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Prayer Meeting Address by Mr. J. Delves at "Ebenezer" Clapham
3rd. July, 1950

Reading: Judges 13

This is very striking reading. We find upon different occasions the Lord appeared in angelic form, as the Son of God, unto men, especially when He was about to work some signal deliverance. So it was in this case, for though it was not known, (and it is often not known,) what the Lord was about to do, yet in these particular circumstances God was preparing a deliverer for His people, who by reason of their base idolatry had been under much oppression. There must have been some majesty pertaining to this divine incarnate appearance to the sons of men because of the effect it had upon Manoah; and here we see an amazing contrast between the two in relation to this remarkable appearance. In the case of Manoah we see great fear but in the case of his wife we see great faith. It is true it has not always worked that way; sometimes it has been otherwise; but here in a striking way we can see how the rising of faith in Manoah's wife prevailed over a human, natural reasoning on the part of her husband. With him was great apprehension, for he said, "We shall surely die, because we have seen God". It is true that on some occasions these divine appearances were a presage of a judgment, but in this case it was absolutely ungrounded fear, as is at times the case with the Lord's people under unusual circumstances.

So here it may be observed that it is more or less natural for human reason to come to premature conclusions, sometimes even in respect to the Lord's purpose in His dealings. In this case there was no ground for Manoah's conclusion but in the case of his wife we see great faith. She was in this instance a true helpmeet unto him, instrumentally, to allay his

fears and to strengthen him, for she said, "If the Lord were pleased to kill us, He would not have received a burnt offering and 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". Would He have done all this if He intended to kill us? Would He have brought us thus far, shown us these things, if He had such an end in view? Surely that could not be. Now that was the rising of faith on the part of Manoah's wife and may have some teaching in it to us all under certain conditions of life or circumstances wherein we may be disposed to draw premature conclusions. It is a mercy when faith, which is the Lord's gift, rises above reason and can believe God and feel assured that He who hath begun a good work in us will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ. So, if any of us are in a low case and feeling, so to speak, to be coming to the end of things, as though it is all winding up, coming to a death, let us remember what Manoah's wife said and how she, like David in an extreme case at Ziklag, encouraged herself in the Lord her God.
