

Praise the Lord. This is Dr. Dana Gillon. I give honor to God, to Pastor Renée and to all of you my brothers and sisters in Christ. I want to talk to you today about **Vexation and Consecration**. In the process, we will take a walk through key scriptures throughout the Bible. So, go with me.

Let's start with vexation. All of us, even as children, have experienced feelings of vexation. That frustration, anger and even distress; those feelings that disturb our peace of mind. It is these very same feelings that strain the bonds we have with our family and within our communities. It is also these very same feelings that interfere with our consecration to God.

**Job 5:2 (ESV)** reads: Surely vexation kills the fool, and jealousy slays the simple. Vexation—that wrath, anger, frustration, distress—kills the fool. Foolish for ruminating on these emotions that lead us away from the consecrated life God has called us to. <sup>19</sup>So then, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath; <sup>20</sup>for the wrath of man does not produce the righteousness of God—**James 1:19**. Vexation can lead us to places God never intended for us to be or to stay.

Vexation of spirit lead Samson to be and to stay in places where he simply did not live the consecrated life God called him to.

In **Judges 13:5-7**, we learn that Samson would be born and be a Nazarite from the womb until his death. His mother could drink no wine or eat anything unclean during her pregnancy—Nazarite from the womb. When this woman told her husband what the angel of the Lord spoke to her, she said, “<sup>7</sup>And He said to me, ‘Behold, you shall conceive and bear a son. Now drink no wine or *similar* drink, nor eat anything unclean, for the child shall be a Nazirite to God from the womb to the day of his death.’ ”

God's plan for Samson was that Samson would lead a consecrated life from the time of his conception until his death. His father, a concerned father, asked the angel of the Lord in **Judges 13:12** how they should raise this promised child. How do we raise a child who is Nazarite from the womb? How do we as parents provide for, guide, and protect this child that he might fulfill his vow? A lifelong vow. How blessed it is to have parents who consider the plan of God for your life and the requirements *they* then need to honor.

In **Judges 13:24**, the woman bore a son and called his name Samson; and the child grew, and the Lord blessed him. But, when we next see Samson, he is an adult and his parents are still providing direction for his life. We also find the Spirit of the Lord moving through Samson and giving Samson extraordinary strength—Samson was blessed. The tragedy of Samson's life is that he did not persistently pursue a consecrated life. Instead, he experienced much vexation and

often yielded to it. He was angry with the Philistines, a lion, his wife, his father-in-law and so many more. Though Samson kept to the letter of the Nazarite vow, he did not live a consecrated life.

Consecration is an ongoing, unending process that requires constant renewal and recommitment to God. Consecration requires us to depend on God's strength and guidance in all aspects of our lives. Consecration requires us to prioritize our relationship with God above all else. Vexation jeopardizes our consecration.

Biblical consecration includes washing with water, wearing special garments, anointing with oil, offering sacrifices for sin. These are external elements that are visible to others of our internal transformation and commitment. Consecration must take place within us.

Let's look at that Nazarite vow. In **Numbers 6:1-21**, we learn that this vow must first be voluntary. The Nazarite vow also requires abstaining from wine and grape products, avoiding contact with dead bodies, and refraining from cutting one's hair. Additionally, there was an offering given for sin. In this discussion of the Nazarite vow, God gives the requirements for the vow and then He says in **Numbers 6:8**, All the days of his separation he shall be holy to the Lord. All the days of his separation. Some were Nazarites for life, some for a specified period of time. But, all the days of the Nazarite separation, God called for holiness—consecration.

In **Numbers 6:13**, when the days of his separation were completed, the Nazarite would make offerings before the Lord and shave his head. The shaving of the head indicated the fulfillment of the Nazarite vow—completion, ending. At that point, the Nazarite could drink wine. This is for the Nazarite who consecrated for a specified period of time. Samson was consecrated to God through this vow – his consecration was not in his hair, but tied to the vow.

In **Numbers 6:21**, the Bible teaches us that <sup>21</sup> “This is the law of the Nazirite who vows to the Lord the offering for his separation, and besides that, whatever else his hand is able to provide; according to the vow which he takes, so he must do according to the law of his separation.” There is a requirement that the Nazarite fulfills the requirements of the vow and, where able, to do more.

Let's go back to Samson. In **Judges 16**, when Samson meets Delilah, he has already experienced several victories, seen God move on his behalf and witnessed miracles performed through and around him. But, Samson was not focused on living a consecrated life. Whenever something happened that he did not like, Samson sought vengeance. Vexation, frustration and the fulfillment

of his flesh were major experiences of Samson's life. And then, Samson sought comfort in women who were not his wife and he did not seek God for direction.

You are likely familiar with how Delilah pressed Samson for information to discover the source of his strength on behalf of the Philistines. Delilah did not love Samson; she was an assassin for hire. On three separate occasions, Samson lied to Delilah about the source of his strength. Each time, an attempt was made on Samson's life using the details Samson provided to Delilah.

Samson stayed in a place where his life was in jeopardy, with a woman whose sole intent was to harm him. There is no indication that Samson sought God at all. Yet, Delilah was relentless in her pursuit of that which would lead to Samson's destruction. Isn't that just how the enemy works? In **Judges 16:16**, Delilah pestered Samson daily with her words and pressed him, so that his soul was vexed to death. Vexation jeopardizes our consecration. For Samson, vexation was deadly. He told Delilah all his heart.

We must be so careful. Though Samson did not prioritize the daily discipline necessary for consecration, he had protected that which pertained to his vow. Until he was vexed.

Delilah told all. Samson's hair was shaven and his strength left. The vow was fulfilled as Samson's hair was cut away. Samson was tormented and abused. But, in his final moments, Samson remembered God and asked God to remember him. God heard Samson and restored his strength. Those Samson killed at his death were more than he had killed in his life. Yet, his life was ended. Vexation.

In the life of every Believer, vexation will come. It is a tool in the tool bag of our enemy, Satan. How do we manage vexation? Though, vexation shall come, we must be diligent in our response.

We should pray without ceasing—**1 Thessalonians 5:17**. We should remember and reflect on the scriptures that encourage us. For example, **Proverbs 15:1**, A soft answer turns away wrath, But a harsh word stirs up anger. And, we should confess our faults one to another and pray for each other, that we might be healed—**James 5:16**.

These very actions that keep vexation at bay also aid us in our consecration to the Lord. We must be intentional if we are to live consecrated lives. Consecration places God at the center of all that we do, every decision that we make and even the thoughts that we think.

Lord, help us to live a life consecrated to Your service. In Jesus name. Amen.