

Remember the Great Works of God – God is Unfailingly Committed to you!

– Judges 13, 14

### I. Background

- Samson's story contains all the elements that can make a great movie in today's world.
- He was born in a God-fearing family.
  - For example, Manoah, Samson's father prayed to God, "teach us how to bring up the boy who is to be born." (Judges 13:8, 12)

#### Think for a moment:

⇒ **When God gives us an assignment, do we ask God to teach us how to ...?"**

- He was also born while the Israelites was ruling under the Philistines (13:2, 24)
- There is a sin-deliverance cycle in the book of Judges:
  1. Israel did evil in the eyes of the Lord (13:1)
  2. God disciplined them by having their enemies to rule over them (13:2)
  3. Israel cried out to God and repented
  4. God rose up Judges/Deliverers to bring Israel out of oppression and peace reign in the land again
- During Samson's time, scripture talked about step 1 and 2, but no step 3 and 4.
- Israel reached a spiritually low point. We can see from the following:
  - The Israelites no longer cry out to God for help
  - The Israelites are okay that the Philistines rule over them (15:11). I.e. the Philistines are Israel's ruler and friend instead of God. Gideon said, "the LORD will rule over you" (Judges 8:23)

#### Think for a moment:

⇒ **How does Israel's spiritual condition compare to the world we live in?**

- Despite of the mess that Israel made, God still stays faithful to his covenant. I.e. God is still about deliverance even Israel didn't cry out for help.

#### Think for a moment:

⇒ **What does this tell us about God's character?**

⇒ **How does that make you feel?**

⇒ **How does that affect how we see ourselves and the world?**

- Unfortunately, Samson's deliverance of Israel will not be completed because:
  - Samson the hero only pursued his women instead of God's word, wills and lifestyle (14:1-3)
  - He also fought the Philistines for his own vengeance
  - The bottom line is that Samson had no interest to deliver Israel from the Philistines

- We serve a great God that he can accomplish anything he desires even with a person like Samson.

**Think for a moment:**

- ⇒ **What does this tell us about our God?**
- ⇒ **How does the statement “God uses even imperfect people” bring hope to us?**
- ⇒ **What’s our response towards this great God?**

- The Good News is that the story of Samson and the entire book of Judges show that our hope is not on the culture heroes but on God whose grace is greater.

- God who is passionate about peace, justice and faithfulness would unfailingly commit to people who regularly brought destruction and chaos due to their unfaithfulness and disobedience towards God.

1. Samson’s mom and God is the hero (Judges 13)

2. Samson’s mother models the way that God wants for his people: attentive to God’s word and God’s way (13:7, 23)

**II. Set apart for the service of God (Judges 14)**

- Nazirite means one separated or one consecrated. One set apart for the service of God.

- Samson ended up violating every part of being a Nazirite

⇒ Stay away from wine and strong drink (14:5; 10; number 6:3)

*Instead of being control by wine and strong drink, one should be controlled by the Holy Spirit. (Ephesians 5:18)*

⇒ Avoid contact with dead bodies human and animals (14:8; Numbers 6:6-8)

*Signify holiness, can be used by God.*

⇒ Not cut his hair (16:15-22; Numbers 6:5-6)

*Outward sign that we work with God, so that people know that we are set apart for the Holy God.*

**Think for a moment:**

**1. Are we filled with (controlled by) the Holy Spirit or are control by our desires to satisfied ourselves?**

**2. Do we set apart ourselves to be used by God? For example, God’s altar has a golden scissor only used to trim the candle wig. The golden scissor is set apart to be used by God only. We can’t take that and use it to cut sausage or tape?**

**3. What outward sign or behaviour or character we have that people can tell that we belong to God?**

**III. Giftedness and Blessings do not guarantee a life of success**

- Samson was gifted or blessed. But what did he do with his gifts and blessings?

- Being blessed by God and being gifted by the spirit of the Lord are no guarantee that the person will fulfill God's purposes
- God works incarnationally; God works with the human resources at God's disposal, flawed as they be may in Samson's case and in our case.
- Samson is motivated by his own pursuit and purposes rather than the pursuit and purpose of God.
- The story of Samson is a testimony of God's persevering grace and faithfulness despite how unfaithful Samson was.
- Congruent with the whole human story of how humans are unfaithful and God's still remain faithful.
- The good news is that God's grace abounds.