

The History, Tragedy and Mystery of Samson

by Ian Paisley

Ian Paisley's sermon explores the life of Samson, highlighting lessons on faith, parenting, and the dangers of apostasy in the church.

Duration: 27:46

Scripture: Numbers 6:1

Topics: "Judges Of Israel", "Spiritual Education"

Description

This sermon delves into the history, tragedy, and mystery of Samson, the last of the judges, exploring the significance of his generation, education, and the special call upon his life. It emphasizes the importance of parental responsibility in raising children in God's ways and the need for spiritual education. The sermon also touches on the theme of beginnings, highlighting that every work we do is just a start, and God is the one who perfects and completes His work over time.

Transcript

We come today to study the most interesting of all the judges, the man called Samson. He's the last of the judges, the twelfth in this series. Could I remind you that twelve in Scripture is the number of government.

Twelve patriarchs giving their names to the twelve tribes of Israel. Then we have the twelve apostles of the Lamb. We have the great New Jerusalem, which has twelve gates and twelve foundations.

In it we have the tree of life, which bears twelve manner of fruits. And when we read the book of Judges, we find there are twelve judges. Of course if you read it, you'll find a thirteenth.

Of course you will. But the thirteenth judge was an apostate. He was a type of anti-crime.

He wasn't a true savior. He was an anti-savior, an anti-crime. And of course there's always the counterfeit as well as the genuine.

I want to look today at the history, the tragedy, and the mystery of Samson. His history, tragedy, and mystery. Turn to chapter thirteen.

You will notice that this chapter begins with the conjunction and. You would need to remember that there were no chapters in the original Scripture. The only book divided as we have it today in our authorized version, in the original, was the book of Psalms.

The Psalms being separate songs. But the whole narrative of the Old and New Testaments were written as one. So the book of Genesis as it was written was one continuous narrative.

They were put into chapters and verses in order that a Bible concordance might be made. So that reference could be made to particular parts of God's Word. But sometimes the chapter headings and divisions divide precious portions.

And we fail to get the connection. So you've got to look at chapter twelve to get the connection to chapter thirteen. And you will notice that the children of Israel, instead of following the Lord, and walking with the Lord, and obeying the Lord, they did evil.

And here's the important word again in the sight of the Lord. Mark that word again in your Bible. How true that is in the history of the church.

God gives great deliverance. God sends periods of revival. God sends times of refreshing.

God sends gracious outpouring. And the church is awakened. And the walls of Zion are built.

And the people are singing and rejoicing. Then the tide begins to wept. And the church languishes.

And prayer ceases. And praises cease. And there's backsliding.

And there's declension and corruption and apostasy. It's the history of the church from the apostolic times until today. And I know no day in the period of the church so corrupt as the day in which we live.

And look at the period of years that there was apostasy. Forty years. That's the longest period in all the period of the judges.

Forty in Scripture is the number of probation. The first mention of it is in the days of the flood when God reamed upon the earth judgment for forty days and forty nights. Goliath of Gath came up and challenged Israel forty days.

The Lord Jesus Christ was fasting forty days before his temptation. The children of Israel were forty years in the wilderness because of their declension. Forty is the number of probation and test.

So for forty long years the heel of the Philistines was upon the people of God. How dark were those days. How sad were those days.

How tragic were those days. It is a terrible thing when apostasy reams. But look with me at verse 2. And you'll find the first lesson of Samson in verse 2. And the first lesson is the lesson of Samson's generation.

Make a note of it. Samson's generation. He came of the tribe of Dan.

That's the most interesting tribe. I think there is no tribe in all the tribes of Israel so interesting as the tribe of Dan. Because if you turn over with me to the book of the Revelation.

You will find in chapter 7 of the book of the Revelation the sealing of the tribes. And when you come to the sealing of the tribes. You will find as you look down those tribes.

That there is no mention of Dan. His name is not called in the 7th chapter of the book of Revelation. He's left out.

There's no one from the tribe of Dan included in the sealing of Revelation 7. There's a name missing. The family circle is broken. The tribes are eternally fractured.

There's one tribe not going to turn up in the day when God calls the roll. It's the tribe of Dan. Dan was the first tribe that went over into idolatry.

You'll find that in the end chapters of this very book of Judges. But in the book of Genesis there is a most interesting narrative. At the present time in my own personal Bible reading I'm reading the book of Genesis.

I've seen more things in this book since I've been reading it. Since the new year than I've ever seen before in reading. It is a wonderful book.

Of course the Bible only opens by continual reading. And reading and reading again. Turn to Genesis 49.

You're one of the most interesting scenes in all the script. Old man Jacob is dying. Calls around his deathbed his son.

He is a seer. He can see into the future. And he says I'm going to tell you what shall befall you.

Genesis 49. One in the last day. Then if you turn down to verse 16.

You have the prophecy of Samson. Dan shall judge his people as one of the tribes of Israel. So when the judges were to be set up.

One of them was to come from the tribe of Dan. That was kept literally to the last letter. For God's prophetic scriptures cannot be broken.

And then we have the character of Dan. And what a sad character it is. Dan shall be a serpent in the way.

The serpent is an accursed animal. Cursed from Eden's garden. Because of the temptation of the fall.

And look what it does. An adder in the path that biteth the horse's heels. So that its rider shall fall backward.

That's the most picturesque description of backsliding in the whole Bible. Here is a Christian riding along the pathway. And suddenly the serpent biteth the horse's heel.

And the horse suddenly stops. And the rider goes off backward into the mire and dirt of the highway. Dan was the tribe of the backslider.

And Samson is a perfect type of the backslider. How the adder and serpent bit the horse that Samson rode. And how many times did he fall backwards into the mire and the dirt.

But there's a great period of time dividing old Jacob from Samson. But the Holy Spirit enabled Jacob to see into the future. And to see what lay ahead for the tribes of Israel.

Let's come back again. Having said that about the tribe of Dan. Let's come back then to the book of Judges at the chapter 13.

This name Zorah is an interesting name. It means wasp. You all know what a wasp has.

It has a sting. The name Manoah is another interesting name. It means rest.

Rest means rest. Until we know the rest from the sting of the old nature. We will never be able to be a champion in the Lord's army.

God has to deal with the old nature within us. If we're going to know sweet rest in the battles for God. My father used to say you can never fight God's battles.

Except you have God's peace in your heart. And he was absolutely right. A young man came to me after one of the services.

And he said to me I have a battle. And I'm not winning the battle. I'm being defeated.

Is there a path of victory? I said yes there's a path. And I turned into Romans chapter 6. And if you turn over to Romans chapter 6. You'll see how the wasp sting can be taken out. And how you can come to the place of absolute and perfect rest with God.

Turn to Romans chapter 6. And in Romans chapter 6. The first thing that you've got to underline. The first word you've got to underline. Is the word knowing.

Underline it verse 6. Knowing this. That our old man is crucified with him. That the body of sin might be destroyed.

That henceforth we should not serve sin. Something you've got to know. Ye shall know the truth said Jesus.

And the truth shall set you free. That word destroyed is an interesting word. It doesn't mean annihilated.

It's the same word that's used in Hebrews chapter 2. For the destruction of the devil. Christ destroyed him that had the power of death. That is to say the devil.

Now the old nature is not annihilated. Neither is the devil. The devil is not annihilated.

But the old nature and the devil are rendered powerless at the cross. So I've got to know something. I've got to know that I have died in Christ.

I brought a corpse to this pulpit. Because I never think of doing such a thing. And I praised that corpse.

It wouldn't lie. If I criticized that corpse. It wouldn't make any response.

If I buffeted that corpse. It wouldn't retaliate. Why? Because it's dead.

And when you learn you've died to sin in Jesus Christ brother. You're in the place of victory. There'll be no response in your heart to the temptation.

Why? Because you've died in Christ. But there's something else. There's another word that we have got to underline.

Verse 11. Reckon. You not only know something.

But thank God you reckon upon it. What does reckon mean? It means that you take your stand upon that truth. So when the devil comes along.

I remember hearing Mr. Nicholson preach once along this night. He put it in his usual inimitable way. He said after he was saved.

The devil used to come and knock on the door. And say are you there Billy? And he said I would sit at the fire and say. And the old devil would knock again.

Are you there Billy? And eventually I would start an argument. And sooner would be died the whole. And sooner would have the door open.

And the devil had got the victory. And he said it happened over and over again. Until I was miserable.

Then one day the devil came along. And he knocked the door. Are you there Billy? No response.

Knocked it again. Are you there Billy? No response. Knocked it again.

Are you there Billy? No response. And then he says a nosy partner old woman that lived next door. Stuck her nose out of the window.

And she said did you not hear about Billy? The devil said what's happened? He's dead. Shrouded. Put in a coffin.

Wilton got the money for him the other day. He's buried in the city cemetery. He's not living here anymore.

And Nicholson said when I learned I had died at the cross. Then the devil had no longer any hold over me. The old preacher was right.

You have to reckon yourself dead indeed unto sin. But alive unto God. That's the second word.

What's the third word? The third word is the word yield. But yield yourselves unto God as those that are alive from the dead. Knowing.

Reckoning. Yielding. That's the way to victory.

You want the wasp sting to be taken out. You want to get to the place of peace. That's the way.

And it's the only way. May God help us to remember what the Bible says in that sixth chapter. What does it say? It says sin shall not have dominion over you.

Mark at verse 14. Sin shall not have dominion over you. Glory to God.

There's victory over sin. You can defeat the devil and defeat the old nature. By walking in the path of victory.

Knowing. Reckoning. Yielding.

All right, let's turn back to Judges chapter 13. We're going everywhere preaching the word this morning. That's apostolic practice and example.

Now let's turn to chapter 13. And you will notice that in chapter 13, in the lesson of his generation, there was three things. There were three things underlined.

His birth was special. His separation was special. And his spirituality was special.

And in order that he might have a special birth and a special separation and a special spirituality, his mother must walk the pathway of separation. You can never expect your family to be spiritual except you are spiritual. You can never expect your home to be spiritual if you yourself are not spiritual.

Parents come to me and mourn the waywardness of their family. Then when I say, did you have a family altar every day? Did you kneel down and pray with your family sometime every day? They say, no, they didn't. Well, how can you expect in your generation God's blessing, father, mother, if you're not prepared to guide the young footsteps into the ways of God? You can bend a sapling, but you can't bend the oak tree.

And it's only as children are youthful, can you bend them to God's perfect law of submission and obedience to his commandments. Now the second lesson we've got to learn about Samson is found in verses 8 and 12, the lesson of his education. The first lesson is the lesson of his generation.

The second lesson is the lesson of his education. Look at verse 8. Then Manoah entreated the Lord and said, O my Lord, let the man of God which thou did send come again unto us and teach us what we shall do unto the child that shall be born. Look at verse 12.

How shall we order the child and how shall we do unto him? Manoah was prepared to educate Samson in the proper way. He was burdened. He had a parental concern.

Even before the child was born, he was anxious to be spiritually instructed so that he would train the boy up in God's fear, in God's nature, in God's way. Oh that God would put upon Christian parents today the burden of parental responsibility. You will notice that in verse 5 that Samson was to begin to deliver Israel out of the hand of the Philistine.

It doesn't say he was to deliver Israel. He was only to begin. Who finished the work that Samson began? None other than King David himself.

He started with the slaying of Goliath of Gath and then he slew all Goliath's brothers. I was going to say big brothers. He slew them all.

Eventually dealt with the Philistines. It started with Samson. Samson only began the work.

Let me say something. Any work we do is only a beginning. A man said to me the other day, when you die, where will the free Presbyterian church go to? I said the free Presbyterian church will be far better when I'm gone for God will have sent Joshua to lead us into the promised land.

He said you have great faith. I said I have. I have faith in Almighty God.

I don't think that I will see in my day the finish of this work that has begun. I believe God will perfect it and complete it in his divine will. I am only responsible for my day.

May God keep us faithful in our day. Begin to deliver the children of Israel. And yet although Manoah was such a godly man, yet at times he was foolish.

And you find this foolishness in verse 22. He said we shall surely die because we have seen God. What a foolish man he was.

Sometimes Christian parents are very foolish too and say foolish things and do foolish things. But his wife said don't be stupid, man. If God was going to kill us, he wouldn't have revealed that he was going to give us a son that was going to begin to deliver Israel.

By the way, could I just point out in closing that the angel of the Lord, the man of God that visited Manoah and his wife was none other than the Lord Jesus Christ. This is one of the great Christophanies. The appearance of Christ in the Old Testament.

How do I know that this was Christ? Look at verse 17 and you'll find out. And Manoah said unto the angel of the Lord, What is thy name? And when thy sayings come to pass, we may do thee honor. And the angel of the Lord said unto him, Why askest thou thus after my name? Seeing it, the word is, is an italic.

It's not the original. Seeing it, secret. If you have a marginal Bible, you'll find the word secret is wonderful.

Isaiah, his name shall be called wonderful. So this was an appearance of Christ in the Old Testament scriptures. I'm sorry I haven't more time today.

We will take up this subject on some future occasion. Remember Samson's generation and remember Samson's education and read Numbers chapter 6 and find out what should have happened to Samson's hair. You read about it in Numbers chapter 6. I'm sure you never knew about it before, for I didn't.

And I've read the Bible many times and still have started to study this afresh. You'll find out what should have happened to his hair in the sixth chapter of Numbers. We'll come back to this study and may God bless it to our hearts and fire our souls in love for Jesus Christ.

Let's stand to be dismissed. And may the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, the Comforter, rest, remain, and abide with you all now and forevermore. The people of God said amen.

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