

A STUDY IN CONTRASTS

(Judges 13-16)

I. He was religious, yet rebellious.

- a. It seems as if Samson's parents were religious people.
- b. When you read of the interaction of Manoah, Samson's father, his wife, and the angel, you see the parents desire to raise their son in accordance with God's will.
 - i. Notice Judges 13:5.
 - ii. Now notice verse 8.
- c. This was the household into which Samson was born (Judges 13:24).
- d. This is the type home we must provide for our children.
 - i. Many preachers have preached sermons on the home based on Manoah's statement in Judges 13:8.
 - ii. We should all have a desire to know how God would have us do for our children.
 - iii. Thankfully, God has laid that out for us in His word.
 - iv. However, we have to take that message and put it into practice.
- e. In that day, people were doing what was right in their own eyes, but Samson's parents wanted to be right with God.
- f. However, Samson later rebelled against the religious teaching of his parents.
 - i. He desired a Philistine for a wife.
 - ii. His parents urged him to find an Israelite to marry, but he would not listen.
 - iii. His parents knew the trouble this could bring, but he would not listen.
 - iv. Christian parents need to encourage their children to marry someone who is right with the Lord.
- g. Also, Samson's rebellion didn't end with a choice of a spouse.
 - i. He rebelled against God in his desire for women.
 - ii. He rebelled against God in his lack of restraint with Delilah.
 - iii. This rebellion ended up costing him a great deal, first his strength and eyes, and ultimately his life.

II. He was consecrated, yet corrupt.

- a. Samson was consecrated to God through the Nazarite vow (Numbers 6:1-4).
 - i. This was told to his mother by the angel.
 - ii. Judges 13:5.
 - iii. This was a very special vow and one that was to be taken very seriously.
- b. Samson allowed himself to be corrupted by a dead body, numerous times, and also by having his head shaved.
- c. How many members of the Lord's church today are the same way?
 - i. We are consecrated, or set apart, by being New Testament Christians.
 - ii. Yet, so many allow themselves to be corrupted by the world.

- d. The lives of numerous Christians are more in line with worldly standards than New Testament ones.
 - i. It is hard to be a city set on a hill, when we consistently live in the valley.
 - ii. It is hard to be lights to the world when we walk in darkness of sin.
- e. We also have many who have obeyed the gospel yet want to worship as the world does, making no distinction between the Lord's church and man's.

III. He was knowledgeable, yet naïve.

- a. Samson was no dummy.
 - i. He was able to deal with situations very easily.
 - ii. He was not one to scare easily or cry out for help because he didn't know what to do.
 - iii. Think of how he dealt with those who attended his wedding party.
 - iv. Also, how he was able to handle his own people who were going to turn him in to the Philistines.
- b. Yet, he seemed so naïve in his dealing with Delilah.
 - i. He should have learned from his experiences with his wife, recorded in chapter 14, that the Philistines couldn't be trusted.
 - ii. Not only that, but three times before giving in, Delilah deliberately attempted to have Samson caught.
 - iii. Why would he finally give in to her?
- c. Today, Christians abandon the source of their strength, God's word, all the time.
 - i. We should be asking why they do this.
 - ii. We turn from truths that are foundational in God's word despite the heartache it has caused in the past and will continue to cause.
 - iii. We leave off basic New Testament teaching and lose our contact with God and His word, all at a terrible price.

IV. He was aware, yet apathetic.

- a. Samson was aware that the Philistines were enemies of God and His people, yet he kept on seeking relationships with them.
 - i. We mentioned he knew their sinfulness and their ways.
 - ii. However, his selfishness led to an apathetic view of them.
 - iii. Samson was going to have what he wanted no matter what because that's all he cared about.
- b. We are aware of the results of sin, but there are always those who are apathetic towards those results because of selfishness.
- c. We are aware of the condition of the lost, yet many are apathetic towards them.

V. He was forceful, yet feeble.

- a. We all know how strong he was.
 - i. He was able to kill a lion with his bare hands.
 - ii. He was able to kill a 1,000 Philistines with the jawbone of a donkey.

