

## Judges Part 9 – Samson 1. Judges 13

Anybody up for a little word association game this morning?.....everybody remembers what those are right....ill say a word, you say the first thing that comes to mind.....for instance....i say best basketball team in the world....most of you would say Rockets.....psychologists would use this to prove you are both mentally unstable and possibly insane....

Word associations point us to what are accepted understandings, norms, and personal preferences.....and there is an understanding and personal preference this morning that I want to get to so lets play real quick....

So....all around the room, turn to your neighbor and say the first thing that comes to mind when I say....

Night – day/relax/lonely

French fries –

Sports

Now....last one – turn to your neighbor and say the first thing that comes to mind when I say.....Samson (Delilah, long hair, strong)

How many of you when you think of Samson, you think – big guy, muscles,

Its fascinating that we think that.....its probably based on Hebrew legend that made him out to be a lot like the incredible hulk from the marvel series.....able to jump from mountain to mountain, shoulders 4 ft wide, biceps made of iron, forearms of copper.....

Truth be told, these legends are probably not true....in fact.....most of our understanding of Samson is almost completely opposite of what he really was....

Let me give you just one of the reasons that he may actually have been quite small or at least average....<sup>1</sup>

**Judges 16:5** – the lords of the philistines asked delilah to go and inquire of Samson and see where his great strength lie....when we look at the incredible hulk.....we don't have to ask where his strength comes from....its from his huge muscles.....the philistines would have been able to deduce this....it actually makes more sense when we examine scripture to see that Samson was probably very average

Lets look at judges 13 as we seek to understand Samson and how he points us forward to Jesus....

**Read 13:1-3**.....sound familiar at all? Lets look at what we have here....

The people again do evil...the Lord gave them into the hands of the Philistines for 40 years....

What do we know about the Philistines....they were really really bad people....

Extremely sophisticated – technologically advanced, they were the first to work with iron, first to employ battle formation. Their art, pottery, culture was more advanced than any other in this time, and it wasn't even close.....

They were building multi story buildings and bridges while the rest of the world were basically hanging out w/ sheep

They flooded the landscape with pigs which to the Israelites were unclean

They were known for their debauchery – week long drinking parties....you thought LSU invented that...nope...philistine

They were also depraved and cruel – they were pirates, who used their technological advancements in cruel manners

When they conquered a land they would mutilate the body parts of the men, women, children...they conquered

As the people continue to through this cycle of sinfulness and repentance, God allows their enemies to be more cruel

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<sup>1</sup> The Giant Judges, the Story of Samson, the Hebrew Hercules – WA SCOTT

They need another savior, and Samson is on his way.....lets look at Samson....

What we know about his parents.....a man of zarah, tribe of dan, name was Manoah.....and his wife was barren

Context....the worst thing that could happen to a woman in this day = barren, unable to have children...

Whats interesting to note also, we never find out the name of Samsons mother.....in a story with magnificent detail, the mothers name is not known.....why? the author is intentionally making her obscure...<sup>2</sup>

But there is something else I want you to see from the story of Samson that I find magnificently hopeful....let me see if anyone else is catching what God is doing here.....reminding us of what we know.....(people did evil, we learn about some parents of a child.....lets read v.4-5

Anyone notice something missing here in this story.....lets remember how God has dealt with Israel through the book of Judges.....all the way back to Ehud

The people do what is evil.....they repent.....God raises up the south paw Ehud

Again the people do what is evil.....they repent.....God raises up Deborah

Again the people do what is evil....they repent....God raises up Gideon

The people continue to do what is evil....they apologize.....God says no.....they repent....God raises up Jephthah

The story of Samson isn't following the previous pattern.....whats different? 2 things....

1. God is seeking out his people and planning their redemption before they even repent
2. This is the first story of a judge being promised before

To summarize.....what we have here is the angel of the Lord (Jesus)....comes to an un named, disgraced woman who the rest of the world rejected, and makes her a magnificent promise.....gives her the direction that she should not drink wine or strong drink, she should eat nothing unclean (fwiw = this also tells us that Manoah and his wife were not God seeking people, probably led astray into idol worship b/c they had to be told not to eat anything unclean)

Her husband....thinking she is crazy....tells her....who told you this again....are you sure you haven't been hitting the bottle a little too much....

The angel of the Lord appears again, this time the woman goes and gets her husband.....read v. 11 – 24

Highlites. ....v.11.....what does Manoah want.....details....hows this going to work, and God if I do that how is this going to work...and this.....how are you going to do this and that....

God simply says.....do what I ask....let me take care of the rest....

v. 15.....let us prepare a goat for you.....it was customary at this time for parties to share a meal as a display of peace...at this point in the story, there is no peace with God....peace with God would come through the actions of a savior.....sound familiar....

v. 19.....Manoah and his wife still have no idea who they are talking to....what is your name....WONDERFUL....a name so divine its beyond description....

So Manoah....offers up the goat as a sacrifice to the Lord, and the man of God (Jesus) ascends in the fire to heaven...

Its at this point....Manoah and his wife figure out.....we are in big trouble....we just saw God

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<sup>2</sup> Tim Keller Judges For You

v.24....and the woman bore a son and his name was called Samson....

This story is so full of application that we could be here all day....but I think its important to really nail down some of these in order for the rest of the stories of Samson to make sense.....a couple of them we've covered....here are more...

1. **God makes those he chooses worthy<sup>3</sup>** (Colossians 1:12)

Samsons mother was rejected, despised, left barren.....nobody in the world would choose her to save the Israelites

2. **We need to choose obedience over details** (1 John 5:3)

Manoah wanted details.....God simply asked for obedience

How often in life do you find yourself waiting on God to provide details before you are obedient....God....I'll go, but first you need to clue me in on how all of this is going to work....

Faith says....I don't care how it works....I'll do what God wants...

3. **One of the most humbling truths in creation is that God loves me "just because".** (Romans 9:14-16)

God doesn't love us b/c of how smart, beautiful, lovely, popular.....that's how humans choose others to love and we think that's how God loves....

Instead, God takes the weak and makes them strong, he takes those who have messed up every possible way in their life and forgives them, he takes those who have no hope and no beauty and makes them lovely....just because

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<sup>3</sup> Borrowed from JD Greear sermon podcast