

## Judges 13-16 Samson

It is clear that God used Samson to punish the Philistines and begin to deliver Israel from the Philistines (Judg. 13:5). What is less clear is whether God approved of Samson's typical methods of punishing the Philistines. Heb. 11:32, 39; 12:1 has to be included in this consideration. Is Samson included here because of a notable expression of faith (at his death) or a lifelong example of faith? How you answer that question affects how you view some of Samson's decisions.

### Ch 13 Birth

v1 Israel returns to their old ways and therefore to captivity. This captivity lasted forty years.

\* What is unusual about this occasion of Israel's captivity? (compare 3:7, 15; 6:7; 10:10)

v2-7 God tells Manoah's barren wife that she will have a son and *the child shall be a Nazirite* (v5). Samson remained a Nazirite all his life (which was rare, it was typically a temporary dedication, Num. 6).

v8-23 Manoah's request, for the messenger to return, is granted. Manoah asks many questions but receives no new information (v13).

v24-25 Samson is born, grows, and is blessed.

\* What mission did God specifically plan for Samson to accomplish? (v5)

\* If you were Samson's parents, would you have told him about these events as he grew up?

\* Name some things about Samson (only from this chapter) that are different from the other judges.

### Application Question

Name something unique in your life, or the life of someone you know, which provides a unique opportunity to serve God, the lost, and/or the church.

### Ch 14 The woman at Timnah

v1-7 Samson finds and wants the woman from Timnah.

v1 This raises many questions: why was he there? what did he see? did he *only* see her and on that basis decide to marry her?

v4 . . . *it was of the Lord* Was it God's idea for him to marry her or was it Samson's idea which God would use to accomplish His will? Does this mean that God approved of Samson's decision? Read Joshua 11:20; Exodus 8:32; 10:20 and then comment.

v8-20 Samson's wedding feast and riddle

\* Name a few of Samson's traits which we learn in this chapter.

### Application Questions

Consider verse 3, 10. What is the relationship between Manoah's words and deeds? If this were his habit as a father, what affect would this have on Samson, during his youth and adulthood?

Choose one of these verses and summarize what it says about the effect of parents on their children (Prov. 1:8-9; 2:1, 12; 6:20-22; 14:26; 19:18)

## Ch 15 Revenge at Timnah & Lehi

v1-8 Samson's disappointment and anger at Timnah

v3-5 instead of taking revenge against the father-in-law, Samson directs his anger at the entire town

v6 This is what the Philistines threatened to do after Samson gave the riddle (14:15)

v7 Samson takes revenge against the Philistines for their injustice against the family who angered him.

v9-12 Philistines request and receive Samson

\* What does Israel's willingness to submit to the Philistines by giving Samson to them, tell us about Israel?

v13-19 Samson slaughters the Philistines and recognizes God's hand. This is the first record we have of Samson acknowledging God. Consider these statements by other judges 3:28; 5:2; 7:18; 8:23; 11:27. We are left to wonder whether Samson regularly offered, and whether the people were interested in hearing, these kinds of words.

v20 Samson judges

\* Name a few of Samson's traits which we learn in this chapter.

## Ch 16 Gaza, Delilah, and death

v1-3 Again, this raises many questions (why did he go to Gaza, into the heart of enemy territory---for business, looking for another woman, to find a way to deliver Israel, other?)

v4-21 Samson & Delilah

v22-31 Samson's death

### Application Questions

Samson had amazing abilities but his choices in women brought constant disappointment. Name some "red flags" that Samson ignored which could have saved him some degree of heartache.

Name some ways that Samson's life mirrors Israel's history.

Samson is listed among the people of faith in Hebrews 11 and among those who have "obtained a good testimony through faith." What in Samson's life makes him an example of faith?