

Bible Study

Samson's Miraculous Birth: Judges 13



How to use this Bible Study

Welcome to this Bible study. It will be a blessing to you. The focus of this Bible study is the circumstances surrounding the miraculous birth of Samson. It consists of background thoughts, scripture references and questions. There are no wrong or right answers to the questions and the scripture references are given as a help. This Bible Study can be completed individually, or you may wish to invite some friends or family members to do it with you. All scripture references are from the New King James Version.



The Backdrop

Samson was one of 12 Judges who led Israel during the time before Israel was ruled by numerous kings. The name Samson is derived from the Hebrew name "Shimshon" which in turn is derived from "Shemesh" that means "sun". He was born in Zorah, that is Tzora in present day Israel located in an arid valley known for its wineries. Samson was born out of the tribe of Dan. Dan, after whom the tribe was named, was one of the sons of Moses who received a peculiar blessing in Genesis 50 which came into fulfillment during Samson's life.



1. The Angelic Visit – Judges 13:2-7

Samson was born because of an angel visiting his mother and leaving her with a mighty surprise and a promise. His mother, whose name is not mentioned, was barren and as a result, childless. That was about to change, even as the angel spoke to her, as she was already pregnant at that stage. With the prospect of having a son came a set of parental guidelines depicting how their son must be brought up, in the prospect of him becoming a leader of their nation through whom they would be delivered from their enemies.

² 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. ³ 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. ⁴ Now therefore, please be careful not to drink wine or *similar* drink, and not to eat anything unclean. ⁵ 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."

⁶ 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. ⁷ 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.'

Questions for Reflection

Can you recall other women in the Bible who were barren and brought forth great leaders because of God's miraculous intervention? (See the scripture references below for clues.)

Manoah's wife described the Man as having the countenance or appearance of the "Angel of God". How did she know what the countenance of an angel was?

What was the word that she used to describe this countenance?

Do you think Manoah's wife correctly portrayed the message of the angel to him?

Why do you think the angel appeared to Manoah's wife and not to him?

What do you think Samson's parents said to each other after his mother shared the news with his father?

Scripture for Further Reading

Genesis 11:30; Genesis 25:21; Genesis 29:31; Genesis 30:17; Gen 30:22; Judges 13:2; 1 Samuel 1.

Afterthought

In numbers 6 the "law of the Nazarite" is laid down by Moses. The main requirements to be met by such a person included some harsh dietary requirements. Such a person was to separate himself or herself **to** the Lord and to separate him or her **from** wine, vinegar, grape juice, fresh grapes, or raisins. In addition, no razor "shall come upon that person's head" until the days are fulfilled for which he or she separated him or herself to the Lord. Such a person shall also not go near a dead body, even that of a family member. Samson became a Nazarite not by his own choice but by God's desire for his life, from his birth unto his death. His God-fearing parents must have played a critical role in raising him this way. This "law" was broken by Samson later in his life with devastating consequences.



2. Manoah's Prayer Answered - Judges 13:10-14

Manoah after learning from the Angelic visit to his wife prayed to God that He will send the Angel once more to instruct them how to bring up their soon to be born son. One can speculate about the reason for his request. Maybe it was Manoah's unbelief but most

probably it was out of fear for failing to follow the instructions of the Angel. Nevertheless, God answered Manoah's prayer and send the Angel again to visit Manoah's wife while she was alone in the field.

¹⁰ 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!" ¹¹ 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*." ¹² Manoah said, "Now let Your words come *to pass*! What will be the boy's rule of life, and his work?" ¹³ So the Angel of the LORD said to Manoah, "Of all that I said to the woman let her be careful. ¹⁴ 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."

Questions for Reflection

How would you describe Manoah's attitude towards the "Man" his wife called him to meet?

Were the instructions from the Angel different from the first time He gave it to Manoah's wife?

Do you think the Angel answered Manoah's question? If not, why not?

What was the role of God's Angel here?

Scripture for Further Reading

Genesis 21:17; Genesis 31:11; Numbers 22:22

Afterthought

Manoah at first did not recognise that the man he was speaking to was an Angel of God despite him requesting God to send His angel again. The angel most probably would have noticed it and true to his Godly character maintained his virtue. He could have responded in a different way.



3. Manoah Filled with Fear – Judges 13:9-23

Manoah asked the Man to stay with them so that they could bring Him an offer of a young goat. The Angel declined their request of Him receiving the offer but instead suggested to them to bring a burnt offering to God. It was at this point that Manoah asked the Man for His name, still not recognizing that it was an Angel. The Angel replied by wanting to know the reason for it seeing His name is so wonderful. Manoah only understood the full meaning of the Angelic visit after the Angel left them, and it left him in fear.

⁹ 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— ²⁰ 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. ²¹ 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. ²² And Manoah said to his wife, “We shall surely die, because we have seen God!” ²³ 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.”

Questions for Reflection

What was the wonderful thing God did in front of Manoah and his wife?

Why was it so wonderful?

Manoah’s wife gave him 3 reasons why God would not kill them. What were her reasons?

Scripture for Further Reading

Daniel 3:25

Afterthought

Indeed, God did not kill Manoah and his wife as she rightly explained to him, there would have been no purpose in God sending his Angel, and then killing them. They were destined to raise their son and to separate him to God. Samson indeed became a great leader, but he also disappointed his parents as one would see later.



Lessons Learned

What new facts have you discovered in this study?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

What spiritual life lessons have you learned from this study?



A Prayer to Pray

Father God in heave. Thank You that You at times revealed Yourself through the actions of Your Angels. You have made them awesome and wonderful! Thank You for shaping the destiny of the Jewish nation this way so many times. Please help us to discern Your interventions in our lives. Open our eyes to see Your miraculous deeds daily. Bless us with Your presence. Thank You father. Amen



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