

**Life of Samson: #1**  
**A Squandered Life**  
**Judges 13:23**

Introduction

The nation of Israel is in a horrible cycle throughout the book of Judges.

Israel would disobey God;

God would send judgment upon them,  
they would cry out to God for help,  
and God would deliver them.

That cycle is repeated time and again.

Around 250 years has passed since Joshua's death.

We come to a character, named Samson.

He led Israel 20 years (16:31).

<sup>1</sup> *One day Samson went to Gaza, where he saw a prostitute. He went in to spend the night with her. (Judges 16:1, NIV)*

When you hear his name,  
what comes to mind?

I think of a strong man  
but a weak man.

I have met folks  
who are ‘modern day’ Samsons.

Folks with so much potential  
for being used of God,  
but for one reason or another  
they have squandered their lives.

I want us to consider Samson,  
and look at what  
led up to his becoming  
a ‘wash-out’ for God.

And I hope  
every one of us here  
would say,  
“I don’t want my life  
to turn out like Samson’s.”

“I don’t want words like  
“he wasted it”  
or “she wasted it”  
to be written over my life story!”

Of course, that is why the Lord  
gave us the story of Samson;

that we might learn and avoid  
repeating the same mistakes.

This is not just a Bible story  
to be read before bedtime  
or illustrated in a children's class.

This is the powerful,  
life-changing,  
truth of the Word of God!

In these chapters,  
the Lord has given us clear,  
specific principles  
to help us avoid  
ending up like Samson.

**I. Samson Squandered His Life Because He Did Not  
Recognize the Seriousness of the Times.**

*<sup>32</sup> There were two hundred leaders from Issachar. They knew what Israel should do, and they knew the right time to do it. Their relatives were with them and under their command. (1 Chron 12:32)*

A. Joshua had died.

1. As long as Joshua was alive,  
and as long as those  
who served with Joshua were alive...
2. The people served the Lord.

3. But a new generation came along who didn't know the Lord (Judges 2:7-15).

**B. Why did this happen?**

1. The parents failed to communicate their faith to their children.
2. But there is also a strong possibility that the children didn't listen to the instruction of their parents.

**C. The point here is that these were serious times because of what had happened after the death of Joshua.**

1. Samson should have known that.
2. He should have considered what had taken place for the last 250 years with the nation of Israel.
3. It should have changed the way he lived his life.
4. Because of the seriousness of the times, Samson shouldn't have wasted a minute of the time God had given him.

5. And neither should we!

**II. Samson Squandered His Life Because He Failed to Benefit from the Spiritual Influence God Placed around Him.**

A. His parents were learners (vv. 1-8).

<sup>1</sup> *Again the people of Israel did what the Lord said was wrong. So he handed them over to the Philistines for forty years.*

<sup>2</sup> *There was a man named Manoah from the tribe of Dan, who lived in the city of Zorah. He had a wife, but she could not have children.*

<sup>3</sup> *The angel of the Lord appeared to Manoah's wife and said, "You have not been able to have children, but you will become pregnant and give birth to a son.*

<sup>4</sup> *Be careful not to drink wine or beer or eat anything that is unclean,*

<sup>5</sup> *because you will become pregnant and have a son. You must never cut his hair, because he will be a Nazirite, given to God from birth. He will begin to save Israel from the power of the Philistines."*

<sup>6</sup> *Then Manoah's wife went to him and told him what had happened. She said, "A man from God came to me. He looked like an angel from God; his appearance was frightening. I didn't ask him where he was from, and he didn't tell me his name.*

<sup>7</sup> *But he said to me, 'You will become pregnant and will have a son. Don't drink wine or beer or eat anything that is unclean, because the boy will be a*

*Nazirite to God from his birth until the day of his death.’’*

*<sup>8</sup> Then Manoah prayed to the Lord: “Lord, I beg you to let the man of God come to us again. Let him teach us what we should do for the boy who will be born to us.” (Judges 13:1-8, NIV)*

1. Manoah’s wife was barren.
  - a. When God wanted to do something wonderful He often used a barren woman.
  - b. He did it with Abraham and Sarah.
  - c. He did it with Elkanah and Hannah.
  - d. He did it with Zechariah and Elizabeth.
  - e. He did it with Joseph and Mary.
2. The angel of the Lord came to give them some wonderful news.
3. Manoah’s response was to pray that God would send His messenger back to teach them.
4. God answered his prayer in 1:9-14:

*<sup>9</sup> God heard Manoah's prayer, and the angel of God came to Manoah's wife again while she was sitting in the field. But her husband Manoah was not with her.*

*<sup>10</sup> So she ran to tell him, "He is here! The man who appeared to me the other day is here!"*

*<sup>11</sup> Manoah got up and followed his wife. When he came to the man, he said, "Are you the man who spoke to my wife?"*

*The man said, "I am."*

*<sup>12</sup> So Manoah asked, "When what you say happens, what kind of life should the boy live? What should he do?"*

*<sup>13</sup> The angel of the Lord said, "Your wife must be careful to do everything I told her to do.*

*<sup>14</sup> She must not eat anything that grows on a grapevine, or drink any wine or beer, or eat anything that is unclean. She must do everything I have commanded her." (Judges 13:9-13, NIV)*

- a. We can't underestimate the importance of godly parents!
- b. They wanted God to teach them to be parents.

B. They were also respectful (vv. 15-16).

<sup>15</sup> *Manoah said to the angel of the Lord, “We would like you to stay awhile so we can cook a young goat for you.”*

<sup>16</sup> *The angel of the Lord answered, “Even if I stay awhile, I would not eat your food. But if you want to prepare something, offer a burnt offering to the Lord.” (Manoah did not understand that the man was really the angel of the Lord.)*

1. Manoah didn't realize  
this man was  
the Angel of the Lord,  
but he knew God had sent Him.
2. He wanted to honor him  
and minister to his needs.
3. Their behavior toward this stranger  
speaks of their character.
  - a. Respectful
  - b. Honoring

C. They were people of faith. (vv. 17-23).

<sup>17</sup> *Then Manoah asked the angel of the Lord, “What is your name? Then we will honor you when what you have said really happens.”*

<sup>18</sup> *The angel of the Lord said, “Why do you ask my name? It is too amazing for you to understand.”*

<sup>19</sup> *So Manoah sacrificed a young goat on a rock and offered some grain as a gift to the Lord. Then an amazing thing happened as Manoah and his wife watched.*

<sup>20</sup> *The flames went up to the sky from the altar. As the fire burned, the angel of the Lord went up to heaven in the flame. When Manoah and his wife saw that, they bowed facedown on the ground.*

<sup>21</sup> *The angel of the Lord did not appear to them again. Then Manoah understood that the man was really the angel of the Lord.*

<sup>22</sup> *Manoah said, “We have seen God, so we will surely die.”*

<sup>23</sup> *But his wife said to him, “If the Lord wanted to kill us, he would not have accepted our burnt offering or grain offering. He would not have shown us all these things or told us all this.” (Judges 13:17-23, NIV)*

1. Manoah asked the Angel of the Lord what his name was,  
that they might give honor to him.

2. Look at v. 17:

*“...when what you have said really happens...”*

3. No indication of doubt,  
no laughing,  
and no questioning the Word.

4. They were people of faith!”
5. When they saw it  
and realized that this man  
was truly an angel from God,  
they humbly fell upon their faces.
6. They discussed  
what they had seen  
and were amazed by it all.

D. Who has God placed around you  
to be a benefit to you spiritually?

1. Are we learning?
2. Are we paying attention?
3. Samson failed to benefit from the godly  
influence of his parents.