
JUDGES 13:1 The children of Israel again did that which was evil in the sight of the LORD; and the LORD delivered them into the hand of the Philistines forty years.

The Israelites corrupt themselves, abut are delivered into the hands of the Philistines forty years, Jdg 13:1. An Angel appears to the wife of Manoah, foretells the birth of her son, and gives her directions how to treat both herself and her child, who was to be a deliverer of Israel, Jdg 13:2-5. She informs her husband of this transaction, Jdg 13:6, Jdg 13:7. Manoah prays that the Angel may reappear; he is heard, and the Angel appears to him and his wife, and repeats his former directions concerning the mother and the child, Jdg 13:8-14. Manoah presents an offering to the Lord, and the Angel ascends in the flame, Jdg 13:15-20. Manoah is alarmed, but is comforted by the judicious rejections of his wife, Jdg 13:21-23. Samson is born, and begins to feel the influence of the Divine Spirit, Jdg 13:24, Jdg 13:25.

Verse 1

Delivered them into the hand of the Philistines - It does not appear that after Shamgar, to the present time, the Philistines were in a condition to oppress Israel, or God had not permitted them to do it; but now they have a commission, the Israelites having departed from the Lord. Nor is it evident that the Philistines had entirely subjected the Israelites, as there still appears to have been a sort of commerce between the two people. They had often vexed and made inroads upon them, but they had them not in entire subjection; see Jdg 15:11.

JUDGES 13:2 There was a certain man of Zorah, of the family of the Danites, whose name was Manoah; and his wife was barren, and didn't bear.

Verse 2

A certain man of Zorah - A town in the tribe of Judah, but afterwards given to Dan.

JUDGES 13:3 the LORD's angel appeared to the woman, and said to her, "See now, you are barren, and don't bear; but you shall conceive, and bear a son.

Verse 3

The angel of the Lord - Generally supposed to have been the same that appeared to Moses, Joshua, Gideon, etc., and no other than the second person of the ever-blessed Trinity.

JUDGES 13:4 Now therefore please beware and drink no wine nor strong drink, and don't eat any unclean thing:

Verse 4

Beware - drink not wine - As Samson was designed to be a Nazarite from the womb, it was necessary that, while his mother carried and nursed him, she should live the life of a Nazarite, neither drinking wine nor any inebriating liquor, nor eating any kind of forbidden meat. See the account of the Nazarite and his vow in the notes on Num 6:2 (note), etc.

JUDGES 13:5 for, behold, you shall conceive, and bear a son; and no razor shall come on his head; for the child shall be a Nazirite to God from the womb: and he shall begin to save Israel out of the hand of the Philistines."

Verse 5

He shall begin to deliver Israel - Samson only began this deliverance, for it was not till the days of David that the Israelites were completely redeemed from the power of the Philistines.

JUDGES 13:6 Then the woman came and told her husband, saying, "A man of God came to me, and his face was like the face of the angel of God, very awesome; and I didn't ask him where he was from, neither did he tell me his name:

Verse 6

But I asked him not whence he was, neither told he me his name - This clause is rendered very differently by the Vulgate, the negative Not being omitted: *Quem cum interrogassem quis esset, et unde venisset, et quo nomine vocaretur, noluit mihi dicere; sed hoc respondit.* "Who, when I asked who he was and whence he came, and by what name he was called, would not tell me; but this he said," etc. The negative is also wanting in the Septuagint, as it stands in the Complutensian Polyglot: *Και ηρωτων αυτον ποθεν εστιν, και το ονομα αυτου ουκ απηγγειλε μοι;* "And I asked him whence he was, and his name, but he did not tell me." This is also the reading of the Codex Alexandrinus; but the Septuagint, in the London Polyglot, together with the Chaldee, Syriac, and Arabic, read the negative particle with the Hebrew text, I asked Not his name, etc.

JUDGES 13:7 but he said to me, 'Behold, you shall conceive, and bear a son; and now drink no wine nor strong drink, and eat not any unclean thing; for the child shall be a Nazirite to God from the womb to the day of his death.'"

JUDGES 13:8 Then Manoah entreated the LORD, and said, "Oh, Lord, please let the man of God whom you did send come again to us, and teach us what we shall do to the child who shall be born."

JUDGES 13:9 God listened to the voice of Manoah; and the angel of God came again to the woman as she sat in the field: but Manoah, her husband, wasn't with her.

Verse 9

The angel of God came again - This second appearance of the angel was probably essential to the peace of Manoah, who might have been jealous of his wife had he not had this proof that the thing was of the Lord.

JUDGES 13:10 The woman made haste, and ran, and told her husband, and said to him, "Behold, the man has appeared to me, who came to me that day."

JUDGES 13:11 Manoah arose, and went after his wife, and came to the man, and said to him, "Are you the man who spoke to the woman?" He said, "I am."

JUDGES 13:12 Manoah said, "Now let your words happen. What shall the child's way of life and mission be?"

JUDGES 13:13 the LORD's angel said to Manoah, "Of all that I said to the woman let her beware.

JUDGES 13:14 She may not eat of anything that comes of the vine, neither let her drink wine or strong drink, nor eat any unclean thing; all that I commanded her let her observe."

JUDGES 13:15 Manoah said to the LORD's angel, "Please, let us detain you, that we may make a young goat ready for you."

Verse 15

Until we shall have made ready a kid - Not knowing his quality, Manoah wished to do this as an act of hospitality.

JUDGES 13:16 the LORD's angel said to Manoah, "Though you detain me, I won't eat of your bread; and if you will prepare a burnt offering, you must offer it to the LORD." For Manoah didn't know that he was the LORD's angel.

Verse 16

I will not eat of thy bread - As I am a spiritual being, I subsist not by earthly food.

And if thou wilt offer a burnt-offering - Neither shall I receive that homage which belongs to God; thou must therefore offer thy burnt-offering to Jehovah.

JUDGES 13:17 Manoah said to the LORD's angel, "What is your name, that when your words happen, we may honour you?"

JUDGES 13:18 the LORD's angel said to him, "Why do you ask about my name, since it is wonderful?"

Verse 18

Seeing it is secret? - It was because it was secret that they wished to know it. The angel does not say that it was secret, but הוּא פֶּלִיא hu peli it is Wonderful; the very character that is given to Jesus

Christ, Isa 9:6 : His name shall be called, אֱלֹהִים Wonderful; and it is supposed by some that the angel gives this as his name, and consequently that he was our blessed Lord.

JUDGES 13:19 So Manoah took the young goat with the meal offering, and offered it on the rock to the LORD. Then the angel did a wonderful thing as Manoah and his wife looked on.

Verse 19

The angel did wondrously - He acted according to his name; he, being wonderful, performed wonderful things; probably causing fire to arise out of the rock and consume the sacrifice, and then ascending in the flame.

JUDGES 13:20 For when the flame went up toward the sky from off the altar, the LORD's angel ascended in the flame of the altar: and Manoah and his wife looked on; and they fell on their faces to the ground.

JUDGES 13:21 But the LORD's angel didn't appear to Manoah or to his wife any more. Then Manoah knew that he was the LORD's angel.

JUDGES 13:22 Manoah said to his wife, "We shall surely die, because we have seen God."

Verse 22

We shall surely die, because we have seen God - See the note on Jdg 6:22.

JUDGES 13:23 But his wife said to him, "If the LORD were pleased to kill us, he wouldn't have received a burnt offering and a meal offering at our hand, neither would he have shown us all these things, nor would at this time have told such things as these."

Verse 23

If the Lord were pleased to kill us, etc. - This is excellent reasoning, and may be of great use to every truly religious mind, in cloudy and dark dispensations of Divine Providence. It is not likely that God, who has preserved thee so long, borne with thee so long, and fed and supported thee all thy life long, girding thee when thou knewest him not, is less willing to save and provide for thee and thine now than he was when, probably, thou trustedst less in him. He who freely gave his Son to redeem thee, can never be indifferent to thy welfare; and if he give thee power to pray to and trust in him, is it at all likely that he is now seeking an occasion against thee, in order to destroy thee? Add to this the very light that shows thee thy wretchedness, ingratitude, and disobedience, is in itself a proof that he is waiting to be gracious to thee; and the penitential pangs thou feelest, and thy bitter regret for thy unfaithfulness, argue that the light and fire are of God's own kindling, and are sent to direct and refine, not to drive thee out of the way and destroy thee. Nor would he have told thee such

things of his love, mercy, and kindness, and unwillingness to destroy sinners, as he has told thee in his sacred word, if he had been determined not to extend his mercy to thee.

JUDGES 13:24 The woman bore a son, and named him Samson: and the child grew, and the LORD blessed him.

Verse 24

And called his name Samson - The original שמשון shimshon, which is from the root שמש shamash, to serve, (whence shemesh, the sun), probably means either a little sun, or a little servant; and this latter is so likely a name to be imposed on an only son, by maternal fondness, that it leaves but little doubt of the propriety of the etymology.

And the Lord blessed him - Gave evident proofs that the child was under the peculiar protection of the Most High; causing him to increase daily in stature and extraordinary strength.

JUDGES 13:25 The Spirit of the LORD began to move him in Mahaneh Dan, between Zorah and Eshtaol.

Verse 25

The Spirit of the Lord began to move him - He felt the degrading bondage of his countrymen, and a strong desire to accomplish something for their deliverance. These feelings and motions he had from the Divine Spirit.

Camp of Dan - Probably the place where his parents dwelt; for they were Danites, and the place is supposed to have its name from its being the spot where the Danites stopped when they sent some men of their company to rob Micah of his teraphim, etc. See Jdg 18:13-20. As he had these influences between Zorah and Eshtaol, it is evident that this was while he dwelt at home with his parents; for Zorah was the place where his father dwelt; see Jdg 13:2. Thus God began, from his infancy, to qualify him for the work to which he had called him.