



A Spiritual Encouragement Message

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The Source of Strength

by Oscar Velazquez

When you read the story of Samson in the book of Judges chapters thirteen through sixteen, you simply can't ignore Samson's reproved lifestyle and bad behavior. Samson simply does not seem to fit properly in the list of those who obtained a good report through faith recorded as great examples in the epistle to the Hebrew Christians of the first century (Hebrews chapter 11).

Samson was the strongest man in the Bible physically speaking, but he was also the weakest man morally speaking. Samson had the moral of a street dog in heat.

Our great strength in one area does not make up for our weakness in another area.

Most people assume that Samson's strength came from his long hair, but that was not the case. I have seen way too many long-haired wimpy, weak guys. Samson's great strength came from the Spirit of the Lord (Judges 14:5-6, 14:19, 15:14) according to God's mercy towards Israel. Nazarites were not physically strong, that was not a part of their vow. Samson's long hair just happened to be the only part of his vow that he kept for a longer time (Judges 13:5, 16:17,22). Samson was probably not even muscular looking. Most likely he appeared as regular as any other guy. Notice that they always asked where his great strength lieth? (Judges 16:5-6).

What was obvious to everybody was Samson's weakness. His greatest weakness was his uncontrolled lust for pagan women (Judges 14:1-3, 16:1, 4). You see, you can be as little as the desire that controls you, or as big as the aspiration that will inspire you. Samson's worst enemy was not the Philistines, his worst enemy was himself. "Keep a close watch on yourself and on the teaching. Persist in this, for by so doing you will save both yourself and your hearers." (1 Timothy 4:16 ESV).

Contrary to the other Judges, Samson was an army of one, he simply had no friends to blame for his shortcomings. Samson's eyes drove him far from God in his sins. "Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world—the desires of the flesh and the desires of the eyes and pride of life—is not from the Father but is from the world. And the world is passing away along with its desires, but whoever does the will of God abides forever" (1 John 2:15-17 ESV). Samson suffered the consequences of following the lust of his eyes.

(Judges 16:20-21). Only being blinded to the things of this world allowed Samson to look for God at the end of his life. (Judges 16:28-31).

I don't want to say the phrase "It is never too late to turn to God" because it's contradictory to the Scriptures (Revelation 6:15-16, Hebrews 3:7-11) to quote a couple of examples. But I will say repent and turn fully to God while you still can. That is how we can relate Judges 13 through 16 with Hebrews 11:32. After all, Samson believed in God thanks to his parents and he knew that God rewarded those who seek Him (Heb.11:6).

Samson is no different than the Apostle Paul or than you and I. Samson, Paul, you and I can appropriate these following words. "For I do not understand my own actions. For I do not do what I want, but I do the very thing I hate. Now if I do what I do not want, I agree with the law, that it is good. So now it is no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells within me. For I know that nothing good dwells in me, that is, in my flesh. For I have the desire to do what is right, but not the ability to carry it out. For I do not do the good I want, but the evil I do not want is what I keep on doing. Now if I do what I do not want, it is no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells within me. So, I find it to be a law that when I want to do right, evil lies close at hand. For I delight in the law of God, in my inner being, but I see in my members another law waging war against the law of my mind and making me captive to the law of sin that dwells in my members. Wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death?" (Romans 7:15-24 ESV). The only difference is that Samson did not have the answer that Paul, you, and I now have. "Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord! So then, I myself serve the law of God with my mind, but with my flesh I serve the law of sin" (Romans 7:25 ESV).

Paul's main source of strength was the Lord. "I can do all things through Him who strengthens me" (Philippians 4:13 ESV). "But He said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness." Therefore I will boast all the more gladly of my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may rest upon me. For the sake of Christ, then, I am content with weaknesses, insults, hardships, persecutions, and calamities. For when I am weak, then I am strong" (2 Corinthians 12:9-10 ESV).

Do yourself an eternal favor and allow Christ to be your source of strength.