The Birth of Samson

Judges 13:1-24

Introduction:

Most famous of the judges Samson is the most unique of the judges. He had more physical strength, but he had little spiritual strength. He has been contrasted to Moses in the following way.

Moses Samson

Brain Brawn

Life was a long epic A brief tragedy

Man of God A man of the people

Apollo Hercules

Died speaking Died speaking prayer

a prophecy for Israel for vengeance.

Gave us the Pentateuch Gave us a riddle

Lived 120 years Lived 50? Years

Founded a nation Fought a nation

Lasted for 30 Centuries Ended as a local catastrophe.

They had one thing in common, “They had the same faith but not the same faithfulness” (Robust Faith – Samuel Zwermer, p. 102)

Somehow Samson made it to the Hall of Faith (Hebrews 11:32-34)

“And what more shall I say? For the time would fail me to tell of ﻿﻿Gideon and ﻿﻿Barak and ﻿﻿Samson and ﻿﻿Jephthah… who through faith subdued kingdoms, worked righteousness, obtained promises, … out of weakness were made strong, became valiant in battle, turned to flight the armies of the aliens.

In Judges 10:6-7 we read of Israel’s failure and God’s judgment on them.

“Then ﻿﻿the children of Israel again did evil in the sight of the Lord, and ﻿﻿served the Baals and the Ashtoreths, ﻿﻿the gods of Syria, the gods of ﻿﻿Sidon, the gods of Moab, the gods of the people of Ammon, and the gods of the Philistines; and they forsook the Lord and did not serve Him. So the anger of the Lord was hot against Israel; and He ﻿﻿sold them into the hands of the ﻿﻿Philistines and into the hands of the people of ﻿﻿Ammon. ﻿

The Ammonites were in the east toward the Dead Sea. Jephthah fought and defeated them.

The Philistines were in the west between Jerusalem and the Mediterranean Sea.

They are the enemy that Samson will fight.

I. The Revelation of Samson’s Birth - 13:1-3

“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.

Manoah and his wife were of the tribe of Dan. The land west of Jerusalem was their original inheritance. But most of the tribe had moved up North.

They were a Godly couple. But a sad couple, they had no children.

“You shall bear a son.”

He was to be the deliverer of Israel. He was to be a special person.

He was announced by a very special messenger. Not just a prophet, or an angel, but God, Himself.

[The term Angel of the Lord meant that it was an appearance of God, Himself in human form. (A Theophany is an appearance of God). That person of the Godhead was the pre-incarnant Christ, so it could be called a Christophany – an appearance of Christ.

The reason they need a deliverer is because of the Philistines.

“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.” (13:1)

Israel will be slaves in the hands of the Philistines for 40 years, that’s 4 decades. This is the 7th cycle of apostasy.

This was a different type of subjection.

The Philistines could have overrun them with their weapons of iron and just taken over their land.

There were several unique conditions in this period:

a. They had a Unique Method of Subjection:

Trade

They did not bring an army and wipe them out.

They did not make raids on their crops.

They had learned to work with Iron -- First in Palestine

They lived among them and because of their superior army and iron weapons they kept them in subjection.

Israelites were not allowed to have any weapons. They could have farm tools, but they had to go to the Philistine’s to get them sharpened, for a fee. (See I Samuel 13:19-20)

Intermarriage

If the Israelite wanted to marry a Philistine they would not object. So the people of Israel were content to live in this environment, so they did not call on God for help.

They were using assimilation and compromise.

Another unique feature was:

b. There was No Repentance by the Israelites.

In the other times of deliverance there was a pattern:

6. Israel serves the Lord

5. Israel is delivered 1. Israel falls into idolatry

4. God raises up a Judge 2. Israel is enslaved

3. Israel cries out to the Lord

That was true in all of the other six cycles. Not here!

We always stress what the Bible says. But we also need to note what the Bible does not say. The “silence of the Word.” Here the silence is deafening! There is not one word about repentance.

Sometimes we don’t know enough to ask for the right thing, because we don’t know the mess we are in. It is then that God sends us what we need.

It was in this environment that God was going to send a deliverer.

II. The Requirements of Samson’s Life -13:4-5

Speaking to Samson’s “soon to be” mother.

“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.”

Nazirite – (Not From Nazareth)

The Nazirite Vow: Numbers 6:2-8

To be separated to the Lord. It refers to a class of people who voluntarily gave themselves to the Lord as special servants for special duties. This is what the Lord had determined for Samson.

{Ray, I’d like to have this whole passage on the screen if possible. I want to refer to it.}

“Speak to the children of Israel, and say to them: ‘When either a man or woman ﻿﻿consecrates an offering to take the vow of a Nazirite, ﻿﻿to separate himself to the Lord, ﻿﻿he shall separate himself from wine and *similar* drink; he shall drink neither vinegar made from wine nor vinegar made from *similar* drink; neither shall he drink any grape juice, nor eat fresh grapes or raisins. All the days of his ﻿﻿separation he shall eat nothing that is produced by the grapevine, from seed to skin. ‘All the days of the vow of his separation no ﻿﻿razor shall come upon his head; until the days are fulfilled for which he separated himself to the Lord, he shall be holy. *Then* he shall let the locks of the hair of his head grow. All the days that he separates himself to the Lord ﻿﻿he shall not go near a dead body. ﻿He shall not ﻿﻿make himself unclean even for his father or his mother, for his brother or his sister, when they die, because his separation to God *is* on his head. ﻿All the days of his separation he shall be holy to the Lord.”

A. It was Personal

No one was required to take the vow. It was a voluntary commitment to the Lord, because one wanted to be special for God.

B. It was Purposeful

It was about being separated to God. The word “separate” is used in each verse.

Samson was to be different, unique, separated, not just from his enemies but among his people, because his vow was also public.

C. It was Public

People would notice that he did not cut his hair, did not drink wine did not touch dead bodies. He was a marked man.

The New Testament had some “Nazirites”:

John the Baptist

Paul (for a time) Acts 18:18

D. It was Periodic

As long as Samson kept his vow, he was strong. When he did not keep his vow, he was weak.

III. The Responsibility of Samson’s Work

A. He Fought Alone

The other judges led an army of repentant people. Since Israel had not repented, they did not see the need to fight against the Philistines.

So Samson fought alone. Not as many as one man went out with him. It was a personal fight. You might say that he had a thing with the Philistines.

B. He was Called to Start the Job.

Starting is important, but it is gratifying to see the completed project. But sometimes the project takes more time than one man has. {Moody and DTS}

How would you have respond to this news about your son?

Samson’s parents responded in some logical ways:

IV. The Reaction of Samson’s Parents

A. The Report of Manoah’s Wife – 13:6-7

“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.’ ”

B. The Request of Manoah – 13:8

“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.”

Appeared to wife two times.

C. The Response of God to Manoah – 13:9-12

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?”

D. The Repetition of God Promise – 13:13-14

“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.”

Third time

E. The Refusal of Manoah’s Invitation – 13:15-16

“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.)

Don’t blame Manoah

F. The Revelation of Manoah’s Wife – 13:17-21

“Then Manoah said to the Angel of the Lord, “What *is* Your name, that when Your words come *to pass* we may honor You?” And the Angel of the Lord said to him, ﻿﻿“Why do you ask My name, seeing it *is* wonderful?” 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.

Wonderful – “beyond description, secret”

Isaiah 9:6 His name shall be called “wonderful”

G. The Reasoning of Manoah’s Wife – 13:22-23

“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.”

She has a handle on this situation.

V. The Record of Samson’s Faith – 13:24-25

“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.

Samson means “strength” or “daring”.

The Spirit of the Lord began to move on Him.

You know that the Holy Spirit did not indwell people in the Old Testament period. He came upon them for a special task and then departed.

It is more like New Testament filling of the Holy Spirit than baptism. In the N.T., after the Christians had been baptized and therefore indwelt permanently, they were filled for ministry from time to time. Later on they were filled again, because filling is for doing not for being.

The Holy Spirit came upon Samson from time to time.

Samson’s power was from God. It was not in his hair, though there was a connection.

While he had the uncut hair, a part of his vow, he was in fellowship with God and had the power of God. We will see that later.

What Samson did is unparalleled in history. But he is like the little girl in the nursery rhymn.

“There was a little girl who had a little curl right in the middle of her forehead. When he was good she was very, very good. But when she was bad, she was horrid”

That’s what Samson was: He had his good times, but he also had his bad times. And he died a horrible death.

Conclusion:

We can learn from Samson. Of course we can see the negative teaching.

* Don’t be taken in by a “Delilah.
* Don’t go back on your vow to God.

God may call you to be the beginning of a task that will be finished by someone else.

God used every Judge in a different way and many of them are commended in the Hall of Faith for performing their task as God commanded.

Don’t let someone else’s plan be the gauge for your life and ministry. Be yourself and follow your own God-given plan.

In 2 Corinthians 10:13, Paul says:

﻿

13﻿ ﻿﻿We, however, will not boast beyond measure, but within the limits of the sphere which God appointed us—a sphere which especially includes you… for it was to you that we came with the Gospel of Christ.

Find out what God wants you to do.

When He wants you to do it;

Where He wants you to do it;

Then just do it!

Then God will use you.

He will fill you with His Spirit;

And use you in mighty ways

Because:

That’s Who He is – He is “Wonderful”

And that’s what He does “wonderful things.”