

Discipleship Notes 3: September 2020

“Samson’s Great Deeds?”

Judges 13 & 14

Welcome

Something strange has happened and the following biblical characters have applied to be leaders of your church. By accident, you have ended up on the imaginary appointments panel. All you need to do is decide if a character is ‘suitable’ or ‘unsuitable’ to lead your church. Consider the impact choosing this leader may have on the way you do things and other people in the church.

Peter

Jesus

Moses

Joshua

Gideon

Introduction:

The period of the judges makes uncomfortable reading. The people of God are portrayed as being in a cycle of decline in terms of their moral and religious behaviour.

In the absence of a king or other national leader, God raised up judges. Their role was to ‘save’ the people of God from their enemies and to encourage the Israelites to live proper lives before God.

God often chooses characters whom we might consider to be ‘unsuitable’ to lead His people. Yet when we read that Samson led Israel for 20 years, we have got to question why.

Why did God choose Samson?

From the start of his life Samson appears to have only his own interests in mind. Rapidly his story descends into a murderous, moral anarchy. There appears to be no one who can control this strong and mighty man.

Were things really as out of control as they look? Or did God have a plan that could include someone as volatile as Samson?

Read: Judges 13: 1-25

- Describe the state of Israel at this time.
- Who are Manoah and his wife? Do they remind us of any other couples in the Bible?
- What happens to Manoah's wife?
- Look up Numbers 6: 1-21. Describe the Nazarite vow.
- As Christians, are there voluntary vows that we might make to God? How might this practice look for us today?

Read: Judges 14: 1-20

- How do things start to go wrong for Samson?
- Why were Samson's actions wrong? Look up Deuteronomy 7: 1-6
- How might we advise a single Christian today if they were looking for a 'soul mate' or marriage partner?
- Describe the reaction of Samson's father and mother to his decision. What do we make of verse 4?
- List the series of increasingly 'bad things' that occur in this section. Why might Samson be a poor choice of leader for Israel? Is there anything here that gives up hope in his ability to lead God's people?

Reading: Judges 15: 1-20

- What happens? And why do these events occur?
- Why are we not to seek revenge or vengeance? See, for example, Romans 12: 17-21
- Look at verse 15. Who initially gets the credit for the victory Samson achieved?
- What causes Samson to cry out to the Lord?
- So, would you have let Samson be your leader for the next 20 years?

Prayer Pointers:

- Pray for our church leaders and our church meeting on September 30th.
- We remember our government and pray for wise decisions
- We pray for an end to Covid-19 and for all those working on solutions
- We pray Christians facing persecution in nations today.