



Trusting in God's Strength

Judges 15:14-16 NASB

- The story of Samson is mentioned by the writer of Hebrews as an example of someone who trusted in the Lord with great faith.
- There are elements of this story that are some of the most interesting occasions in the entire Bible. Samson had great strength, and that opened up some unique situations.
- He was mad at the Philistines in Judges 15, and he took 300 foxes, tied their tails together, set their tails on fire, and sent them out into the Philistine harvest fields to set their crops on fire.
- In chapter 14, a lion came after him, and the Bible says that he ripped the lion apart.

- Then, of course, there's the well-known occasion of Samson killing 1,000 men with the jawbone of a donkey.
- He pulled some crazy stunts. He wasn't perfect. He was reactive and emotional at times. He used his strength for good and for bad.
- But God still had plans to use him for His glory.
- AW Tozer – "Samson's vengeance was flawed, but God's deliverance was flawless."
- In the midst of the incredible stories of Samson's strength, we see God at work and the ultimate source of his strength in the Lord.
- No matter how big or powerful we may become in this life, we need to never forget where our help comes from.

Main Point: We should always depend on the strength and provision of the Lord.

- There are two main seasons of life we need to be aware of temptations that Satan seeks to take advantage of.
 - o Seasons of struggle – when we are out in difficult situations or painful seasons, we may be tempted to follow the ways of the world for things to change
 - o Seasons of strength – we may be tempted to become prideful in our circumstances.

I. Aligning our plans with God's plans

- a. Many of the conflicts that we read about between Samson and the Philistines was because of his marriage to a woman who was a Philistine.
- b. There were those in Samson's own family who disapproved of his marriage. There were lots of issues that would come from intermarriage with foreigners.

- c. The Philistines were ruling and oppressed the Israelites for 40 years. This was in the context of a cultural clash between the two. They worshipped pagan gods. Timnah was a border town so you could see the issues that could come from regular clashes with the two different groups of people.
- d. Samson was also a Nazarite as we read about in Judges 13. Samson is supposed to be set apart. He isn't supposed to have wine, cut his hair, or touch the dead. But here he is pursuing a forbidden marriage, attends a feast that probably involved wine in Judges 14, and also touches a dead lion in Judges 14.
- e. And yet, in the midst of all of that, God is still able to use Samson for His glory. He uses his marriage to a foreign woman as means of accomplishing His will.
- f. Judges 14 tells us that God was using this situation and Samson's bad decision to work things out in a way that only God can do.
- g. It's a reminder for us, however, that it's important to pursue God's plan and not our own.
- h. God can use our mistakes in the long run, but He can use our obedience in ways that are way greater. The best place to be is in the center of the will of God.

II. Types of opposition

- a. Opposition from the outside
 - i. There was obvious opposition from the Philistines in Samson's story. He was betrayed by the Philistine's and burned their crops as a result.
 - ii. The marriage unraveled very quickly, and it was easy to see how chaotic this situation would wind up being.
- b. Opposition from the inside

- i. Samson goes to take on the Philistines, but there is an interesting turn of events where even the Israelites decide not to follow Samson.
 - ii. 3,000 men from Judah blamed Samson for putting them in a difficult situation when they were ruled by the Philistines.
 - iii. Some opposition is predictable. Other types of opposition may hurt us more because it comes from people we thought would support us in our time of need.
- c. Opposition from ourselves
 - i. One of the greatest enemies we could ever have is ourselves.
 - ii. It seems obvious that in many situations, Samson is his own worst enemy.
 - iii. He is reactive, and at times makes rash decisions that impact himself and others.
 - iv. This was a pattern of behavior that would hurt him in the long run when he pursued another foreign wife, Delilah, and he lost his strength due to his hair being cut.

III. Going back to the source

- a. In Chapter 15, Samson slays 1,000 Philistines in perfect Samson fashion. He does so with the jawbone of a donkey.
- b. It's hard to find any other stories of strength like this in all of human history.
- c. However, he was still human and still needed the Lord.
- d. After all of this, he cried out to the Lord in thirst. VERSE 18.
- e. God provided water in the for him miraculously out of nowhere.
- f. Even Samson, in all of his strength, needed to God back to the Lord for provision.