

Samson's Birth & Marriage

Judges 13:1–15:20

Main Street



bible verse

COMMITTING TO MEMORY

Joshua 24:15

...as for me and my house,
we will serve the Lord.



story lesson

BIBLE STORY

We continue the downward spiral of wickedness and sin in the book of Judges by looking into the life of a famous Judge—Samson. Samson's story is notable because there are things that happened in his life that make him stand out among other men in Scripture.

Samson was born in a special way. His mother was barren and childless and the angel of the Lord came to her and told her that she was “going to conceive and have a son...and he is to be set apart to God from birth, and he will begin the deliverance of Israel from the hands of the Philistines” (Judges 13:3, 5). She was amazed at this revelation and she told her husband about it. Her husband prayed to the Lord and asked him to send the angel again “to teach us how to bring up the boy who is to be born” (Judges 13:8). God heard him and sent the angel of the Lord to the lady again. She ran and got her husband and he inquired of the angel how to raise the boy. The angel replied as he did before. The husband asked the angel to stay and eat with them. The angel declined any food and asked it to be prepared as an offering. When the young goat and the grain was placed on a rock to the Lord, the Lord did an amazing thing: “As the flame blazed up from the altar toward heaven, the angel of the Lord ascended in the flame...seeing this Manoah and his wife fell with their faces to the ground” (Judges 13:20). And then they realized that it was the Lord God of heaven and earth that had visited them. “The woman gave birth to a boy and named him Samson. He grew and the Lord blessed him, and the Spirit of the Lord began to stir him...” (Judges 13:24-25).

After Samson was grown, he saw a young Philistine woman and told his parents that he wanted her for his wife. His mother and father answered: “Isn't there an acceptable woman among your relatives or among all our people? Must you go to the uncircumcised Philistines to get a wife?” But Samson said to him, “Get her for me... she's the right one for me” (Judges 14:3). The interesting thing in this account is found in Judges 14:4 when “his parents did not know that this was from the Lord, who was seeking an occasion to confront the Philistines; for at that time they were ruling over

Israel.” So they went down to Timnah (where this Philistine woman lived). As Samson was approaching Timnah a young lion came roaring toward him.

“The Spirit of the Lord came upon him in power so that he tore the lion apart with his bare hands as he might have torn a young goat...but he told neither his father or his mother what he had done...then he went down and talked with the woman and he liked her”
(Judges 14:6-7).

Some time had passed and he was headed back to Timnah to marry this young Philistine woman that he happened upon the lion’s carcass. Inside the carcass was some honey, which he took and ate some and shared some with his parents (although he did not tell them that it was from a lion’s carcass).

Samson made a feast as was customary for bridegrooms and he was given thirty attendants. Samson goaded them with a riddle and they all bet on their ability to answer it or not with garments and clothes. Samson's riddle was: “Out of the eater, something to eat; out of the strong, something sweet” (Judges 14:14). The attendants could not figure out the answer and they threatened Samson's future wife with her and her father's life if she did not find out the answer for them. “Then Samson's wife threw herself on him, sobbing, ‘You hate me! You don't really love me. You've given my people a riddle, but you haven't told me the answer’” (Judges 14:16). Samson told her that he hadn’t even told his parents what the answer was. She sobbed the whole seven days of the festival and on the seventh day Samson gave in and told her. She then told her people the answer.

Samson’s wife-to-be’s attendants gave him the answer: “What is sweeter than honey? What is stronger than a lion?” (Judges 14:18). Samson was furious and he went down to Ashkelon and killed thirty of their men and stripped them of their clothes and gave it to those who had explained the riddle (Judges 14:19). And Samson’s wife was given to the friend who had attended him at his wedding. (Wait...it isn’t over...)

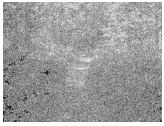
A little while later, Samson took a goat and went to visit his wife. He wanted to go to his wife’s room, but her father would not let him go in. And then her father explained that he had given her to his friend. Samson was very angry and vowed: “This time I have a right to get even with the Philistines; I will really harm them” (Judges 15:3). Then he devised a plan. He caught three hundred foxes and tied them tail-to-tail and then

fastened a torch to every pair of tails. He then lit them and set them loose in the standing grain of the Philistines. “He burned up the shocks and standing grain, together with the vineyards and olive grove” (Judges 15:4-5). When the Philistines asked who did this, they discovered that it was Samson because his wife had been given to his friend. So they went up and burned her and her father to death. Samson vowed: “Since you have acted like this, I won't stop until I get my revenge on you...he attacked them viciously and slaughtered many of them” (Judges 15:7-8). The men of Judah (Samson’s friends) came to get him to deliver him to the Philistines so they would not cause any more trouble for them. Samson let them bind him with new ropes

and lead him to the Philistines. As Samson approached, the Philistines came toward him shouting and yelling. "The Spirit of the Lord came upon him in power. The ropes on his arms became like charred flax, and the bindings dropped from his hands. Finding a fresh jawbone of a donkey, he grabbed it and struck down a thousand men" (Judges 15:14-15).

A little while later, Samson was thirsty and pleaded with the Lord to give him some water. The Lord provided him with water out of a hollow place. And "Samson led Israel for twenty years in the days of the Philistines" (Judges 15:20).

I don't know how to handle that the Spirit of the Lord enabled Samson to do the things that he did. It does not seem right. Samson was just a spoiled brat who always wanted his way and happened to have the power of the Spirit of the Lord on his side. I don't know how to reconcile that. Maybe that the Lord only knows. He even uses the bad things that we do for his glory and purposes. It does not matter if we are following him or not, he is going to use our lives interweaved in sovereign plan. I don't know...



life application

MAKING IT REAL

Listen To Your Parents

Did Samson listen to his parents? No. His parents had wisdom to share, but Samson only wanted what Samson wanted. He did not listen to anyone. He did only what was in his own special interest.

Parents Need to Parent

Did his parents do anything to stop their son? No. His parents did not go that extra step and try to stop his poor choices and bad actions.

God is in Control

The Lord is in control and has big picture reasons for why he does things. We may not be able to understand in the short term, but we must rely on the fact that God is sovereign and in control of the events in history.

Control Yourself

Be careful and watch your temper. Control it before it controls you. What you say or do in anger cannot be taken back.



questions

REMEMBERING

- 1. What was the Judge's name that was born special?** Samson
- 2. What did Samson tear apart with his bare hands?** A lion
- 3. What did Samson eat out of the dead lion's body?** Honey
- 4. How many foxes did Samson tie tails together and send off into a field with a torch in the middle?** 300
- 5. What group of people were against Samson?** The Philistines
- 6. Why did God allow Samson to be a Judge in Israel?**



coloring sheet

ON THE NEXT PAGE



Samson's Birth & Marriage