

Judges 13-15

New King James Version (NKJV)

Judges 13

The Birth of Samson

¹ Again the children of Israel did evil in the sight of the LORD, and the LORD delivered them into the hand of the Philistines for forty years.

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.’”

⁸ Then Manoah prayed to the LORD, and said, “O my Lord, please let the Man of God whom You sent come to us again and teach us what we shall do for the child who will be born.”

⁹ And God listened to the voice of Manoah, and the Angel of God came to the woman again as she was sitting in the field; but Manoah her husband *was* not with her. 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.”

¹⁵ Then Manoah said to the Angel of the LORD, “Please let us detain You, and we will prepare a young goat for You.”

¹⁶ And the Angel of the LORD said to Manoah, “Though you detain Me, I will not eat your food. But if you offer a burnt offering, you must offer it to the LORD.” (For Manoah did not know He *was* the Angel of the LORD.)

¹⁷ Then Manoah said to the Angel of the LORD, “What *is* Your name, that when Your words come *to pass* we may honor You?”

¹⁸ And the Angel of the LORD said to him, “Why do you ask My name, seeing it *is* wonderful?”

¹⁹ 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.”

²⁴ So the woman bore a son and called his name Samson; and the child grew, and the LORD blessed him.²⁵ And the Spirit of the LORD began to move upon him at Mahaneh Dan^[a] between Zorah and Eshtaol.

Judges 14

Samson’s Philistine Wife

¹ Now Samson went down to Timnah, and saw a woman in Timnah of the daughters of the Philistines.² So he went up and told his father and mother, saying, “I have seen a woman in Timnah of the daughters of the Philistines; now therefore, get her for me as a wife.”

³ Then his father and mother said to him, “*Is there* no woman among the daughters of your brethren, or among all my people, that you must go and get a wife from the uncircumcised Philistines?”

And Samson said to his father, “Get her for me, for she pleases me well.”

⁴ But his father and mother did not know that it was of the LORD—that He was seeking an occasion to move against the Philistines. For at that time the Philistines had dominion over Israel.

⁵ So Samson went down to Timnah with his father and mother, and came to the vineyards of Timnah.

Now *to his* surprise, a young lion *came* roaring against him.⁶ And the Spirit of the LORD came mightily upon him, and he tore the lion apart as one would have torn apart a young goat, though *he had* nothing in his hand. But he did not tell his father or his mother what he had done.

⁷ Then he went down and talked with the woman; and she pleased Samson well.⁸ After some time, when he returned to get her, he turned aside to see the carcass of the lion. And behold, a swarm of bees and honey *were* in the carcass of the lion.⁹ He took some of it in his hands and went along, eating. When he came to his father and mother, he gave *some* to them, and they also ate. But he did not tell them that he had taken the honey out of the carcass of the lion.

¹⁰ So his father went down to the woman. And Samson gave a feast there, for young men used to do so.¹¹ And it happened, when they saw him, that they brought thirty companions to be with him.

¹² Then Samson said to them, “Let me pose a riddle to you. If you can correctly solve and explain it to me within the seven days of the feast, then I will give you thirty linen garments and thirty changes of clothing.¹³ But if you cannot explain *it* to me, then you shall give me thirty linen garments and thirty changes of clothing.”

And they said to him, “Pose your riddle, that we may hear it.”

¹⁴ So he said to them:

“Out of the eater came something to eat,
And out of the strong came something sweet.”

Now for three days they could not explain the riddle.

¹⁵ But it came to pass on the seventh^[b] day that they said to Samson’s wife, “Entice your husband, that he may explain the riddle to us, or else we will burn you and your father’s house with fire. Have you invited us in order to take what is ours? *Is that not so?*”

¹⁶ Then Samson’s wife wept on him, and said, “You only hate me! You do not love me! You have posed a riddle to the sons of my people, but you have not explained *it* to me.”

And he said to her, “Look, I have not explained *it* to my father or my mother; so should I explain *it* to you?” ¹⁷ Now she had wept on him the seven days while their feast lasted. And it happened on the seventh day that he told her, because she pressed him so much. Then she explained the riddle to the sons of her people. ¹⁸ So the men of the city said to him on the seventh day before the sun went down:

“What *is* sweeter than honey?
And what *is* stronger than a lion?”

And he said to them:

“If you had not plowed with my heifer,
You would not have solved my riddle!”

¹⁹ Then the Spirit of the LORD came upon him mightily, and he went down to Ashkelon and killed thirty of their men, took their apparel, and gave the changes *of clothing* to those who had explained the riddle. So his anger was aroused, and he went back up to his father’s house. ²⁰ And Samson’s wife was *given* to his companion, who had been his best man.

Judges 15

Samson Defeats the Philistines

¹ After a while, in the time of wheat harvest, it happened that Samson visited his wife with a young goat. And he said, “Let me go in to my wife, into *her* room.” But her father would not permit him to go in.

² Her father said, “I really thought that you thoroughly hated her; therefore I gave her to your companion. *Is not her younger sister better than she?* Please, take her instead.”

³ And Samson said to them, “This time I shall be blameless regarding the Philistines if I harm them!” ⁴ Then Samson went and caught three hundred foxes; and he took torches, turned *the foxes* tail to tail, and put a torch between each pair of tails. ⁵ When he had set the torches on fire, he let *the foxes* go into the standing grain of the Philistines, and burned up both the shocks and the standing grain, as well as the vineyards *and* olive groves.

⁶ Then the Philistines said, “Who has done this?”

And they answered, “Samson, the son-in-law of the Timnite, because he has taken his wife and given her to his companion.” So the Philistines came up and burned her and her father with fire.

⁷ Samson said to them, “Since you would do a thing like this, I will surely take revenge on you, and after that I will cease.” ⁸ So he attacked them hip and thigh with a great slaughter; then he went down and dwelt in the cleft of the rock of Etam.

⁹ Now the Philistines went up, encamped in Judah, and deployed themselves against Lehi. ¹⁰ And the men of Judah said, “Why have you come up against us?”

So they answered, “We have come up to arrest Samson, to do to him as he has done to us.”

¹¹ Then three thousand men of Judah went down to the cleft of the rock of Etam, and said to Samson, “Do you not know that the Philistines rule over us? What *is* this you have done to us?” And he said to them, “As they did to me, so I have done to them.”

¹² But they said to him, “We have come down to arrest you, that we may deliver you into the hand of the Philistines.”

Then Samson said to them, “Swear to me that you will not kill me yourselves.”

¹³ So they spoke to him, saying, “No, but we will tie you securely and deliver you into their hand; but we will surely not kill you.” And they bound him with two new ropes and brought him up from the rock.

¹⁴ When he came to Lehi, the Philistines came shouting against him. Then the Spirit of the LORD came mightily upon him; and the ropes that *were* on his arms became like flax that is burned with fire, and his bonds broke loose from his hands. ¹⁵ He found a fresh jawbone of a donkey, reached out his hand and took it, and killed a thousand men with it. ¹⁶ Then Samson said:

“With the jawbone of a donkey,
Heaps upon heaps,
With the jawbone of a donkey
I have slain a thousand men!”

¹⁷ And so it was, when he had finished speaking, that he threw the jawbone from his hand, and called that place Ramath Lehi. ^[c]

¹⁸ Then he became very thirsty; so he cried out to the LORD and said, “You have given this great deliverance by the hand of Your servant; and now shall I die of thirst and fall into the hand of the uncircumcised?” ¹⁹ So God split the hollow place that *is* in Lehi, ^[d] and water came out, and he drank; and his spirit returned, and he revived. Therefore he called its name En Hakkore, ^[e] which is in Lehi to this day. ²⁰ And he judged Israel twenty years in the days of the Philistines.

Luke 6:27-49

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Love Your Enemies

²⁷ “But I say to you who hear: Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, ²⁸ bless those who curse you, and pray for those who spitefully use you. ²⁹ To him who strikes you on the *one* cheek, offer the other also. And from him who takes away your cloak, do not withhold *your* tunic

either.³⁰ Give to everyone who asks of you. And from him who takes away your goods do not ask *them* back.³¹ And just as you want men to do to you, you also do to them likewise.

³² “But if you love those who love you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners love those who love them.³³ And if you do good to those who do good to you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners do the same.³⁴ And if you lend *to those* from whom you hope to receive back, what credit is that to you? For even sinners lend to sinners to receive as much back.³⁵ But love your enemies, do good, and lend, hoping for nothing in return; and your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the Most High. For He is kind to the unthankful and evil.³⁶ Therefore be merciful, just as your Father also is merciful.

Do Not Judge

³⁷ “Judge not, and you shall not be judged. Condemn not, and you shall not be condemned. Forgive, and you will be forgiven.³⁸ Give, and it will be given to you: good measure, pressed down, shaken together, and running over will be put into your bosom. For with the same measure that you use, it will be measured back to you.”

³⁹ And He spoke a parable to them: “Can the blind lead the blind? Will they not both fall into the ditch?⁴⁰ A disciple is not above his teacher, but everyone who is perfectly trained will be like his teacher.⁴¹ And why do you look at the speck in your brother’s eye, but do not perceive the plank in your own eye?⁴² Or how can you say to your brother, ‘Brother, let me remove the speck that *is* in your eye,’ when you yourself do not see the plank that *is* in your own eye? Hypocrite! First remove the plank from your own eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck that is in your brother’s eye.

A Tree Is Known by Its Fruit

⁴³ “For a good tree does not bear bad fruit, nor does a bad tree bear good fruit.⁴⁴ For every tree is known by its own fruit. For *men* do not gather figs from thorns, nor do they gather grapes from a bramble bush.⁴⁵ A good man out of the good treasure of his heart brings forth good; and an evil man out of the evil treasure of his heart^[a] brings forth evil. For out of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaks.

Build on the Rock

⁴⁶ “But why do you call Me ‘Lord, Lord,’ and not do the things which I say?⁴⁷ Whoever comes to Me, and hears My sayings and does them, I will show you whom he is like:⁴⁸ He is like a man building a house, who dug deep and laid the foundation on the rock. And when the flood arose, the stream beat vehemently against that house, and could not shake it, for it was founded on the rock.^[b]⁴⁹ But he who heard and did nothing is like a man who built a house on the earth without a foundation, against which the stream beat vehemently; and immediately it fell.^[c] And the ruin of that house was great.”