



“The Passionate Pursuit of Your Calling.”

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Judges 13:1-16:31

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Samson Cycle Overview

A. Birth & Nazirite Vow - Jdg 13:1-25

B. Philistine Wife #1 - Jdg 14-15

C. Philistine Prostitute - Jdg 16:1-3

B'. Philistine Wife #2 - Jdg 16:4-17a

A'. Nazirite Vow & Death - Jdg 17b-31

Philistine Wife #1 & #2	Jdg 14–15	Jdg 16
Samson sees a woman	v. 1 (Timnite)	v. 4 (Delilah)
Woman obtains and betrays Samson's secret	vv. 5–18	vv. 4–20
Samson bound	vv. 9–13	v. 21
Great slaughter of Philistines and calling upon Yahweh	vv. 14–17/18–19	vv. 25–30
Judge formula	v. 20	v. 31b

Adapted from Davis, D. R. (2000). *Judges: Such a Great Salvation* (p. 184).

The Samson Cycle: A Comedic Tragedy

Nazirite Vow - 13:3-5; 14:5-9; 16:17, 22

Samson's Eyes - 14:3; 16:21

Samson's Source of Strength - 13:25; 16:20

Israel's Failure - 15:11; 16:31

Yahweh's Covenant - 13:3-5; 15:19; 16:3, 28

17 I will surely bless you, and I will surely multiply your offspring as the stars of heaven and as the sand that is on the seashore. And your offspring shall possess the gate of his enemies, 18 and in your offspring shall all the nations of the earth be blessed, because you have obeyed my voice.”

Genesis 22:17-18 ESV

Two Lessons from the Samson Cycle

1. Samson's Failure Reflects the Failure of God's People.
2. Our Failures Will Not Undo God's Promises.

“...how was Israel to hear this latter part of the Samson story? Were they not meant to hear it in hope? Were they not to understand that though Yahweh’s hand may justly cast down his unfaithful servants, his ears are nevertheless open to their cries and his arm still ready to act on their behalf? Should Israel not see that even in her sinfulness God was still encouraging her to ‘call upon [him] in the day of trouble’ (cf. Ps. 50:15)?”

Davis, D. R. (2000). *Judges: Such a Great Salvation* (p. 190).

Cry Out to God to Renew Your Calling.

But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.

1 Peter 2:9 ESV

SUMMARY

If there was ever a person who served as a reflection of his generation it was Samson. He was a man who was set apart from birth for God’s special purposes. Set apart for holiness. Set apart for faithfulness. Set apart to deliver his people from evil. Yet, he chose his lustful and vengeful passions over his godly calling. The people of Israel did the same. Yet, even in the midst of rampant failure, God proved faithful and remained true as Israel’s Help and Hope. The Samson cycle will challenge each of us to constrain our passions as we seek to live out the special calling in Christ we share as God’s people.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

3. What was something you had lost or left behind but didn’t realize it until later?
4. Read Numbers 6 and refer to Judges chapter 13. Compare and contrast Samson’s manner of life with what is described in Numbers 6.
5. Identify the parallels in the narrative between chapters 14/15 and chapter 16 regarding the circumstances and Samson’s heart behind his failures.
6. Samson embodied many traits of the people of Israel. In what ways does he represent God’s people at his time? In what ways does he resemble God’s people today?
7. When can you look back on your life and see God’s faithfulness in the midst of your unfaithfulness?
8. What attributes or central promises from God are on display through the life of Samson?

9. Samson sought what was right in his own eyes (14:7) and used his God-given gift of physical strength for selfish purposes. What are you pursuing and how are you using your God-given gifts?
10. What was your personal takeaway from Sunday's message?