

# SERMON XV.

---

ON SAMSON, AS A TYPE OF CHRIST, IN HIS NAZARITESHIP, WORK, AND OFFICE.

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JUDGES xiii. 5.

*“ For lo, thou shalt conceive and bear a son, and no razor shall come on his head: for the child shall be a nazarite unto God from the womb; and he shall begin to deliver Israel out of the hand of the Philistines.*

IT is an immutable truth, that the number of God's elect can neither be increased nor diminished; yet it is as real a truth, that the number of the elect may be more in one age and place than another, and according to this, such is the success of the everlasting gospel of the blessed God. This book of Judges gives full proof of it; for the number of God's elect being few in Israel, the true worship of God became so generally neglected, and will-worship and idolatry so greatly prevailed, that we read of scarce any

thing throughout this part of the inspired volume, but the relapses of the Israelites into idolatry, and the Lord, on their repentance, raising up judges or deliverers for them, who administered judgment unto them, giving them proper advice, going forth before them to battle, governing their political affairs, and thus again and again saving them out of the hands of their various enemies. This book, from the death of Joshua to the death of Samson, contains the period of two hundred and ninety-nine years, according to Dr. Lightfoot. It contains an account of thirteen persons, stiled judges; whose names were, first, Othniel, who delivered the Israelites out of the hands of Cushan Rishathaim, who oppressed them eight years, and he governed them as a judge forty years. Second, Eliud, who delivered them from the oppression of Eglon, king of Moab, under which they were eight years; and he acted as a judge amongst them eighty years. Third, Barak, who delivered them from the cruelty of Jabin, king of Canaan, which lasted twenty years; and he acted as a political judge forty years. Fourth, Gideon, who delivered them from the oppression of Midian, which lasted seven years; and he acted as their ruler forty years. Fifth, Abimelech, Gideon's son, acted in a public office three years. Sixth, Tola, of Issachar; he was judge in Israel twenty-three years. Seventh, Jair, of Manasseh, six years. Eighth, Jephthah, he

delivered the Israelites out of the hands of the children of Ammon, who oppressed them eighteen years: he ruled six years. Ninth, Ibsan, who ruled seven years. Tenth, Elon, who ruled ten years. Eleventh, Abdon, who acted as judge eight years. And the twelfth, was Samson, of the tribe of Dan, whom the Lord raised up to begin to deliver Israel out of the hands of the Philistines; and who acted in a public capacity twenty years. The total sum of the years of these judges is two hundred and ninety-nine. The years of oppression by the kings of Mesopotamia, Moab, Canaan, Midian, Ammon, and the Philistines, recorded in this book of Judges, are one hundred and eleven.

It may not be amiss, for the help of the memory, to observe, that the four famous monarchies of the world, the Assyrian, Persian, Grecian, and Roman, were the descendants of Shem and Japhet: the former, of Shem; the latter of Japhet. And also that the Ishmaelites and Hagarenes were the descendants of Ishmael, Hagar's son by Abraham. The Moabites and Ammonites were descendants of Lot. The Edomites were descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Esau. The Midianites were descendants of Midian, a son of Abraham, by Keturah. Job was a son of Nahor, Abraham's brother, descended from him by his son Buz. Gen. xxii. 21.

And so Elihu and he came to live so near together, the one being of Uz, the eldest son of Nahor, and the other of Buz, the second son. Dr. Lightfoot.

As a Trinity in one incomprehensible Unity, distinguished in the sacred page by the names of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, of one and the same divine essence, subsisting and acting in and by one another, makes a glorious part of the revelation given us in the sacred page; so it is most truly pleasing to behold the Son, who in the covenant which obtained before the world was, undertook the office of Head and Saviour to his church and people, personating and acting in the name of the Father and Spirit, on the behalf of his beloved ones. He it is, of whom the chapter before us treats, who appeared to Manoah and his wife, and gave an intimation of the deliverance which would be wrought for the people of Israel by their son Samson, whose birth he now declares unto them.

The chapter begins thus, ver. 1. "And the children of Israel did evil again in the sight of the Lord, and the Lord delivered them into the hands of the Philistines forty years." Their sin was idolatry. They forsook the Lord and followed their own inventions, and the Lord corrected them for it; he delivered them into the hands of the Philistines, who domineered over them forty years. A very righteous retaliation

for their crime ; so that they had reason to say, " The Lord is righteous."

Ver. 2. " And there was a certain man of Zorah, of the family of the Danites, whose name was Manoah, and his wife was barren, and bare not." The tribes of Ephraim and Dan were chief in the first idolatry in Israel, after Joshua's death, yet out of them the Lord raised up the two last judges, to shew the sovereignty of his grace. Zorah, the place where Manoah lived, was in the tribe of Dan. His name is much the same in significancy as Noah's, which is, rest, peace, or comfort.

Ver. 3. " And the angel of the Lord appeared unto the woman, and said unto her, behold, now thou art barren and bearest not, but thou shalt conceive and bear a son." This was the Angel Jehovah, whose name is secret, or wonderful : he brings her good news, he tells her of her present case ; but informs her, that she shall, beyond her present apprehension, conceive and bear a son. An angel foretold the birth of Christ. The strongest man was born of a woman who had been barren ; the Lord Jesus was born of a pure virgin. " The Lord," saith the prophet, " hath created a new thing in the earth, a woman shall compass a man." Jer. xxxi. 22.

Ver. 4. " Now, therefore beware, I pray thee, and drink not wine nor strong drink, and eat not

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any unclean thing." The reason for all which follows in the words of the text.

Ver. 5: "For lo, thou shalt conceive and bear a son, and no razor shall come on his head, for the child shall be a nazirite unto God from the womb: and he shall begin to deliver Israel out of the hand of the Philistines."

I shall endeavour, from these words, to shew that Samson was a type of our Lord Jesus Christ, in his nazariteship, work, and office. May the Lord the Spirit be with me, and so shine on his word, that a fresh crown may be set on the antitypical Samson, Jesus-Jehovah. Amen.

The Lord Jesus Christ was not only set forth to his church before his incarnation by many divine symbols, memorials, types, and figures; but also that he was to be made of a woman, made under the law, was most clearly and divinely expressed. Isaac and Samson, both born of women who had been barren, were to suggest how much above all the power of nature the conception and birth of Christ's human nature would be. And the strength, victories, and triumphs of Christ, were suggested to the minds of his believing people, by some remarkable and heroic actions, performed in the name, and by the supernatural power and influence of the Lord, and were as so many shadows of the power, victories, and triumphs of Jesus.

In explaining my text, and in pursuing my design, which is to shew that Samson was a type of Christ, in his nazariteship, work, and office, I will set forth my subject thus.

First, I will briefly consider the prediction concerning the birth of Samson, “ For lo, thou shalt conceive and bear a son.”

Secondly, that he was to be a nazirite: “ And no razor shall come upon his head, for the child shall be a nazirite unto God from the womb.”

Thirdly, I will speak of the work and office which Samson was to perform and exercise: “ And he shall begin to deliver Israel out of the hands of the Philistines.”

Lastly, how Christ and Samson may be considered, and will be found to be, one the shadow, the other the substance; the one the type, the other the most glorious and Almighty Deliverer and Saviour of his church and people, who hath saved them with an everlasting salvation.

I will read my text afresh, that it may not be altogether out of sight, “ For lo, thou shalt conceive and bear a son, and no razor shall come upon his head; for the child shall be a nazirite unto God from the womb: and he shall begin to deliver Israel out of the hands of the Philistines.”

First, I will briefly consider the prediction concerning the birth of Samson, “ For lo, thou shalt conceive and bear a son.”

It was a time of great darkness and distress with the Israelites, who were greatly distressed by the Philistines when this prediction was given concerning the birth of a deliverer. So also it was a time of great darkness and distress to the church of God, when the angel predicted to the virgin mother of our Lord, the conception and birth of the holy child Jesus. This message was delivered to Manoah's wife when she was alone, which was the case also when the message was given concerning the birth of Christ. Manoah, when his wife informed him of the prediction, intreated in prayer that the messenger who had given the notice of it might be sent again; and his prayer was answered: the Angel Jehovah appeared to him, and repeated what he had before delivered. So Joseph had his mind relieved by the appearance of an angel, who cleared up the character and honour of his espoused wife, and informed him of the name of that illustrious person which Mary was to bear, "His name shall be called Jesus, for he shall save his people from their sins."

The conception and birth of Samson was beyond the expectation of his parents, prior to this appearance of the angel. The conception and birth of Christ was wholly supernatural, and was the fulfilment of ancient prophecy, and divine prediction. The name that Manoah and his wife gave their son, signified their faith



and expectations, that what had been declared concerning him would be verified. The word Samson signifies a little sun. Thus Samson, a type of Christ, the light, or sun of righteousness, was termed a little sun; and his strength lay in seven locks of hair, representing the seven streams of light between the sun and the planetary orbs. Samson was a child of promise; he was devoted to the Lord, he was famous for his strength; the last act of his life was an act of faith; he acted in all he did in avenging himself on the Philistines, as the friend of his people, and as a type of Christ.

As in the prediction concerning the conception and birth of Samson, a dawn of light and consolation broke forth; so in the prophecy concerning his great antitype, the Lord is pleased to comfort his afflicted church, saying, "How long wilt thou go about, O thou backsliding daughter; for the Lord hath accomplished a new thing on the earth, a woman shall compass a man." Jer. xxxi. 22. It was the Lord's own act that the human nature of Christ should be conceived and born of a pure virgin, should triumph over all the power of hell, fling off its gates from their very hinges, lead captivity captive, and be able to say, O, my soul, thou hast trodden down strength. I proceed,

Secondly, to consider that this child, Samson, was to be a nazarete: "And no razor shall come

upon his head, for the child shall be a nazirite unto God from the womb."

As the Lord Jesus Christ was the foundation of all the faith and hope of the old testament church, so he was not only revealed in the promise, but set forth also typically, in sacrifices, and ceremonial perfumes and services; and there were also personal types, to set forth the most divine and adorable Jesus. The first-born among the Israelites, the nazirites also among that people, were shadows of him who is the first-born among many brethren, and the perfection of beauty, in whom holiness and purity shine forth in their utmost perfection. The nazirite under the law, was in all things a type of our Jesus, who was in heart and life separated from all sin, and was really holiness to the Lord. You have an account of the institution of this order of typical persons in the sixth chapter of Numbers.

A nazirite signified one separated in a peculiar manner; as the command and particulars, concerning what they were to do, and abstain from, is recorded in the before-mentioned chapter, so you may take it up thus: first, the nazirite was to abstain from wine, and all fermented liquors, and every thing made of grapes, ver. 3, 4. Second, he was to let his hair grow, ver. 5. Thirdly, he was not to defile himself by the dead, ver. 6, 7. And in each of these particulars he

was a lively type of Christ. And Samson in an especial manner was so, because he was a nazirite from the womb; hence his mother was restricted by the angel from partaking of such things, whilst she bare him in her womb, as the nazirites were commanded to abstain from. Samson was also a type of Christ; the light, as his name imports, was a shadow of our Lord in those extraordinary endowments which, as a man, were not from any natural causes, but from above. Thus Christ was invested with all power in heaven and in earth; of this the hair on the head of Samson was an emblem: it represented the irradiation of the sun, the source of all material and mechanical power. Thus the supernatural strength of Samson, who had his Hebrew name from the solar light, and who was a most striking type of the Sun of righteousness, was annexed to his seven naziritical locks of hair. As heat in plants presses out the branches, or in animals shoots forth their hair, in the same manner as fire does streams of light from the sun; so Samson, a type of our Christ, the Sun of righteousness, the hairs of his head being thrust forth by the internal heat, unfolded or displayed themselves like beams of light from the sun. Our Lord was predicted by him, and by the order of the nazirites. The Jews understood hereby one separated, crowned, sanctified, in memory whereof there was an order of persons dedicated by

vow to the service of God, to point out the holiness, purity, and peculiar separation of our Lord Jesus Christ to his work and office.

Samson was a type of Christ as the separated one, as the crowned one, as the sanctified one. Our Jesus was entirely separated from dead works, from sin, and sinners; he was holy, harmless, and undefiled. In order to turn the attention of men to him, as the true nazarite, in whom the type was completely fulfilled, he came and dwelt in a city called Nazareth, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, "He shall be called a Nazarene." Matt. ii. 22.

Samson was to be a nazarite to God from the womb: Christ was, in every sense, the holy and separated one to God from the womb to his death; no razor was to come on the head of Samson, because he was to be a perpetual nazarite. Jesus, his antitype, continued in his obedience to all the will of God to his latest breath: "He was obedient unto death, even the death of the cross." Though Christ was not a nazarite, according to the law, yet the whole truth of the type was fulfilled in him: the spirit of holiness, with all his sevenfold influences, in all the perfections of his gifts and graces, rested on him. Jesus was the branch out of the root of Jesse, the crowned Saviour, and eternal deliverer. The hair of Samson, as long as it remained on his head, was a symbol of his strength,

and served to remind him of his being devoted, in an especial manner, to the Lord. I proceed,

Thirdly. To speak of the work and office which Samson was to perform and exercise; which is declared by the angel thus: "And he shall begin to deliver Israel out of the hands of the Philistines."

Thus he was foretold and raised up, fitted, and qualified by the Lord God to work deliverance for his people Israel, and begin to lay a foundation for their rescue out of the hands of their enemies, the Philistines. This is sufficient to give light into the whole recorded concerning this very extraordinary man. What he did to gain advantage over the Philistines, was not out of private hatred and revenge, but as a judge in Israel, and as actuated by the Lord against the common public enemies of his church and people. Samson was raised up by the Lord to deliver the Israelites from the tyranny and rage of these people; it is so said in my text, "He shall begin to deliver Israel out of the hands of the Philistines." His work was to deliver. His office was to act in a public capacity; yet he was but a partial deliverer. Hence it is said, that "He shall begin to deliver Israel." Christ is the complete deliverer of his true Israel; he not only began it, but hath completed it; and he must reign upon his throne, as God-man, Jesus the Almighty Saviour, the Prince of Peace, until

all his enemies, even death itself, is made his footstool.

It is expressly said of Samson, that the Spirit of the Lord began to move him at times in the camp of Dan, between Zorah and Estaol, ver. 25. His valour and strength was first discovered in his slaying a lion which came out against him, which he rent as though it had been a kid; in which we may consider Christ, his anti-type, against whom the roaring lion, the devil, came out and tempted forty days and forty nights, and afterwards in another form renewed his attack upon him; but our Lord overcame him with the two-edged sword of the word.

As a public judge and deliverer, authorized, sent, and qualified by the Lord, Samson acted, and on every proper occasion avenged himself on the Philistines. Great and heroic acts he performed; and we are authorized to say, he did it in the faith of Jesus, because he is classed, in the 11th of the Hebrews, with old testament saints and believers in Jesus; so that it is to undervalue the testimony of the Holy Ghost concerning him to look on him, as too many do, as an unregenerate person. His being a type of Christ, his work and office being of the Lord, the Spirit of the Lord coming on him to enable him to discharge his office, and perform his work, with what is said concerning him in the 11th of Hebrews, is sufficient to prove him a vessel of mercy.

It should be noticed, when we say that Samson was a type of Christ, that we mean he was so only in a partial sense. Adam, Abel, Noah, Isaac, Joseph, Joshua, Moses, Samson, David, were all of them typical persons; yet it was only in some particulars that they were shadows and types of Messiah, the Prince. Therefore we are not to strain the subject, but should only aim to point out the type and antitype, as they may be designed by the Holy Ghost, lest we follow our own imagination, and not his authority and warrant in the word; and many things it may be lawful to say, by way of accommodation, which we dare not lay any stress upon, as thus: when Samson's birth was foretold, it was declared he should "be a nazirite unto God from the womb." When Christ's birth was foretold, his human nature was called holy; "That holy thing which shall be born of thee, shall be called the Son of God." Luke i. 35. When the angel of the self-existing essence appeared to Manoah and his wife, and had confirmed the pleasing news concerning Samson's birth, and on the offering of the sacrifice, ascended in the flame of the altar to heaven; such was the terror Manoah was struck with, that he cried out, "We shall surely die because we have seen God." So when the angel of the Lord proclaimed the birth of Christ to the shepherds, and the glory of the Lord shone about them, they were sore afraid. The manner

in which the burnt-offering was received, was a full proof of the divine acceptance of it, yet unbelief works in the man, who was struck with awe when he understood he had seen God in human form: "We have seen God." They had seen the Son of God in a body like their own, which he assumed for the occasion, to give them a pledge how much his delights were with the sons of men, and that he would most assuredly become incarnate at the fixed season for it, in the divine purpose of the eternal Three.

Having aimed to shew that Samson was a type of Christ, in his nazariteship, work, and office, I proceed,

Lastly, to shew how Christ and Samson may be considered, and will be found to be, one the shadow, the other the substance; the one the type, the other the most glorious and Almighty Deliverer and Saviour of his church and people, who hath saved them with an everlasting salvation.

As every prediction, type, and memorial, made use of by the Lord, given out and instituted by him, to proclaim and make known the incarnation, work and offices of his Son, had the greatest propriety in them, and the peculiarity of Samson, as a personal type of the Messiah, lay in the peculiarity of that sanctification and holiness, pointed out in his being a nazarite to God from the womb; so the incarnation of the Son of God, and his being born of a woman, made



under the law, and his dedication to God from the conception of his human nature to the last moment of his incarnate life, was more fully expressed by this type of his person as the light and sun of righteousness, than by any other symbol and shadow of him under the old testament dispensation. Indeed all this is more than probable; it is even sealed and confirmed by the prophet Jeremiah in these words, "The Lord hath created a new thing on the earth, a woman shall compass a man." Jer. xxxi. 22. Dr. Goodwin says, the words are, 'the strong man,' even him prefigured by Samson, the strongest of men. Now Samson's strength was supernatural; it was bestowed by the Lord on him, and continued to him, so long as he had his seven locks, which were expressive of his being a nazarite unto God, or separated and devoted unto him; and by his strength thus given and continued by the Lord, he performed prodigies of valour: he conquered the lion; slew the Philistines, and took away their garments; he sent three hundred foxes, with firebrands, or torches, tied to their tails, amongst the standing corn of the Philistines, and ruined it; he slew a thousand men with the jaw bone of an ass; took the gates, posts, bars, and doors of the city of Gaza, and carried them up upon the top of the hill before Hebron, and all this by main strength.

Mr. Romaine's note on Samson is well suited to my subject. He says, on the 15th chapter of Judges, ' We here see what great things were done by a single man ; but he was made strong in the Lord, and went out in the power of his might; and he did these great things not out of private revenge, but to the glory of God, for he fought the Lord's battles. He further says,

Samson's great strength was from the Lord, who continued it while he abode in his calling; but when he broke his nazarite's vow, then the Lord left him, and he became like other men. So it is still. Through Christ we can do all things, without him we can do nothing.'

Now as we set Samson and Christ one against the other, by way of considering them, as one bearing the shadow and resemblance of the other, we shall find the actions and circumstances of the one very expressive of the other.

Samson was separated and sanctified by the Lord for his work and office. So was Christ. The Spirit of the Lord came upon Samson, and stirred him up, and moved him to perform his work and office, as a deliverer of his people from the oppression of their public enemies. The Holy Spirit, with his sevenfold unction, power, and grace, descended and remained on Christ, to qualify him to work deliverance for his people, against their public and sworn enemies,

sin, satan, the world, death, and hell. On Samson's first going forth, after the Spirit of the Lord came upon him, a lion came forth and roared against him; immediately on our Lord's public entrance on his work, the devil began to attack him. Samson overcame the lion with the greatest ease. Our Lord vanquished the devil, so that he departed from him for a season. Samson delivered out a parable to the Philistines. Our Lord spake in parables to the multitudes. What Samson did, was by his own strength; not at the head of an army, but in his own person, singly he performed his heroic acts. So Christ's own arm brought salvation.

Now it is easy to see, and for ourselves to perceive, that Samson was a shadow of Christ, the person represented by him.

Again, in those great acts of Samson's, such as his slaying the Philistines, spoiling their corn fields and vineyards, taking their garments from them, we may see, as in a figure, the power and wrath of Christ, as it was expressed against his enemies, the heathen nations, who opposed the glorious spread of his everlasting gospel, and will be further expressed until all shall be brought to submit to him the everlasting Conqueror.

Samson, when he had slain a thousand men with the jaw-bone of an ass, was athirst, and cried unto the Lord. Our Lord, when in pursuit of all the enemies of his people, when completing his final victory over all the powers of hell, cried out, "I thirst."

Samson's taking the gates of Gaza off their hinges, may remind us of Christ's having cast hell gates off their's, and that by his own almighty and invincible strength.

And in the work and office of Samson we may perceive him to be a type of our Almighty and most glorious Saviour and Deliverer, the Lord Jesus Christ.

Samson conquered the Philistines by his death; he died with his arms stretched out; he slew more at his death than in his life; by main force he pulled down the walls of the idolatrous temple about the ears of its cursed worshippers, who were crushed to death hereby. Thus he finished his work, and conquered by his death. So our Lord Jesus Christ died on the cross, with his arms stretched out, and his hands and feet nailed to it: he, by his death, shook the very foundations of hell, was a conqueror in it, and overcame his enemies more completely then, than he had before done in his life. The walls of hell fell flat to the ground; satan and his principalities and powers felt the death of Jesus

to be the complete conquest of their empire :  
“ He, by his death, conquered death, and him  
that had the power of it, that is, the devil.”  
By his obedience unto death, even the death  
of the cross, he put away sin by the sacrifice  
of himself, brought in everlasting righteousness,  
made peace by the blood of his cross, trod  
upon the head of the old serpent, called the  
devil, and spoiled principalities and powers, and  
made a shew of them openly, triumphing over  
them on his cross, saying, “ It is finished.”

Thus the person of Samson, as a nazarite,  
his work and office as a deliverer and judge,  
served to be a shadow and symbol, figure and  
type of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath, as the  
substance and truth of what was represented  
and fore-signified, saved his people out of the  
hands of all their enemies, and delivered them  
out of the hands of law and justice, sin and  
satan, death and hell ; and who, as their Judge,  
will decide their cause, and give righteous judg-  
ment between them and their enemies, and be a  
refuge for them in times of trouble. He hath  
saved them in himself with an everlasting salva-  
tion ; he will put forth his everlasting strength  
on their behalf, and for their security. In his  
name they shall do valiantly ; therefore in the  
belief of it, they may well go on from conquer-  
ing to conquer.

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May the Lord Jesus give his blessing to what has been delivered, and lead you to understand the whole scripture to be written concerning him, and lead you to understand that it is full of him. Even so. Amen.