

SAMSON : The Weaknesses of A Strong Man



"You will become pregnant and give birth to a son, and his hair must never be cut. For he will be dedicated to God as a Nazirite from birth. He will begin to rescue Israel from the Philistines." Judges 13:5 NLT

- What makes a man strong? What makes a man weak?

Samson was the strongest person to ever live - but not strong enough. He was not strong enough to defeat his greatest enemy - himself. Bible scholars, Ed Hindson and Elmer Towns, write: "Despite his gift of physical strength given by the power of the Spirit, Samson's inability to conquer his own passions ultimately led to his demise." Illustrated Bible Survey, (p.110).

Samson is the most popular Judge during the era of the Judges. This was a time when Israel turned from God and lived like the heathen nations around them. Judges 17:6 records: *"In those days Israel had no king; all the people did whatever seemed right in their own eyes."* God used Samson to judge and deliver Israel from the Philistines for twenty years (15:20; 16:31).

Central Lesson

The power & control of the Holy Spirit is the secret to strength.

I. What Made Samson Strong? What Makes Us Strong?

The secret to Samson's strength was the power of the Holy Spirit.

Judges 13:25 NLT *"And the Spirit of the Lord began to stir him...."*

Judges 14:6 NLT *"At that moment the Spirit of the Lord came powerfully upon him, and he ripped the lion's jaws apart with his bare hands...."*

Judges 14:19 NLT *"Then the Spirit of the Lord came powerfully upon him. He went down to the town of Ashkelon, killed thirty men, took their belongings, and gave their clothing to the men who had solved his riddle...."*

Judges 15:14 NLT *"As Samson arrived at Lehi, the Philistines came shouting in triumph. But the Spirit of the Lord came powerfully upon Samson, and he snapped the ropes on his arms as if they were burnt strands of flax, and they fell from his wrists."*

Judges 16:28 NLT *"Then Samson prayed to the Lord, 'Sovereign Lord, remember me again. O God, please strengthen me just one more time. With one blow let me pay back the Philistines for the loss of my two eyes.'"*

Both the Old and New Testament talk about the importance of the Holy Spirit in the life of God's redeemed people. In the **Old Testament**, the Holy Spirit came *upon* the individual, as mentioned with Samson (14:6, 19; 15:14).

In contrast, in the **New Testament**, after Pentecost in Acts 2, the Holy Spirit would indwell the believer at the moment of salvation (John 14:17; Romans 8:9; Acts 1:8; Ephesians 5:18).

II. What Made Samson Weak? What Makes Us Weak?

1. Samson had little **LOYALTY** to his commitments and vows. (13:4-5, 24-25)

"4 So be careful; you must not drink wine or any other alcoholic drink nor eat any forbidden food. 5 You will become pregnant and give birth to a son, and his hair must never be cut. For he will be dedicated to God as a Nazirite from birth. He will begin to rescue Israel from the Philistines." (13:4-5).

The word *Nazirite* (13:5) means "to set apart, to devote, or to be separate." This is described in Numbers 6:1-21). Samson was to be under the Nazirite vow all his life. Unfortunately, he repeatedly violated it. For example: He touched a dead corpse when he touched the dead lion (14:8-9), drinking alcoholic beverages (14:10); and having his head shaved (16:19). Samson was weak because he did not keep his commitments and vows. A lack of loyalty to ones commitments and vows make people weak today.

2. Samson did not fully **OBEY** God and His Word - the OT scriptures. *"His father and mother objected. 'Isn't there even one woman in our tribe or among all the Israelites you could marry?' they asked. 'Why must you go to the pagan Philistines to find a wife?' But Samson told his father, 'Get her for me! She looks good to me.'" (14:3).*

To guard against idolatry from slipping into Israel, God had commanded them to only marry within their Nation (Exodus 34:12-16; Deuteronomy 7:1-3). Samson was willfully and knowingly disobeying God and His Word.

Bible teacher, Warren Wiersbe, explains: "According to Hebrews 11:32, Samson was a man of faith, but he certainly wasn't a faithful man. He wasn't faithful to his parents' teaching, his Nazirite vow, or the laws of the Lord. It didn't take long for Samson to lose almost everything the Lord had given him, except his great strength, and he finally lost that as well." The Wiersbe Bible Commentary, (p.461). Samson's disobedience to God made him weak. Disobedience to God makes people weak today.

3. Samson lacked **MORAL** self-control.

"One day Samson went to the Philistine town of Gaza and spent the night with a prostitute." (16:1).

Samson's story revolved around three Philistine women: (1) the Timnah woman who he planned to marry (14-15:6); (2) the Gaza prostitute (16:1-3); and (3) Delilah (16:4-20). His immorality made him weak and eventually resulted in his fall. Immorality, in any form, makes people weak today.

4. Samson had **POOR** judgment and was overly confident (16:4-20).

"15 Then Delilah pouted, 'How can you tell me, 'I love you,' when you don't share your secrets with me? You've made fun of me three times now, and you still haven't told me what makes you so strong!' 16 She tormented him with her nagging day after day until he was sick to death of it." (16:15-16).

Delilah repeatedly pressured Samson for the secret of his strength. Her attempts should have been suspicious and obvious to Samson. Delilah made 4 attempts: (1)16:6-9); (2) 16:10-12; (3) 16:13-14; (16:15-20). Samson should have detected Delilah's scheme and left her. He demonstrated both poor judgment and over-confidence. This made Samson weak. Poor judgment and over-confidence makes people weak today.

Central Lesson:

The power & control of the Holy Spirit is the secret to strength.

- ▶ Accept Christ as your Savior. ▶ As a Christian, dedicate your life to Christ. ▶ Invite someone to next Sunday's study. ▶ Attend a small group. ▶ Read the Bible this week & journal meaningful verses. ▶ Pray for friends that need Jesus.