to the passage in chapter 13. The context of Judges 13:22 is in Exodus when Moses wanted to see the glory of God. He knew the name of God, Yahweh. But now he wanted to see the essence of God. God tells him that no man can see His essence and live. It might be like a million lasers shining on a person. He would be vaporized instantly.

Exodus 33:18 Then Moses said, “I pray You, show me Your glory!”

Exodus 33:19 And He said, “I Myself will make all My goodness pass before you, and will proclaim the name of the Lord before you; and I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious,

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and will show compassion on whom I will show compassion.”

Exodus 33:20 But He said, “You cannot see My face, for no man can see Me and live!”

There is a slight difference in the literal translation:

Exodus 33:20 (YLT) He saith also, ‘Thou art unable to see My face, for man doth not see Me, and live;’

There are two statements here: 1) You are unable to see My face and 2) If you saw me you would not live.

God is infinite. So man in his limited abilities could not actually see all there is to see of God. We cannot “see” with our eyes, ultraviolet (although some people are reputed to be able to see ultraviolet), infrared, or x-rays, etc.

If man were directly exposed to the essence of God, our physical bodies would not be able to withstand it.

Now on to what Manoah said.

We will surely die. When I see “surely” and a verb, I often find that the Hebrew has used something called the *infinitive absolute*. Usually, this involves the *infinitive absolute* form plus a verb of the same root. English only has an *infinitive*. Hebrew has two *infinitives*. The usual *infinitive* and the *infinitive absolute*. That is a way for the Hebrew to emphasize something. It has repeated the word in a different form. Repetition. Scott N. Callahan said, “In general, Biblical Hebrew employs repetition of a word or its root to reinforce the significance of the word or to apply some kind of stress. Indeed, Georg Heinrich Ewald asserts that repetition is the

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strongest means of emphasis available in Biblical Hebrew.” Repeating a word is one thing. But to repeat it in a different form adds something to it.

In this case, death is the result of seeing God, in Manoah’s mind. I am trying to convey the idea of something called modality without getting into the details. Result and certainty are emphasized. In Manoah’s mind, this is immanent. Yet, he knows somethings from the Torah but he doesn’t understand them. He can’t relate two doctrines and keep them separate.

In the case of Adam, God used the same construction: *infinitive absolute* of the word “to die” followed by a verb of the same root. Manoah may have been familiar with both instances. If you see God’s essence (face) then you die and if you eat of the “forbidden” fruit, dying you shall die. It is interesting that Manoah understood he had “seen” God but his application was incorrect. His wife, who may not have completely understood, did understand that if God had wanted them dead, they would already be dead.

This caused me to research this infinitive absolute of the word death. Note that this construction is not used in Exodus 33:20, so Manoah had to get it from somewhere else. So the question from observation is, “Is there a pattern to this usage in the Torah.” I say Torah because that would have been accessible to Manoah through the priesthood. Below is a list of the infinitive absolutes of “to die” in the Torah, also known as the Pentateuch. A pattern does appear. As Spock (on Star Trek) might have said, “fascinating.”

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Scripture	Offense
Genesis 2:17	Eating of the forbidden tree
Genesis 3:4	Eating of the forbidden tree
Genesis 20:7	Having sex with another man's wife
Genesis 26:11	Having sex with another man's wife
Exodus 19:12	Don't Go Up Mount Sinai
Exodus 21:12	Murderer
Exodus 21:15	Murderer
Exodus 21:16	Kidnapper
Exodus 21:17	Curse Mother and Father
Exodus 22:18	Bestiality
Exodus 31:14	Sabbath Violation
Exodus 31:15	Sabbath Violation
Leviticus 20:2	Child Sacrifice to Molech
Leviticus 20:9	Curse Mother and Father
Leviticus 20:10	Adulterer
Leviticus 20:11	Incest
Leviticus 20:12	Incest
Leviticus 20:13	Homosexuality
Numbers 15:35	Violation of the Sabbath
Numbers 26:65	1 st Generation of Exodus
Numbers 35:16	Murderer
Numbers 35:17	Murderer
Numbers 35:18	Murderer
Numbers 35:21	Murderer
Numbers 35:31	Murderer

Some observations on this table:

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1. Most of them deal with violations of the divine institutions: free will, marriage, family, nation. Violations of God's order are punishable by death.
2. Many of them deal with the consequence or punishment for murder. Murder takes away a persons free will, the 1st divine institution.
3. Essentially, this appears to be the command to impose capital punishment.
4. Each of these instances of the death penalty is the result of a willful decision to violate a law of God.

But in Manoah's case, he had not violated any law. He had not made a conscious decision to commit some heinous sin. The Angel of the Lord appeared to Manoah. His emotion overwhelmed him when he realized he had actually been visited by God. Like some in the book of Judges, he had knowledge of the text of the Torah and history, but he lacked understanding. Like Hebrews 4:1-2, you must apply faith to the Word of God for understanding.

**Deuteronomy 32:28 “For they are a nation
lacking in counsel, And there is no
understanding in them.**

Now what did Manoah's wife think?

Judges 13:23 But his wife said to him, “If the Lord had desired to kill us, He would not have accepted a burnt offering and a grain offering from our hands, nor would He have shown us all these things, nor would He have let us hear things like this at this time.”

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Manoah's wife must have had some understanding of the character of God. She uses logic based upon a "propitious" God. He accepted their offering and was "satisfied." How could He kill them if He accepted the offering. He is God. He could not.

If the Lord had desired to kill us. She uses a verb meaning to desire plus the normal infinitive of to kill. From Manoah's perspective death is certain. That is the result of "seeing" God. But, obviously, they are not dead. There is no "subjunctive" mood in the Hebrew. Yet this construction, in my opinion, delves into a subjunctive mood: action that is contingent or hypothetical. If he had wanted us dead... Yet, look at all the things He did for us and you idiot husband of mine missed it!

When I looked up the word for desired I was surprised that it also means "to please." Like...

Isaiah 53:10a But the Lord was pleased To crush Him, putting Him to grief; ...

So in one instance, if the Lord was pleased to not kill Manoah and his wife, yet in another, on the cross, the Lord (God the Father) was pleased to crush His Son.

Numbers 14:5 Then Moses and Aaron fell on their faces in the presence of all the assembly of the congregation of the sons of Israel.

Numbers 14:6 Joshua the son of Nun and Caleb the son of Jephunneh, of those who had spied out the land, tore their clothes;

Numbers 14:7 and they spoke to all the congregation of the sons of Israel, saying,

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“The land which we passed through to spy out is an exceedingly good land.

Numbers 14:8 If the Lord is pleased with us, then He will bring us into this land and give it to us—a land which flows with milk and honey.

From this perspective, God could be pleased with the children of Israel in “Generation #2.” From the Judges passage, apparently God was pleased with Manoah and his wife. It would seem that she was the smart one in the family. Often, the Bible has portrayed women in a positive light. Already in Judges we have seen Deborah and Jael as heroines.

Judges 13:24 Then the woman gave birth to a son and named him Samson; and the child grew up and the Lord blessed him.

What God promises, He does. We should depend upon God’s promises using faith.

Hebrews 4:1 Therefore, let us fear if, while a promise remains of entering His rest, any one of you may seem to have come short of it.

Hebrews 4:2 For indeed we have had good news preached to us, just as they also; but the word they heard did not profit them, because it was not united by faith in those who heard.

God promised a child. They received a child. And this was no ordinary child. And not only did God provide a child, the Lord blessed him.

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Named him Samson. His name means “little sun.” That is sun with a “u.” No explanation for that name is given. Is this a prophetic reference to his future exploits? Will he be great in some way?

The child grew up. The word can mean “grow up.” But the basic meaning of the root is “great.” Is this perhaps a double entendre? Yes he grew up and that is often the translation when applied to children. But he became great in strength. He is mentioned in the faith hall of fame in Hebrews chapter 11. Although his strength was not in his muscles alone, he likely had bulging muscles. They only had super human strength as a result of empowerment by the Holy Spirit.

The Lord blessed him. This is a divine decision to bless Samson. As always with God, He blesses from his grace, his lovingkindness. He also blessed him because God had a special purpose for him.

Judges 13:25 And the Spirit of the Lord began to stir him in Mahaneh-dan, between Zorah and Eshtaol.

The Spirit of the Lord began to stir him. Began is an echo from verse 5:

Judges 13:5 “...he shall begin to deliver Israel from the hands of the Philistines.”

Samson was only able to begin to deliver because of the empowerment from the Holy Spirit.

To stir him. It can mean to stir someone, but this doesn’t communicate very well. Another possible translation (TDOT) is to “actively influence.” The Holy Spirit does this in a more dramatic way in Mark 1:12 when the Spirit impels Jesus into the desert to be tempted. Here, the influencing is day by day, not all at once.

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From the TDOT, “The verb, e.g., contributes especially to enriching the notion of God’s mighty guidance of human affairs and destiny and thus of history itself.”

From the TDNT for the Greek translation of this word says, “The most important OT definition, which is again alien to the Greek world, is that which speaks of the ways of God on which man should go. God is the Lawgiver who gives orders to man. The ways of Yahweh are not a mode of life which leads to God; they are a mode of life which God has ordained for His people as distinct from others.”

This is not unlike what happened to Jesus:

Luke 2:40 The Child continued to grow and become strong, increasing in wisdom; and the grace of God was upon Him.

Luke 2:52 And Jesus kept increasing in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men.

Or John the Baptist:

Luke 1:80 And the child continued to grow and to become strong in spirit, and he lived in the deserts until the day of his public appearance to Israel.

God was preparing Samson for his work as a judge. Here is documented evidence that God is working in history.