



LIFE LESSONS FROM OLD TESTAMENT HEROES WEEK #8 SAMSON

In this sermon series on Courageous Faith, we have seen how God often chooses to display His glory through the most unlikely and unqualified candidates. Last week, we saw how God used Jephthah despite his difficult past and challenging family life.

Jephthah's life began with a big disadvantage, but Samson's life began with a big advantage. The Lord had a special mission for Samson from the day he was born. He gave Samson unique powers, both physical and spiritual, to fulfill his calling as the leader and protector of the Israelites.

Although Samson had God's favor and would probably have been voted "most likely to succeed" in high school, he was also most likely to fail because he lived a life of sin and squandered the gifts God had given him. He also did not learn from his mistakes but, rather, fell deeper and deeper into a web of temptation and lust.

He took God's blessing and used it for his own glory. He pursued his own personal satisfaction rather than dedicating his life and gifts to the Lord, yet God still had mercy on him at the end of his life. He cried out to God and repented in his weakest moment, and God redeemed him. In that moment, Samson was offered the free gift of God's grace, despite all the ways he had strayed from God.

MOST LIKELY TO SUCCEED – SAMSON

Judges 13:2-5, 24-25 Hebrews 11:32-39 Hebrews 12:1-2

Let's look deeper into Samson's life and see what else scripture could reveal to us.

1. What is the significance of Samson's miraculous birth? What other stories in scripture begin with a miraculous birth?
2. How do you think Samson's story fits into our theme of God using unlikely people to do His will?
3. What do you think was the true secret of Samson's strength? Was it really his hair, or was it the power of God's Spirit?
4. If Samson was such a large and strong man, as we typically assume him to be, why do you think people were so surprised by his incredible strength? What if he was an ordinary looking man, making his strength clearly miraculous?
5. When we read this story, there is a great deal of violence as a result of Samson's strength, which was a gift from God. How can we reconcile God's character of peace with the use of violence upon the Philistines through Samson's strength?
6. Do you believe God orchestrated the conflicts between the Israelites and the Philistines? What do you believe is the element of God's sovereignty in this story and where do you think people were acting outside of God's will?
7. Samson lived a life full of sin, which "blinded" him from his need for God's grace. Is there any sin or setback in your life which is holding you back from receiving the free gift of God's grace? If so, take some time now to reflect upon your life, repent for your sin, and receive that wonderful gift from God. Feel the comforting presence of the Holy Spirit as you step into the freedom of God's grace.