

13 Again the Israelites did evil in the eyes of the Lord, so the Lord delivered them into the hands of the Philistines for forty years. ² A certain man of Zorah, named Manoah, from the clan of the Danites, had a wife who was childless, unable to give birth. ³ The angel of the Lord appeared to her and said, “You are barren and childless, but you are going to become pregnant and give birth to a son.

⁴ Now see to it that you drink no wine or other fermented drink and that you do not eat anything unclean. ⁵ You will become pregnant and have a son whose head is never to be touched by a razor because the boy is to be a Nazirite, dedicated to God from the womb. He will take the lead in delivering Israel from the hands of the Philistines.”

⁶ Then the woman went to her husband and told him, “A man of God came to me. He looked like an angel of God, very awesome. I didn’t ask him where he came from, and he didn’t tell me his name. ⁷ But he said to me, ‘You will become pregnant and have a son. Now then, drink no wine or other fermented drink and do not eat anything unclean, because the boy will be a Nazirite of God from the womb until the day of his death.’”

⁸ Then Manoah prayed to the Lord: “Pardon your servant, Lord. I beg you to let the man of God you sent to us come again to teach us how to bring up the boy who is to be born.” ⁹ God heard Manoah, and the angel of God came again to the woman while she was out in the field; but her husband Manoah was not with her. ¹⁰ The woman hurried to tell her husband, “He’s here! The man who appeared to me the other day!”

¹¹ Manoah got up and followed his wife. When he came to the man, he said, “Are you the man who talked to my wife?” “I am,” he said. ¹² So Manoah asked him, “When your words are fulfilled, what is to be the rule that governs the boy’s life and work?” ¹³ The angel of the Lord answered, “Your wife must do all that I have told her. ¹⁴ She must not eat anything that comes from the grapevine, nor drink any wine or other fermented drink nor eat anything unclean. She must do everything I have commanded her.”

¹⁵ Manoah said to the angel of the Lord, “We would like you to stay until we prepare a young goat for you.” ¹⁶ The angel of the Lord replied, “Even though you detain me, I will not eat any of your food. But if you prepare a burnt offering, offer it to the Lord.” (Manoah did not realize that it was the angel of the Lord.) ¹⁷ Then Manoah inquired of the angel of the Lord, “What is your name, so that we may honor you when your word comes true?”

¹⁸ He replied, “Why do you ask my name? It is beyond understanding.^[a]” ¹⁹ Then Manoah took a young goat, together with the grain offering, and sacrificed it on a rock to the Lord. And the Lord did an amazing thing while Manoah and his wife watched: ²⁰ As the flame blazed up from the altar toward heaven, the angel of the Lord ascended in the flame. Seeing this, Manoah and his wife fell with their faces to the ground. ¹ When the angel of the Lord did not show himself again to Manoah and his wife, Manoah realized that it was the angel of the Lord.

²² “We are doomed to die!” he said to his wife. “We have seen God!” ²³ But his wife answered, “If the Lord had meant to kill us, he would not have accepted a burnt offering and grain offering from our hands, nor shown us all these things or now told us this.” ²⁴ The woman gave birth to a boy and named him Samson. He grew and the Lord blessed him, ²⁵ and the Spirit of the Lord began to stir him while he was in Mahaneh Dan, between Zorah and Eshtaol.

We will use five tools on our expedition that are built around five questions

What questions were provoked within you?

Did anything confuse you?

Did anything move you emotionally?

Did God instruct you to do something?

Did you gain any insight into God’s character?

- 1 The chapter begins with the Israelites again doing evil in the eyes of the Lord,
- 2 The Lord delivers them into the hands of the Philistines for forty years.
- 3 Manoah's wife is barren. Her name does not appear in the text.....Why?
- 4 What significance does the barrenness of Manoah's wife have in the context of God's plans and miracles in the Bible?
- 5 The angel of the Lord appears to Manoah's wife and tells her she will give birth to a son
- 6 How does the appearance of the angel to Manoah's wife compare to other angelic visitations in the Bible?
- 7 Why does the angel give specific instructions as to what she can not eat and drink?
- 8 The angel tells her never to cut the boy's hair.
- 9 The boy is a Nazirite.....what does this mean?
- 11 The woman tells her husband about the visit from the angel
- 13 Manoah prays for further instruction, and the angel returns, this time appearing to both Manoah and his wife.
- 14 Manoah questions the angel about his message and how they should raise the child. He receives the same instructions, emphasizing the importance of obedience to God's commands.
- 15 The angel also reveals the purpose of Samson's life: "He will begin the deliverance of Israel from the hands of the Philistines."
- 16 What can we learn from Manoah's request for further instruction from God?
- 17 Why do you think the angel did not reveal his name to Manoah?
- 18 Manoah offers hospitality to the angel, who declines to eat but instructs Manoah to offer a burnt offering to the Lord.
- 19 Manoah sacrifices a young goat on a rock, and as the flame blazes, the angel ascends in the flame,
- 20 How does the angel's ascension in the flame confirm his divine nature?
- 21 Manoah and his wife realize they have seen a manifestation of God, why does this fill Manoah with awe and fear.?
- 22 However, his wife wisely reassures him, reasoning that if God intended to kill them, He would not have accepted their offering or given them such a hopeful message.
- 23 The angel of the Lord's prophecy is fulfilled with the birth of Samson.
- 24 In what ways does Samson's birth narrative mirror other miraculous births in the Bible?
- 25 The Spirit of the Lord begins to stir him, indicating that God is already at work in his life,
- 26 Can you see how God is preparing him for his future role as a deliverer of Israel.
- 27 This marks the beginning of Samson's unique and tumultuous journey as a judge.