

**LESSON AIM:** To illustrate from the life of Samson that what feels right, or seems right in our own eyes, is not always right. Compromise will undermine our spiritual strength and power.

**KEY SCRIPTURE:** Judges 13 - 16

**INTRODUCTION:**

- In the book of Judges the children of Israel have a lot of ups and downs. When they are obediently worshipping and serving the Lord, things go well. But when they do what is evil in the sight of the Lord, God allows their enemies to oppress them.
- In **Judges 21:25** it says that *"in those days there was no king in Israel; everyone did what was right in his own eyes."* Often what *seems* right and what *feels* right is not right. This is the lesson we learn in the life of Samson, the Judge that God set apart who would give the Israelites victory over their enemy the Philistines. .
- We find in learning from the events in Samson's life that he not only compromised his commitment to God and disobeyed the Lord, he had an anger issue that made matters worse. [Proverbs 29:22](#) says *"An angry person stirs up conflict, and a hot-tempered person commits many sins."* But also, [Proverbs 29:11](#) says *"Fools give full vent of their rage, but the wise bring calm in the end."* We have a choice.

**LESSON:**

Samson had a special gift of incredible spiritual strength, but he also had an issue with self control.

[James 1:19](#) says *"Understand this, my dear brothers and sisters: You must all be quick to listen, slow to speak, and slow to get angry"*. If your anger gets out of control, you are headed into problems as we discover with Samson.

How many of you have said something when you are angry and regret it afterwards? [Psalms 37:8](#) says *"Stop being angry! Turn from your rage! Do not lose your temper—it only leads to harm."*

Let's read **Judges 13: 1-5** Manoah and his wife were going to have a miracle child, a Nazirite, that would be set apart for his life. Often people would take a Nazirite vow and be set apart for maybe 30 days of 4 months. It would include not cutting hair, not drinking wine or touching a dead animal. **In today's world that would be like not using your cell phone, no internet or games to be set apart to seek God.** Samson was going to be a Nazirite from birth and would be a judge to the Israelites to deliver them from the enemies of God, the Philistines. **Verse 25** tells us *"the Spirit of the Lord was upon him"*.

In Chapter 14 Samson grows to be a big boy and wanted a wife from the Philistines. **Verse 3** he demands his father to get her for him after they pleaded with him to find a wife from among their people. **This was the beginning of his demise.** We see here a war . Samson's character, a war we all have to fight. It is a war between the Spirit and the flesh. The Spirit is what God wants. The flesh is a war against the spirit for what we want. We have to decide which one are we going to feed. (Think of a dog fight. The dog that is stronger, because it is fed the most is the dog that is going to win)

[Galatians 5:19-22](#) tells that *When you follow the desires of your sinful nature, the results are very clear: sexual immorality, impurity, lustful pleasures, idolatry, sorcery, hostility, quarreling, jealousy, outbursts of anger, selfish ambition, dissension, division, and more but, the fruit of the spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self control.*

Quite the contrast isn't it? We need the **Holy Spirit to help us to understand what we are like.**

**Verse 5-6** A young lion came against him. He was so selfish. God is warning him, “don’t go this way!” But Samson keeps going and rips the lion apart with his hands. One thing about God, He warns us! Beep...Beep...Beep, danger ahead!

He rips apart God’s creation because *nothing was going to stop him from doing what he wanted to do.*

**Verse 18** He tells the Philistines a riddle and calls his wife a heifer (that’s a cow, by the way) He is so mad he goes into the city and kills 30 men and took their clothes. He left his wife there so the father of the bride gave her to the best man. When Samson found out he was so mad he tied 300 foxes together with torches and they run through the fields of the Philistines and burns up their crops. Now the Philistines are really out to get him.

This Samson is so angry he is not thinking right. After that he kills 1000 men that went after him. You’d think after he killed 5 he would have thought, “what am I doing?”, maybe after 100, he’d come to his senses, but he went postal on the Philistines and killed 1000. Listen to Proverbs:

[Proverbs 15:18](#) *A hot-tempered person starts fights; a cool-tempered person stops them.*

[Proverbs 29:22](#) *An angry person stirs up conflict, and a hot-tempered person commits many sins.*

**Chapter 16:4** Samson fell in love with a Philistine woman named Delilah. The lords of the Philistines told her to entice him and find out what the secret of his strength is and we will pay you well and make you a rich woman. Well Samson, not only had an anger problem, but he had a lust problem. He has been feeding his flesh and not his spirit and now he will be tested. The Philistines are out to destroy him. Delilah has it set up with the Philistines in her room. She’s got the candles, the wine and the sweet talk. She is asking our Samson about his great strength. Samson doesn’t even think for a moment, “**are you trying to trick me?**” He plays along.

Day after day she butters him up and asks him what the secret of his strength is. He mentions his hair and she weaves it into the web of the loom vs 14. She said again, “*Samson, the Philistines are upon you*” But he awoke from his sleep and tore the loom off the wall. She cried and said, “*How can you say you love me, when your heart is not with me? You have mocked me these three times, and have not told me where your strength lies*”

She pestered him daily with her words. What should our friend Samson done? Run!

Finally let’s read out loud [Judges 16:16-20](#)

Let me read that last part again and some...*When he woke up, he thought, “I will do as before and shake myself free.” But he didn’t realize the LORD had left him.*

The Bible tells us to get knowledge, get understanding. When we don’t listen, we will not understand and we get frustrated. Be slow to anger, slow to wrath. Under the power of the Holy Spirit we can exhibit self control. Self-control has got to be practiced. When we are slow to speak and slow to wrath it equals peace.

Samson has been betrayed. Even as the Philistines are attacking him, Samson does not realize he no longer has the special anointing of God's strength. He thinks he'll defeat the Philistines just like always. But it was not to be: Samson has disobeyed the Lord once too many times. He's crossed over the line and now he's on his own. In his own strength, he is no match for the enemy. (*Read verse 20*)

After Samson is defeated and humiliated by the Philistines, does God cast him aside for good? After all, he's now blind and weak, and a lowly slave. (*Read verse 21*). But the next verse tells us that his hair began to grow again. That's God's grace! Samson doesn't deserve any more chances but because God is a God of grace He gives Samson one last opportunity to defeat the enemy more powerfully than he ever has before. (*Read verses 23-31*)

## MEMORY VERSE:

*Understand this my dear brothers and sisters: “You must all be quick to listen and slow to speak, and slow to get angry.”*

[James 1:19](#) (NIV)