Unfiltered Family

Judges 13:1-5
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 childless, unable to give birth. ³ The angel of the Lord appeared to her and said, "You are barren and childless, but you are going to become pregnant and give birth to 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 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."

Judges 13:24-25
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.

Judges 14:1-4
Samson went down to Timnah and saw there a young Philistine woman. ² When he returned, he said to his father and mother, "I have seen a Philistine woman in Timnah; now get her for me as my wife." ³ His father and mother replied, "Isn't there an acceptable woman among your relatives or among all our people? Must you go to the uncircumcised Philistines to get a wife?" But Samson said to his father, "Get her for me. She's the right one for me." ⁴ (His parents did not know that this was from the Lord, who was seeking an occasion to confront the Philistines; for at that time they were ruling over Israel.)

Judges 14:19-20
Then the Spirit of the Lord came powerfully upon him. He went down to Ashkelon, struck down thirty of their men, stripped them of everything and gave their clothes to those who had explained the riddle. Burning with anger, he returned to his father's home. ²⁰ And Samson's wife was given to one of his companions who had attended him at the feast.

1. **Grieve the LOSS.**

2. **Pray for PROTECTION.**

3. **Ask for INSIGHT.**

How to receive forgiveness from God:

1) *Admit you, like everyone else, need new LIFE in Jesus.*
2) *Ask God to forgive your sins by the sacrifice of Jesus.*
3) *Receive new LIFE from God by trusting in Jesus as your Savior & Lord.*

You can do that now by simply talking to God in a prayer like this:

*Dear Lord Jesus, I know I am a sinner, and I ask for Your forgiveness.
I believe You died for my sins and rose from the dead. Today, I receive you as my Savior; and I put my faith in you as my LORD. Help me to live for you all the days of my life. In Your name, Amen.*

If you chose to follow Jesus today, text "FAITH" to 309-250-2007 to receive additional information about next steps in following Jesus.

For Further Reflection:

:: Samson's parents saw his birth as a miracle. How have you seen God's grace and power the way God created your family?

:: God gave Samson's parents specific instructions for how to raise him. How do you sense God leading you as you raise your children?

:: Samson's personal choices shattered his parents' dreams for his life. What have been some of the setbacks and disappointments in your parenting journey?

:: How have you seen God work in and through those disappointments:
- *Develop your child's wisdom or character?*
- *Stretch you in your ability to trust God's character?*
- *See God's larger purposes beyond your family, even if those purposes threaten your sense of comfort and control?*

Unless otherwise noted, today's Scripture is from the New International Version [NIV].
Steve Norman – August 1, 2021
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Conversation Prompts to Help Parents Through Difficult Times

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