

MIRACLE MAN AND REVENGER: SAMSON, PART 1

FLAWED HEROES | JUDGES 13:1-15:20 | JULY 30/31, 2016 | PASTOR MARK LYNCH

"Because he was very thirsty, he cried out to the Lord, "You have given your servant this great victory. Must I now die of thirst and fall into the hands of the uncircumcised?" (Judges 15:18)

The Advantages of Samson (Judges 13)

- Birth announced by the angel of the Lord (13:2-3)
- Mission in life was known (13:3-5)
- Raised by godly parents (13:8)
- Blessed by God as a young man (13:24)
- Empowered by the Holy Spirit (13:25)

A Change of Direction (Judges 14)

- Self-centered (14:1-2)
- Rejection of godly wisdom and training (14:3-6)
- Arrogance

Revenge of Samson: Consumed with Anger (Judges 14-15)

- Anger leads to entitlement and revenge (14:19-20)
- Cycle of revenge (anger, retaliation, response to retaliation, rejection, retaliation)

Principles to Learn from Samson (Judges 15)

- You may be misunderstood (15:11-13)
- Spirit of God can work through flawed people (15:14-18)
- Embracing God's calling will reproduce the life of Jesus

1. This week, as we continue our "Flawed Heroes" series, we look at one of the most popular stories in the book of Judges with the character of Samson in Judges 13-15. So many people know the story of Samson but often look past many of the details and relevance to us today. Pray that God would open the word to you and your group today.
2. How surprising is it that Samson is included in Hebrews Chapter 11 and the Heroes of Faith? Could you think of biblical figures that you might include over a flawed person like Samson?
3. Read Judges Chapter 13. What advantages does Samson have as he enters the world? How does God give hope that God gives to Samson's parents in verse 5? What does it say about God that in the midst of a people turning away from Him, He still provides hope?
4. Consider everything that Samson has going for him. Can you think of any other biblical figure that was blessed in such amazing ways? Why do you think it all went wrong? Why did the life of Samson take an unexpected turn when he seemed to have everything going for him?
5. We learn about one of the key weaknesses in the life of Samson in Judges 14:1-2. This weakness will be used against Samson in Chapter 14 and 20 years later with Delilah. It seems that everybody is aware of Samson's weakness in this story. How are our weaknesses still being used against us in a similar fashion?
6. Why do you think Samson rejects godly counsel? Who are some people that you have in your life that speak truth when needed? Why can it be difficult to embrace their advice at times?
7. The arrogance of Samson leads to him embracing a sense of entitlement. How can we avoid acting and living entitled lives?
8. Puritan thinkers and theologians saw many similarities between the life of Samson and Jesus.
 - Samson was rejected by his countrymen
 - Samson was arrested by his own people.
 - Samson was handed over to certain death.
 - Samson didn't resist his own people when they betrayed him.
 - Samson in his victory delivered his people. Jesus in His victory delivered His people.
9. What is one thing that God is speaking to you through this study today? If you are on your own, take a moment to write it down, pray about it, and then commit to sharing that with one person this week. If you are with a small group, share your answers together and then pray for each other.

[Next week we continue the "Flawed Heroes" series by looking at the 2nd part of the story of Samson in Judges 16. Read that passage ahead of time and pray that God speaks to us through this story.]