Judges 13:23 (Frederick George Patterson) 77954

Words of Truth: Volume 5, Manoah's Wife (13:23)

I believe that very commonly when we read such writings as the Epistle to the Galatians, to the Ephesians, or to the Hebrews, indeed any of the epistles, we might very profitably keep in memory the words of Manoah’s wife to her husband. He was afraid, for they had seen God, and he thought he should die; but she said to 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 sheaved us all these things, nor would, as at this time, have told us such things as these” (Judg. 13).

A very simple, beautiful and convincing argument, Faith is always the best reasoner; because it uses the very arguments which God in grace suggests—as in this instance of this simple woman, whose simplicity of faith is apparent from the whole chapter. Her husband was rather a devout and good man, who walked more in a praying a believing mind; but this simple reasoning of his wife may be our reasoning as we read such scriptures as those I have mentioned. There we find that our God has told us wonderful secrets, brought us into intimate and near relationship to. Himself, and looks for our presence in His sanctuary within a rent veil, with burnt-offerings and sacrifices of praise. In such character and places as these He addresses us. And how full such a thing as that is of the great proof that He has no purpose of a controversy with us, but that He has already accepted our persons, and forgiven our sins? Surely it is. He would not, after this manner, set us in the place of either sons, friends, or worshippers, had He not first set us as accepted and pardoned. The less is surely included in the better.

And He Himself treats acceptance and pardon very much in that way in such epistles. He rather assumes it than teaches it. If He is recalled to it at all, it is because the saints were so disposed to return to the law, to the legal mind, and the world of ordinances. The question of pardon or justification suits the presence of God as a judge. But in some of these epistles our God speaks to us as a Father; or as from the sanctuary of peace; or as face to face, as a man would speak to a friend communicating his secrets; or as One that has us with Himself in heavenly places; and He would not thus deal with us we may say, in the spirit of Manoah’s wife, if it were His pleasure to kill us, or to keep us under law, and in fear of judgment.

Indeed, the reasoning of the apostle at the close of Rom. 8 has this character in it. It may remind us of Manoah and his wife in the field of Zorah. For, like that believing woman, the apostle is challenging the inferior thing in the presence or name of the higher thing. She says, He would not kill us because He has spoken to us, and accepted our worship; the apostle says, who shall condemn, since Christ died, and rose, and intercedes?