

**Judges 13:1-25**  
**The Rise of Samson**  
**Sermon Outline**

**Introduction:** Most people seem to be “hard-wired” for wonder—which in fact is one of the ways that God calls to us. The climax of Samson’s birth narrative is the discovery that the “name” of God is “Wonderful.” What is so wonderful about God and what should we do about it?

**I) What is so wonderful about the Lord?**

**A) He persists with us, despite us**

Israel is far gone—does not even ask for help  
God acts anyway  
Such behavior is not new

Meaning for us: *Psalm 139.6: Why me, God? Why such interest?*

**B) He uses ordinary people**

We don’t know Mrs. Manoah’s name  
She is barren  
“Samson”—accommodation to pagan sun-cult?

Meaning for us: *1 Corinthians 1.26: ...Not many of you were wise...not many powerful...*

**C) He often hides in ordinary things**

*13.13: What is your name?*

Meaning for us: The wonder of God is that he is accessible in ordinary things

**II) How ought we to respond to the God whose name is Wonderful?**

**A) Tremble**

*v. 20*

**B) Rejoice**

*v. 23*

### Questions for Reflection this Week

- 1) What evidence do you see for people being 'hard-wired' for wonder?
- 2) Judges 13:1 and 15:11 indicate that Israel did not even want to be delivered any more. They were both "in the world and of the world." Try to illustrate at least two ways in which the church has sold out to the world. Can you see an example of this today?
- 3) Reflect on Psalm 139:1-6, which culminates in "such knowledge is too wonderful for me." Why is the psalmist so moved? Spend some time thanking God for his involvement with you.
- 4) List the ways in which Manoah and his wife are ordinary, weak, and even spiritually 'off'. Why does God choose to use them anyway? Why does God specify that Samson be a Nazirite? Why must Samson's mother keep the vow as well?
- 5) Reflect on 1 Corinthians 1:18-31. Why does God operate in the way described here? How has he 'leveraged' your weakness?
- 6) As with the Angel of the Lord, God is often 'hidden in plain sight'. List at least 5 ways in which God has shown himself to you in ordinary life over the last 24 hours.
- 7) How do Manoah and his wife respond when they finally realize who the angel was (vv 21-24)? What is there for us to learn from their response? Respond accordingly.