



**So you've
heard of
Samson...What
about his
mother?!**

Rabbi Robyn Ashworth-Steen

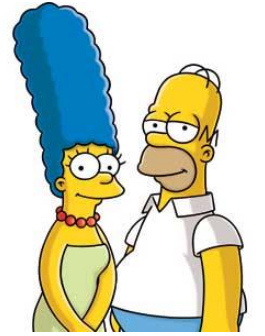
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Aggadah

Halachah wears a frown, *Aggadah* a smile. The one is pedantic, severe, unbending – all justice; the other is accommodating, lenient, pliable – all mercy.

Hayim Bialik

Judges 13



1. Again the Israelites did evil in the eyes of Adonai, so Adonai delivered them into the hands of the Philistines for forty years.

א) וַיִּסְפוּ בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל לַעֲשׂוֹת
הָרַע בְּעֵינֵי יְהוָה וַיִּתְּנֵם יְהוָה
בְּיַד-פְּלִשְׁתִּים אַרְבָּעִים שָׁנָה:

2 A certain man of Zorah, named Manoah, from the clan of the Danites, had a wife who was childless, unable to give birth.

ב) וַיְהִי אִישׁ אֶחָד מִצְרָעָה
מִמְּשֻׁפְּחַת הַדָּנִי וּשְׁמוֹ מָנוּחַ
וְאִשְׁתּוֹ עֵקְרָה וְלֹא יִלְדָה

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.

ג) וַיֵּרָא מַלְאָךְ-יְהוָה אֶל-הָאִשָּׁה
וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלֶיהָ הֲנִי-נָא אֶתְ-עֲקָרָה
וְלֹא יִלְדֹת וְהָרִית וְיִלְדֹת בֶּן

4 Now see to it that you drink no wine or other fermented drink and that you do not eat anything unclean.

ד) וְעַתָּה הִשְׁמְרִי נָא וְאַל-תִּשְׁתִּי יַיִן
וְשִׁכָר וְאַל-תֹּאכְלִי כָל-טָמֵא

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.”

ה) כִּי הִנָּךְ הָרָה וְיִלְדֹת בֶּן וּמִוְרָה
לֹא-יִעָלֶה עָלָיִךְ
רֹאשׁוֹ כִּי-נָזִיר אֱלֹהִים יִהְיֶה הַנֶּעַר
מִן-הַבֶּטֶן וְהוּא יִחַל לְהוֹשִׁיעַ
אֶת-יִשְׂרָאֵל מִיַּד פְּלִשְׁתִּים

6 Then the woman went to her husband and told him, “A man of God **came** to me. He **looked like** an angel of God, very awesome. I didn’t ask him where he came from, and he didn’t **tell** me his name.

ו) וַתָּבֵא הָאִשָּׁה וַתֹּאמֶר לְאִישָׁהּ לֵאמֹר
אִישׁ הָאֱלֹהִים **בָּא** אֵלַי וּמְרֵאָהוּ כְּמֵרְאָה
מִלְאָךְ הָאֱלֹהִים נֹרָא מְאֹד וְלֹא
שָׁאַלְתִּיהוּ אֵי-מֵזָה הוּא וְאֶת-שְׁמוֹ
לֹא-הִגִּיד לִי

7 But he said to me, ‘You will become pregnant and have a son. Now then, drink no wine or other fermented drink and do not eat anything unclean, because the boy will be a Nazirite of God from the womb **until the day of his death.**”

ז) וַיֹּאמֶר לִי הַנָּךְ הָרָה וְיִלְדֶת בֶּן וְעַתָּה
אַל-תִּשְׁתֵּי יַיִן וְשִׁכָר וְאַל-תֹּאכְלֵי
כָּל-טְמֵאָה כִּי-נָזִיר אֱלֹהִים יִהְיֶה הַנֶּעַר
מִן-הַבֶּטֶן **עַד-יוֹם מוֹתוֹ**

8 Then Manoah prayed to Adonai: “Pardon your servant, my Lord. I beg you to let the man of God you sent to us **come again to teach us** how to bring up the boy who is to be born.”

ח) וַיַּעֲתֵר מְנוּחַ אֶל-יְהוָה וַיֹּאמֶר בִּי
אָדוֹנָי אִישׁ הָאֱלֹהִים אֲשֶׁר שָׁלַחְתָּ
יָבוֹא-נָא עוֹד אֵלֵינוּ וַיּוֹרְנוּ מֵה-נַעֲשֶׂה
לַנֶּעַר הַיּוֹלֵד

9 God heard Manoah, and the angel of God **came** again to the woman while she was out in the **field**; **but her husband Manoah was not with her.**

10 The woman **hurried** to **tell** her husband, “He’s here! The man who **appeared** to me the other day!”

11 Manoah **got up** and followed his wife. When he came to the man, he said, “Are you the man who talked to my wife?” “I am,” he said.

12 So Manoah asked him, “When your words are fulfilled, what is to be the rule that governs the boy’s life and work?”

13 The angel of the Lord answered, “Your wife must do all that I have told her....”

ט) וַיִּשְׁמַע הָאֱלֹהִים בְּקוֹל מָנוּחַ וַיָּבֹא
מִלְאָךְ הָאֱלֹהִים עוֹד אֶל-הָאִשָּׁה וְהִיא
יוֹשֶׁבֶת בַּשָּׂדֶה וּמְנוּחַ אִישָׁהּ אֵין עִמָּהּ

י) וַתַּמְהֹר הָאִשָּׁה וַתֵּרָץ וַתַּגֵּד לְאִישָׁהּ
וַתֹּאמֶר אֵלָיו הִנֵּה נִרְאָה אֵלַי הָאִישׁ
אֲשֶׁר-בָּא בַיּוֹם אֵלַי

יא) וַיָּקָם וַיֵּלֶךְ מָנוּחַ אַחֲרֵי אִשְׁתּוֹ וַיָּבֹא
אֶל-הָאִישׁ וַיֹּאמֶר לוֹ הֲאַתָּה הָאִישׁ
אֲשֶׁר-דִּבַּרְתָּ אֶל-הָאִשָּׁה וַיֹּאמֶר אָנֹכִי

יב) וַיֹּאמֶר מָנוּחַ עֲתָה יָבֹא דְבָרֶיךָ
מֵה-יְהִיָּה מִשְׁפַּט-הַנֶּעַר וּמַעֲשָׂהוּ

יג) וַיֹּאמֶר מִלְאָךְ יְהוָה אֶל-מָנוּחַ מְכֹל
אֲשֶׁר-אָמַרְתִּי אֶל-הָאִשָּׁה תַשְׁמֹר

20 ...As the flame blazed up from the altar toward heaven,
the angel of Adonai ascended in the flame. Seeing this,
Manoah and his wife fell with their faces to the ground.

21 When the angel of Adonai did not **show** himself again to
Manoah and his wife, **Manoah realized that it was the angel
of Adonai.**

22 “We are doomed to die!” he said to his wife. “We have
seen God!”

23 But his wife answered, “If Adonai had meant to kill us,
he would not have accepted a burnt offering and grain
offering from our hands, nor shown us all these things or
now told us this.”

24 The woman gave birth to a boy and named him
Samson. He grew and Adonai blessed him,

כ) וַיְהִי בַעֲלוֹת הַלֶּהֶב מֵעַל הַמִּזְבֵּחַ הַשָּׁמַיְמָה
וַיַּעַל מִלְאֲדָיִם יְהוָה בְּלֶהֱב הַמִּזְבֵּחַ וּמָנוחַ וְאִשְׁתּוֹ
רָאִים וַיִּפְּלוּ עַל-פְּנֵיהֶם אֶרְצָה

כא) וְלֹא-יָסַף עוֹד מִלְאֲדָיִם יְהוָה לְהִרְאֶה אֶל-מָנוחַ
וְאֶל-אִשְׁתּוֹ אֲזַי יָדַע מָנוחַ כִּי-מִלְאֲדָיִם יְהוָה הוּא

כב) וַיֹּאמֶר מָנוחַ אֶל-אִשְׁתּוֹ מוֹת נָמוֹת כִּי
אֱלֹהִים רָאִינוּ

כג) וַתֹּאמֶר לוֹ אִשְׁתּוֹ לוֹ חַפֵּץ יְהוָה לְהַמִּיתָנוּ
לֹא-לָקַח מִיָּדָנוּ עֹלָה וּמִנְחָה וְלֹא הִרְאָנוּ
אֶת-כָּל-אֱלֹהִים וְכָעַת לֹא הִשְׁמִיעָנוּ כִּזְאת

כד) וַתֵּלֶד הָאִשָּׁה בֵּן וַתִּקְרָא אֶת-שְׁמוֹ שָׁמְשׁוֹן
וַיִּגְדַּל הַנַּעַר וַיְבָרְכֵהוּ יְהוָה