



JUDGES 13:1-25

GETTING STARTED...

When is the last time you felt helpless? It is not a comfortable feeling and yet the truth is we recognize that there will always be areas of life where we need help from others. No one is able to do everything themselves, we rely on help from people around us. We see the same pattern in Scripture not only in our physical lives, but in our spiritual lives as well. The Bible tells us that we are helpless to save ourselves, that we are trapped in our sin. The book of Judges shows us that pattern very clearly, but also shows us the pattern of God's intervening mercy. God shows mercy upon sinful Israel again and again, to give them a picture of what his salvation will look like. As we see God's salvation played out throughout the Bible, we realize that the coming of Jesus was announced by many former saviours. Yet the problem in all of the previous saviours is that they themselves still needed saving. The birth of Jesus is God's provision of a saviour who needed no saving, who would save all who come to Him.

READ THE TEXT: JUDGES 13:1-25

And the people of Israel again did what was evil in the sight of the Lord, so the Lord gave them into the hand of the Philistines for forty years.

² There was a certain man of Zorah, of the tribe of the Danites, whose name was Manoah. And his wife was barren and had no children.

³ And the angel of the Lord appeared to the woman and said to her, "Behold, you are barren and have not borne children, but you shall conceive and bear a son. ⁴ Therefore be careful and drink no wine or strong drink, and eat nothing unclean, ⁵ for behold, you shall conceive and bear a son. No razor shall come upon his head, for the child shall be a Nazirite to God from the womb, and he shall begin to save Israel from the hand of the Philistines." ⁶ Then the woman came and told her husband, "A man of God came to me, and his appearance was like the appearance of the angel of God, very awesome. I did not ask him where he was from, and he did not tell me his name, ⁷ but he said to me, 'Behold, you shall conceive and bear a son. So then drink no wine or strong drink, and eat nothing unclean, for the child shall be a Nazirite to God from the womb to the day of his death.' "

⁸ Then Manoah prayed to the Lord and said, "O Lord, please let the man of God whom you sent come again to us and teach us what we are to do with the child who will be born." ⁹ And God listened to the voice of Manoah, and the angel of God came again to the woman as she sat in the field. But Manoah her husband was not with her. ¹⁰ So the woman ran quickly and told her husband, "Behold, the man who came to me the other day has appeared to me." ¹¹ And Manoah arose and went after his wife and came to the man and said to him, "Are you the man who spoke to this woman?" And he said, "I am." ¹² And Manoah said, "Now when your words come true, what is to be the child's manner of life, and what is his mission?" ¹³ And the angel of the Lord said to Manoah, "Of all that I said to the woman let her be careful. ¹⁴ She may not eat of anything that comes from the vine, neither let her drink wine or strong drink, or eat any unclean thing. All that I commanded her let her observe."

¹⁵ Manoah said to the angel of the Lord, "Please let us detain you and prepare a young goat for you." ¹⁶ And the angel of the Lord said to Manoah, "If you detain me, I will not eat of your food. But if you prepare a burnt offering, then offer it to the Lord." (For Manoah did not know that he was the angel of the Lord.) ¹⁷ And Manoah said to the angel of the Lord, "What is your name, so that, when your words come true, we may honor you?" ¹⁸ And the angel of the Lord said to him, "Why do you ask my name, seeing it is wonderful?" ¹⁹ So Manoah took the young goat with the grain offering, and offered it on the rock to the Lord, to the one who works wonders, and Manoah and his wife were watching. ²⁰ And when the flame went up toward heaven from the altar, the angel of the Lord went up in the flame of the altar. Now Manoah and his wife were watching, and they fell on their faces to the ground.

²¹ The angel of the Lord appeared no more to Manoah and to his wife. Then Manoah knew that he was the angel of the Lord. ²² And Manoah said to his wife, "We shall surely die, for we have seen God." ²³ But his wife said to him, "If the Lord had meant to kill us, he would not have accepted a burnt offering and a grain offering at our hands, or shown us all these things, or now announced to us such things as these."

²⁴ And the woman bore a son and called his name Samson. And the young man grew, and the Lord blessed him. ²⁵ And the Spirit of the Lord began to stir him in Mahaneh-dan, between Zorah and Eshtaol.

UNDERSTANDING THE WORD

1. How is the faith of Manoah shown in this story? How is the faith of his wife shown?
2. Looking at the rest of Samson's life, in what ways did he save the people of Israel? What flaws did he show?

REFLECTING ON THE SERMON

3. What was the main point of the sermon?
4. What has God been impressing on your heart from the sermon?

APPLYING THE POINT

5. How do we put this into practice?

- Agassiz* Which enemy (Satan, sin, death) has been your greatest threat? How have you experienced God's salvation? How has Jesus given you victory, and how can you help others?
- Chilliwack* How has the Holy Spirit empowered you to accomplish the call of God to make disciples of all nations? Consider the reality that God meets us in our weakness. How might that change the way you think about your sin, God, and ultimately salvation in Christ?
- Harrison/Lake Errock* In what ways does Samson's birth and life point to Jesus? Where did Samson fail but Jesus succeed? How does that help us trust God's word more?
- Promontory* What challenges have you faced in trusting God for the future? How does seeing God's salvation played out throughout the Bible give us confidence? How can we remind ourselves to trust and worship God even when we don't know what the future holds?

PRAYING & SHARING

1. How can you share what you have learned with... another believer?
An unbeliever?
2. Share and pray for one another in your life group. How can you specifically pray for and encourage one another in response to this text?



How to Use this Guide

This guide is intended to help facilitate Central Life Groups as they meet to understand the Bible passage, discuss the sermon, and how to put it into practice in our lives. What is contained in this guide is not an exhaustive text analysis nor a full list of questions that can or should be asked during Life Group. This is simply a guide to help **start conversations that are centered on the Word of God.**

The Life Group Guide is separated into three main sections that are arranged with an intentional order: *Understanding the Word*, *Reflecting on the Sermon*, and *Applying the Point*. We want to first understand the Word of God, and then check that understanding by what has been preached, and then discuss how to put it into practice in our own lives. The order is intended to imitate the process of how the Word of God makes changes in our lives. Head, heart, hands, and all of it wrapped in prayer.

While the meaning of a text doesn't change, the way that we are called to apply it may look different from campus to campus, and even person to person. To reflect this distinction, you will see application questions from each campus in this guide.

Start with the question(s) from your campus and then look at others to see if they are helpful for your group. You may be surprised how similar or different they end up being and how the diversity brings a fuller understanding to how we can apply the Word of God.

Our goal is not that you answer every question in this guide, but that you are able to discuss the Word of God in a way **that helps everyone follow Jesus together!**

*"Great are the works of the LORD,
studied by all who delight in them." - Psalm 111:2*