

JUDGES

“Samson the Nazarite”

Series Objective:

Students will learn:

- The pattern of sin that Israel went through in Judges
- The story of Jephthah’s arrogance
- The story of Ruth’s faithfulness
- The story of Samson’s Nazarite vows

Series Theme Verse: “Whenever the Lord raised up a judge for them, he was with the judge and saved them out of the hands of their enemies as long as the judge lived.” –Judges 2:18

Lesson Objective: For students to understand that Samson was a Nazarite, and not a good Judge for Israel because he violated many of his vows.

Lesson Passage: Judges 13:1-5; Numbers 6:1-21; Judges 14:5-9, 15:14-17, 16:18-21

Materials Needed: Bibles, white board or butcher paper, Series Theme Verse on poster

Lesson Plan:

Talking Points: Judges 13:1-5

- Knowing what you know about the Sin Cycle of Israel, what do you think was the evil that Israel did in God’s eyes? (Idolatry, worshipped false gods)
- Who did God give Israel over to and for how many years were they oppressed? (Philistines, 40 years)
- What was the family issue of Manoah and his wife? (She was barren and had not given him any children to carry on his family name)
- What special visitor visited Manoah’s wife? (The angel of the Lord)
- What was the angel’s message? (You will conceive and give birth to a son)
- What specific instructions did the angel give? (Do not drink wine or any anything that is considered unclean)
- Why was Manoah’s wife given these instructions? (The child would be a boy and a Nazarite and will begin to deliver Israel from the Philistines)
- What special instructions were given about the child? (No razor shall touch his head because he will be a Nazarite from birth...no haircuts)
- What is a Nazarite? (Not sure)

Talking Points: Numbers 6:1-21

- Explain to students that Numbers 6 tells us what a Nazarite was, and the rules Samson was supposed to follow.

- Have students read through Numbers 6:1-21 and write any Nazarite rules they find on the white board.
- After they have had plenty of time, outline the Nazarite rules for them:
 - Three guidelines are given to the Nazirite:
 - Numbers 6:3-7 tells us that he/she was to abstain from wine or any fermented drink, nor was the Nazirite to drink grape juice or eat grapes or raisins, not even the seeds or skins.
 - Next, the Nazirite was not to cut his hair for the length of the vow.
 - Last, he was not to go near a dead body (human or animal), because that would make him ceremonially unclean. Even if a member of his immediate family died, he was not to go near the corpse.
 - Normally the Nazarite vow was taken by someone voluntarily for a period of time, but three people in the Bible were called by God from birth to be a Nazarite:
 - Samson
 - Samuel
 - John the Baptist (Baptizer)

Talking Points: Judges 14:5-9, 15:14-17, 16:18-21

- Each of the passages shows a way that Samson violated his Nazarite vows.
- Read the passage and ask students what vow of the Nazarite was violated.
- Ultimately, Samson was not a very good Judge, though God did use Samson to push the Philistines back some, there is never peace for Israel under Samson.
- Samson ends up being one of the worst judges for Israel because he does not follow God.

The Story and Me:

- Review the memory verse.
- Ask students why the system of Judges was needed? (Because Israel continually turned away from God)
- Originally, God was to be their judge and they should look to God only, but they turned away time and time again.
- Ultimately, the Judge System would fail and Israel wants to look like other nations and have a king, turning their backs on the true King who brought them out of Egypt and into the Promised Land, God.
- Say the verse one last time as a group and remind students that God is our judge and we need to live up to God's commands.