

# SAMSON: JUDGE OF GREAT STRENGTH



# KEY SCRIPTURES: JUDGES 13-16

- HIS STORY
  - AN ANGEL OF THE LORD APPEARS TO MANOAH AND HIS WIFE WHO HAD BEEN UNABLE TO HAVE A CHILD
  - THE ANGEL PROCLAIMED THAT THEY WOULD HAVE A SON AND THAT HE WAS GOING TO DELIVER THE PEOPLE OF ISRAEL FROM THE BONDAGE OF THE PHILISTINES
  - HE WAS TO BE A “NAZARITE” FROM BIRTH. NO ALCOHOL AND NO RAZOR TO EVER TOUCH HIS HAIR AS A SIGN OF OBEDIENCE AND DEDICATION

- SAMSON IS RAISED IN THE WAYS OF A NAZARITE
- HE LEAVES THE PLACE OF HIS PEOPLE AND TRAVELS TO SEE THE CITY OF THE PHILISTINES AND FALLS IN LOVE WITH A PHILISTINE WOMAN AND DECIDES TO MARRY HER.
- HIS PARENTS OBJECT BECAUSE THEY FEEL LIKE IT MIGHT NOT BE OF THE LORD. HE MARRIES HER ANYWAY
- ON THE WAY TO THE WEDDING HE DISCOVERS THE SUPERNATURAL POWER THAT GOD HAS GIVEN HIM.
- HE CROSSES THE PHILISTINES AND THEY BURN HIS WIFE AND FATHER TO DEATH AND HE KILLS MANY PHILISTINES IN REVENGE. HIS ENEMIES MARVEL AT HIS STRENGTH

- HE FALLS IN LOVE IN LOVE WITH DELIA WHOSE NAME MEANS “NIGHT” MAKING HER VERY MYSTERIOUS.
- “TELL ME, SAMSON,” SHE SAID, HER VOICE SOFT AS A DOVE’S COOING, “WHAT IS THE SECRET OF YOUR GREAT STRENGTH AND HOW CAN YOU BE TIED UP AND SUBDUED?”
- SAMSON TELLS HER THREE DIFFERENT LIES, TEASING HER THAT HE HAS CONFIDED THE SECRETS OF THE STRENGTH THAT GOD HAD GIVEN HIM.
  - FRESH LEATHER STRAPS THAT HADN’T BEEN DRIED
  - NEW ROPES NEVER USED BEFORE
  - WEAVE HIS LONG HAIR INTO THE LOOMS

- DELIAH HAS SOME WORDS IN HER ARSENAL THAT SAMSON FINDS HARD TO RESIST.
- “HOW CAN YOU SAY ‘I LOVE YOU’ WHEN YOU WON’T CONFIDE IN ME? THIS IS THE THIRD TIME YOU HAVE MADE A FOOL OF ME AND HAVEN’T TOLD ME THE SECRET OF YOUR GREAT STRENGTH.”
- TIRED OF NAGGING SAMSON GIVES IN AND SAYS “NO RAZOR HAS EVER BEEN USED ON MY HEAD, BECAUSE I HAVE BEEN A NAZIRITE SET APART TO GOD SINCE BIRTH. IF MY HEAD WERE SHAVED, MY STRENGTH WOULD LEAVE ME.”

– DELILA HAS HIS HEAD SHAVED WHILE HE SLEEPS. SHE WAKES HIM AND RUNS AWAY INTO THE NIGHT. THE PHILISTINES GOUGE OUT HIS EYES AND PUT HIM TO GRINDING GRAIN LIKE AN ANIMAL.



- ONE DAY WHEN THERE WERE THOUSANDS OF PEOPLE IN THE TEMPLE OF DAGON, THE PHILISTINE GOD, THE PEOPLE CRIED OUT FOR SAMSON TO BE BROUGHT TO THE TEMPLE SO THEY COULD MAKE FUN OF HIM.
- SAMSON'S HAIR HAD BEEN SLOWLY GETTING LONGER AND HIS STRENGTH SLOWLY RETURNED ALSO, BUT NO ONE FEARED THIS FALLEN BLIND JUDGE OF ISRAEL.
- SAMSON ASKS TO BE LEANED UP AGAINST THE PILLARS OF THE TEMPLE SO HE COULD REST

SAMSON PRAYS/ASKS THE LORD TO GIVE HIM  
STRENGTH. HE PUSHES AND PRAYS . TEMPLE  
CRASHES DOWN -THOUSANDS OF GOD'S ENEMIES  
DIE AND SO DOES SAMSON





## SAMSON: THE MAN

- SAMSON WAS A SON OF GREAT PROMISE BUT HE WAS NOT DILIGENT WITH THE GIFT GOD GAVE HIM.
- SAMSON'S BOASTING, HIS VISITS TO PROSTITUTES, OR HIS MURDEROUS RAGE. EVEN HIS PRAYERS WERE SELFISH, FOCUSED ON HIS OWN DESIRE FOR REVENGE RATHER THAN ON GOD'S GLORY.
- SAMSON WOULD HAVE BEEN A BETTER MAN HAD HE PAID ATTENTION TO THE CALL GOD HAD PLACED ON HIS LIFE. INSTEAD, HE SEEMS TO HAVE SQUANDERED THE PROMISE OF HIS LIFE BY LIVING IT IN A SELF-CENTERED, SELF-DIRECTED WAY.

- SAMSON'S STORY IS THE STORY IS THE STORY OF THE ISRAELITES. GOD'S ANOINTING, SIN, FALLING FROM GRACE, AND REDEMPTION FROM THE LORD AT GREAT COST.
- HIS LIFE SHOWS WHAT HAPPENS WHEN THOSE OF US WHO ARE CALLED OF GOD AND GIVEN GREAT GIFTS BECOME MORE ATTACHED TO PEOPLE AND THINGS THAT ARE NOT OF GOD.
- WE SQUANDER THE PURPOSES OF GOD IN OUR LIFE AND THE QUALITY OF OUR LIFE AND HIS PURPOSES SUFFER FOR IT.

# QUESTIONS TO ANSWER

1. DO YOU KNOW OF A TIME IN YOUR LIFE WHEN THE PATTERN OF SIN, DELIVERANCE INTO THE HAND OF ENEMIES, AND EVENTUAL RESCUE HAVE OCCURRED?
2. GOD INTERVENED IN THE LIFE OF SAMSON TO ENSURE HIS BIRTH. WHAT LENGTH WILL GOD GO TO BRING HIS WILL AND PLAN INTO EXISTENCE?

3. SAMSON BROKE THE ROPES OF HIS CAPTORS, AND TOOK THE JAWBONE OF A DONKEY AND KILLED 1000 MEN. IMMEDIATELY HE STARTED CRYING AND WHINING ABOUT BEING THIRSTY AND GOD LETTING HIM DIE OF THIRST. WHAT DOES THAT SHOW US ABOUT SAMSON?
4. SAMSON FINALLY GAVE IN TO DELILAH'S INSISTENT DEMANDS TO KNOW THE SECRET OF HIS STRENGTH. WHAT DOES THE STORY OF SAMSON AND DELILAH REVEAL ABOUT HIS PRIORITIES?

# CONCLUSION:

- SAMSON HARDLY SEEMS FIT FOR THE ROLE OF HERO—A STRONG MAN TOO WEAK TO CONTROL HIS OWN PASSIONS, HIS OUTER STRENGTH COLLAPSING BECAUSE OF HIS INNER WEAKNESS. GOD'S PURPOSES WILL BE FULFILLED BUT HOW MUCH BETTER WOULD IT HAVE BEEN IF SAMSON HAD YIELDED HIMSELF TO THE WAYS OF GOD?

# THINGS TO THINK ABOUT...

1. REFLECT ON: JUDGES 16:23–31
2. PRAISE GOD: FOR HIS SOVEREIGNTY.
3. OFFER THANKS: FOR GOD'S STRENGTH WORKING WITHIN YOU
4. CONFESS: ANY PROMISES YOU HAVE MADE TO GOD AND NOT KEPT.
5. ASK GOD: TO MAKE YOU A PERSON WHO IS STRONG ON THE OUTSIDE BUT ALSO ON THE INSIDE.

# OUR PRAYER

- FATHER, I THANK YOU THAT THE PLANS AND PURPOSE OF YOUR HEART STAND FIRM FOREVER. HELP ME TO BE IN COMPLETE ALIGNMENT WITH YOUR PLANS FOR MY LIFE. IF I WAVER, THEN BRING ME BACK, NO MATTER WHAT IT TAKES. USE THE HARD THINGS IN MY LIFE TO SHAPE ME SO THAT I CAN BE USED HOWEVER AND WHEREVER YOU INTEND.