

Samson - Set Apart to God

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Scene Summary

This exciting play tells the story of the birth of Samson. The scenes include the angel visits the wife of Manoah...Manoah prays to learn more about the birth...the angel appears again to the wife and she hurried to bring Manoah...the angel tells them that the child is to be set apart to God...they offer a sacrifice and the angel disappears.

Scripture

(Judg 13 NIV) Again the Israelites did evil in the eyes of the LORD, so the LORD delivered them into the hands of the Philistines for forty years. {2} A certain man of Zorah, named Manoah, from the clan of the Danites, had a wife who was sterile and remained childless. {3} The angel of the LORD appeared to her and said, "You are sterile and childless, but you are going to conceive and have a son. {4} Now see to it that you drink no wine or other fermented drink and that you do not eat anything unclean, {5} because you will conceive and give birth to a son. No razor may be used on his head, because the boy is to be a Nazirite, set apart to God from birth, and he will begin the deliverance of Israel from the hands of the Philistines." {6} Then the woman went to her husband and told him, "A man of God came to me. He looked like an angel of God, very awesome. I didn't ask him where he came from, and he didn't tell me his name. {7} But he said to me, 'You will conceive and give birth to a son. Now then, drink no wine or other fermented drink and do not eat anything unclean, because the boy will be a Nazirite of God from birth until the day of his death.'" {8} Then Manoah prayed to the LORD: "O Lord, I beg you, let the man of God you sent to us come again to teach us how to bring up the boy who is to be born." {9} God heard Manoah, and the angel of God came again to the woman while she was out in the field; but her husband Manoah was not with her. {10} The woman hurried to tell her husband, "He's here! The man who appeared to me the other day!" {11} Manoah got up and followed his wife. When he came to the man, he said, "Are you the one who talked to my wife?" "I am," he said. {12} So Manoah asked him, "When your words are fulfilled, what is to be the rule for the boy's life and work?" {13} The angel of the LORD answered, "Your wife must do all that I have told her. {14} She must not eat anything that comes from the grapevine, nor drink any

wine or other fermented drink nor eat anything unclean. She must do everything I have commanded her." {15} Manoah said to the angel of the LORD, "We would like you to stay until we prepare a young goat for you." {16} The angel of the LORD replied, "Even though you detain me, I will not eat any of your food. But if you prepare a burnt offering, offer it to the LORD." (Manoah did not realize that it was the angel of the LORD.) {17} Then Manoah inquired of the angel of the LORD, "What is your name, so that we may honor you when your word comes true?" {18} He replied, "Why do you ask my name? It is beyond understanding." {19} Then Manoah took a young goat, together with the grain offering, and sacrificed it on a rock to the LORD. And the LORD did an amazing thing while Manoah and his wife watched: {20} As the flame blazed up from the altar toward heaven, the angel of the LORD ascended in the flame. Seeing this, Manoah and his wife fell with their faces to the ground. {21} When the angel of the LORD did not show himself again to Manoah and his wife, Manoah realized that it was the angel of the LORD. {22} "We are doomed to die!" he said to his wife. "We have seen God!" {23} But his wife answered, "If the LORD had meant to kill us, he would not have accepted a burnt offering and grain offering from our hands, nor shown us all these things or now told us this." {24} The woman gave birth to a boy and named him Samson. He grew and the LORD blessed him, {25} and the Spirit of the LORD began to stir him while he was in Mahaneh Dan, between Zorah and Eshtaol.

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Players

- **Narrator** – The play's "catechist" or teacher should be a good reader with a clear voice.
- **Manoah** - (Ma-no-ah) The father of Samson.
- **Wife** - The mother of Samson.
- **Angel** - A messenger from God

Special Props

- A staff for Manoah
- Distinctive clothes for the Angel, either all white, or very colorful and bright.
- A few dishes and a bowl.
- Normal clothing and headdress from the prop box.

Script – Samson - Set Apart to God

Opening scene: Manoah and his wife walk slowly out to center stage where there is a table with the dishes and bowl. They stop at the table and begin to talk with each other silently as the narrator speaks.

Narrator: [comes to stage right and gestures to Manoah and his wife] This is Manoah and his wife. The Bible does not tell us her name. They do not have any children. [steps back offstage]

Manoah: [waves goodbye to his wife and leave the stage]

Wife: [sits at the table and begins to work making a meal; she does not see the angel until he begins speaking, then acts startled]

Angel: [walks boldly on stage and begins speaking to the startled wife] You are going to have a son. You must not drink any wine or eat anything unclean. You must not cut his hair, because the boy is to be a Nazirite, set apart to God from birth, and he will begin to deliver Israel from the enemy.

Wife: [afraid, backs slowly away from the angel, then runs off stage left]

Angel: [casually leaves the stage as the narrator speaks]

Narrator: [comes back to stage right] This was exciting news. She was going to have a son. She hurried to find Manoah.

Wife: [comes back from stage left pulling Manoah and very excited] He was just here.

Manoah: Where? I don't see anyone now.

Wife: [very excited] I was so afraid. It was a man of God.

Manoah: [calm voice] OK, calm down. What did he look like?

Wife: He looked like an angel. He was very awesome.

Manoah: Where did he come from?

Wife: I didn't ask him where he came from, and he didn't tell me his name. But he said to me, you will conceive and give birth to a son. Now then, drink no wine or other fermented drink and do not eat anything unclean, because the boy will be a Nazirite of God from birth until the day of his death.

Manoah: OK, let's pray and ask God for help. [looking up] O Lord, I beg you, let the man of God you sent to us come again to teach us how to bring up the boy who is to be born.

Wife: When will he come? Should we wait here?

Manoah: God heard our prayer. He will answer. [pause] I have a meeting in town. I'll be home later. [waves goodbye and leaves the stage]

Wife: OK, I will keep watch for the angel. [waves, then begins working about]

Angel: [returns on stage and touches the wife]

Wife: [startled and afraid] It is you! [pause] Please stay here and let me get my husband.

Scene change: she hurries off stage and returns with Manoah.

Wife: [very excited] He's here! The man who appeared to me the other day!

Manoah: [comes over to the angel] Are you the one who talked to my wife?

Angel: I am

Manoah: When your words are fulfilled, what is to be the rule for the boy's life and work?

Angel: Your wife must do all that I have told her. She must not eat anything that comes from the grapevine, nor drink any wine or other fermented drink nor eat anything unclean. She must do everything I have commanded her.

Manoah: We would like you to stay until we prepare a young goat for you.

Angel: Even though you detain me, I will not eat any of your food. But if you prepare a burnt offering, offer it to the LORD.

Manoah: What is your name, so that we may honor you when your word comes true?

Angel: Why do you ask my name? It is beyond understanding.

Manoah: [and wife kneel down in prayer]

Narrator: Then Manoah built a fire and offered a sacrifice to the LORD. And the LORD did an amazing thing while Manoah and his wife watched: [A simple dramatic effect is to switch the room lights off and have the angel quickly leave the stage] As the flame blazed up from the altar toward heaven, the angel of the LORD ascended in the flame.

Manoah: [both fall to the ground, then with an excited voice] We are doomed to die! We have seen God!

Wife: If the LORD had meant to kill us, he would not have accepted a burnt offering and grain offering from our hands, nor shown us all these things or now told us this.

Narrator: She gave birth to a boy and named him Samson. He grew and the LORD blessed him.

The End

Supplemental Information

The law concerning the Nazirite vow is explained in Numbers 6, in contrast to our story this special vow is for a period of time, then there are rules describing how to end the separation. Samson was to be a Nazirite from birth. Samuel and John the Baptist are two others in the Scriptures as being a Nazirite from birth. The Nazirite was consecrated to the Lord, separated unto God.

It is interesting in this story that Samson's mother has the central role, but her name is omitted. There are other barren women in the Scripture that receive the promise of a son who will have a special destiny, for example Sarah, Rachel and Hannah. It is also interesting that on two occasions, the messenger appears to the woman alone, not to Manoah. There are essential facts about raising the child that are communicated only to the woman. Also, it seems only when the messenger disappears in the fire that Manoah realizes this is an angel of God, however the woman perceives this from the first meeting. Finally, she assures her husband that they are not doomed to die, but are participating in God's plan for Samson's life.

Reflection Questions

- What was the name of Samson's father?
- What was the name of Samson's mother? (trick question)
- What did the angel say they couldn't drink or eat?
- What did the angel say about the child's hair?

Extra Time

Ask your students about their parents. Listen carefully and affirm their feelings towards their parents. Certainly there will be a complex blend of family relationships, however remind your students that we have a Heavenly Father that loves us unconditionally, and that love is shown in giving His only Son to be our Savior.

Point your students to Christ. Help them memorize "For God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son, that whoever believes on him shall not perish but have eternal life." (John 3:16)