

## SAMSON'S RIDDLE (Judges 14)

A. **Many lessons** can be gleaned from the Biblical record of Samson's life.

1. He was an impetuous man (impulsive, rash, hasty, hotheaded, & reckless) driven to act on emotions.
2. One minute he could be gentle & affectionate toward a beautiful woman (16), & the next minute he could be cruel & heartless, as when he slew 1000 men with the jawbone of a donkey & then set their cornfields on fire (15).

[Chapter 14 in the book of Judges lays out several good life lessons for us demonstrated in the life of Samson.]

### I. GOD'S ABSOLUTE POWER CAN & WILL OVERRULE MAN'S DESIRES (14:1-4)

A. **Samson** had a lust; he had an unlawful desire.

1. First, his desire was more important to him than his parent's wishes.
  - a. How could they be pleasant, friendly, warm & amiable to the LORD's enemy?
  - b. And what about the children of this marriage; would they be inclined to serve the LORD or the idol gods of the Philistines?
2. Secondly, his desire was more important to him than God's Law (Exo 34:10-16).
  - a. He didn't seem to care that he was offending God, & that he might be entangled & led away from God by the customs of the Philistines.

B. **God's desire** to employ Samson as a Deliverer of His people overruled the unholy pining (infatuation, obsession, yearning, longing) of Samson.

1. God knows our innermost desires, & whether they are good or evil cannot alter the fact that God can accomplish His will either way.

- b. Nobody could have guessed it, not even Samson; he had no idea that he was about to do the LORD a favor.

- c. And in the process of carrying out God's will, Samson would suffer greatly as a direct result of his sins.

C. **A few questions** come to mind as we consider why God would choose a man like Samson to deliver God's people from their enemies.

1. Why choose a man who wants to marry into that race of people?

2. Why choose a man so driven by unlawful passions.

3. Why not choose a man of integrity & high moral character (a David like figure) who loved honesty, truth & the Law of God?

- a. The answers are in the Sovereignty of God who knew Samson from the inside out, & who knew that he was the right man for this job.

[**Wouldn't** we rather carry out God's will as obedient rather than disobedient children? **Because** if we had to suffer, at least we would know it was for the right cause.]

## II. THE LION IN THE WAY (14:5-6)

A. **Samson** made this trip with his parents, but they were unaware of what had occurred.

1. Since they were not on the best of terms, Samson may have kept his distance.

B. **There are lessons** for us in this dangerous situation that will help us understand the work of Satan.

1. He CAN approach us when we least expect it.

- a. I'm not sure about Samson, but most of us would have tried to avoid this lion.
- b. But lions don't generally tell you where they are so that you can avoid them.
- c. Satan operates against us in the same way, & so we must always be on the lookout for him (1 Pet 5:8-9).
- d. Satan can take on the unexpected form of ministers in the church (2 Cor 11:13-15).
- e. He can go on the attack after a new Christian has repented of sin (2 Cor 2:11).

– These are unexpected situations.

2. He MAY attack us while we're on a pleasure trip with our family.

- a. Samson went to seek a wife & he met a lion instead.
- b. Satan can bring upon us our greatest trial in the hour of our greatest anticipation of joy.
- c. Earthly joys are no safeguard against spiritual or physical danger (1 Kings 18-19; Gen 39; Acts 6:8-9; 9:22-23).

3. He WILL devour us when our heart is bent or inclined to do some evil.

- a. Let's face it, Samson was up to no-good; no matter what kind of spin we try to put on his plan, it should have never been considered (Read Exo 34:10-16).

- b. The lesson is that we too will meet Satan occasionally on the path of our service to Christ, but we can expect to confront Him every moment of life if we take the pathway sin.

**Gen 4:7** – If you do well, will you not be accepted? And ***if you do not do well, sin lies at the door. And its desire is for you,*** but you should rule over it."

**Jonah 1:1-4** – Now the word of the LORD came to Jonah the son of Amittai, saying, 2 "Arise, go to Nineveh, that great city, & cry out against it; for their wickedness has come up before Me." 3 But ***Jonah arose to flee to Tarshish from the presence of the LORD.*** He went down to Joppa, & found a ship going to Tarshish; so he paid the fare, & went down into it, to go with them to Tarshish from the presence of the LORD. 4 ***But the LORD sent out a great wind on the sea, & there was a mighty tempest on the sea, so that the ship was about to be broken up.***

[Samson won this battle against the lion, & by doing so we may learn the nearest way for our victory over Satan.]

### III. THE VICTORY OVER THE LION

- A. **Samson** had nothing in his hand with which to defeat the lion.

1. In his case, he had no weapon because of the regulations imposed by the Philistines.
2. Similarly, in our spiritual warfare we have nothing in our hands.
  - a. The limited commission (**Matt 10:6-10**).
  - b. Our weapons & armor are not designed for carnal warfare (**2 Cor 10:3-5**).
3. We are not to trust the arm of flesh ever & for any reason (religious, political, social).

B. **Samson's** strength for his victory over the lion came from the Spirit of the LORD.

1. God provided the might, but Samson had to put up the fight (**Eph 6:10-18**).

2. For the Christian, God has provided the armor & the weapon, but we must put on the armor, pick up the weapon & put them to use.
3. Satan can defeat us while we are in full battle array if we don't use the armor & the weapon God had provided for us.

C. **Samson** concealed his victory over the lion.

1. I don't know that he did this out of a sense of modesty, but it's a lesson for us.
2. Did you come here today to brag about some victory over Satan last week? – I doubt it!
3. "It's better to be more than we seem, than to seem more than we are" ([Gal 6:14](#); [Eph 2:9](#)).
4. Remember that the source of our victory over Satan is the strength & power of the Lord.

[We never have any grounds for boasting in our spiritual battle against the roaring lion.]

IV. **SAMSON'S RIDDLE (14:7-14)**

A. **Samson** was setting forth the principle that he saw illustrated in his tangle with the lion.

1. The principle: The thing that appears to be harsh & destructive may be found to contain sources of life & happiness.

B. Examples of the principle:

1. Nature's destructive forces prepare the way for fresh new life: forest & grass fires renew the old soil with new fertility; rotting leaves of autumn nourish the blooming flowers of spring; products of decay are food for new life.

2. National revolutions can introduce a better more peaceful order in a society: as in the case of our own nation in securing its liberty, & later the liberty of the slaves.
3. Painful surgeries can lead to an extended & better quality of life.
4. The work of Jesus was harsh & destructive by His own admission ([Matt 10:34-39](#)), but it had to be done before the gospel of peace could come into the hearts of men.
5. Family & local church discipline has to be done in order that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord ([1 Cor 5:5](#); [Heb 12:11](#)).

## CLOSING

God's Absolute Power & Our cooperation  
will result in certain victory for both parties ([Rom 8:31-32](#))!