

JUDGES

Lesson 6 w/Answers

Samson: Part 2 of 3

After looking at the birth of Samson and his upbringing in the last lesson, we continue our study of Judges with a fascinating look at the man Samson; or rather, the spoiled man-boy Samson.

In this lesson, we will be examining Judges Chapters 14 and 15, which recounts a story that we could humorously title "Samson, the Formative Years." We will also see God in ways that perhaps we did not expect to see Him, or at least in ways that we find hard to explain. Despite Samson's disciplined upbringing, we will see someone who is now growing into a man, but has already become spoiled. He is a person of some wealth; however, he is also stubborn, vengeful, prideful, weak around women, somewhat dumb or naive to the world around him, but yet very strong and fearless. We will see that even with a man such as this, God accomplishes His purpose in the end.

Read Judges Chapters 14 and 15 and answer the following:

1. Judges Chapter 14 is divided into five sections, with each section's beginning containing the phrase "went down". Can you identify each section? List each section's verse references below. (For example, Judges 14:1-4 is the first section; see if you can find the next four.)
 - a. Section 1: _____
 - i. ANSWER: Judges 14:1-4
 - b. Section 2: _____
 - i. ANSWER: Judges 14:5-6
 - c. Section 3: _____
 - i. ANSWER: Judges 14:7-9
 - d. Section 4: _____
 - i. ANSWER: Judges 14:10-18
 - e. Section 5: _____
 - i. ANSWER: Judges 14:19-20
2. We have already discovered from our reading of Judges Chapter 14 that Samson was a spoiled child who had little regard for his parents. We also observed that he was stubborn and, although he was physically extremely strong, he was weak around women. What can we learn about God in this same Chapter from the following verses?
 - a. Judges 14:4
 - i. ANSWER: God knew Samson and would use Samson's desire to have a young Philistine wife to confront the Philistines.
 - b. Judges 14:5-6
 - i. ANSWER: God allowed Samson to slay the lion by giving him great strength.
 - c. Judges 14:19
 - i. ANSWER: Again God provided great strength to Samson so that he could go to Ashkelon, one of the five great Philistine cities, and strike down thirty of their men.
3. How does the verse Romans 8:28 compare with Chapter 14 of Judges?
 - a. ANSWER: Judges Chapter 14 is a clear reflection of the truth in Romans 8:28: "And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose."
4. Can you list all of the specific Nazirite Vows (Numbers 6:1-8) that Samson violates in Judges Chapters 14 and 15? (There are a lot of them in both chapters.) Listed below are some of scripture passages documenting these violations. Can you list which ones are specifically identified in each passage?
 - a. Judges 14:1-4
 - i. ANSWER: Samson's marriage to a Philistine woman made him unclean. It was a direct violation of Mosaic law, and God warned against it in Exodus 34:16.
 - b. Judges 14:5
 - i. ANSWER: Samson was in a vineyard, a clear violation of the rules of his vow.
 - c. Judges 14:6-7
 - i. ANSWER: Samson was now handling a dead body (a lion) and talking with a Philistine woman.
 - d. Judges 14:10-18
 - i. ANSWER: Clearly Samson is not separating himself from the Philistines and the world around them. Feasting and boasting, now married to a Philistine wife, Samson is not living a Holy life that is dedicated and set apart for service to God.

- e. Judges 15:14-17
 - i. ANSWER: Once again, Samson is violating the vow. He is not supposed to be around a dead body; but here he has taken a fresh jawbone from a donkey carcass and slew a thousand men.
 - 5. Fire is associated with major events in Samson's life. What are the specific events referenced in the passages below?
 - a. Judges 13:20
 - i. ANSWER: In this example, fire is the means for Menoah and his wife to see the Angel of the Lord ascending into heaven.
 - b. Judges 14:15
 - i. ANSWER: The Philistines threaten to use fire to burn Samson and his wife to death.
 - c. Judges 15:4-5
 - i. ANSWER: Samson used fire to destroy the Philistine's fields of grain, olive trees, and vineyards
 - d. Judges 15:14
 - i. ANSWER: The reference to "charred flax" is another reference to the use of fire in Samson's life.
 - 6. What do you think of the Judahites' reaction to the Philistines' demands in Judges 15:9-13?
 - a. ANSWER: Clearly, they did not see Samson as a deliverer, but rather as someone whose actions had the potential of bringing calamity upon them. Little did they know that shortly Samson would deliver them and bring peace to Israel for 20 years.
 - 7. Why would Samson be using a fresh jawbone in Judges 15:14-17 instead of using a well-seasoned, dried one? Why is this a violation of the Nazirite Vows?
 - a. ANSWER: Samson would not have wanted to use an old, dried-out, jawbone; as it would have been too brittle and useless as a weapon. Clearly his actions here violate the vow, as he is not to be near a dead body; furthermore, now he is actually beside a "fresh" dead donkey, from which he pulls the jawbone to use as a weapon.
 - 8. After God gave Samson a great victory, what was Samson's reaction? How does his reaction compare to Elijah's reaction after his great victory recounted in 1 Kings 19:1-8?
 - a. ANSWER: As spoiled as ever, Samson can only think of himself, and shouts at the Lord regarding his thirst. In contrast, Elijah was afraid after his victory; he ran and hid, and he wanted to die and not go on living. But here, too, God was patient and loving; and provided Elijah food and rest.
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As we witnessed during our study of this lesson, all things work towards accomplishing God's purpose, even when a person violates his vows to God. Samson's parents, despite their proper upbringing of Samson, are not respected by Samson. In fact, we see that Samson has little respect for anything but himself.

Tragically, when our world centers on us, we are blinded to the truth; and we fail to see the path to destruction that lies ahead. Samson failed to seek out God, except when he needed something; and he also failed to see each time that God worked in his life and gave him great strength and great victories.

The accomplishment of God's purpose, that of confronting the Philistines, came in unexpected ways; and His victory came in a most unusual way. With little to nothing at all, with even nothing more substantial than a jaw bone, we can experience great victories if we depend completely on God.

God loves us and wants the best for us. He has a plan for each of us; but we must humble ourselves before Him, and put our complete trust and faith in Him if we are to see and know His will for our lives.

May He richly bless you through this study of His Holy Word.

In Christ,

Wes