

The Strongest and Weakest Man In the Bible

When you think of the strongest man in the Bible, you no doubt think of Samson. Samson was one of the strongest men of all time. We have thrilled at his great feats of strength as recorded in the Scriptures. His strength has made him one of the better known characters in the Old Testament. His name has become synonymous with strength.

However, Samson also had a weak side. While he was a physical giant, he was, at times, a spiritual midget. In many respects, he is one of the weakest men in the Bible. Samson's weaknesses kept him from being the deliverer he could and should have been.

I. THE STRONGEST MAN IN THE BIBLE

- A. What feats of strength Samson displayed!
 1. He killed a young lion with his bare hands (14:5, 6).
 2. He used foxes and firebrands to destroy the Philistines' fields of grain (15:4, 5).
 3. He broke ropes and killed thousands with a jawbone (15:14-16).
 4. He pulled up the gate of a city (16:3), etc.
- B. Samson got his strength from God (13:4, 5, 25). Why did God need a strong deliverer?
 1. The deliverer had to meet Israel's needs.
 2. The Philistines were a cruel, oppressive people who understood brute strength.

II. THE WEAKEST MAN IN THE BIBLE

- A. Samson was weak in many ways:
 1. He liked to show off his strength.
 - a. God raised him up to be a leader of the Israelite nation, but he apparently saw himself as a spiritual "Lone Ranger."
 - b. Vanity and pride is always a weakness (Prov. 21:4; 16:5; Rom. 12:3; Matt. 23:12; 1 Pet. 5:5, 6; Prov. 16:18).
 2. He could not control his temper.
 - a. He could destroy things and men; he could not control himself.
 - b. We need to learn to control our tempers (Eccl. 7:9; Eph. 4:26; Col. 3:12,13; Prov. 16:32). True strength lies in strength of character, not in bulging muscles.

3. He was weak morally.
 4. He had a weakness for women who were not God's children.
 - a. His passion for Philistine women ultimately brought about his downfall.
 - b. We need to encourage our children to date and marry Christians.
- B. The result: He was forsaken by God!
1. The story: 16:4-20. Especially note verse 20.
 2. What caused Samson to lose his strength? Not a haircut, but disobedience!
 3. Refusing to yield to God's authority brings even the strongest man to the dust.

III. THE FINAL SCENE: A CHILD OF GOD CAN COME BACK!

- A. How sad it would be if the story ended with Samson's weakness! The last scene in Samson's life (16:22-30) is the greatest of all.
 1. All of Samson's pride, vanity, and shallowness were gone (note v. 28). Samson accomplished in his death what he never accomplished in his life. His unselfish gesture inspired the people, united them, and gave them strength.
 2. Thus Samson is pictured as a hero of faith (Heb. 11:32). He had a faith that "came back."
- B. How wonderful it is that we can come back!
 1. "Come backs" are thrilling in sports and other secular activities. How much more thrilling they are in our spiritual lives! (Gal. 6:1; James 5:19, 20; Jer. 3:22).
 2. You and I can come back to God (Acts 8:22; James 5:16; 1 Jn. 1:9).

CONCLUSION

- Let us learn from the story of Samson's life.
- A. From his strength. Let us realize our bodies are the temple of God and treat them as such. Let us develop inner strength (1 Cor. 16:13).
 - B. From his weaknesses. Let us guard against the things that brought about his downfall.
 - C. From his final triumph. Let us learn that we can return to God and He will receive us.