

Potential/Samson – heroes of the faith series/ Hebrews 11:32

Capable of becoming real. Possible. (It was very possible for Samson to become one of the great leaders of all time)

There are two sides to opportunity. (Seized or missed) A visit from God usually is an indicator.

Judges 13:5 (ESV)

⁵for 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.**” (Begin. This shows God’s will is done despite what man may do.)

Talking to one of our members this week; *“wisdom to learn from other mistakes”*.

Samson is a picture to all of us of potential wasted, and God’s plan in action anyhow.

1. Disregard of godly parents- (Strange move presently against godly homes with “new adults”.)
 - a.) Nazirite vow- (no wine, not around dead bodies, not cutting hair) Demonstration of consecration. “Consecration means nothing unless the heart is right.”
 - b.) Spiritual disciplines such as – prayer, worship, bible study, church, fellowship, etc. are spiritually empowered or fleshly. (Flesh will lose heart) Authenticity. (Walking in God’s Spirit-control)
 - c.) He had parents that wanted to please the Lord.

Judges 13:8 (ESV)

⁸Then Manoah prayed to the LORD and said, “O Lord, please let the man of God whom you sent come again to us and teach us what we are to do with the child who will be born.”

Judges 13:24–25 (ESV)

²⁴And the woman bore a son and called his name Samson. And the young man grew, and the LORD blessed him. ²⁵And the Spirit of the LORD began to stir him in Mahaneh-dan, between Zorah and Eshtaol.

- d.) His strength wasn’t the vow, the hair. (It was the Spirit of God) (That is the same with us)
- e.) Early on, **we see God’s grace**, and yet the **ignoring of the significance of Gods grace**. (God, not us. His purposes and not our own.)

1 Corinthians 9:24–27 (ESV)

²⁴Do you not know that in a race all the runners run, but only one receives the prize? So run that you may obtain it. ²⁵Every athlete exercises self-control in all things. They do it to receive a perishable wreath, but we an imperishable. ²⁶So I do not run aimlessly; I do not box as one beating the air. ²⁷But I discipline my body and keep it under control, lest after preaching to others I myself should be disqualified.

Judges 14:1–3 (ESV)

Samson’s Marriage

14 Samson went down to Timnah, and at Timnah he saw one of the daughters of the Philistines. ²Then 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.” ³But 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.**" (Pr. 14:12/there is a way that seems right to a man but the end leads to death) 2 Cor.6:14-18 /not to be unequally yoked. (ungodly led)
f.) Visits the woman/Lion/spiritually empowered /killed the lion/another visit/honey in the carcass of the lion (What about the vows?)

Wiersbe- How many Christians defile themselves just to enjoy a little honey in a lion's carcass?
(Movies, activities, friendships, accolades, money, pleasure)

2. Disregard to a Holy God- ("Feast/riddle/bet/out of the eater came something to eat, out of the strong came something sweet.") They couldn't solve and threatened fiancé and family.(She cried it out of Samson and divulged the info)
 - a.) Worldly friends are not your friends, they don't care.
 - b.) Struck thirty men to pay his debt/found out his wife was given to the best man
 - c.) He went to see her, found out /foxes or jackals/tied torches to their tails/destroying Philistine crops. (This is what God intended but it wasn't because Samson was listening!)
 - d.) The Philistines killed his fiancé, dad. (So, the Philistines advanced) Samsons people feared.
 - e.) Why did you do this? They asked. (3000 tied him up to deliver him over)
 - f.) Broke the bonds, and defeated 1000 Philistines with a jawbone of a donkey.
 - We see twice where he prayed and now, we see one of them.

Judges 15:17–20 (ESV)

¹⁷ As soon as he had finished speaking, he threw away the jawbone out of his hand. And that place was called Ramath-lehi.

¹⁸ 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?" ¹⁹ 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. ²⁰ And he judged Israel in the days of the Philistines twenty years.

- God gives us wake-up calls. (When we ignore them, we disregard God's grace. Very dangerous)
- A double minded man is unstable in all his ways (James 1:8)
- 3. Disregard to God's ways- (Knowing God but not grateful/minds are darkened- Rom 1) What is the response to God's grace and goodness? Our devotion and obedience.
 - Note, God's plan will continue despite our blindness.
 - a.) Next/ prostitute/enemy locked the gates/He broke and carried the gate with him.
 - b.) He knew where sin was and he blindly ran to it, despite the danger. (**Arrogance of sin.**)
 - c.) Finally, Delilah. (lied to her 3 times until he succumbed to her pleading about the source of his strength) Which even Samson didn't fully understand, evidently.)

Hebrews 6:4–6 (ESV)

⁴ For it is impossible, in the case of those who have once been enlightened, who have tasted the heavenly gift, and have shared in the Holy Spirit, ⁵ and have tasted the goodness of the word of God and the powers of the age to come, ⁶ and then have fallen away, to restore them again to repentance, since they are crucifying once again the Son of God to their own harm and holding him up to contempt.

Matthew 26:41 (ESV)

41 Watch and pray that you may not enter into temptation. The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak."

- This leads to his other prayer....

Judges 16:20–31 (ESV)

²⁰ 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. ²¹ 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. ²² But the hair of his head began to grow again after it had been shaved.

The Death of Samson

²³ Now the lords of the Philistines gathered to offer a great sacrifice to Dagon their god and to rejoice, and they said, "Our god has given Samson our enemy into our hand." ²⁴ And when the people saw him, they praised their god. For they said, "Our god has given our enemy into our hand, the ravager of our country, who has killed many of us." ²⁵ And when their hearts were merry, they said, "Call Samson, that he may entertain us." So they called Samson out of the prison, and he entertained them. They made him stand between the pillars. ²⁶ And Samson said to the young man who held him by the hand, "Let me feel the pillars on which the house rests, that I may lean against them." ²⁷ Now the house was full of men and women. All the lords of the Philistines were there, and on the roof there were about 3,000 men and women, who looked on while Samson entertained.

²⁸ 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." ²⁹ And Samson grasped the two middle pillars on which the house rested, and he leaned his weight against them, his right hand on the one and his left hand on the other. ³⁰ And Samson said, "Let me die with the Philistines." Then he bowed with all his strength, and the house fell upon the lords and upon all the people who were in it. So the dead whom he killed at his death were more than those whom he had killed during his life. ³¹ Then his brothers and all his family came down and took him and brought him up and buried him between Zorah and Eshtaol in the tomb of Manoah his father. He had judged Israel twenty years.

- Look at yourself/"take heed lest you fall".
- We need to break away from our flesh. (sin kills)
- Samson was not a leader. (alone/arrogant/guided by the flesh)

1 John 2:16–17 (ESV)

¹⁶ For all that is in the world—the desires of the flesh and the desires of the eyes and pride of life—is not from the Father but is from the world. ¹⁷ And the world is passing away along with its desires, but whoever does the will of God abides forever.

- To be a conqueror, you must conquer sin (If you live in the Spirit walk in the Spirit Gal.5:25)
- Samson fought his enemies when he could have stood against God's enemies.

Look again at verse 21. (This is a sad picture of what sin did, instead of God's potential for Samson)

