

CHAPTER 5

WEAK SAMSON

Samson was the strongest man who ever lived, but he was a man who also had some serious weaknesses. In this chapter of notes we will look both at his strength and his weakness. Physical strength is one thing, but moral strength is something else. God wants us to be so strong that we will avoid what is evil and cleave to what is good.

The Announcement of Samson's Birth

The message of Samson's birth was announced to a barren woman (Judges 13:2) by the "_____ of the LORD" (Judges 13:3). The Angel of the LORD was no one less than _____ Himself (see Judges 13:21-22)! Often in Old Testament times the Lord Jesus Christ would appear to men as the Angel of the LORD.

According to the Angel, this baby boy would be a N_____ unto God from the womb (Judges 13:5). "From the womb" means "from birth." He would be a Nazirite all his life. The word "Nazirite" is sometimes spelled "Nazarite."

What is a Nazirite? This is explained in Numbers chapter 6. Read Numbers 6:1-8. A person in becoming a Nazirite would be required to S_____ himself unto the LORD (Numbers 6:2). This separated person would be "_____ unto the LORD" (Numbers 6:8). A Nazirite was one who had separated himself fully to God and who had dedicated himself fully to the Lord. Some people would become Nazirites only for a certain number of days (Numbers 6:4), but God had set apart Samson to be a Nazirite all the days of his life. He was to be a Nazirite UNTO GOD (Judges 13:5) from the day of his birth! So also believers are SEPARATED UNTO GOD from the day they are born again and for all the days of their Christian lives.

Think about believers living today. Think about yourself. Should we be separated unto the Lord (2 Corinthians 6:17;7:1)? _____ What does this separation mean? What are we SEPARATED FROM? What and who are we SEPARATED UNTO? Are believers living today required to be HOLY UNTO THE LORD (1 Thessalonians 4:1-8)? _____

There were three things that a Nazirite was **not** to do. What were these three forbidden things?

1) Numbers 6:3

2) Numbers 6:5

3) Numbers 6:6

Long Hair

Samson is famous for his long hair, and we see that this was required for a Nazirite. Long hair is a symbol of weakness and submission. When a Nazirite let his hair grow long he was saying, "I am submitting to God and to God's authority over me. I recognize my weakness but I also recognize God's strength. God is my authority and God is my strength."

What is God's will for us today concerning the length of hair? According to 1 Corinthians 11:15, the woman's hair is to be _____ and according to 1 Corinthians 11:14 it is a shameful thing for a man's hair to be _____. Again we must remember that long hair is a symbol of weakness and submission. Long hair on a Christian wife carries this message: "I am submitting to my husband and I recognize his authority over me. I also recognize that in this marriage relationship I am the weaker vessel according to 1 Peter 3:7."

We should also remember that the Lord Jesus Christ was a Nazarene (He was from the city of Nazareth) but He was not a Nazirite. He did not have long, flowing, girlish hair as artists often picture Him having.

As we shall see, Samson's strength did not come from his hair. His strength came from the Spirit of God. His hair was just a symbol of the fact that he was weak but that God was his strength. His hair was a daily reminder that the strength he had was not his own. Because of the supernatural strength which God gave to him, Samson was a walking miracle showing forth God's power. Samson would be tempted to use his strength for his own honor or to further his own selfish ends, and his hair would be a constant reminder that God was the real source of his might.

Samson was the strongest man who ever lived. Does this mean that Samson had bulging muscles similar to weightlifters of today? We don't really know because the Bible never describes the size of his muscles and of course we have no pictures of him. It's possible that his physique was not much different from any other average man. We need to remember that his strength was from the Lord; it was not due to Samson's body building program or exercise regimen.

Samson's Mission

The last sentence in Judges 13:5 tells of Samson's mission. This was God's plan for his life:
"And he shall

_____."

Notice that it says "begin." What Samson began, David and others would continue. Remember Goliath was a Philistine. Although Samson had certain weaknesses and failures in his life, he did fulfill this mission and purpose which God had for him. It is interesting that he always met the Philistines by himself. He never gathered an army. God made this man a one-man army!

God's blessing was on Samson from the very beginning (Judges 13:24) and the Spirit of God made him what he was (Judges 13:25). No matter what abilities or talents you might have, it is important to always remind yourself of the question asked in 1 Corinthians 4:7: "What hast thou that thou didst not receive?" What is the answer to this question?

_____ Those who boast in themselves have forgotten this important truth!

Samson's Weakness

Samson had no problem facing a great army, but put one pretty woman in front of him and he was as weak as a man could be!

Read Judges 14:1-2. What was wrong with what Samson wanted (Deuteronomy 7:1-4 and 2 Corinthians 6:14)?

_____ Did Samson's parents see the problem with this (Judges 14:3)? _____ Why did Samson want this woman (Judges 14:3)? _____ Samson's weakness was that of LUST and PASSION. Remember, LUST says, "I must have what I want (regardless of what God says or what God wants) and I must have it now!" If Samson had been morally strong and had seen this same Philistine girl, what decision would he have made and why?

_____ Samson's parents did not know that this was "of the _____" (Judges 14:4). In spite of Samson's sin and lust, God had a purpose in it all. The same God who used Jacob's schemes to bring about His plan (see Chapter 3 in these notes) is the same. God who can use Samson's failures to bring about HIS own purposes. God wanted the Philistines to be defeated under Samson and this is exactly what took place.

The Lion and the Riddle

According to Judges 14:6, what was Samson's secret of strength?

_____ What weapon did he use against the lion? _____

Samson used the lion and the honey as an occasion to offer a wager to the 30 Philistine men who had come to the feast (Judges 14:12-13). Did these men accept the challenge (Judges 14:13)?

_____ After the men could not explain the riddle, they told Samson's wife to find out the answer upon threat of death (Judges 14:15--"lest we _____ thee"). These men should have admitted defeat and paid the debt. Samson's wife should have told her husband of their plot and trusted her strong husband to protect her. With Samson as her husband, what was there to fear? As things turned out, did she get burned anyway (Judges 15:6)? _____

As could be expected, she did give away the answer to the riddle, and Samson should have learned that you should never trust a Philistine, especially a Philistine woman. But he did not learn his lesson and later in his life he would be trapped by another Philistine woman.

Samson was angry because the men solved the riddle (Judges 14:19) and so he paid the debt at their own expense by killing 30 of their own people. What was the secret of his strength (Judges 14:19)? _____

More Amazing Exploits

After Samson learned that his wife had been given to another man, he caused even more problems for the Philistines. He caught _____ (how many?) foxes or jackals (Judges 15:4), tied their tails together and put a torch to the tails. These lighted torches then went running off into the Philistine grain fields causing great destruction. In all of this Samson was fulfilling God's purpose. He was keeping the children of Israel out of the hand of the Philistines (Judges 13:5). They had their hands full with Samson.

Samson caused problems even for his own people, the Jews (Judges 15:9-12). Even though God raised up Samson to deliver the Jews out of the hand of the Philistines (Judges 13:5), these Jews wanted to deliver Samson into the hand of the Philistines (Judges 15:12). They bound him as best they could and were ready to deliver him to the enemy. It should be remembered that Samson never did anything against his own people. With them he was as gentle as a lamb (Judges 15:13). Why was Samson able to break loose from the cords with which he was bound (Judges 15:14)? _____

What weapon did he use against the Philistine army? (see Judges 15:15)

_____ How many men did he slay with this method?
 _____ Samson was an amazing one-man army!

Samson's prayer in Judges 15:18 tells us something about this man. First of all, he had enough sense to cry out to God in time of need. Secondly, did he take credit for the great victory in which he was involved? _____ According to Samson, who was responsible for this great deliverance? _____ Thirdly, he called himself God's S _____. What about you? Do you cry out to God in times of personal need? Do you give God credit for the things that are happening in your life? Do you consider yourself a servant of the most high God?

Samson was Israel's judge and leader for how many years (Judges 15:20)? _____
 _____ The Bible does not tell us very much about these 20 years. Instead we are told of events that happened toward the end of Samson's life.

Another Woman

Read Judges 16:1. If Samson had seen an entire Philistine army of 10,000 men he would have had no problem. But he saw one woman and fell into sin? The strongest and bravest Philistine soldiers could not defeat him, but one attractive Philistine woman could and did! The life of Samson teaches us that lust and passion can control and ruin any man. The Bible tells us to _____ fornication (1 Cor. 6:18). In other words, we are to RUN AWAY from immoral and loose persons (in this case a harlot). Instead of running away, Samson ran right into one!

The Philistines thought they had Samson trapped in the city of Gaza, but Samson simply took out the entire gate of the city and carried it with him (Judges 16:2-3).

Yet Another Woman

Samson fell in love with another Philistine woman whose name was _____ (Judges 16:4). Samson was a giant in physical strength, whom no man could defeat in combat, but he was a weakling in the hands of Delilah. The one who was able to defeat the strongest of men was himself defeated by a weak but clever woman.

Samson loved Delilah but did she love him? One time she said to Samson, "How canst thou say, I love thee, when thine heart is not with me?" (Judges 16:15). Let's turn this around. Was Delilah's heart really with Samson (Judges 16:5-6)? _____ Would a loving wife want to see her husband delivered over into the hands of those who would destroy him? _____ With a lover like Delilah, who needs a hater?

There were **five** lords of the Philistines, and if Delilah could find out the secret of Samson's strength, each lord would give her _____ pieces of silver (Judges 16:5). How much silver is this total? _____ Delilah loved money more than she loved Samson!

Every believer who is thinking about marrying an unsaved person should always ask this question: IS THIS PERSON'S HEART REALLY WITH THE LORD JESUS CHRIST? If the person's heart is not with God, then how can it be with me? If the person does not love the God I love and does not believe the Bible I believe, then there will be great problems! My life can be ruined by the wrong choice of a marriage partner.

Read Judges 16:6-14. How many times did Delilah try to find the answer to his strength and capture him? _____ How many times did Samson lie and deceive her? _____ Do you think that by this time Samson would have begun to be suspicious of her? Do you think that he should have concluded that Delilah is not really the kind of person to trust and confide in? But Delilah was a persistent woman and she used every feminine trick she could think of to finally get her man to tell her the secret (Judges 16:15-17).

Why did Samson's strength go from him (Judges 16:19)? Was it because his hair was cut? The end of verse 20 gives the real answer:

_____ Samson's hair was only an outward symbol that the Lord was his strength. Samson lost out because of his lust and passion. He sold himself and God's blessing for a few moments of pleasure with a deceitful and wicked woman.

Samson learned that sin does not pay. What are two things that the Philistines did to their weak victim (Judges 16:21)?

- 1) _____
- 2) _____

In light of all he had done to them, they made their prisoner as miserable as possible!

In the end, though, Samson was the victor as God brought about the greatest deliverance of all (Judges 16:23-31)! In spite of his moral weakness, Samson is mentioned among the great heroes of faith (Hebrews chapter 11, verse _____).

