

Sermon to the saints of God assembled at Topeka – Sunday, Feb. 3, 2019

I have returned to the topic of Christophanies, in my private study, over and over during my time spent sojourning with you all. So many questions over time. Too many to list here now. For some reason, I've always been so excited about this sobering topic, and I am finally coming to a greater understanding of just why. In years past, my excitement at the prospect of these blessed events has met with intermittent disappointment over my inability to see with much clarity just what we are to make of these events, what constitutes one, how many there are, and what can we learn from each, as well as in the aggregate. The LORD just did not see fit to give me light.

A Christophany (from the Greek *christo* - Christ + *phan* - revealed or manifest) is a word used to label a visible or audible preincarnate manifestation of Christ found in scripture (so, Old Testament). In the same manner, a theophany (*theo* - deity + *phan* - revealed or manifest) is a visible or audible manifestation of God – of course, this word is used in connection with the study of all world religions, which are idolatry. I only bring up the difference because many Bible scholars put a distinct difference between appearances of the preincarnate Christ and of God the Father. I've become convinced that such a difference put is neither meaningful nor accurate, and that much by way of revelatory fruit can be gleaned by looking more closely at this blessed subject.

It is in this spirit that I ask for your patience in taking this ride with me. Perhaps not every twist and turn will yield immediate clarity along the way, but my hope is that, by the end of this two-sermon examination of the subject at hand, there will be something both illuminating and edifying for you in it. This may, in turn, help bring further illumination and edification to us in revisiting related subjects. To begin, we will refresh ourselves on a few of the more widely-accepted instances of Christophany, and then venture into deeper waters – ever guided by the blessed precision and clarity of the word of God. Please bear with me in fleshing out the details of these exemplars today, that we may come to a deepened analysis of the topic next Sunday – Lord willing.

The Garden

And they heard the voice of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day: and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God amongst the trees of the garden. 9 And the LORD God called unto Adam, and said unto him, Where art thou? 10 And he said, I heard thy voice in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked; and I hid myself. 11 And he said, Who told thee that thou wast naked? Hast thou eaten of the tree, whereof I commanded thee that thou shouldest not eat? 12 And the man said, The woman whom thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat. 13 And the LORD God

said unto the woman, What is this that thou hast done? And the woman said, The serpent beguiled me, and I did eat... 21 Unto Adam also and to his wife did the LORD God make coats of skins, and clothed them. - Genesis 3: 8-13, 21

Gill (v.8): *the voice of the Son of God, the eternal Word, is here meant, who appeared in an human form, as a pledge of his future incarnation, and that not only as a Judge, to arraign, examine, and condemn the parties concerned in this act of disobedience to God, but as a Saviour of men, to whom, as such, he made himself known, as the event shows.* Christ gives ample meaning and evidence of sin, the consequence of sin, and therefore a need for a Saviour, causing Adam and Eve to know the proper type of Himself in blood sacrifice – that only blood atones for sin. The making of and clothing them with animal skins (as opposed to the leaves that they donned in the folly of their own judgment to cloak their shame) is the punctuation to that sobering lesson. Their parents' experience is no doubt how Cain and Abel would have had knowledge of sacrifice unto the LORD – Abel performing it in proper obedience and manner, and Cain devising a ceremony which exalted the work of his own hands.

The plains of Mamre

And the LORD appeared unto him in the plains of Mamre: and he sat in the tent door in the heat of the day; 2 And he lift up his eyes and looked, and, lo, three men stood by him: and when he saw them, he ran to meet them from the tent door, and bowed himself toward the ground, 3 And said, My Lord, if now I have found favour in thy sight, pass not away, I pray thee, from thy servant: 4 Let a little water, I pray you, be fetched, and wash your feet, and rest yourselves under the tree: 5 And I will fetch a morsel of bread, and comfort ye your hearts; after that ye shall pass on: for therefore are ye come to your servant. And they said, So do, as thou hast said. 6 And Abraham hastened into the tent unto Sarah, and said, Make ready quickly three measures of fine meal, knead it, and make cakes upon the hearth. 7 And Abraham ran unto the herd, and fetcht a calf tender and good, and gave it unto a young man; and he hasted to dress it. 8 And he took butter, and milk, and the calf which he had dressed, and set it before them; and he stood by them under the tree, and they did eat. 9 And they said unto him, Where is Sarah thy wife? And he said, Behold, in the tent. 10 And he (Christ) said, I will certainly return unto thee according to the time of life; and, lo, Sarah thy wife shall have a son. And Sarah heard it in the tent door, which was behind him. 11 Now Abraham and Sarah were old and well stricken in age; and it ceased to be with Sarah after the manner of women. 12 Therefore Sarah laughed within herself, saying, After I am waxed old shall I have pleasure, my lord being old also? 13 And the LORD said unto Abraham, Wherefore did Sarah laugh, saying, Shall I of a surety bear a child, which am old? 14 Is any thing too hard for the LORD? At the time appointed I will return unto thee, according to the time of life, and Sarah shall

have a son. 15 Then Sarah denied, saying, I laughed not; for she was afraid. And he said, Nay; but thou didst laugh. – Gen. 18:1-15

This 'return unto thee according to the time of life' did not mean a literal return visit, but the fulfillment of the promise that he had before given to Abraham – and now reiterates it. This historic event of course continues - with the two created angels who accompany the LORD leaving ahead of Him and going down to Sodom, where they encounter Lot and ultimately the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah is accomplished by the LORD, with Lot narrowly escaping (Freddie says "utterly conflagrated"). This was no doubt Christ, as many scriptures (that we will get to in due time) attest to. Christ is the I Am – the Alpha and Omega – The Existing One (Jehovah):

Verily, verily, I say unto you, If a man keep my saying, he shall never see death. 52 Then said the Jews unto him, Now we know that thou hast a devil. Abraham is dead, and the prophets; and thou sayest, If a man keep my saying, he shall never taste of death. 53 Art thou greater than our father Abraham, which is dead? and the prophets are dead: whom makest thou thyself? 54 Jesus answered, If I honour myself, my honour is nothing: it is my Father that honoureth me; of whom ye say, that he is your God: 55 Yet ye have not known him; but I know him: and if I should say, I know him not, I shall be a liar like unto you: but I know him, and keep his saying. 56 Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day: and he saw it, and was glad. 57 Then said the Jews unto him, Thou art not yet fifty years old, and hast thou seen Abraham? 58 Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham was, I am. – John 8:51-58

Abraham saw Christ in the promised birth of his son Isaac (which means laughter, BTW) – which when promised to him he was told that in him the nations of the world would be blessed – and Abraham laughed. He saw the death and sufferings of Christ in a figure in the binding of Isaac, the sacrifice of the ram and in the receiving of Isaac, as from the dead, and experienced the deep faith of trusting in the promises of God, as he was promised prior to the commandment to offer his son up that the LORD would establish an everlasting covenant with Isaac and Isaac's seed after him. He saw Messiah in both type and appearance in the king and priest of Salem (peace) Melchizedek (which many, me included, believe was indeed a Christophany). All this was no doubt a matter of great joy to Abraham (as also to us).

Wrestling (desperate for the blessing)

And Jacob was left alone; and there wrestled a man with him until the breaking of the day. 25 And when he saw that he prevailed not against him, he touched the hollow of his thigh; and the hollow of Jacob's thigh was out of joint, as he wrestled with him. 26 And he (the man) said, Let me go, for the day breaketh. And he (Jacob) said, I will not let thee go, except thou bless me. 27 And he said unto him, What is thy name? And he said, Jacob. 28 And he said, Thy name

shall be called no more Jacob, but Israel: for as a prince hast thou power with God and with men, and hast prevailed. 29 And Jacob asked him, and said, Tell me, I pray thee, thy name. And he said, Wherefore is it that thou dost ask after my name? And he blessed him there. 30 And Jacob called the name of the place Peniel (facing God): for I have seen God face to face, and my life is preserved. - Gen. 32:24-30

Barnes (v. 11): *The thigh is the pillar of a man's strength, and its joint with the hip the seat of physical force for the wrestler. Let the thigh bone be thrown out of joint, and the man is utterly disabled. Jacob now finds that this mysterious wrestler has wrested from him, by one touch, all his might, and he can no longer stand alone. Without any support whatever from himself, he hangs upon the conqueror, and in that condition learns by experience the practice of sole reliance on one mightier than himself. This is the turning-point in this strange drama. Henceforth Jacob now feels himself strong, not in himself, but in the Lord, and in the power of his might. This was no vision, but a real experience, and Jacob HAD to have the blessing of the LORD. He knew it. Otherwise, any man is completely undone. He knew that he had dealt with God, face to face, which we know from scripture would only have meant the appearance of Christ.*

No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him. – John 1:18

Hosea ties this experience of Jacob to the angel of God as well.

He (Jacob) took his brother by the heel in the womb, and by his strength he had power with God: 4 Yea, he had power over the angel, and prevailed: he wept, and made supplication unto him - Hosea 12:3,4

Joshua by Jericho

And it came to pass, when Joshua was by Jericho, that he lifted up his eyes and looked, and, behold, there stood a man over against him with his sword drawn in his hand: and Joshua went unto him, and said unto him, Art thou for us, or for our adversaries? 14 And he said, Nay; but as captain of the host of the LORD am I now come. And Joshua fell on his face to the earth, and did worship, and said unto him, What saith my lord unto his servant? 15 And the captain of the LORD'S host said unto Joshua, Loose thy shoe from off thy foot; for the place whereon thou standest is holy. And Joshua did so. – Joshua 5:13-15

Gill: *though Joshua was general, Christ was Generalissimo; and so Joshua understood him, and therefore showed a readiness to do whatsoever he should command him; the spiritual Israel of God, the church, is in a militant state, and has many enemies to combat: sin, Satan, the world, and false teachers; Christ is their Leader and Commander, the Captain of their salvation, and has all necessary qualifications or wisdom, courage, and might, for such an office. And if we look at*

Rev. 19:9-10 – this answers any questions as to whether or not Joshua was approached by Christ. If this were a created angel, or any other voice (as of the spirits of just men made perfect, or as the 20 and 4 elders, for example) Joshua’s falling upon his face and worshipping would no doubt have been quickly and roundly rejected.

And he (a ministering spirit, or created angel – go back to verse 5 to see the continuation of that voice) saith unto me, Write, Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb. And he saith unto me, These are the true sayings of God. 10 And I (John the revelator) fell at his feet to worship him. And he said unto me, See thou do it not: I am thy fellowservant, and of thy brethren that have the testimony of Jesus: worship God: for the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy. – Rev. 19:9-10

Moses at the tabernacle #1

And Miriam and Aaron spake against Moses because of the Ethiopian woman whom he had married: for he had married an Ethiopian woman. 2 And they said, Hath the LORD indeed spoken only by Moses? hath he not spoken also by us (the spirit that dwelleth in us lusteth to envy)? And the LORD heard it. 3 (Now the man Moses was very meek, above all the men which were upon the face of the earth.) 4 And the LORD spake suddenly unto Moses, and unto Aaron, and unto Miriam, Come out ye three unto the tabernacle of the congregation. And they three came out. 5 And the LORD came down in the pillar of the cloud, and stood in the door of the tabernacle, and called Aaron and Miriam: and they both came forth. 6 And he said, Hear now my words: If there be a prophet among you, I the LORD will make myself known unto him in a vision, and will speak unto him in a dream. 7 My servant Moses is not so, who is faithful in all mine house. 8 With him will I speak mouth to mouth, even apparently, and not in dark speeches; and the similitude of the LORD shall he behold: wherefore then were ye not afraid to speak against my servant Moses? 9 And the anger of the LORD was kindled against them; and he departed. 10 And the cloud departed from off the tabernacle; and, behold, Miriam became leprous, white as snow: and Aaron looked upon Miriam, and, behold, she was leprous. 11 And Aaron said unto Moses, Alas, my lord, I beseech thee, lay not the sin upon us, wherein we have done foolishly, and wherein we have sinned. 12 Let her not be as one dead, of whom the flesh is half consumed when he cometh out of his mother’s womb. 13 And Moses cried unto the LORD, saying, Heal her now, O God, I beseech thee. 14 And the LORD said unto Moses, If her father had but spit in her face, should she not be ashamed seven days? let her be shut out from the camp seven days, and after that let her be received in again. - Numbers 12:1-14

Gill (v. 8): “With him will I speak mouth to mouth” - And face to face, as he had done, in Ex. 33:11; in a free, friendly, and familiar manner, as one friend speaks to another; not by means of a (created) angel, as in some cases, but the Lord himself spake to him. “Even apparently, and

not in dark speeches"; the word "apparently," (the Hebrew there is *mareh*, or sight, appearance) being opposed to "dark speeches," shows that this is not to be understood of the appearance or vision of an object presented to the mind's eye, or a 'a vision', though usual with other prophets. "And the similitude of the Lord shall he behold": as he had at the burning bush, and at Mount Sinai, with the elders of Israel, and when the Lord proclaimed his name before him; at which several times he beheld the Lord, even the Lord Christ, in an human form, as a presage of his future incarnation, and as he (would) also after this.

There are three Hebrew words that are translated into the English 'similitude' (2 Greek words in the NT). The Hebrew used here for 'similitude' is *temunah*, which means: form, image, likeness, or semblance. This as compared to another, slightly different meaning that we have frequently looked at in the context of 'metaphor,' or 'vision.'

I have also spoken by the prophets, and I have multiplied visions, and used similitudes, by the ministry of the prophets. – Hosea 12:10

In the case of Hosea 12:10, more of a sense of metaphor or vision is applied. The sense of Numbers 12:8 is that Moses did not behold the LORD Jehovah (Christ) 'in visions' or 'metaphorically,' nor was Moses spoken to by them, as with several of the other prophets. The Lord Jesus Christ did business with Moses face to face – being beheld by Moses in direct interactions with the LORD Jehovah. And I believe that this brings even more light to the description of Moses given, in part, at Hebrews 11:

By faith Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter; 25 Choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season; 26 Esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt: for he had respect unto the recompence of the reward. – Heb. 11:24-26

'Reproach' is from the Greek *oneidismos*: reproach, reproof or rebuke: - an expression of disapproval. There is no question that the reproach of Christ can be looked upon, as we have, as the rejection and disapproval of his (or our) generation – suffering for Christ's sake - but I believe the direct reproach of Christ, which Moses felt down to his toes in *his* day, is also here intended. Moses received the reproach of Christ, directly, on several occasions, including:

And Moses said unto the LORD, O my Lord, I am not eloquent, neither heretofore, nor since thou hast spoken unto thy servant: but I am slow of speech, and of a slow tongue. 11 And the LORD said unto him, Who hath made man's mouth? or who maketh the dumb, or deaf, or the seeing, or the blind? have not I the LORD? 12 Now therefore go, and I will be with thy mouth, and teach thee what thou shalt say. 13 And he said, O my Lord, send, I pray thee, by the hand of him whom thou wilt send. 14 And the anger of the LORD was kindled against Moses, and he said, Is not Aaron the Levite thy brother? I know that he can speak well. And also, behold,

he cometh forth to meet thee: and when he seeth thee, he will be glad in his heart. 15 And thou shalt speak unto him and put words in his mouth: and I will be with thy mouth, and with his mouth, and will teach you what ye shall do. 16 And he shall be thy spokesman unto the people: and he shall be, even he shall be to thee instead of a mouth, and thou shalt be to him instead of God. 17 And thou shalt take this rod in thine hand, wherewith thou shalt do signs. – Ex. 4:10-17

And it came to pass by the way in the inn, that the LORD met him, and sought to kill him. 25 Then Zipporah took a sharp stone, and cut off the foreskin of her son, and cast it at his feet, and said, Surely a bloody husband art thou to me. 26 So he (Christ) let him go: then she said, A bloody husband thou art, because of the circumcision. – Ex. 4:24-26

And the LORD spake unto Moses that selfsame day, saying, 49 Get thee up into this mountain Abarim, unto mount Nebo, which is in the land of Moab, that is over against Jericho; and behold the land of Canaan, which I give unto the children of Israel for a possession: 50 And die in the mount whither thou goest up, and be gathered unto thy people; as Aaron thy brother died in mount Hor, and was gathered unto his people: 51 Because ye trespassed against me among the children of Israel at the waters of Meribah-Kadesh, in the wilderness of Zin; because ye sanctified me not in the midst of the children of Israel. 52 Yet thou shalt see the land before thee; but thou shalt not go thither unto the land which I give the children of Israel. – Deut. 32:48-52

If the Lord Jesus Christ was the One who was dealing directly with Moses, then these are certainly instances of the reproach of Christ. Through the shame and guilt, Moses placed GREAT value upon them, being chastened as a son, and not vexed in the LORD's sore displeasure – seeing them as infinitely more valuable, and as tokens of his salvation, than the high place as the prince of all Egypt, and therefore owner of all its temporal pleasures.

Moses at the tabernacle #2

And it came to pass, when Moses went out unto the tabernacle, that all the people rose up, and stood every man at his tent door, and looked after Moses, until he was gone into the tabernacle. 9 And it came to pass, as Moses entered into the tabernacle, the cloudy pillar descended, and stood at the door of the tabernacle, and the LORD talked with Moses. 10 And all the people saw the cloudy pillar stand at the tabernacle door: and all the people rose up and worshipped, every man in his tent door. 11 And the LORD spake unto Moses face to face, as a man speaketh unto his friend. And he turned again into the camp: but his servant Joshua, the son of Nun, a young man, departed not out of the tabernacle. – Ex. 33:8-11

The previous analysis (Moses at tabernacle #1) applies to this event as well. Gill (in part) on verse 11: *he himself in person; not by a dream or vision, but apparently, in real visible appearance; not*

in dark speeches, but clearly in plain words, easy to be understood; and not by a voice from heaven at a distance, but mouth to mouth, being very near, as when on the mount, and now at the door of the tabernacle:

Moses and the elders at Sinai

Then went up Moses, and Aaron, Nadab, and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel: 10 And they saw the God of Israel: and there was under his feet as it were a paved work of a sapphire stone, and as it were the body of heaven in his clearness. 11 And upon the nobles of the children of Israel he laid not his hand: also they saw God, and did eat and drink. 12 And the LORD said unto Moses, Come up to me into the mount, and be there: and I will give thee tables of stone, and a law, and commandments which I have written; that thou mayest teach them. 13 And Moses rose up, and his minister Joshua: and Moses went up into the mount of God. - Ex. 24:9-13

Gill (v. 10): “And they saw the God of Israel”: *Moses and Aaron, and the seventy elders, all saw him, and who were witnesses to the people that it was a divine Person that spoke to Moses, and delivered the laws unto him, to be observed by them; which seems to be the reason of their being called up, and favoured with this sight. And this sight they had was not by a vision of prophecy, or with the eyes of their understanding, but corporeally; they saw the Son of God, the God of Israel, in an human form, as a pledge and presage of his future incarnation, who is the Angel that spoke to Moses on Mount Sinai.*

This is he (Moses), that was in the church in the wilderness with the angel which spake to him in the mount Sina, and with our fathers: who received the lively oracles to give unto us: - Ac. 7:38

If it was Christ that the 70 had seen, then it was Christ who gave Moses the tables of commandments that He had written (the Word of God).

Hagar in the way to Shur

And the angel of the LORD found her by a fountain of water in the wilderness, by the fountain in the way to Shur. 8 And he said, Hagar, Sarai’s maid, whence camest thou? and whither wilt thou go? And she said, I flee from the face of my mistress Sarai. 9 And the angel of the LORD said unto her, Return to thy mistress, and submit thyself under her hands. 10 And the angel of the LORD said unto her, I will multiply thy seed exceedingly, that it shall not be numbered for multitude. 11 And the angel of the LORD said unto her, Behold, thou art with child, and shalt bear a son, and shalt call his name Ishmael; because the LORD hath heard thy affliction. 12 And he will be a wild man; his hand will be against every man, and every man’s hand against him; and he shall dwell in the presence of all his brethren. 13 And she called the name of the

LORD that spake unto her, Thou God seest me: for she said, Have I also here looked after him that seeth me? - Gen. 16:7-13

The Angel of the LORD here, or *malak Jehovah* (messenger of the “Existing One,” or the “I AM”), is not a created angel. A created angel who is a servant and messenger of God hasn’t the power to multiply a person’s ‘seed’ exceedingly, nor would such a creature ever claim such a power to himself – but would always attribute such power in a proper manner, that God’s name is glorified in His power and providence. It is the person of Christ. Hagar asks the question that ostensibly means “Have I beheld or perceived Him that sees me (divinely, or without being able to hide from)?”

Isaiah’s commission

In the year that king Uzziah died I saw also the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple. 2 Above it stood the seraphims: each one had six wings; with twain he covered his face, and with twain he covered his feet, and with twain he did fly. 3 And one cried unto another, and said, Holy, holy, holy, is the LORD of hosts: the whole earth is full of his glory. 4 And the posts of the door moved at the voice of him that cried, and the house was filled with smoke. 5 Then said I, Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts. 6 Then flew one of the seraphims unto me, having a live coal in his hand, which he had taken with the tongs from off the altar: 7 And he laid it upon my mouth, and said, Lo, this hath touched thy lips; and thine iniquity is taken away, and thy sin purged. 8 Also I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, Whom shall I send, and who will go for us? Then said I, Here am I; send me. 9 And he said, Go, and tell this people, Hear ye indeed, but understand not; and see ye indeed, but perceive not. 10 Make the heart of this people fat, and make their ears heavy, and shut their eyes; lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and convert, and be healed. 11 Then said I, Lord, how long? And he answered, Until the cities be wasted without inhabitant, and the houses without man, and the land be utterly desolate,– Isa. 6:1-11

It is clear, from the New Testament reference to this intense experience of his calling, that Isaiah had beheld and spoke with the Messiah:

While ye have light, believe in the light, that ye may be the children of light. These things spake Jesus, and departed, and did hide himself from them. 37 But though he (Jesus) had done so many miracles before them, yet they believed not on him: 38 That the saying of Esaias the prophet might be fulfilled, which he spake, Lord, who hath believed our report? and to whom hath the arm of the Lord been revealed? 39 Therefore they could not believe, because that Esaias said again, 40 He hath blinded their eyes, and hardened their heart; that they should

not see with their eyes, nor understand with their heart, and be converted, and I should heal them. 41 These things said Esaias, when he saw his glory, and spake of him. – John 12:36-41

Gideon wants a sign

And there came an angel of the LORD, and sat under an oak which was in Ophrah, that pertained unto Joash the Abiezrite: and his son Gideon threshed wheat by the winepress, to hide it from the Midianites. 12 And the angel of the LORD appeared unto him, and said unto him, The LORD is with thee, thou mighty man of valour. 13 And Gideon said unto him, Oh my Lord, if the LORD be with us, why then is all this befallen us? and where be all his miracles which our fathers told us of, saying, Did not the LORD bring us up from Egypt? but now the LORD hath forsaken us, and delivered us into the hands of the Midianites. 14 And the LORD looked upon him, and said, Go in this thy might, and thou shalt save Israel from the hand of the Midianites: have not I sent thee? 15 And he said unto him, Oh my Lord, wherewith shall I save Israel? behold, my family is poor in Manasseh, and I am the least in my father's house. 16 And the LORD said unto him, Surely I will be with thee, and thou shalt smite the Midianites as one man. 17 And he said unto him, If now I have found grace in thy sight, then shew me a sign that thou talkest with me. 18 Depart not hence, I pray thee, until I come unto thee, and bring forth my present, and set it before thee. And he said, I will tarry until thou come again. 19 And Gideon went in, and made ready a kid, and unleavened cakes of an ephah of flour: the flesh he put in a basket, and he put the broth in a pot, and brought it out unto him under the oak, and presented it. 20 And the angel of God said unto him, Take the flesh and the unleavened cakes, and lay them upon this rock, and pour out the broth. And he did so. 21 Then the angel of the LORD put forth the end of the staff that was in his hand, and touched the flesh and the unleavened cakes; and there rose up fire out of the rock, and consumed the flesh and the unleavened cakes. Then the angel of the LORD departed out of his sight. 22 And when Gideon perceived that he was an angel of the LORD, Gideon said, Alas, O Lord GOD! for because I have seen an angel of the LORD face to face. 23 And the LORD said unto him, Peace be unto thee; fear not: thou shalt not die. 24 Then Gideon built an altar there unto the LORD, and called it Jehovahshalom: unto this day it is yet in Ophrah of the Abiezrites. – Judges 6:11-24

In verses 11 and 12, the visitor is presented as “an angel of the Lord” (malak Yehovah, or messenger of Jehovah), who sat down to speak with Gideon. In verse 13, Gideon addresses his visitor as master, or colloquially ‘sir’: “Oh my Lord”; and then refers to Jehovah: “if the LORD be with us – showing that clearly he still did not understand who he spoke with. Then in verse 14, the angel who speaks with Gideon is now called “The LORD” (Jehovah) – he commands Gideon to go in his might and asks, “have I not sent thee?” The LORD Jehovah sends men to do things in His Providence alone. In verse 16, again now the visitor speaks as the LORD Jehovah: “And

the LORD said unto him, "Surely I will be with thee," again expressing the certainty of His Providence. In verse 17, it seems that Gideon, though earlier not quite knowing who he was talking with, now wants proof of what has crept into the edges of his understanding: that he is talking to Jehovah.

Gill (v. 20): *Instead of sitting down and partaking of the entertainment made for him, he bid him do as follows: "take the flesh, and the unleavened cakes, and lay them upon this rock"; not as a table to eat it from, but as an altar to offer it upon; and which rock and altar might be typical of Christ, who sanctities every gift, present, and offering of his people: "And pour out the broth"; that is, upon the flesh and cakes, and upon the rock also, which Gideon did. "Then the angel of the Lord put forth the end of the staff that was in his hand and touched the flesh and the unleavened cakes"; did not strike the rock with it, as Moses did with his rod, to fetch out water for the Israelites, but touched only the provisions brought him, for the working of a miracle. "And there rose up fire out of the rock"; had he struck the rock with his staff, the miracle would not have appeared so great, because it might be thought there was an iron ferrule at the end of it (as was somewhat common), which striking on a flinty rock might cause fire; but it was the flesh and cakes only that were touched, and these also as having broth poured on them, and the rock likewise. "And consumed the flesh, and the unleavened cakes"; though they had the broth poured on them and were sodden with it; so that the miracle was similar to that wrought by Elijah on Mount Carmel, #1Ki 18:33-38. "Then the angel of the Lord departed out of his sight": not went on his journey, as he might seem, but vanished immediately; which circumstance plainly showed, and fully convinced Gideon.*

Manoah and his wife

And the children of Israel did evil again in the sight of the LORD; and the LORD delivered them into the hand of the Philistines forty years. 2 And there was a certain man of Zorah, of the family of the Danites, whose name was Manoah; and his wife was barren, and bare not. 3 And the angel of the LORD appeared unto the woman, and said unto her, Behold now, thou art barren, and bearest not: but thou shalt conceive, and bear a son. 4 Now therefore beware, I pray thee, and drink not wine nor strong drink, and eat not any unclean thing: 5 For, lo, thou shalt conceive, and bear a son; and no razor shall come on his head: for the child shall be a Nazarite unto God from the womb: and he shall begin to deliver Israel out of the hand of the Philistines. 6 Then the woman came and told her husband, saying, A man of God came unto me, and his countenance was like the countenance of an angel of God, very terrible: but I asked him not whence he was, neither told he me his name: 7 But he said unto me, Behold, thou shalt conceive, and bear a son; and now drink no wine nor strong drink, neither eat any unclean thing: for the child shall be a Nazarite to God from the womb to the day of his death. 8 Then Manoah intreated the LORD, and said, O my Lord, let the man of God which thou didst

send come again unto us, and teach us what we shall do unto the child that shall be born. 9 And God hearkened to the voice of Manoah; and the angel of God came again unto the woman as she sat in the field: but Manoah her husband was not with her. 10 And the woman made haste, and ran, and shewed her husband, and said unto him, Behold, the man hath appeared unto me, that came unto me the other day. 11 And Manoah arose, and went after his wife, and came to the man, and said unto him, Art thou the man that spakest unto the woman? And he said, I am. 12 And Manoah said, Now let thy words come to pass. How shall we order the child, and how shall we do unto him? 13 And the angel of the LORD said unto Manoah, Of all that I said unto the woman let her beware. 14 She may not eat of any thing that cometh of the vine, neither let her drink wine or strong drink, nor eat any unclean thing: all that I commanded her let her observe. 15 And Manoah said unto the angel of the LORD, I pray thee, let us detain thee, until we shall have made ready a kid for thee. 16 And the angel of the LORD said unto Manoah, Though thou detain me, I will not eat of thy bread: and if thou wilt offer a burnt offering, thou must offer it unto the LORD. For Manoah knew not that he was an angel of the LORD. 17 And Manoah said unto the angel of the LORD, What is thy name, that when thy sayings come to pass we may do thee honour? 18 And the angel of the LORD said unto him, Why askest thou thus after my name, seeing it is secret? 19 So Manoah took a kid with a meat offering, and offered it upon a rock unto the LORD: and the angel did wondrously; and Manoah and his wife looked on. 20 For it came to pass, when the flame went up toward heaven from off the altar, that the angel of the LORD ascended in the flame of the altar. And Manoah and his wife looked on it, and fell on their faces to the ground. 21 But the angel of the LORD did no more appear to Manoah and to his wife. Then Manoah knew that he was an angel of the LORD. 22 And Manoah said unto his wife, We shall surely die, because we have seen God. 23 But his wife said unto him, If the LORD were pleased to kill us, he would not have received a burnt offering and a meat offering at our hands, neither would he have shewed us all these things, nor would as at this time have told us such things as these. – Judges 13:1-23

In verse 15, Manoah asks his visitor to stay until he can get a proper meal ready for him, which was the custom to honor and refresh your guests, especially great persons. The angel of the LORD corrects Manoah in verse 16, giving him to understand that He was no pedestrian visitor, nor a mere man – and that if he was going to bring a kid or bread to the LORD, he should do so as *unto* the LORD, and make an offering unto Him (which Manoah still did not perceive). In the next verse, Manoah asks his visitor what his name is, still perceiving him to be of some tribe and from some location that he could connect to in his mind, and that perhaps he could honor his visitor who came with a glad prophecy by naming the child after him when it is born. Manoah still asked in ignorance, however honest the request was; the LORD's response is crisp and resolute. Manoah had yet to grasp the utter gravity of the situation, and there was no reason, other than base curiosity of relating the encounter to social custom, for Manoah to ask the

question, or for the LORD to give an answer to such a trivially-asked query. In comparison, there was a specific reason for the LORD to give an answer to Moses (who asked a similar question), as the question was then asked in the serious context of Moses considering the detail of what the LORD had charged him with:

And Moses said unto God, Behold, when I come unto the children of Israel, and shall say unto them, The God of your fathers hath sent me unto you; and they shall say to me, What is his name? what shall I say unto them? 14 And God said unto Moses, I AM THAT I AM: and he said, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you. – Ex. 3:13-14

(“I AM THAT I AM” is rendered from the Hebrew *hayah* (haw-yaw), which means: to be, to exist, to be in existence – which is ostensibly the meaning of *Jehovah*, or “The Existing One.) The Hebrew word rendered as ‘secret’ in verse Judges 13:18 is *pali* (paw-lee), which means: wonderful, incomprehensible, extraordinary.

For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. – Isa. 9:6

Who hath ascended up into heaven, or descended? who hath gathered the wind in his fists? who hath bound the waters in a garment? who hath established all the ends of the earth? what is his name, and what is his son’s name, if thou canst tell? – Pro. 30:4

Gill (v. 19): “and the angel did wondrously” (*pala* – paw-law – same word root: wondrous or wonderful) *agreeably to his name, which was "Wonderful," "he, Jehovah, did wondrously" for this angel was no other than Jehovah the Son. The instance in which he did wondrously was, by bringing fire out of the rock, which consumed the flesh of the kid, and the meat offering; he touched the flesh with a rod he had, and fire sparkled out, and consumed it with the bread, or meat offering, in the same manner as the angel did with the kid and cakes that Gideon brought in Judges 6:21.*

The phrase “the angel of the LORD” (again, *malak Jehovah*) was regularly put for Christ in scripture, as these oracles indicate. In Judges 13:21-23, Manoah and his wife clearly equate “the angel of the LORD” with “God,” as should any reader who connects the dots in earnest.

We will continue the discussion of this vital topic, Lord willing, next Sunday. I ask your continued patience and considering of the matter, as I believe that the work of fleshing out details of these many examples will greatly aid in providing a better level of understanding with the following level of scriptural analysis. I hope that something here has been edifying and refreshing.

I love you all.