

SAMSON'S STRENGTH

Judges 13-15

Lesson Memory Verse: 2 Timothy 2:1 – “You, therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus.

Lesson Aim: To know that Christ can make us strong so we can serve Him and obey His commands.

Lesson Plan: Use the KEY – HE – SEE – WE – BE plan (explained in the Introductory Notes).

KEY (for Attention): Can you name some animals that God has made very strong? (Lion, elephant, bear.) God has made them strong so He might use them in special ways. He has a reason for everything that He has made. God made you the way you are for a special reason. Do not ask Him why He made you the way He did, just ask Him what He wants you to do and serve Him with the strength He gives you.

HE (for Authority): 2 Timothy 2:1 tells us that we can be strong by the grace that Christ gives us. What is Christ's “grace”? “Grace” is a special gift from Him, which in this case is strength. It is a free gift that is made possible by His death on the cross and by rising from the grave. “Grace” cannot be earned by good works or by money. We receive it by faith in His promise. He will make us strong to fight against the temptations of Satan. He will make us strong to love others and tell them about Jesus' gift of salvation. He wants to make us strong so we can obey all of His commands.

This Bible lesson will tell us how God made a certain man strong in his body so that he could fight Israel's enemies. Israel's enemies in today's lesson were the Philistines and they wanted to make Israel their slaves. God did not want this to continue, so He gave Samson great strength to defeat the Philistines many times. God gave Samson strength because he had faith in Him to fight against His enemies. But Samson did not always obey God. He would have been much greater if he had obeyed all of God's commands all of the time. Listen to this story and discover how strong He made Samson.

SEE (for Apperception) and WE (for Application): Tell the story of Samson as found in Judges 13-15. Do not teach the story found in Judges 16 until next week. **Be sure to read this story from the Bible several times before reading these notes. First let the Holy Spirit teach you directly from His Word.** Use these notes to give you further ideas on how you might apply this lesson to your class' needs. Do not feel that you must use all of these applications to teach a good lesson. In fact, you may not use any of them. They are only suggestions for the Spirit of God to use if He leads you to use them.

I. Parents of Samson (Judges 13)

A. Samson's parents were told how to train him, even before he was born (13:2-14).

WE: We are told in the Bible to respect and obey our parents, especially if they are Christian parents. Christian parents are told in the Bible how to train their children, even before they are born. They do not need to have a special messenger from God to tell them what to do. Children should respect their parents when they are trying to follow God's rules in the Bible for training them.

B. The Angel of the Lord (Christ before He became a man) appeared to Samson's parents to tell them how to train him (13:15-23). “Secret” in 13:18 is the same word translated “wonderful” in Isaiah 9:6, so in reality the Angel of the Lord said his name was “wonderful” (cf. v. 19 – “did wonderfully”).

WE: We should be thankful for our parents. They love us and want to help us. If our parents are Christians, they have God with them and in them all of the time (Heb. 13:5). We should be extra thankful to God for Christian parents.

C. Samson's parents obeyed God so that the Spirit of the Lord could bless Samson and use him (13:24, 25).

WE: When we have Christian parents that obey the Lord, we receive special blessings. We should thank our parents for obeying God, and then we should thank God for giving us parents that obey Him.

II. Pleasures of Samson (Judges 14)

A. Samson chose to take a wife from among the heathen Philistines (14:103). This would not please God because He had definitely told His people not to marry the children of unbelievers (Deut. 7:1-4). This did not please his parents because they knew God's law (14:3). This only pleased Samson (14:3, 7). He did what pleased himself.

WE: We must learn to choose what God chooses and not choose what pleases us. Godly parents will help us make the right choices. We must give careful attention to what they tell us.

B. Even Samson's sin did not stop God from using him against the Philistines (14:4, 12-19).

WE: We may not listen to God, but we cannot stop Him from doing what He wants to do. We may get hurt or embarrassed, but God will do what He wants with or without our help.

C. Instead, God stopped Samson from going too far in this marriage and Samson never lived with his wife (14:19, 20; 15:1, 2, 6).

WE: We may be stopped by God from going too far in our sin, or He may let us have temporary pleasure in our sin and add many troubles with our selfish pleasures.

D. Samson provided a drinking feast for his Philistine friends because that was the custom (14:20). However, it was against his Nazarite vow (Num. 6:3, 4). He pleased men more than God.

WE: We must learn it is better for us to please God than to please men.

III. Philistines in Samson's Life (Judges 15)

A. God had called Samson to fight against the Philistines, but instead, he tried to be friendly with them even to the point of marrying one of their daughters (15:1; cf. 14:7-10).

WE: We must not be friendly with people who love sin, but oppose them because they are in agreement with Satan (James 4:4).

B. When Samson found out that his wife helped her Philistine friends rather than him, he became angry with her and left her for a while in her father's house. Her father then gave Samson's wife to someone else. This made Samson even more angry and he burned some of the Philistine's crops (15:2-5). God used this to make Samson fight against the Philistines as God had told him.

WE: We are to fight against God's enemies. We are to hate the things He hates and to love the things He loves, and to do the things He wants us to do (Phil. 2:13).

C. The Philistines burned Samson's Philistine wife and her father (15:6-8), because they had caused them the loss of their crops when they had offended Samson. Then Samson became still more angry with the Philistines and he killed many of these wicked Philistines.

WE: We see that God can cause us to have troubles so we will do His will, even if we did not plan to do it.

D. Finally, Samson fought and killed one thousand Philistine soldiers who tried to capture him (15:8-17; cf. Josh. 23:10). God helped him fight against these Philistines (15:14) because they were trying to make slaves out of God's people. His weapon was simple; it was a fresh jawbone of a donkey (15:15).

WE: We need to learn that God will help us fight and win against an enemy much stronger than us, if we look to Him for strength (Phil. 4:13). God will use simple, weak things to overthrow the strong (1 Cor. 1:27-29). That way, He will get the glory for it.

E. When Samson needed water, God miraculously provided it (15:18, 19).

WE: We will discover that God will supply all of our needs when we obey Him (Phil. 4:19).

F. Samson was used by God to fight against the Philistines for twenty years (15:20).

WE: We will be used by God if we trust Him for the power to do His work.

BE (for Action): Would you like to be strong to do God's work? God will make you strong, if you look to Him for strength. Be careful to use the strength that God gives you to serve Him and do not use it for your selfish interests. If you are a Christian, God wants to use you and He will give you enough spiritual power to defeat Satan every time that he tempts you to sin! You can defeat every sin in your life. If you want God's power and will use it to do His work, you can pray right now, and He will give it to you as you serve Him. (Invite those who are serious about receiving God's power to stay after class is dismissed so that you can talk with them privately.)