

Sunday, May 1, 2022

From Darren:

Judges 13:1-14:20 - Plowing with another man's heifer is never advised, especially if it is Samson

Ps 102:1-28 - The Jews were very concerned with God saving Jerusalem...interesting to think about

Pro 14:15-16 - Be prudent

John 1:29-51 - Jesus: "the stairway between heaven and earth"

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Judges 13:1-14:20

13 1 Again the Israelites did evil in the LORD's sight, so the LORD handed them over to the Philistines, who oppressed them for forty years.

2 In those days a man named Manoah from the tribe of Dan lived in the town of Zorah. His wife was unable to become pregnant, and they had no children.

3 The angel of the LORD appeared to Manoah's wife and said, "Even though you have been unable to have children, you will soon become pregnant and give birth to a son.

4 So be careful; you must not drink wine or any other alcoholic drink nor eat any forbidden food.

5 You will become pregnant and give birth to a son, and his hair must never be cut. For he will be dedicated to God as a Nazirite from birth. He will begin to rescue Israel from the Philistines."

6 The woman ran and told her husband, "A man of God appeared to me! He looked like one of God's angels, terrifying to see. I didn't ask where he was from, and he didn't tell me his name.

7 But he told me, 'You will become pregnant and give birth to a son. You must not drink wine or any other alcoholic drink nor eat any forbidden food. For your son will be dedicated to God as a Nazirite from the moment of his birth until the day of his death.'

8 Then Manoah prayed to the LORD, saying, "Lord, please let the man of God come back to us again and give us more instructions about this son who is to be born."

9 God answered Manoah's prayer, and the angel of God appeared once again to his wife as she was sitting in the field. But her husband, Manoah, was not with her.

10 So she quickly ran and told her husband, "The man who appeared to me the other day is here again!"

11 Manoah ran back with his wife and asked, "Are you the man who spoke to my wife the other day?" "Yes," he replied, "I am."

12 So Manoah asked him, "When your words come true, what kind of rules should govern the boy's life and work?"

13 The angel of the LORD replied, "Be sure your wife follows the instructions I gave her.

14 She must not eat grapes or raisins, drink wine or any other alcoholic drink, or eat any forbidden food."

15 Then Manoah said to the angel of the LORD, "Please stay here until we can prepare a young goat for you to eat."

16 "I will stay," the angel of the LORD replied, "but I will not eat anything. However, you may prepare a burnt offering as a sacrifice to the LORD ." (Manoah didn't realize it was the angel of the LORD .)

17 Then Manoah asked the angel of the LORD, "What is your name? For when all this comes true, we want to honor you."

18 "Why do you ask my name?" the angel of the LORD replied. "It is too wonderful for you to understand."

19 Then Manoah took a young goat and a grain offering and offered it on a rock as a sacrifice to the LORD. And as Manoah and his wife watched, the LORD did an amazing thing.

20 As the flames from the altar shot up toward the sky, the angel of the LORD ascended in the fire. When Manoah and his wife saw this, they fell with their faces to the ground.

21 The angel did not appear again to Manoah and his wife. Manoah finally realized it was the angel of the LORD,

22 and he said to his wife, "We will certainly die, for we have seen God!"

23 But his wife said, "If the LORD were going to kill us, he wouldn't have accepted our burnt offering and grain offering. He wouldn't have appeared to us and told us this wonderful thing and done these miracles."

24 When her son was born, she named him Samson. And the LORD blessed him as he grew up.

25 And the Spirit of the LORD began to stir him while he lived in Mahaneh-dan, which is located between the towns of Zorah and Eshtaol.

14 1 One day when Samson was in Timnah, one of the Philistine women caught his eye.

2 When he returned home, he told his father and mother, "A young Philistine woman in Timnah caught my eye. I want to marry her. Get her for me."

3 His father and mother objected. "Isn't there even one woman in our tribe or among all the Israelites you could marry?" they asked. "Why must you go to the pagan Philistines to find a wife?" But Samson told his father, "Get her for me! She looks good to me."

4 His father and mother didn't realize the LORD was at work in this, creating an opportunity to work against the Philistines, who ruled over Israel at that time.

5 As Samson and his parents were going down to Timnah, a young lion suddenly attacked Samson near the vineyards of Timnah.

6 At that moment the Spirit of the LORD came powerfully upon him, and he ripped the lion's jaws apart with his bare hands. He did it as easily as if it were a young goat. But he didn't tell his father or mother about it.

7 When Samson arrived in Timnah, he talked with the woman and was very pleased with her.

8 Later, when he returned to Timnah for the wedding, he turned off the path to look at the carcass of the lion. And he found that a swarm of bees had made some honey in the carcass.

9 He scooped some of the honey into his hands and ate it along the way. He also gave some to his father and mother, and they ate it. But he didn't tell them he had taken the honey from the carcass of the lion.

10 As his father was making final arrangements for the marriage, Samson threw a party at Timnah, as was the custom for elite young men.

11 When the bride's parents saw him, they selected thirty young men from the town to be his companions.

12 Samson said to them, "Let me tell you a riddle. If you solve my riddle during these seven days of the celebration, I will give you thirty fine linen robes and thirty sets of festive clothing.

13 But if you can't solve it, then you must give me thirty fine linen robes and thirty sets of festive clothing." "All right," they agreed, "let's hear your riddle."

14 So he said: "Out of the one who eats came something to eat; out of the strong came something sweet." Three days later they were still trying to figure it out.

15 On the fourth day they said to Samson's wife, "Entice your husband to explain the riddle for us, or we will burn down your father's house with you in it. Did you invite us to this party just to make us poor?"

16 So Samson's wife came to him in tears and said, "You don't love me; you hate me! You have given my people a riddle, but you haven't told me the answer." "I haven't even given the answer to my father or mother," he replied. "Why should I tell you?"

17 So she cried whenever she was with him and kept it up for the rest of the celebration. At last, on the seventh day he told her the answer because she was tormenting him with her nagging. Then she explained the riddle to the young men.

18 So before sunset of the seventh day, the men of the town came to Samson with their answer: "What is sweeter than honey? What is stronger than a lion?" Samson replied, "If you hadn't plowed with my heifer, you wouldn't have solved my riddle!"

19 Then the Spirit of the LORD came powerfully upon him. He went down to the town of Ashkelon, killed thirty men, took their belongings, and gave their clothing to the men who had solved his riddle. But Samson was furious about what had happened, and he went back home to live with his father and mother.

20 So his wife was given in marriage to the man who had been Samson's best man at the wedding.

Psalm 102:1-28

102 1 LORD, hear my prayer! Listen to my plea!

2 Don't turn away from me in my time of distress. Bend down to listen, and answer me quickly when I call to you.

3 For my days disappear like smoke, and my bones burn like red-hot coals.

4 My heart is sick, withered like grass, and I have lost my appetite.

5 Because of my groaning, I am reduced to skin and bones.

6 I am like an owl in the desert, like a little owl in a far-off wilderness.

7 I lie awake, lonely as a solitary bird on the roof.

8 My enemies taunt me day after day. They mock and curse me.

9 I eat ashes for food. My tears run down into my drink

10 because of your anger and wrath. For you have picked me up and thrown me out.

11 My life passes as swiftly as the evening shadows. I am withering away like grass.

12 But you, O LORD, will sit on your throne forever. Your fame will endure to every generation.

13 You will arise and have mercy on Jerusalem — and now is the time to pity her, now is the time you promised to help.

14 For your people love every stone in her walls and cherish even the dust in her streets.

15 Then the nations will tremble before the LORD . The kings of the earth will tremble before his glory.

16 For the LORD will rebuild Jerusalem. He will appear in his glory.

17 He will listen to the prayers of the destitute. He will not reject their pleas.

18 Let this be recorded for future generations, so that a people not yet born will praise the LORD .

19 Tell them the LORD looked down from his heavenly sanctuary. He looked down to earth from heaven

20 to hear the groans of the prisoners, to release those condemned to die.

21 And so the LORD 's fame will be celebrated in Zion, his praises in Jerusalem,

22 when multitudes gather together and kingdoms come to worship the LORD .

23 He broke my strength in midlife, cutting short my days.

24 But I cried to him, “O my God, who lives forever, don’t take my life while I am so young!
25 Long ago you laid the foundation of the earth and made the heavens with your hands.
26 They will perish, but you remain forever; they will wear out like old clothing. You will change them like a garment and discard them.
27 But you are always the same; you will live forever.
28 The children of your people will live in security. Their children’s children will thrive in your presence.”

Proverbs 14:15-16

14 15 Only simpletons believe everything they’re told! The prudent carefully consider their steps.
16 The wise are cautious and avoid danger; fools plunge ahead with reckless confidence.

John 1:29-51

1 29 The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him and said, “Look! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!
30 He is the one I was talking about when I said, ‘A man is coming after me who is far greater than I am, for he existed long before me.’
31 I did not recognize him as the Messiah, but I have been baptizing with water so that he might be revealed to Israel.”
32 Then John testified, “I saw the Holy Spirit descending like a dove from heaven and resting upon him.
33 I didn’t know he was the one, but when God sent me to baptize with water, he told me, ‘The one on whom you see the Spirit descend and rest is the one who will baptize with the Holy Spirit.’
34 I saw this happen to Jesus, so I testify that he is the Chosen One of God.”
35 The following day John was again standing with two of his disciples.
36 As Jesus walked by, John looked at him and declared, “Look! There is the Lamb of God!”
37 When John’s two disciples heard this, they followed Jesus.
38 Jesus looked around and saw them following. “What do you want?” he asked them. They replied, “Rabbi” (which means “Teacher”), “where are you staying?”
39 “Come and see,” he said. It was about four o’clock in the afternoon when they went with him to the place where he was staying, and they remained with him the rest of the day.
40 Andrew, Simon Peter’s brother, was one of these men who heard what John said and then followed Jesus.
41 Andrew went to find his brother, Simon, and told him, “We have found the Messiah” (which means “Christ”).
42 Then Andrew brought Simon to meet Jesus. Looking intently at Simon, Jesus said, “Your name is Simon, son of John—but you will be called Cephas” (which means “Peter”).
43 The next day Jesus decided to go to Galilee. He found Philip and said to him, “Come, follow me.”
44 Philip was from Bethsaida, Andrew and Peter’s hometown.
45 Philip went to look for Nathanael and told him, “We have found the very person Moses and the prophets wrote about! His name is Jesus, the son of Joseph from Nazareth.”
46 “Nazareth!” exclaimed Nathanael. “Can anything good come from Nazareth?” “Come and see for yourself,” Philip replied.

47 As they approached, Jesus said, “Now here is a genuine son of Israel—a man of complete integrity.”

48 “How do you know about me?” Nathanael asked. Jesus replied, “I could see you under the fig tree before Philip found you.”

49 Then Nathanael exclaimed, “Rabbi, you are the Son of God—the King of Israel!”

50 Jesus asked him, “Do you believe this just because I told you I had seen you under the fig tree? You will see greater things than this.”

51 Then he said, “I tell you the truth, you will all see heaven open and the angels of God going up and down on the Son of Man, the one who is the stairway between heaven and earth. ”