

Judges 13

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[0 : 00] I want to encourage you to continue to be in prayer for the Awanas and also be in prayer how you can serve in different capacities. They're always looking for the storytellers. And you say, well, I don't have much of a story.

The best thing to do with kids is we need to show what it looks like to follow Christ's everyday life and everyday living.

That is, how you do your life as a Christian, how you do your life as a follower of Jesus. I read something recently. We'll be in Judges chapter 13 tonight, by the way, so you can take your Bibles, Judges 13.

It said one of the greatest tragedies of our day is we have professionalized Christianity. That is, we have professionals who do the faith stuff.

Now, a pastor was writing that, and I'm a pastor, and I was reading that. And what he was saying in a nutshell is that we leave all the serious faith stuff to the professionals, right?

[0 : 56] That's the pastors or the ministers or whatever they may be. Those who are getting paid to do it, they do all the serious following stuff, serious believer stuff.

In the day and time, not too long ago, that was the believer's responsibility, and that's a biblical point there. So our children and those in the church and really those in the community need to really see what it looks like to be a follower of Christ in everyday life.

Okay? They just do. What it looks like to be a follower of Christ in any occupation, in every occupation, because that's, the reality is, is that more people are called to everyday living than they're called to full-time ministry.

And, you know, if all you ever see is a pastor, and that's what it looks like to follow Christ, and most people will never be that, because God doesn't call everybody to that.

But even then, there's a lot to be learned about what it looks like to follow Christ every day. All right. That's enough of that. Judges 13.

[2 : 07] Just continuing to make our way through the book of Judges, and in particular, we're making our way through the Old Testament, and we're in that section of Judges, which is the last judge. We're going to look at the beginning stages of the last judge, and it's this major section.

More is dedicated to this judge, as far as chapter-wise, than any other judge. We have so much writing, and, I mean, the story is told, it seems like, so many times.

Not mentioned many places outside of the book of Judges, this individual in particular. He's only mentioned kind of in a passing reference, which would be in 1 Samuel 12, and even there, some people, some translators have his name being translated Samuel, as opposed to Samson.

And then he's mentioned in the book of Hebrews. Hebrews chapter 11 is in the hero of faith, or the hall of faith there. So we're beginning the story of Samson. You know, he is a judge who does a wondrous work, but we need to keep in mind, too, that even though he is in the hall of faith there in Hebrews chapter 11, as is the case in everything else in the book of Judges, we're not going up, we're going down.

Okay? So he is not the standard. As a matter of fact, he's on the opposite end of that spectrum. For all that Samson does, he breaks every one of his Nazarite vows, every single one of them.

[3 : 28] He disobeys so many of the commandments, the Ten Commandments. He does expressly everything that God commands him not to do, yet in spite of all of that, God uses him.

Right? And I think it just kind of reaffirms the story that we see that's permeated through the book of Judges in these tragedies and really this tell of what's going on during this period of the nation of Israel's history.

Man, when man gets his way, things go bad. I mean, it just does. When man gets his way, you know, we're going to get to it.

In those days, there was no king in Israel, and every man did what was right in his own eyes. And when man does what is right in his own eyes, things go downhill really quick. And if it wasn't for the grace and the mercy of God intervening in human history and really, in particular, in his people's lives, then we know where the story is going to go.

Because each judge that comes up is worse than the judge that was before him. And it's hard to imagine that. It's hard to get much worse than Jephthah, right?

[4 : 39] Jephthah's the one who offered his daughter as a human sacrifice after winning a battle. But yet, the very next one we meet, Samson. And Samson really does a lot of atrocious things.

And we'll get into his story in detail as we make our way through it. But, I mean, he displaces people economically. He rips the gates of the city down. He slays people.

And, you know, he's just really atrocious the things that he does. But yet, God uses him. So we're in Judges 13. And we'll read the entire chapter. And we'll kind of look at what I want you to see tonight is the announcement of a coming deliverer.

The announcement of a coming deliverer. So hold on to that title as we read through the 13th chapter of Judges. Now, the sons of Israel, again, did evil in the sight of the Lord so that the Lord gave them into the hands of the Philistines 40 years.

There was a certain man of Zorah of the family of the Danites. By the way, let's just stop right there. Family of the Danites. That means he's from the tribe of Dan.

[5 : 44] Okay. If you just want to see how bad it gets. The tribe of Dan is a tribe that introduces idolatry to the nation of Israel. Okay. Tribe of Dan. When we get to the end, the Danites will be the ones who go and take this man, make him his own priest, move to another area.

And that's the introduction of idolatrous worship, really, to the nation as a whole. So anyway, we move forward. So he's the family of the Danites whose name was Manoah.

And his wife was barren and had born no children. Then the angel of the Lord appeared to the woman and said to her, Behold, now you are barren and have born no children, but you shall conceive and give birth to a son.

Now, therefore, be careful not to drink wine or strong drink, nor eat any unclean thing. For behold, you shall conceive and give birth to a son. And no razor shall come upon his head, for the boy shall be a Nazarite to God from the womb.

And he shall begin to deliver Israel from the hands of the Philistines. Then the woman came and told her husband, saying, A man of God came to me, and his appearance was like the appearance of the angel of God.

[6 : 49] Very awesome. And then I asked him where he came from, nor did he tell me his name. But he said to me, Behold, you shall conceive and give birth to a son. And now you shall not drink wine or strong drink, nor eat any unclean thing.

For the boy shall be a Nazarite to God from the womb to the day of his death. Then Manoah entreated the Lord and said, O Lord, please let the man of God, whom you have sent, come to us again, that he may teach us what to do for the boy who is to be born.

And God listened to the voice of Manoah, and the angel of God came again to the woman as she was sitting in the field. But Manoah, her husband, was not with her. So the woman ran quickly and told her husband, Behold, the man who came the other day has appeared to me.

Then Manoah arose and followed his wife. When he came to the man, he said to him, Are you the man who spoke to the woman? He said, I am. And Manoah said, Now, when your words come to pass, what shall be the boy's mode of life and his vocation?

So the angel of the Lord said to Manoah, Let the woman pay attention to all that I said. She should not eat anything that comes from the vine, nor drink wine or strong drink, nor eat any unclean thing. Let her observe all that I commanded.

[7 : 54] Then Manoah said to the angel of the Lord, Please let us detain you so that we may prepare a young goat for you. The angel of the Lord said to Manoah, Though you detain me, I will not eat your food. But if you prepare a burnt offering, then offer it to the Lord.

For Manoah did not know that he was the angel of the Lord. And Manoah said to the angel of the Lord, What is your name? So the angel of the Lord, he said, What is your name?

But the angel of the Lord said to him, Why do you ask me, seeing it is wonderful? That expression means it's inexpressible. You can't say it. So Manoah took the young goat with the grain offering and offered it on the rock to the Lord.

And he performed wonders while Manoah and his wife looked on. For it came about when the flame went up from the altar toward heaven, that the angel of the Lord ascended in the flame of the altar. Then Manoah and his wife saw this. They fell on their faces to the ground. Now the angel of the Lord did not appear to Manoah or his wife again. Then Manoah knew that he was the angel of the Lord. So Manoah said to his wife, We will surely die, for we have seen God.

[8 : 57] 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 let us hear things like this at this time.

Then the woman gave birth to a son and named him Samson. And the child grew up, and the Lord blessed him. And the spirit of the Lord began to stir him at Mahanadan between Zorah and Eshtael. Judges 13, the announcement of a coming deliverer. Here we have an account which seems to be a recurring theme that runs throughout Scripture.

Namely a barren woman that is getting an angelic visit that tells her that she will give birth to a child, and that child will be a male, and there will be a special purpose for that child. We see this theme running throughout Scripture.

More times than not, the angel appears to the lady. Now we know in the case of Abraham and Sarah, when the angel of the Lord tells Abraham that his wife Sarah will give birth and change names there, that that is the exception.

[9 : 59] But more times than not, it is God confirming to the lady. And we see this. But there are so many differences with this account than any other account. And we will kind of dive into it in just a moment.

But we see here the preparation for the coming of Samson. And we'll read of his accounts and his stories. And we get so caught up in what he does and the works that he performs and the life that he lives.

And even with his riddles and his trickery and all of his really just magnificent displays of strength. And there are two times that we have Samson praying. And we can kind of get into all of that. But before we get to that, we need to get to the beginning. And we need to see this announcement of a coming deliverer. Because it is very unique. It is very affirming.

Because this is one of those passages in Scripture, I'll just be honest with you, as a Bible student, not saying that I know it as well as I would hope to, and as a pastor and a teacher and a preacher, these are passages that kind of get you excited because it ties the rest of Scripture together.

[11 : 07] You say, well, how in the world does this tie the rest of Scripture together? Well, stay with me. The book of Judges is really twofold. It shows us what man looks like when man has his own way.

And we know that when man gets his own way, we don't progress, we digress, right? We don't go further, we go down. It is my theory that the human race is not a progressive race, that we are a degressive race.

We're actually going down. It's astounding to me how we can look back in history and we can look back at historical artifacts and we ask the question, how in the world did they ever do that?

Yet we think that we are advancing with all of our technology, with all of our achievements, with everything that we have gained. And I know there are some scientific advancements and there are things you say, oh, yeah, those were strong men back then, but they died young too.

I understand that. I get that. I know there are advancements in some fields, but man by nature, I believe, is going backwards, not going forward. For every one of our advancements, we take two or three steps back spiritually.

[12 : 15] And we see that running through the book of Judges. But we also see the theme running through the book of Judges that deliverance or redemption by man is temporary.

That is, no matter how good the man, no matter how great the victory, no matter how many foes they defeat, it's temporary because each and every judge we read, it says, and he died.

And he died. And after he died, the sons of Israel again did what was evil on the side of the Lord. So we've seen this two-fold reality that when man gets his own way, man is going to go down, down, down.

And then when man finds one among themselves who can deliver them or set them free, the word deliverer is also the same word, redeemer. So when man finds a redeemer among themselves who can set them free from what's holding them back, that redemption is temporary.

It doesn't last long. It only lasts as long as the individual. And we have to do it all over again. So we've seen this. Man needs a king. He needs someone greater than him ruling over him, setting the course for his life.

[13:22] Man desperately needs a king. Regardless if they acknowledge it, regardless if they admit it or even want it, man needs a king.

You need someone ruling him. And number two, the redeemer needs to be eternal. You need one that's not going anywhere.

We find those ultimate fulfillments in Christ, who sits on the throne, who is the king of kings and lord of lords, who is the forerunner who goes before us, who is the everlasting redeemer.

We see all of that fulfillment. But here in this announcement of a coming deliverer, we are reminded of a number of things, of God's announcement here and exactly what's going to come about.

And we're reminded of it in a very dark period in the nation of Israel's history. Now, this event in particular takes place just a little bit before Samuel comes along, just a couple of years before Samuel and eventually the first king, Saul, and then David.

[14:31] I don't know if you caught it, and you'll see in just a moment, but the angel of the Lord says that he will begin to deliver Israel from the hand of the Philistines. He does not say he will deliver. He says he will begin.

It is David who finishes that deliverance. We say he's the beginning of that. So we understand that these things are really kind of coming to a climax, if you will.

God's doing something. The first thing we notice is the initiated deliverance. This deliverance in particular is initiated like no other.

We read it in the account that says, The people of Israel again did what was evil in the sight of the Lord. We've read that after every judge dies, right? The people of Israel again did what was evil in the sight of the Lord.

That word evil just means they did absolutely everything God told them not to do. And then we read the same recurrent theme. Now, this is something that I think, if we don't have a good grasp of Scripture, that it bothers us a little bit.

[15:29] Every problem that the nation of Israel faced in the book of Judges, God caused the problem. Okay? God created the problem. It says, And then the Lord raised up the Philistines.

When his people rebelled, and his people revolted, and his people did what was evil in his sight, God caused the problem. Now, the reason we don't like that is because we don't want a God who would put us through that.

But the reality is, is God is jealous. The Lord our God is a consuming fire. He is a jealous God. He will not be mocked. He will not be ridiculed. He will not be forgotten about.

And he will put his people in situations to get their attention. And we need to be mindful of that. We read this other places in the Old Testament where it says, God created chaos in the nation.

God created chaos. Think about this. When Jesus is in the boat with his disciples, and he's asleep in the bow of the boat, and the boat is going across the Sea of Galilee, and the waves are coming on the boat, and the disciples were afraid they were going to die and drown.

[16:37] These are fishermen. God also is in control of nature. He caused the storm. Jesus sent his disciples into the midst of the storm that he would walk across the Sea on.

So what we see is this reality that the people again did what was evil on the side of the Lord, and the Lord raised up someone. So the Lord gave them into the hand of the Philistines 40 years.

So here we see this recurring theme, right? The people rebel. God brings something to get their attention. He brings this discomfort. You say, well, does he do that today? Yes, absolutely he does it. You know how he does it today?

He doesn't bring Philistines. He doesn't bring Ammonites. He doesn't bring any of those things. You have the Holy Spirit inside of you that if you are his child, one of the works and jobs and operations of the Holy Spirit is to bring conviction.

God will not let us sin and get away with it, right? He brings conviction, disturbance, disruption in our life. He does that. So here we see the Philistines are raised up.

[17:33] So this is a recurring theme. But notice this. They suffer under the hand of the Philistines 40 years. That's longer than any other suffering in the book of Judges. 40 years, okay?

They were 18 years under the sons of Ammon prior to this, before they went and got Jephthah. 40 years of suffering, right? So 40 years they're being chastised and being disciplined, disciplined, or not

disciplined, disciplined, and they're being rebuked and corrected because of the suffering that the Lord their God brought upon them.

And for 40 years, but then notice this. For the first time in the book of Judges, the people of Israel never cry out. Up to this point, when the people of Israel did what was evil inside the Lord and the Lord raised up someone to rule over them, they would cry out to him.

Remember that? The last one, chapter 10, the sons of Ammon for 18 years, they cried out to the Lord, and the Lord says, I'm not going to listen to you. Why don't you go to those foreign gods? And then they're so desperate, they put away the foreign gods, and they repent, and it says that God could bear their misery no longer.

So God began to deliver them. But here, they suffer for 40 years, and nobody cries out. You know why? Because it is absolutely possible to get so accustomed to suffering and sin that one becomes numb to it.

[18:57] And no longer do we experience the misery of our suffering that God intended to come upon us to bring us back to him. Rather, we get comfortable in the uncomfortable.

We ask ourselves, maybe you don't, but I do, how in the world could the churches in the European regions get to the place where they're at today when they had pastors and preachers like they did just a couple of hundred years ago?

I mean, Martin Luther was in Germany. I know that was in the 1500s and 1600s, but it used to be that if you wanted a good education, theologically, you went to Germany. It's just where you went. You still have the possibility to go there. Like, I had a professor tell me I could go get my doctorate in theology for free there because they just want you to come there now. But it used to be that's where you went. Everybody went there.

And then you'd go to England or London and all the European regions. I mean, you had, at one time, you had Joseph Parker. You probably haven't heard of him much, but you had Charles Spurgeon. They were actually across the street from one another.

[20:07] You had pastors and preachers that are just world-renowned. I mean, Hudson Taylor, who started China Inland Missionary Fellowship. Hudson Taylor came out of that.

And at the same time, George Muir was there taking orphans off the street and was literally praying in millions of dollars. And now if you go there, the churches are hollow and empty. We ask ourselves, why?

It's because when the rebuke came, they got so comfortable in the uncomfortable that they just got numb to it. And it is absolutely possible for God's people to be under his hand of discipline and not respond because the miseries of sin are just what we expect.

And for 40 years, nobody cries out. 40 years, they deal with this. They're supposed to be rulers in the land, but they're being ruled in the land, right? And for 40 years, nobody says a word, but we're looking at the initiated deliverance.

And it says, and then the angel of the Lord appeared to a woman. We never know Manoah's wife's name. We don't have to know her name, but we know Samson's father's name is Manoah. We know he's of the Danites and we understand that.

[21:20] But then the angel of the Lord appeared to the woman. This should just stop you in your tracks. And if you want to tie scripture together, this is where you tie it together.

God's people did what was evil in his sight. They deserved to be disciplined. They deserved the punishment they were receiving. They never cried out for deliverance, yet God initiated the deliverance.

They didn't ask for it. They never cried out for it. Yet God initiated the deliverance. Why?

Because redemption is the full work of God and not the work of man. Everywhere you look in scripture, it tells the same story.

Man is redeemed because of what God has done, not because of their works and their efforts. You can't miss it.

[22:23] mankind's redemption is wholly, totally dependent upon God's initiation. They didn't even cry out and ask for help.

The New Testament says it this way, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. He initiated redemption. And we stand in wonder of that.

And more than any other portion in the book of Judges, this one tells it. They weren't looking for it. They were comfortable in their sin. They were comfortable in their suffering.

They were comfortable in the Philistine captivity. They were comfortable in all of this stuff. They never even asked God to do anything, yet he did it anyway. Because God initiates man's deliverance.

Astounds me. He pursues us and draws us and compels us. Jesus says, no one comes to the Father lest he be drawn by the Father.

[23 : 25] Right? It's astounding to me. You see the initiated deliverance. Second, you see the message delivered. So the angel of the Lord shows up and one thing you need to pay attention to is that the angel of the Lord, God sends his angels.

This is a Christophany, which I think it could be, or even a theophany in the appearance of God in the Old Testament. It's a Christophany as the appearance of Christ in the Old Testament. But anyway, I know we're kind of splitting atoms there, but anytime an angel shows up, he shows up with a message.

Because angel literally means messenger. That's exactly what it means. So God doesn't just do things just to do things, right? God shows up to say something or to deliver a message.

People cry all the time, Lord, I just wish I could see the Lord. Lord, manifest your presence. Lord, won't you show yourself to us? Well, the reality is if we're crying that out, like I just want to see God, I just want to see him manifest his presence, he manifests his presence with a message.

He has something to say or something he wants us to do. So unless we're willing to receive what it is he's going to tell us and to respond to what it is he's commanding us to do, then we really don't want him to show up.

[24 : 32] And the angel of the Lord shows up unpetitioned, unannounced, and he shows up to the wife of Manoah and he has a message.

Now, he delivers this message in the most unlikely of places. It's a barren woman who has no children. I've said that her story's a little bit different because unlike the other women that we meet in scripture who are barren, she's never asking for a child.

She's not beating her chest saying, give me a child lest I die. She's not crying out saying, oh, I need a son. She's content where she's at. She never asked for one.

Yet in the most unlikely of places, God delivers a message to the most unlikely of person and he chooses this because God does the supernatural within the most natural means.

Okay? He's a natural occurrence of a woman conceiving a child and giving birth but he's doing it supernaturally because this is one that couldn't give birth and one that couldn't get pregnant and couldn't conceive.

[25 : 34] And the angel shows up and there's this perceived reality of circumstances. Like, that's the last person we would think that he would ever show up to but he comes and he comes with this message and this message is the message of clarity.

Right? He tells her, he says, you will conceive, you will give birth to a child and a child will be a son. And he's clear. He gives some instructions here. He says, don't eat anything from the vine. Don't drink any strong drink. Don't anything unclean because he's going to be a Nazirite from his birth. Now, the vow of a Nazirite, we find it in the book of Numbers. It can be taken voluntarily. Someone could say, you could say it or I could say it, hey, I'm going to take a Nazirite vow. That would just mean for me in particular, men or women could take it either way.

For a man in particular, he wouldn't shave his beard. He wouldn't shave his head. He would go around for a particular amount of time and he would change his diet. Right? He wouldn't eat any grapes. He wouldn't eat anything from the vine. He wouldn't drink wine.

He wouldn't drink anything that grew on a vine. He couldn't even eat fresh grapes. He couldn't touch anything unclean, which means he couldn't even touch a dead person, even if it was his mother or father or even if it was his wife.

[26 : 32] If it was a man, he couldn't be around any of those things. But it was always for a season, for a time, and then it would end. You would specify a time. And if you broke the Nazirite vow, there was this real big series.

If you remember, we went through the book of Numbers where you would be cleansed and there's all these things. We seem to see Paul doing it in the book of Acts where he pays for people to get their heads shaved when they go into the temple.

That's where he gets arrested near the end of the book of Acts. Paul said he had his head shaved because he had taken a vow, which was probably a Nazirite vow. We see these things taking place.

We only find two in Scripture that God announces that they would be Nazirites from birth, and that is Samson and John the Baptist.

That's only two. Other than that, it's always man making a choice. But God here announces it, so that's part of the message. It's a message of clarity. And then he very clearly says he will begin to deliver my people from the hands of the Philistines.

He says begin. And he gives this clear message. This is what it's going to be. It's going to be a boy. This is how his life is going to look, and this is what he's going to do. And so Manoah wasn't there.

[27 : 42] Seems like dads are always the ones out of the loop. I say in my house, I just try to be a fly on the wall so I can hear what's going on, right? I just need to catch it when you run by me. So Manoah wasn't there, and she comes and tells Manoah.

And it's amazing because she doesn't say everything. She doesn't say anything about beginning to deliver from the hand of the Philistines. She adds to the reality that he will be a Nazirite until his death. The angel said from his birth.

She just implies it until his death. And so we see this, and she comes and says, I met a man. I don't know where he came from. And he prays, and God responds to prayer, and the angel comes back. And I know I'm going fast, but stay with me on this.

So Manoah wants a little clarification. Manoah says, okay, because we're still talking about that message delivered. He says, when this word comes true. So there's no doubt here. So we give him that. Remember, God's always got his person.

God's always got his man. He says, when these things come true, what will be the manner of his life so that we'll know what to do? He said, I need to know what he's going to do. I need to know what occupations he's going to have. I mean, at least Zacharias got that, right?

[28 : 40] He was told what John the Baptist would be, and he said, what was he going to do? I need to know how to raise him. I need to know all these things. But notice here that the message is unchanged as well because the angel says, see to it that the woman does what I told her to do.

That's it. What I have said is sufficient. So we understand this reality. We don't have to know everything. We just have to know what he's told us.

And the message delivered was sufficient, even though it wasn't what man would perceive as complete. They had enough to trust and follow.

They didn't need to know everything. And that's quite often how the message comes to us. We wish God would fill in all the gray areas and all the blanks in our life, but the reality is, is what he has told us is sufficient.

And as long as we do what he has told us, then the rest will be taken on. No further word was needed for their obedience. All the angel had said was enough to obey.

[29 : 48] The third thing we see is the glorious display. Manoah still doesn't know who he's talking to here. He still refers to him as the man of God, which could be a word for a prophet or someone like that.

He is still uncertain of where he came from. He asked him his name. Now more than likely, he asked his name so that he could name his son that when he was born, so that we could honor you at his birth.

And I love the angel's wording here. It says, why do you ask me my name since it is glorious? Or it's really, literally, it's unspeakable. You, you can't pronounce my name. It is so wondrous, right? He says, why do you ask me my name since it is glorious?

And he never tells him his name. That should all of a sudden put a flag up for us because we see that elsewhere in scripture, right? To know the name of something in scripture, by the way, was to, because we kind of wrestle with that.

Like, why, why does God not always say his name? And the angel of the Lord say his name to know the name was to have dominion over, right?

[30 : 50] To be greater than. And the angel here is saying, you're not on my same playing field. You don't need to know my name. You just need to do what I tell you to do.

My name is too glorious for you to comprehend. So we see that. And then so Manoah says, well, and it is a good gesture. Hospitality, the people of Israel are supposed to be hospitable.

The people of the church are supposed to be that way too. He said, let me go and prepare a meal for you. You know, just wait for a minute and I'll prepare a meal. And the angel of the Lord says, I'm not going to eat the food. If you want to delay, it's fine, but make it a burnt offering to the Lord.

So he does. He brings the goat and he has the, the grain offering as well. And he puts it on a rock there, which is important because it's an uncut stone. So he puts it on a rock and he sets it on fire on an uncut stone.

This glorious display. He who did wonders among them. The ESV says, it was the angel of the Lord who does wondrous works is how it says it. And the ESV said, he did a wonderful thing in front of them.

[31 : 48] Then when he did that, the angel of the Lord went up, ascended into the flames. Now, we want to understand who he is. The only firsthand account we have is Manoah and his wife.

Right? They are the only ones that are there to see the display. So we need to pay really close attention to what they did and what they said. Immediately, they fell on their faces to the ground. Immediately, they fell on their faces to the ground. You know, the only other places we find that, that the individual is not rebuked for doing that, is when man falls before the presence of God. Isaiah is in the presence of God. Isaiah chapter 6, he falls on his face. Ezekiel sees a manifestation of God by the river Shabar, falls on his face. We go to the book of Revelation, and John is in the presence of God and falls straight on his face.

But then we go later into the book of Revelation, two times actually in the book of Revelation, John falls on his face in front of an angel, and the angel picks him up and says, get up. Don't worship me.

[32 : 52] I'm your servant too. I'm a fellow servant. The angels rebuke him for falling down on their face. Yet here we have Manoah and his wife falling on their faces to the ground.

And then we have this confession that Manoah says, we're going to die. All of a sudden, Isaiah chapter 6, woe is me for I am a man of unclean lips, and I live among a people of unclean lips. And Isaiah fully expected to what die? Because the common understanding at that time was that if you saw the presence of God, you would die.

And he says, we're going to die because we have seen God. So, based on firsthand our witnesses, this is not just some normal angel.

The theophany, an appearance of God in the Old Testament, which I think is Christophany, it's Christ in the Old Testament, because he has no one has seen the father but the son.

[33 : 53] And he who has seen me has seen the father. So you have God initiating redemption by his own presence. And he displays that in such a manner that there would be no uncertainty.

He displays it in such a manner that they would know. And of course, Manoah is rebuked by his wife, says, God's not going to kill us, because if God was going to kill us, why would he have accepted? Again, here's another thing. Why would he have accepted our offering?

Can an angel accept offerings? The answer to that is no. Because any angel that tried to accept an offering was cast out with a third of the heavens. That would be those who wanted the place of God on the throne.

An angel does not accept an offering. So you say, why would he accept our offering? And why would he have told us what he's told us? He wouldn't tell us things that are going to be if he was going to kill us just because we saw him, right?

So we have God's gracious choosing and moving and appointing. We have him announcing a coming deliverer. One more thing we'll be through and we'll pray.

[34 : 58] This fourth thing. We've seen the initiated deliverance, a message delivered, a glorious display. We also notice a holy disturbance or a holy disruption.

It says, then the woman gave birth to a son and named him Samson. We don't really know where the name came from. It literally just means son, like bright star.

Then the woman gave birth to a son and named him Samson. And the child grew up and the Lord blessed him. Now, he's keeping his vows at this point because he's still under the control of his parents.

He'll break every vow of the Nazarite, by the way. He touches dead carcasses. He kills people. He becomes unclean. He drinks wine. He has a wedding feast. He breaks every single vow.

But that's for a later story. Here's this holy disruption in verse 25. And the spirit of the Lord began to stir him at Mahanadan between Zorah and Eshtael.

[36 : 06] And the spirit of the Lord began to stir him. That word stir means to shake him up and to move him around. Again, notice this.

Because it stays true to our theme. This is the announcement of a coming deliverer. He is going to be the deliverer. He will kill more Philistines at his death than he did in his life. We understand that.

He begins the deliverance process.

He will begin to deliver God's people. He's going to begin the course of history for the eventual coming of David and even the lineage of David, which leads to the coming of Christ.

God initiated it. The people didn't cry out for it. But even here, Samson did not begin in his own strength or by his own choosing.

He didn't say, you know what? I'm going to be a pretty strong guy. If we go back to Jephthah, Jephthah knew already he was a pretty valiant warrior. He went around raid old parties and that's how he made his living was going out and raiding towns and taking loot and all this other stuff.

[37 : 16] Gideon, going this strength of yours or this might of yours, he says, I don't have any, but he goes anyway. We can go back through all the judges and most of them are like, hey, okay, well this is something I can do.

This is a little something I can do. We don't read of anything of that with Samson. Rather, we see, and the spirit of the Lord began to stir him. Even the beginning, not just the announcement, but when Samson began to be used, we attribute it again to the Lord's doing.

It is all him. Not Samson saying, you know what, I'm bigger than everybody else even though we know he is. Not Samson saying, there must be something about this hair because, you know, I can't be bound or nobody can hold me back.

I mean, we know he figures that out later. But God began to disrupt and disturb his life in such a manner that he had to go forth and do what God was calling him to do.

It is a beautiful thing, this holy disruption. And the spirit of the Lord began to stir him, shake him, move him, make him uncomfortable, make him do something that he probably would not have done on his own even though he was the one chosen to do it.

[38 : 36] And the reason it's a beautiful thing is because God still does that today, that holy disruption where the spirit of the Lord begins to stir.

You know what, not everybody has to see it, not everybody has to know it, but you know it internally where the spirit of the Lord begins to stir. I know it and I've become very sensitive to it because it's a twofold thing. There's this butterfly feeling in my stomach and I know God's about to do something and then there's this natural opposition in the flesh and I'm like, no, I don't want to do that.

I'd rather not do that. And there's this internal battling and this wrestling and all of this stuff and what it is is it's this shaking, it's this holy disruption of taking me out of the norm because he wants to do something else.

There have been a number of times even here in the past where I've worked all week and had a message prepared to deliver on a Sunday morning and come sit, or I used to sit on the front, come sit down or come into the congregation and God completely changed the message.

Or times where I would come in early in the office and I'd be in a totally different text. And just about every one of those times, Carrie could look at me and know I was about to change my message even though I didn't know it because there's this disruption.

[39 : 53] In your life, the spirit of the Lord begins to stir and to shake up and to disrupt and to do things that not in your own strength but in his leading because he's got a calling and a purpose and he's initiating and if he's initiating then he's also going to ensure that you get there.

And our job is to respond to that. We wrestle against it. We resist it quite often but our job is to respond to that.

Because then if you look in the beginning of chapter 14, I'm not going to go there, but it says, and then Samson went down. He moved, right? He did something. And this is the announcement of the coming deliverer.

We stand in wonder of this 13th chapter because every bit of this we see it is God's doing. He is doing something even though his people weren't looking for it.

And all his people had to do was respond to what he is doing. And it's the same thing today. It's the same thing today. Judges chapter 13. Thank you guys.

[41 : 23] Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you., so,