

Judges 13 – 16 Samson

a Samson's birth (13:1-25)

- chronological note
- his parent see God and do not die; reference to “day of his [Samson's] death”
- Samson grows up between Zorah and Eshtaol; mention of Manoah

b Samson betrays his secret to his Philistine wife (14:1-20)

- begins: Samson falls in love with woman in Sorek Valley
- Philistines threaten to burn woman's house down if she will not entice Samson to betray secret
- Woman initially fails; but when she questions his love for her, he finally reveals his secret to her; and she tells the Philistines
- keyword: tell
- setting: Sorek Valley (Timanah)

c Samson visits wife at Timnah (15:1-9)

- angered by Philistines and destroys town's fields
- begins: Samson goes to visit his wife
- ends: Samson goes down to Etam

d **TURNING POINT: Samson kills on thousand Philistines** with jawbone of ass; fellow Israelites reject Samson's leadership and Philistines begin to take the initiative against him (15:9-20)

c' Samson visits prostitute at Gaza (16:1-3)

- opposed by Philistines and destroys town's gates
- begins: Samson goes to the Gaza prostitute
- ends: Samson takes the Gaza gates up to Hebron

b' Samson betrays his secret to Delilah (16:4-22)

- begins: Samson falls in love with Delilah in Sorek Valley
- Philistines offer Delilah gifts to entice Samson to betray secret
- Delilah initially fails; but when she questions his love for her, he finally reveals his secret to her; and she tells the Philistines
- keyword: tell
- setting: Sorek Valley (Delilah home)

a' Samson's death (16:23-31)

- chronological note
- Samson cannot see, and he dies
- he is buried between Zorah and Eshtaol; mention of Manoah

Discussion:

Part 1 – Samson’s Birth – A Savior is Born? Judges 13

How is Samson’s unnamed mother a demonstration of God’s saving power?

In what ways is the role of God highlighted in the story of Samson’s nativity? How does Samson’s beginnings (“calling”) differ from the other Judges’ beginnings (calling)? What advantages does he have?

What was prohibited when fulfilling a Nazirite vow (Numbers 6:1-8)? How would these prohibitions help set a person apart for the Lord?

Samson’s marriage – lust at first sight Chapter 14

Why do Samson’s parents object to his choice of a spouse?

What Nazirite vows does Samson break in this Chapter?

What do you think of the party Samson threw? And what do think of the party “game” – the riddle? Was Samson justified in killing thirty men of Ashkelon to make good on his bet? How do you account for his being enabled by God to do this?

Samson’s vengeance – Chapter 15

Who’s fault is this snafu between Samson and his wife? Does Samson have a right to “get even with the Philistines” because of this?

Who seems to be the enemy of the Israelites at this point? Why do Samson’s own countrymen turn him over to the Philistines?

Samson and Delilah – Chapter 16

What did Samson and Delilah have going for them as a couple?

How many times does Delilah ask Samson the secret of his strength? How many times does she shout “Samson, the Philistines are upon you!”? Why do you think he eventually tells her the truth? What does this reveal about Samson? About the importance he placed on his vow?

How is Samson’s life a reflection of Israel’s relationship with God? How does he embody all that is wrong in Israel?

Sampson – Judges 13 – 16 – Bob Krepps