

Title: The Samson We Don't Often Hear About

Passage: Judge's 13-16

Overview:

Biblical framework for study of God's Word:

BP SOAP

- Background/Prayer (BP)
- Scripture/Observation/Application/Prayer (SOAP)

Background

- Israelites led out of Egypt, a polytheistic culture
- After 40 years of wondering, Joshua was called to lead Israel to the Promised Land (but also called to not intermarry with surrounding polytheistic cultures)
- After Joshua died, Israel rebelled and began intermarrying polytheistic people around them. God did what He said He would do (stopped protecting them, allowed them to be oppressed)
- Cycle began: Israelites would cry out for help, God would respond with a judge, Israelites would enjoy a time of peace, then judge would pass and Israelites would again rebel, oppression would occur, and Israelites would cry again for help...

Judges 13:1

And the people of Israel *again* did what was evil in the sight of the Lord, so the Lord gave them into the hand of the Philistines for forty years.

Nazarite Vow

- a voluntary vow for a specified time to dedicate oneself more fully to the LORD
- usually refraining from not drink, eat certain foods, no contact with bed bodies, allowing one's hair to grow
- if vow broken, then the person was to go through a cleansing process (shaved head, etc.)

Pray

Scripture/Observations

Judges 13:2-5

There was a certain man of Zorah, of the tribe of the Danites, whose name was Manoah. And his wife was barren and had no children. And the angel of the Lord appeared to the woman and said to her, "Behold, you are barren and have not borne children, but you shall conceive and bear a son. Therefore be careful and drink no wine or strong drink, and eat nothing unclean, for behold, you shall conceive and bear a son. No razor shall come upon his head, for the child shall be a Nazirite to God *from the womb*, and he shall begin to save Israel from the hand of the Philistines."

Samson

- described for a special purpose, even from the womb
- purpose: "begin to save Israel from the hand of the Philistines"

Judges 13:24

And the woman bore a son and called his name Samson. And the young man grew, and the Lord blessed him.

Samson grows up:

Judges 14:1-2

Samson went down to Timnah, and at Timnah he saw one of the daughters of the Philistines. Then he came up and told his father and mother, "I saw one of the daughters of the Philistines at Timnah. Now get her for me as my wife."

- this was directly contrary to what was instructed by God as the Philistines worshipped false gods

Judges 14:3

But his father and mother said to him, "Is there not a woman among the daughters of your relatives, or among all our people, that you must go to take a wife from the uncircumcised Philistines?" But Samson said to his father, "Get her for me, for she is right in my eyes."

- Samson was only concerned with what was "right in [his] eyes."

- contrast: what is right in God's eyes = righteousness.

Judges 14:4 (God's sovereign plan)

His father and mother did not know that it was from the Lord, for he was seeking an opportunity against the Philistines. At that time the Philistines ruled over Israel.

- God was using Samson's foolish lust and even his parents weakness for His sovereign purposes.

Judges 14:5-6 (unintentional breaking of Nazirite vow)

Then Samson went down with his father and mother to Timnah, and they came to the vineyards of Timnah. And behold, a young lion came toward him roaring. Then the Spirit of the Lord rushed upon him, and although he had nothing in his hand, he tore the lion in pieces as one tears a young goat. But he did not tell his father or his mother what he had done.

- Why important? Samson unintentionally broke his Nazirite vow by touching a dead body.

- What should have happened? Go through cleansing process (shave head, etc.)

- Why didn't Samson tell his parents? Unknown.

- *Application*: Let there be no shame to bring sin into the light (tell parents or others), even if one is involved sexual sins such as pornography or sexual overtures of others. Likewise, may those who can counsel others (parents/grandparents/ others) be a safe place for sins to be brought and shared and Biblically-responded to.

Judges 14:7 (repeat of Samson's perspective)

Then he went down and talked with the woman, and she was right in Samson's eyes.

Judges 14:8-9 (conscious breaking of Nazirite vow)

After some days he returned to take her. And he turned aside to see the carcass of the lion, and behold, there was a swarm of bees in the body of the lion, and honey. He scraped it out into his hands and went on, eating as he went. And he came to his father and mother and gave some to them, and they ate. But he did not tell them that he had scraped the honey from the carcass of the lion.

- *Application*: when you've made a conscious bad choice, tell others so can be helped to get back on the right track quickly.

- Parents/Grandparents: be wise on *how* you respond so that those younger will never hesitate to come to you.

Judges 14:10-11 (Samson's wedding event at Philistine woman)

His father went down to the woman, and Samson prepared a feast there, for so the young men used to do. As soon as the people saw him, they brought thirty companions to be with him.

- note: no Israelites were there. Shows lack of community.

Judges 14:12-14 (Samson's play of Philistine men with a riddle)

And Samson said to them, "Let me now put a riddle to you. If you can tell me what it is, within the seven days of the feast, and find it out, then I will give you thirty linen garments and thirty changes of clothes, but if you cannot tell me what it is, then you shall give me thirty linen garments and thirty changes of clothes." And they said to him, "Put your riddle, that we may hear it." And he said to them, "Out of the eater came something to eat.

Out of the strong came something sweet."

And in three days they could not solve the riddle.

Judges 14:15-20 (Philistine men threatened Samson's wife, wife pressed Samson for answer, Samson answered with violence)

On the fourth day they said to Samson's wife, "Entice your husband to tell us what the riddle is, lest we burn you and your father's house with fire. Have you invited us here to impoverish us?"...And the Spirit of the Lord rushed upon him, and he went down to Ashkelon and struck down thirty men of the town and took their spoil and gave the garments to those who had told the riddle. In hot anger he went back to his father's house. And Samson's wife was given to his companion, who had been his best man.

- in anger, Samson ignored his Nazirite vow and murdered others

- contrast:

Ephesians 4:26

Be angry and do not sin; do not let the sun go down on your anger,

Judges 15 (Samson's defeat of Philistines)

- Samson returned to take his wife but given to someone else. Samson responded with destroying Philistine's fields/economy, Philistines kill his wife and family, Samson responded with violence in vengeance.

Judges 15:14-15

When he came to Lehi, the Philistines came shouting to meet him. Then the Spirit of the Lord rushed upon him, and the ropes that were on his arms became as flax that has caught fire, and his bonds melted off his hands. And he found a fresh jawbone of a donkey, and put out his hand and took it, and with it he struck 1,000 men.

Judges 15:18-19 (God showed grace though Samson repeatedly broke the Nazirite vow)

And he was very thirsty, and he called upon the Lord and said, "You have granted this great salvation by the hand of your servant, and shall I now die of thirst and fall into the hands of the uncircumcised?" And God split open the hollow place that is at Lehi, and water came out from it. And when he drank, his spirit returned, and he revived. Therefore the name of it was called En-hakkore; it is at Lehi to this day.

Judges 15:20 - 16:1 (a time of peace but still of moral compromise)

And he judged Israel in the days of the Philistines twenty years. Samson went to Gaza, and there he saw a prostitute, and he went in to her.

Judges 16:1-21 (Samson falls in love with a Philistine woman (Delilah), and reveals the source of his strength)

Judges 16:19-21 (Samson's defeat, imprisonment)

She made him sleep on her knees. And she called a man and had him shave off the seven locks of his head. Then she began to torment him, and his strength left him. And she said, "The Philistines are upon you, Samson!" And he awoke from his sleep and said, "I will go out as at other times and shake myself free." But he did not know that the Lord had left him. And the Philistines seized him and gouged out his eyes and brought him down to Gaza and bound him with bronze shackles. And he ground at the mill in the prison.

- the one whom God had called to rescue the Israelities was now blind, powerless, and working in a Philistine prison.

Judges 16:23-31 (Philistine's celebration of humbling of Samson yet also their defeat)

Judges 16:28 (Samson's humility/prayer)

Then Samson called to the LORD and said, "O Lord God, please remember me and please strengthen me only this once, O God, that I may be avenged on the Philistines for my two eyes."

- one of few times Samson prayed to God in humility.

Hebrews 11:32 (Samson is mentioned in Faith Hall of Fame)

And what more shall I say? For time would fail me to tell of Gideon, Barak, *Samson*, Jephthah, of David and Samuel and the prophets

- despite Samson's disobedience to his calling, God still used him to save His people from their enemies.

Applications

For parents/grandparents:

- Lead those under you well.
- Encourage them to confide in you. Counsel them wisely.
- Train them not to enjoin them with unbelievers (whether in marriage, dating); not to be unequally yoked.

For young people:

- Confide in your parents. Tell them about things thrust upon you.
- Talk to them about choices made, even bad ones. Discuss how can help get back on right path.
- Don't enjoin yourselves with unbelievers

All:

- Care more about what is right in God's eyes than what is right in your own. We can be mixed about things. Trust Him. Obey Him.
- Don't misuse the Holy Spirit's power. Be angry; sin not. Allow God to avenge you when you've been wronged. Deal with your own pride before God chooses to deal with it.
- Pray for those who govern us - their goveranance, their wisdom, their salvation.
- Thank God for His Son, Jesus - not only our judge but also our king who never sinned.
 - He stretched out His arms on the cross (not merely between two pillars) and completely save His people from sin (not merely from enemies) with eternal implications (not merely for 20 years)

Prayer