

Wonderful

(Companion Paper to the Sermon Delivered February 22nd, 2015,

By James Moriello, at Firm Foundation Christian Church, Woonsocket, RI)

“And the Angel of the LORD said to him, “Why do you ask My name, seeing it is wonderful?” (Judges 13:18, NKJV)

First, we will examine the context of our text. Then, we will speak of and consider who the Wonderful Angel of the LORD is.

“Again the children of Israel did evil in the sight of the LORD, and the LORD delivered them into the hand of the Philistines for forty years” (Judges 13:1). Here, we have the first two cycles of Judges, sin and bondage of the nation.

”Now there was a certain man from Zorah, of the family of the Danites, whose name was Manoah; and his wife was barren and had no children. And the Angel of the LORD appeared to the woman and said to her, “Indeed now, you are barren and have borne no children, but you shall conceive and bear a son. Now therefore, please be careful not to drink wine or similar drink, and not to eat anything unclean. For behold, you shall conceive and bear a son. And no razor shall come upon his head, for the child shall be a Nazirite to God from the womb; and he shall begin to deliver Israel out of the hand of the Philistines” (Judges 13:2-5). The Angel of the LORD appears to Mrs. Manoah, and foretells that she will bear a son, although she had been barren. It is further revealed that her son will be a Nazirite from the womb (Cf. Numbers 6:1-21).

“So the woman came and told her husband, saying, “A Man of God came to me, and His countenance was like the countenance of the Angel of God, very awesome; but I did not ask Him where He was from, and He did not tell me His name. And He said to me, ‘Behold, you shall conceive and bear a son. Now drink no wine or similar drink, nor eat anything unclean, for the child shall be a Nazirite to God from the womb to the day of his death.’” Then Manoah prayed to the LORD, and said, “O my Lord, please let the Man of God whom You sent come to us again and teach us what we shall do for the child who will be born” (Judges 13:6-8). Mrs. Manoah tells her husband about the visitation, and Manoah prays for divine guidance.

“And God listened to the voice of Manoah, and the Angel of God came to the woman again as she was sitting in the field; but Manoah her husband was not with her. Then the woman ran in haste and told her husband, and said to him, “Look, the Man who came to me the other day has just now appeared to me!” So Manoah arose and followed his wife. When he came to the Man, he said to Him, “Are You the Man who spoke to this woman?” And He said, “I am.” Manoah said, “Now let Your words come to pass! What will be the boy’s rule of life, and his work?” So the Angel of the LORD said to Manoah, “Of all that I said to the woman let her be careful. She may not eat anything that comes from the vine, nor may she drink wine or similar drink, nor eat anything unclean. All that I commanded her let her observe” (Judges 13:9-14). The Angel of the LORD returns and offers guidance, in answer to Manoah’s prayer.

“Then Manoah said to the Angel of the LORD, “Please let us detain You, and we will prepare a young goat for You.” And the Angel of the LORD said to Manoah, “Though you detain Me, I will not eat your food. But if you offer a burnt offering, you must offer it to the LORD.” (For Manoah did not know He was the Angel of the LORD.) *Then Manoah said to the Angel of the LORD, “What is Your name, that when Your words come to pass we may honor You?”* (Judges 13:15-17). Manoah and his wife offer to entertain the Angel of the LORD, and Manoah asks Him His Name.

“And the Angel of the LORD said to him, “Why do you ask My name, seeing it is wonderful?” (Judges 13:18). The Angel of the LORD responds. This is our text.

“So Manoah took the young goat with the grain offering, and offered it upon the rock to the LORD. And He did a wondrous thing while Manoah and his wife looked on—it happened as the flame went up toward heaven from the altar—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. When the Angel of the LORD appeared no more to Manoah and his wife, then Manoah knew that He was the Angel of the LORD. And Manoah said to his wife, “We shall surely die, because we have seen God!” 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 told us such things as these at this time” (Judges 13:19-23). Manoah and his wife now clearly recognize that this is no ordinary angelic visitor. This was the Angel of the LORD, who is clearly God Himself.

This is what is known as an Old Testament Theophany, or Christophany, which is a Pre-Incarnate visitation of the Son of God to men. We know Him as Jesus Christ.

“So the woman bore a son and called his name Samson; and the child grew, and the LORD blessed him. And the Spirit of the LORD began to move upon him at Mahaneh Dan between Zorah and Eshtaol” (Judges 13:24-25). Mrs. Manoah bears a son as God had promised. She calls him Samson, because God would give him extraordinary strength for the purpose of delivering His people Israel from the Philistine bondage.

The Old Testament prophet Isaiah spoke of Jesus, calling His Name *“Wonderful”*, saying, *“For unto us a Child is born, Unto us a Son is given; And the government will be upon His shoulder. And His name will be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.”* (Isaiah 9:6). Let us consider some of the ways in which *“the Angel of the LORD”*, who is Jesus, is *“Wonderful”*.

1. Jesus is a Wonderful Friend. *“No longer do I call you servants, for a servant does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all things that I heard from My Father I have made known to you”* (John 15:15). *“A man who has friends must himself be friendly, But there is a friend who sticks closer than a brother”* (Proverbs 18:24). *“A friend loves at all times, And a brother is born for adversity”* (Proverbs 17:17).
2. Jesus is a Wonderful Healer. *“Then the blind and the lame came to Him in the temple, and He healed them. But when the chief priests and scribes saw the wonderful things that He did, and the children crying out in the temple and saying, “Hosanna to the Son of David!” they were indignant and said to Him, “Do You hear what these are saying?”* (Matthew 21:14-16). If Jesus has healed your body, give Him glory! If Jesus has healed your soul, give Him glory!
3. Jesus is a Wonderful Teacher. *“And so it was, when Jesus had ended these sayings, that the people were astonished at His teaching, for He taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes”* (Matthew 7:28-29). *“You call Me Teacher and Lord, and you say well, for so I am. If I then, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another’s feet.*

For I have given you an example, that you should do as I have done to you” (John 13:13-15). Jesus taught God’s truth with divine authority. Jesus also taught by example.

4. Jesus is a Wonderful Helper. *“Therefore, in all things He had to be made like His brethren, that He might be a merciful and faithful High Priest in things pertaining to God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people. For in that He Himself has suffered, being tempted, He is able to aid those who are tempted”* (Hebrews 2:17-18). Jesus stands at the ready waiting to help us when we ask Him for help.
5. Jesus is a Wonderful Lord. *“For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor, that you through His poverty might become rich”* (2 Corinthians 8:9). Jesus always has our best interests at heart. He proved it even to the point of offering up Himself as a sacrifice for our sins, that we might share in the riches of His salvation.
6. Jesus is a Wonderful God. *“And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifested in the flesh, Justified in the Spirit, Seen by angels, Preached among the Gentiles, Believed on in the world, Received up in glory”* (1 Timothy 3:16).
7. Jesus is a Wonderful Savior. *“For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life”* (John 3:16). *“Therefore He is also able to save to the uttermost those who come to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them”* (Hebrews 7:25). Jesus loves all people and each person. He is not only able to save, but He is willing to save. He desires to save your soul today, and become your Wonderful Savior. If you are done trying to save yourself, try Jesus. No true Child of God has ever been disappointed with His results.