

Samson
and
The God
That Doeth Wondrously!



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"And the children of Israel did evil again in the sight of the Lord; and the Lord delivered them into the hand of the Philistines forty years. And there was a certain man of Zorah, of the family of the Danites, whose name was Manoah; and his wife was barren, and bare not. And the angel of the Lord appeared unto the woman, and said unto her, Behold now, thou art barren, and bearest not: but thou shalt conceive, and bear a son. Now therefore beware, I pray thee, and drink not wine nor strong drink, and eat not any unclean thing: For, lo, thou shalt conceive, and bear a son; and no razor shall come on his head: for the child shall be a Nazarite unto God from the womb: and he shall begin to deliver Israel out of the hand of the Philistines. Then the woman came and told her husband, saying, A man of God came unto me, and his countenance was like the countenance of an angel of God, very terrible: but I asked him not whence he was, neither told he me his name: But he said unto me, Behold, thou shalt conceive, and bear a son; and now drink no wine nor strong drink, neither eat any unclean thing: for the child shall be a Nazarite to God from the womb to the day of his death. Then Manoah entreated the Lord, and said, O my Lord, let the man of God which thou didst send come again unto us, and teach us what we shall do unto the child that shall be born. And God hearkened to the voice of Manoah; and the angel of God came again unto the woman as she sat in the field: but Manoah her husband was not with her. And the woman made haste, and ran, and shewed her husband, and said unto him, Behold, the man hath appeared unto me, that came unto me the other day. And Manoah arose, and went after his wife, and came to the man, and said unto him, Art thou the man that spakest unto the woman? And he said, I am. And Manoah said, Now let thy words come to pass. How shall we order the child, and how shall we do unto him? And the angel of the Lord said unto Manoah, Of all that I said unto the woman let her beware. She may not eat of any thing that cometh of the vine, neither let her drink wine or strong drink, nor eat any unclean thing: all that I commanded her let her observe. And Manoah said unto the angel of the Lord, I pray thee, let us detain thee, until we shall have made ready a kid for thee. And the angel of the Lord said unto Manoah, Though thou detain me, I will not eat of thy bread: and if thou wilt offer a burnt offering, thou must offer it unto the Lord. For Manoah knew not that he was an angel of the Lord. And Manoah said unto the angel of the Lord, What is thy name, that 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 is secret? So Manoah took a kid with a meat offering, and offered it upon a rock unto the Lord: and the angel did wondrously; and Manoah and his wife looked on. or it came to pass, when the flame went up toward heaven from off the altar, that the angel of the Lord ascended in the flame of the altar. And Manoah and his wife looked on it, and fell on their faces to the ground. But the angel of the Lord did no more appear to Manoah and to his wife. Then Manoah knew that he was an angel of the Lord. And Manoah said unto his wife, We shall surely die, because we have seen God. But his wife said unto him, If the Lord were pleased to kill us, he would not have received a burnt offering and a meat offering at our hands, neither would he have shewed us all these things, nor would as at this time have told us such things as these. And the woman bare a son, and called his name Samson: and the child grew, and the Lord blessed him. And the Spirit of the Lord began to move him at times in the camp of Dan between Zorah and Eshtaol." (Judges 13:1-25).



Samson and The God That Doeth Wondrously!

Samson's Destiny

From before Samson was born he had a destiny straight out from the heart of God. God came to Samson's mother while she was still barren and childless and told her, *"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."* From before birth God ordained Samson to lead His people from their bondage to their flesh (the uncircumcised Philistines). God did not tell Samson's mother how Samson would do that. The method was a mystery. But from the very beginning of his existence Samson knew his life purpose involved not allowing the enemies of God to control God's people. The flesh was not to reign and govern the Lord's own. How similar that is to every born again believer! From the earliest days of new birth we know that our flesh is not supposed to control us, and that the Cross of Jesus has crucified and dealt with that enemy (Romans 6:6). Yet it feels like a riddle that cannot be solved when we try to apply that victory to the "Philistines" within us that yet control us. We may set about in our own

strength to “solve the riddle” and deal with our flesh, yet things only seem to get worse. With our every attempt to fulfill our destiny to be “flesh-free vessels of the life of Jesus” we only seem to become more entrenched in our old ways. But this does not stop God! Within each failure He is moving to give us clues based on His nature of sacrifice in how to “solve this riddle” and fulfill our destiny. The hidden demonstrations of His selfless love and outpoured life do more than teach us, they break us and melt us and draw us into the Answer Himself. May the Lord revive within us the passion to press past our lack, failures, and carnal approaches into the very Heart of God *“in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge”* (Col. 2:3). He holds in His very BEING the key which opens the door through His Cross. God gave us Samson so that we could live as a generation that knows how to deal with the Philistines (the flesh) through oneness with the Lamb. May the Lord minister His life within us as we seek Him in these scriptures.

Our Approach

Approach is everything. If we start on God’s ground we will walk with Him, in Him, and by Him through every step of the journey. Our approach to His heart in searching the scriptures will make a difference in how the Spirit responds to us as we read. The scriptures tell us in 1 Corinthians 2:9-10, *“Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searches all things, yea, the deep things of God.”* There is no way for us to enter into the things that God has prepared for us with our own resources. God will only show them to us by His Spirit. 1 Corinthians 2:14 continues to share, *“But the natural man receives not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither*

can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.” The things that pertain to God Himself cannot be received or known by someone in their natural senses. If our approach to knowing God is with our own resources, we are locked out. It is a vain pursuit to try to solve the riddle of His wisdom and the mystery of His Being in a manner devoid of love and the Spirit’s unveiling. We need to become convinced of our barrenness in relation to conceiving of who God is. We must become emptied of all our old resources and ways of knowing, and allow the Spirit of God to overshadow us and bring true conception. We will then know the Lord in a way that surpasses knowledge and brings forth Christ as our very life.

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Barren and Blessed

We begin in Samson’s story with a barren wife (Judges 13:2b: *“and his wife was barren and bare not.”*). The Lord found a woman among the women of Israel that was barren. Similar to Mary’s story in Luke chapter one, we find an angel visiting Samson’s mother and telling her that she shall CONCEIVE and bear A SON. *“For lo though shalt conceive and bear a son, and he shall begin to deliver Israel out of the hand of the Philistines.”* This son will be a representation of how true deliverance against the flesh (Philistines) is wrought. His will be a life of secrets and riddles that can only be solved through the hidden wisdom of God. The same God who made the barren woman conceive will be the God who solves the mystery of how to truly end the flesh in Samson’s life and ours. Throughout this story we will be deeply touched by the God who brings life to the barren, in both Samson and his mother.

Samson's story begins with a barren mother and an enemy-infested Israel. Although they are God's people, on every front they live separate and empty of Him. The God who dwells in their midst is a mystery to them. His name is a secret. As it was in Samson's day, so it is now. We are powerless to CONCEIVE of such a One as this apart from the Holy Spirit. Eye cannot see Him, ear cannot hear of Him, heart cannot comprehend Him. We will look but not find. We will seek but not see. In our barrenness to even conceive of this One, we must look to God alone to bring forth this Son.

"We are powerless to conceive of such a One as this apart from the Holy Spirit."

And so Samson's story begins with a barren woman conceiving a son by the Lord. And truly this barren woman did conceive, for we hear it in her words at the end of verse seven: *"for the child shall be a Nazarite to God from the womb to the day of his death."* The angel of the Lord never specified (in verse five) that the child would be a Nazarite until "THE DAY of HIS DEATH." But the Spirit was upon this woman and she was bathed in the essence of this Holy Spirit conception. Already she perceives the things of sacrifice that will be involved in this child's true separation unto God. Because this woman is barren, she is not reaching into her own resources to comprehend what is happening to her and what God is doing. She has God, and He is giving her conception. For this reason God always comes to her when it is time to communicate the things pertaining to her son. Her husband, on the other hand, represents the carnal mind and its approach to trying to figure out that which God has hidden. How easy it is for our carnal minds to believe they can "conceive" of the things of God, things not even the angels can look into. Things that God has held secret in Himself from before the foundation of the world and only shares with those *"that love Him"* (II Cor. 2:9).

The Carnal Head... her Husband

The real person who is fathering this woman's son (Samson) is God. God is the one who gave conception. God is the one who will bring the increase as this son grows and fulfills his destiny as a sign to Israel of how to deal with the flesh. The word "carnal" is interpreted as "fleshly." Here, in Samson's story, we find Manoah as a picture of the carnal mind (fleshly mind) that wants to know how to parent Samson into fulfilling his destiny. Interestingly enough, Samson's destiny is to show how to destroy the flesh (Philistines), and yet the fleshly mind would like to learn how to help accomplish that! *"Then Manoah entreated the Lord, and said, O my Lord, let the man of God which thou didst send come again unto us, and TEACH US what WE SHALL DO unto the child that shall be born"* (Judges 13:8). The carnal mind presumes that through teaching it will know how to make this son fulfill his purpose. Manoah continues to press the point in verse 12: *"And Manoah said, 'HOW shall we ORDER THE CHILD, and HOW shall we DO UNTO HIM?'"* As soon as the carnal mind hears (through his wife) that there is a move of God going on, it immediately begins to set about to accomplish it in its own strength and understanding. But GOD REFUSES to communicate with the carnal mind as seen in verse nine, *"And God hearkened to the voice of Manoah; and the angel of God came again unto the woman as she sat in the field; but Manoah her husband was not with her."* God answers Manoah's questions by coming to his wife when Manoah was not there! God will not communicate the things of His Son with the carnal/fleshly mind. He will not teach it how to father the Seed, order the child, or do anything unto Him. The flesh has no place in the things of the Spirit, in the things pertaining to the Son.

Herein we can discover the motives of the carnal mind and its approach to the things of God. May we, from our hearts, cry out to see God by the Spirit rather than try to figure Him out.

Yet Manoah continues to persist, and so the angel of the Lord responds by saying, *“Of all that I said unto the woman let her observe”* (Judges 13:13). The Lord will only communicate with the one who has been opened by the Holy Spirit to conceive of the things pertaining to the Son. Still not satisfied, Manoah further persists by trying to detain the angel of the Lord (probably to try and get more answers from him), and asks to prepare a meal for him (verse 15). The angel of the Lord responds by letting Manoah know that even if he is detained, he will not partake of his bread. The angel of the Lord is letting Manoah know that there will be no communion with his carnal/fleshly mind. God (who is Spirit) will not and cannot sit down and have communion with our fleshly carnal minds. The carnal mind is at enmity with God (Romans 8:7). God will not be manipulated or pressured through detainment into answering the carnal mind’s questions. Consider this: a person’s entire time in a church or Bible school could consist of the carnal mind ambushing God into answering its questions on how to make this “Jesus thing” happen in their life. God is a Lamb in nature, and although He may be detained, He will never have communion with our carnal minds. He will not break bread with our flesh. Yet God in His infinite love and mercy makes a suggestion to Manoah that opens the door to spiritual order and true answers. Judges 13:16, *“And the angel of the Lord said unto Manoah, though thou detain me, I will not eat of thy bread: and if thou wilt offer a burnt offering thou must offer it to the Lord.”* Manoah never brought up the idea of offering a burnt offering. God did. It is the ONE CLUE that God freely gave to Manoah. Manoah should have taken note of this! It was the one bit of uncoerced information that God gave freely. Instead of Manoah immediately turning all of his focus onto the burnt offering, he kept pressing for information that was not his to know, and asks the angel of the Lord what his name is (Judges 13:17). The angel of the Lord responds to his question in

verse 18 by saying, *“WHY askest thou thus after my name, seeing IT IS SECRET.”* Again, the carnal mind keeps poking and prodding into areas that only belong to the Spirit and those who love God and are barren of their own resources.

The God Whose Name Is Secret

With Manoah’s initial pressing to know the secret of the Lord’s name, we find an overriding theme that continues throughout the entire story of Samson. There is always someone trying to extract a secret from someone else. Just like Manoah did with the angel of the Lord, so will many do unto Samson throughout his life. There is always a secret and a riddle that Samson is meant to keep hidden, but which people are pressuring him to disclose. In truth, it is a secret Samson himself does not comprehend until the very end of his life.

Let us call to remembrance the order of this situation. Manoah wants to detain the angel of the Lord by suggesting he stay for a meal; the angel of the Lord suggests he make a burnt offering instead. Manoah then asks for the angel of the Lord’s name, and the angel responds, *“WHY would you ask that seeing my name is a secret?”* So finally Manoah prepares the burnt offering. Notice that the angel of the Lord did not sit down and disclose detailed information about his name with Manoah. Instead he said, “Prepare a burnt offering.” The secret of God’s name is not found in answers to the carnal mind. The secret of God’s name is not found in feeding information to a fleshly mind. *The secret of God’s name is found in His way in the burnt offering.*

“To behold Him in a manner that causes one to see into His ways in sacrifice is to look into the inward parts of the Lamb.”

Something about the Way He Gives Himself...

“So Manoah took a kid with a meat offering, and offered it upon a rock unto the LORD: and the angel did wondrously; and Manoah and his wife looked on. For it came to pass, when the flame went up toward heaven from off the altar, that the angel of the LORD ascended in the flame of the altar. And Manoah and his wife looked on it, and fell on their faces to the ground” (Judges 13:19-20).

The clue given by the God whose name is Secret did not come in the form of an explanation or instruction. It came when God Himself ascended in the flames of the burnt offering! THIS is His answer...and what an answer it is! We, like Manoah, are ready for God to come down to the level of our carnal mind and map out a strategy in how to bring forth Christ and deal with our flesh. Rather God speaks in His own language (which is sacrifice) and wants us to come up to His level. Rather than teaching, God gives a demonstration by manifesting Who He is in His eternal nature. It is here, even before Samson is born, that we find God Himself giving the answer to the riddle. The God whose name is secret is trying to show forth the mystery, but who has eyes to see Him, and who will believe this report? Many would rather have a ten-step program or counseling as opposed to knowing Christ Crucified as their way and life.

Many times we are seeking for an answer rather than a Person. But it is the Person of Christ Who fulfills everything in His Lamb nature. To behold Him in a manner that causes one to see into His ways in sacrifice is to look into the inward parts of the Lamb. Such a view is sacred, intimate, and life-changing. We are seeing the only One who can truly be the answer because of the way He is on the inside.

To behold God in His way upon the altar is to bring us into the realm of our own barrenness in regards to nature. Can we perform the burnt offering that gives Himself wholly unto death in ways that are wondrous and ascend to God as a sweet savor, satisfying the very heart of the Father? We may have will power and dedication, but we need another Life for this! And try organizing that into a teaching or lesson plan! The God of the burnt offering, whose name is a secret, is answering Manoah's question. To really know God's secret name will only come through conforming to the Son who is the acceptable burnt offering in ways that are marvelous, wondrous, awe-inspiring, and pure satisfaction to God. This will take a lifetime of lessons and horrible mistakes, all of which involve manifesting our old nature that slays the sacrifice with our attitudes and prideful, selfish ways. Yet here comes the Lord Himself, walking up to our house ready to hop on the altar and give Himself for us and before us in the midst of our carnality and strife. Instead of sitting down and listening to a teaching, we watch Him in the flames and behold the Lamb in His incredible beauty, a beauty only found in the manner in which He lays down His life for His enemies (my carnal mind). We observe the answer to the secret in the way the Lamb gives His life as an offering in the midst of it.

Through all of it, the God who hides Himself will not make Himself fully known to Samson until Samson has been weakened and broken enough to become the riddle himself through union with the burnt offering. Yet in every step of the journey there are clues and steps given of God to help Samson's heart progress and turn in the right direction. All of it worked together to finally bring forth THE Son in Samson that would truly deal with the flesh (Philistines) according to the wisdom and power of God while ministering a sweet savor to the Father. THIS SECRET, the one found here in the burnt offering in verses 18-20, shows the end from the beginning. We will look at two examples of this within Samson's story.

The Secret of the Carcass of the Lion

“Then went Samson down, and his father and his mother, to Timnath, and came to the vineyards of Timnath: and, behold, a young lion roared against him. And the Spirit of the Lord came mightily upon him, and he rent him as he would have rent a kid, and he had nothing in his hand: but he told not his father or his mother what he had done. And he went down, and talked with the woman; and she pleased Samson well. And after a time he returned to take her, and he turned aside to see the carcass of the lion: and, behold, there was a swarm of bees and honey in the carcass of the lion. And he took thereof in his hands, and went on eating, and came to his father and mother, and he gave them, and they did eat: but he told not them that he had taken the honey out of the carcass of the lion” (Judges 14:5-9).

Here we find Samson encountering a lion that is roaring AGAINST him. Samson delivers the death blow to the lion, and does it with great ease, for the Spirit of the Lord was with him in a mighty way. Samson used his might to inflict death upon his enemies. He used that which God gave him to destroy all that would rise against him. This death blow that killed the lion would be considered by most as the victory. But the real victory came from the carcass of the one who was slain. Later, when Samson walked past the defeated lion, he beheld sweetness flowing out of the lion's dead body. Herein we see a picture of Christ Crucified. Herein we also see a picture of the manner in which God will eventually bring forth victory through Samson. Instead of reproving Samson for abusing His power, God uses the lion to show Samson how God overcomes through death. Rather than resisting all who oppose through fighting back, Jesus was led like a sheep to the slaughter and in weakness and foolishness gave Himself

unto death. Oh what sweetness comes forth from the Crucified Christ, feeding us to this very day! Samson needed to eat that which came out of the slain one and get that in him. In like manner we need to partake of the life that comes out of the slain Lamb. We need to do more than look at the crucified Christ, we must partake of His Lamb nature.

Just like the burnt offering in which the Lord ascended in the flames before his parents, so also it is with the slain lion.

The God who gives Himself in death is showing Himself to Samson through this dead lion. This slain lion is also a prophesy of Samson, for in this lion we see what once was strong



and devoured is now bringing forth sweetness through death. So it will be with Samson at the end of his life. But at this early stage the riddle is not solved in Samson's heart yet. He has much to learn through the many failures ahead.

Samson even made a contest out of this lion phenomena by presenting it as a riddle: *"Out of the eater came forth meat, and out of the strong came forth sweetness"* (Judges 14:14). No one could figure out what this riddle meant and some went as far as using threatening, blackmail, and manipulation to find the answer. The answer to this riddle was not truly known in the fact that a lion died and then bees and honey came out of its carcass. The real answer could only be found in knowing the nature of God. Samson proved that he did not know the answer to this riddle yet by burning and slaughtering those who used treachery against him to solve the riddle (Judges 15:1-8).

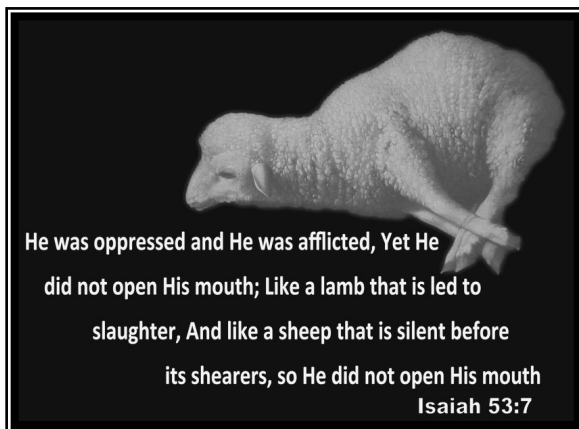
Through the entire book of Samson we find God answering the secrets and mysteries of God in ways that have nothing to do with words. God is not like Manoah in the way that he fathers Samson. God does not sit Samson down and teach him how to order his life and do things. Rather God appears as the burnt offering in the midst of Samson's lifetime of mistakes and fleshly ways, and shows forth the answer through a nature that gives itself for its enemies (Samson being that enemy). If you read closely through the scriptures in Judges chapters 13 through 16, you will find Samson continually raging against his enemies like a beast, slaughtering all who do him wrong. In this instance God appeared as a lion that had been gutted, and yet poured out sweetness to his slayer. Not only was this lion carcass that was full of honey a picture of God in His true nature and way, but it was also a prophesy of the nature Samson would bear once that riddle was solved in his own life. At the end of his life Samson would no longer be the crucifier, but one with the Crucified. He would pour all that God had given him into death rather than "might and right."

The Jawbone of A Donkey is Redeemed by A Lamb

*"And he found a new jawbone of an ass, and put forth his hand, and took it, and slew a thousand men therewith. And Samson said, With the jawbone of an ass, heaps upon heaps, with the jaw of an ass have I slain a thousand men. **And it came to pass, when he had made an end of speaking, that he cast away the jawbone out of his hand, and called that place Ramathlehi.** And he was sore athirst, and called on the Lord, and said, Thou hast given this great deliverance into the hand of thy servant: and now shall I die for thirst, and fall into the hand of the uncircumcised? But God clave an hollow place that was in the jaw, and there came water thereout; and when he had drunk, his spirit came again, and he revived: wherefore he called the name thereof Enhakkore, which is in Lehi unto this day" (Judges 15:15-19).*

As you follow Samson's story, you will find that one act of revenge triggers a new act of avenging violence, resulting in a life of constant strife. Samson is caught in a cycle of revenge, and this time we find Samson using his mouth to take down his enemies. His weapon of choice is a "jawbone," and although this could be seen as a physical weapon, I believe it signifies the destructive use of the mouth. How many of us have chosen this *"tool of destruction"* (James 3:5-6) to take down our enemies and those who oppose us? Samson used this jawbone and killed a thousand men with it. What a slaughter! If we question that the jawbone represents using things we say to wound and destroy, let us consider what the scriptures say. Verse 17 of Judges 15 declares that when Samson ***"made an end of speaking"*** he then cast down the jawbone and the massacre ceased. As long as Samson was still speaking, his jawbone was bringing destruction. When he finally stopped using his mouth in this way, the slaughter ended.

It is interesting to note that Samson's jawbone was not the jawbone of a Lamb, but of a donkey. Isaiah 53:7 tells us that the Lamb *"openeth not His mouth"* and goes into death for His accusers. The Lamb is not going to be using His mouth as weapon of destruction but a tool of sacrificing Himself for His enemies.



After all that talking Samson got extremely thirsty! His first thought is for himself and his own thirst and not the enormous amount of death that he just caused. He cries out to God saying, *“Shall I now die of thirst?”* It is here that God appears again. He comes, not in judgment or even reproof, but as a Lamb. God opened a hollow place that was in the very jaw that just killed a thousand men, and made water come out of it. From this water Samson’s thirst was quenched. Here we see the Lamb of God coming to those who abuse His power, misuse His name, and war against His Spirit. What does He do? He dies for them. Just like He can bring His sweetness out from the eater (the lion), so can He bring forth living waters from that which once released death and destruction (the jawbone). How does He do it? Exodus 13:13 tells us how: *“But every firstborn of a donkey you shall redeem with a lamb.”* It is within these horrible failures that we see the beauty of God in ways we never beheld before. We see Him “doing wondrously” as He ascends in the burnt offering! The contrast overwhelms us as we see Him responding in love and selfless giving where we responded in our strength and wisdom that warred against this Spirit of the Lamb. These lessons cannot be taught in a school or learned from a sermon. These are wrought deep inside of us when HE APPEARS in the midst of our mess. His beauty melts us, opens us, and prepares us to become vessels of the Lamb.

Samson’s story is filled with the flesh wreaking havoc on anything and anyone who crosses him. And yet, Samson’s destiny is such that he will eventually be fathered by God into overcoming all enemies through the weakness of the Cross. Every deep failure in Samson’s life was followed by God showing forth Himself as the answer through the altar. We must therefore believe that God used all these awful and even destructive failures to eventually bring Samson to the Lamb as power and the Cross as wisdom (I Corinthians 1:18-25). This

should give us all a new perspective on our failures and the heart of God. Like Samson, we must eat the Lamb's flesh (honey from the lion) and drink in His Life (water from the jawbone).

Most of us are familiar with how Samson's story ends... a most beautiful ending! Samson becomes one with the Sacrifice and through bearing His dying in a manifest way defeats the Philistines (Judges 16:30). Samson finally knew the God whose name is Secret. Samson solved the riddle that had remained a mystery his whole life. And for those of us who go into regret over past failures, let us remember this verse: *"So the dead which he slew at his death were more than they which he slew in his life"* (Judges 16:30b). What if Samson had given up based on all his failures, rather than allowing them to work together to bring forth Christ (Romans 8:28)? God did not give up on him. God continually appeared to him and released His nature to Him. God fathered His Spirit through the Son.

Conclusion: He Doeth Wondrously

As we conclude this article, let us return to the initial appearing of God in the burnt offering before Samson's parents. As is true with the Lord, so many times we can find the end in the beginning, and such is the case with the story of Samson.

"So Manoah took a kid with a meat offering, and offered it upon a rock unto the LORD: and the angel of the Lord did wondrously; and Manoah and his wife looked on. For it came to pass, when the flame went up toward heaven from off the altar, that the angel of the LORD ascended in the flame of the altar. And Manoah and his wife looked on it, and fell on their faces to the ground" (Judges 13:19-20).

The answer came in the beginning through the God of the altar and His way in the flames. It can be hard to fathom in a realistic way what literally seeing God ascend in the burnt offering would be like. Talk about a shocking turn during a meal! Especially if you didn't realize that the angel you were entertaining was actually the Lord Himself. If a picture paints a thousand words, God Himself being the burnt offering in front of our eyes would be beyond all words and teaching! Behold the Lamb of God. He is the answer, and the secret of His name is only understood in the wonder of the way in which He gives Himself in sacrifice. How do we comprehend that secret and solve that riddle? By allowing that same Lord to be in us as our Life. He alone doeth wondrously on the altar! He doeth wondrously in the way He gives Himself to the Father, as a little defenseless slaughtered Lamb. It reaches the Father's heart. The Father sees into the very spirit and way this One responds to loss, injustice, blame, and slaughter at the hands of enemies and friends.

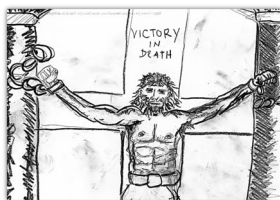
The Philistines have striven from the beginning to push their way into the holy things of God. The flesh has always tried to understand the secret of God for personal gain and promotion. For power and wisdom. To increase us and feed our pride and ambition. God hid Himself in the altar. He hid His wisdom in His crucified Son. Nothing could prevail until Samson became one with the Sacrifice. The flesh will always remain in ascendancy until our eyes become opened to the God of the altar.

He is truly known, the deep and hidden things of His Person, through the way He gives Himself in sacrifice. He gives himself in weakness, foolishness, no reputation and shame. Yet behold the beauty of the Lamb in the wonder of His nature! The "name" of this One cannot be known through a word or explanation, but in a demonstration of His selfless Being in sacrifice. God overcame our flesh through being overcome. He bore our stripes. He took our shame. He

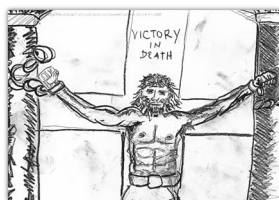
carried our grief and received our punishment. He bore all of this with a heart full of love and not revenge.

We can seek to understand the secret to dealing with our flesh and understanding the cross. We can rush to the altar to offer sacrifices to God. But until we understand the secret of the name and nature of the Lord in the way Samson finally did, we will approach all these things in the strength of our flesh and carnal understandings. The only way to truly deal with the flesh (whether ours or that of our enemy) is by the Lamb's death for and as us, and the Lamb's death through us. We can spend our whole life being like Samson trying to overcome the flesh in our own strength or like Manoah trying to figure out how to apply the Cross with our carnal mind. But God wants to Father our spirit through His slain Son that is our true resource and life. Let us become barren of our own resources that we might conceive of the Son Who will fulfill it all in us as our Life.

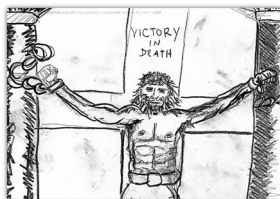
And finally, may we ponder these words: *"He doeth wondrously"* (Judges 13:19). There is no detailed description here of what He did that was so wondrous. Could it be that it was more than just what He did, but the spirit and way in which He gave Himself there on the altar? A way that no one but God could do and be? It was so wondrous, in fact, that Manoah and his wife both knew they had just seen God. The secret of God cannot be taught or imitated. HE must be Himself in us and then He doeth wondrously as only He can. May He appear wondrously to us as the Lamb in the midst of our failures until He appears wondrously in us as the Sacrifice who will give Himself through us to bring true victory.



Personal Notes



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**This is a Fire Ministries booklet by Kelly Koshatka
that is meant to draw your heart closer to the
Person of our Lord and Life, Jesus Christ.
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The Burning Scroll

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