

SAMSON

THE WORLD'S STRONGEST MAN

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SUMMARY | Born to deliver his people, Samson's birth was announced by an angel and accompanied with great expectations—only to be followed by superhuman strength, swagger, scandal, and stubbornness. Jesus's birth was also announced by an angel and came with great expectations. What are we to make of the similarities and differences between Samson and Jesus? Join us on *Discover the Word* to see what we can learn from these two born to save their people.

This Week's Discussion Questions

1. The book of Judges begins where Joshua, the book of war, ends. Some backroads of a Promised Land remain to be conquered (*Judges 1:1-18*). Even though God assures the men of Judah that He'll help them, they forge an alliance with the men of Simeon and then, like the other tribes, are not able to completely drive out the residents of an already-occupied Canaan (1:19-36). Instead, they make covenants with the people of the land and do not destroy the pagan altars (2:1-5). Why do you think the people of Israel failed to obey God and made human covenants instead? How do we do what is convenient rather than trust in God?
2. Following the passing of Joshua (2:6-9), a younger generation is marked by ignorance and idolatry (2:11-13). Without a king, everyone does what is right in their own eyes (17:6; 21:25). So God uses enemies to bring His people to the end of themselves—and back to Him (2:14-15). This happens again and again as God raises up twelve heroes to rescue the twelve tribes of Israel from their enemies whenever they cry for help (2:16-23). Known as judges, these national champions are not jurists as we think of judges. They are saviors raised up by God to rescue His people from their enemies. Samson is the twelfth hero. Why did God continue to rescue His people after they disobeyed time and time again? How does God continue to rescue you when you disobey?
3. Destined to be holy (set apart) and known as a Nazarite, Samson's life is marked by the hand of God. His enemies are confused by his words and even more so by the amazing things he does. And “by faith,” he accomplishes more in the moment of his tragic death at the hands of his enemies, than in his life. What are we to make of Samson who, like Jesus, is a different kind of judge?
4. Samson is like Jesus, and yet they are so very different. Read the following verses to compare and contrast their two lives and missions.
 - Born for a different kind of rescue (*Judges 13:2-5; Matthew 1:18-21*)
 - Led by the Spirit with different results (*Judges 13:25-14:1; Matthew 4:1-11*)
 - Given a different kind of strength (*Judges 14:5-6; Matthew 4:23-24*)
 - Loves women with a different kind of love (*Judges 16:4, 15; John 11:1-7*)
 - Uses different kind of riddles (*Judges 14:10-18; Matthew 13:10-15*)
 - Defeats enemies in different ways (*Judges 15:14-17; 1 Corinthians 1:23-25*)
 - Suffers for different reasons (*Judges 16:17-24; 1 Peter 3:17-18*)
 - Dies a tragic death with different outcomes (*Judges 16:28-30; John 3:16-17*)

Challenge

Samson had a specific mission from God. So did Jesus. God also has given us a mission in the form of the Great Commission. Read *Matthew 28:16–20* and name or list three practical ways you can work on your mission this week.

Commit To Memory

“She will give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus,
because he will save his people from their sins”.

Matthew 1:21 (NIV)

Prayer

Father, thank You for a story that helps us see our need
of the long-awaited Son who—in Your wisdom and love,
is the kind of Judge, Savior, Teacher, and Hero we need.

Amen.

Notes