

# Sunday School Lesson

**LESSON FOR JULY 31**  
**Samson: Strength and Weakness**  
**Golden Text: "Be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might"**  
 Eph. 6:10

## THE LESSON AS A WHOLE

**Approach to the Lesson**  
 In many respects, the story of Samson is one of the saddest in the Bible. He began so well. He gained many mighty victories. But he failed so terribly because he had not learned, as Paul did, to keep under his body and bring it into subjection (1 Cor. 9:27). Therefore he became a castaway for a time, though restored at the very last. His biography is pregnant with instruction for all who profess to know God and seek to serve Him in any capacity. It is a solemn warning against playing with sin in any form.

The parents of Samson were godly people and their deep concern for the welfare of their son is evident in the earnest question, "How shall we order the child?"

From the time of his physical maturity Samson proved himself incapable of controlling his body and holding his physical appetites in check. He was a brawny man of tremendous strength, but overly self-indulgent. A Nazirite in outward

appearance, he knew little of real heart-separation to God. Had he been as strong in spirit as he was in body, he could have accomplished great things for the glory of Jehovah and the blessing of his people. As it was, his efforts were sporadic and not of lasting benefit. Yet he was, after all, a man of faith (Heb. 11:32) but in him the struggle between flesh and spirit (Gal. 5:17) was painfully manifest.

### The Historical Setting

Samson's life story covers about forty years from 1161 to 1120 B.C. for twenty years he judged Israel, and through him many striking deliverances were wrought, but there was no permanent victory. His death left the twelve tribes in anarchy and confusion, from which they were eventually freed by Samuel, Saul, and David.

### Verse by Verse

Judges 14:5—"The vineyards of Timnath." Do not overlook Chapter 13 and the previous verses of Chapter 14. Samson went to Timnath to woo a Philistine young woman, much to the disgust and chagrin of his parents. However, God overruled even this in order to bring Samson to the front as the champion of Israel's liberties. A lion roaring against him did not frighten him, but furnished occasion to display his prowess.

Verse 6—"He had nothing in his hand." This incident shows what Samson might have been, had his reliance always been upon "the Spirit of the Lord."

Chap. 15:11—"As they did unto me, so have I done unto them." The intervening verses tell of Samson's unfortunate marriage, his riddle, and some minor victories, which served to arouse the Philistine host against him, and filled Israel with fear.

Verse 12—"We are come down to bind thee." The men of Judah demanded that he permit them to surrender him to the Philistines. He

stipulated that they must agree not to fall upon him if he acquiesced. Verse 13—"They bound him... and brought him." They agreed to his demand, and so he permitted them to bind him fast with two new cords, and thus they led him to the Philistine army, a hero rejected by his own people, who failed to realize that he was sent of God to be their deliverer.

Verse 14—"The Spirit of the Lord came mightily upon him." When the Philistine horde shouted with glee as the captive was about to be handed over to them, the Spirit of God fell in power on the Nazirite-Judge, the cords were snapped asunder, and snatching up a "jawbone of an ass" lying upon the ground (v.15) Samson smote the enemy so that he put them all to rout after slaying a thousand men.

Chap. 16:15—"Thou hast mocked me these three times." We gather from Chapter 15:20 to 16:3 that for some twenty years Samson lived on a higher plane, and was used of God to bless his people, as their judge and leader. Then came the sad failure in connection with Delilah, of whom he became enamored.

Verse 16—"She pressed him daily." With constant urging she begged him to prove his love for her by betraying the secret of the Lord, until his determination was undermined.

Verse 17—"He told her all his heart." At last he revealed the story of his Naziriteship (and this in a harlot's house!).

Verse 18—"The Philistines... brought money." Delilah, with all her blandishments and outward charm, was but a black-hearted adventuress, ready to sell her paramour for money.

Verse 19—"She made him sleep upon her knees." What a comedown for God's Nazirite servant!

Verse 20—"As at other times before." The backslider seldom knows his real condition. Aroused by Delilah's cry, Samson went out to "shake" himself, that is, to exercise his strength as before, but his power was gone, though he knew it not.

Verse 21—"Put out his eyes." The one-time mighty deliverer had no strength left to cope with the wary Philistines, but was overpowered, blinded, fettered, and cast into prison. From verse 22 to 31 we get the end of the story.

### The Heart of the Lesson

Trifling with sin is a terrible mistake, and will bring dire consequences as last. Had Samson walked before God in self-judgment, keeping under his body and bringing it into subjection (1 Cor. 9:27), he would undoubtedly have been the greatest of all the judges of Israel. As it was, because of self-indulgence, he became a "castaway," that is, he was set aside as a servant, disapproved of God, and obliged to learn in bitterness of soul, in the house of bondage, the folly of his course. He stands out upon the page of holy Scripture as a beacon light to all who would serve the Lord and his people, calling them to abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul" (1 Pet. 2:11). A holy minister is a tremendous weapon in the hand of God, but an unholy man, who seeks to lead in divine things, will have to prove that God "will be sanctified in them that come nigh" (Lev. 10:3). He will not cover up iniquity in those who profess his name.

### MINISTER VISITS CLAREMONT

The Hon. Gordon Conant, Attorney-General in the Hepburn cabinet, was a guest of several of the party stalwarts in the village of Claremont one evening last week. There was nothing official or public about the minister's appearance in the village. It was just a quiet get-together of the members and a few workers. Mr. Conant has and is conducting his office with the utmost vigor, such as has not been surpassed by any of his predecessors.

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W. Davey, 8 Stanton Ave.

Many happy returns of the day to our friend Fred Haight whose birthday falls on July 31, also to T. J. Feren and Charles Feasby who celebrated their birthdays on July 17th.

Distin McDonald was in the city attending Masonic Grand Lodge. We suppose he was getting his pencil sharpened up as tax time is just around the corner.

We sincerely regret the passing of William Norton, member of a well known family of the township of Uxbridge.

We congratulate The Tribune on sending a representative to the Newspaper Convention to be held in Vancouver in August. As the editor will participate in the program the town will get some added publicity.

Price Pugh, former Goodwood lad, is now in business for himself at Stouffville and we wish him success. He is a son of Alf Pugh.

We are pleased that our old friend Edd Davis is strolling the streets of Stouffville again.

Mr. and Mrs. C. Meader visited at Keswick on Saturday.

Mr. and Mrs. Alex. Brown were in Ashburn on Sunday.

Mr. and Mrs. Bewell of Unionville were guests with Mr. and Mrs. George Lee.

Mr. and Mrs. A. Brown visited R. Brown Stouffville on Wednesday last.

Mrs. P. La Fraugh is visiting in Toronto.

Thank you, Road Commissioner for oiling the Stouffville road, a good job well done.

Mr. and Mrs. W. Davey attended the Women's Institute picnic at H. Harper's home, on Wednesday last. A nice gathering of some 60 persons. Games and races for the children. Ice cream galore. Rev. and Mrs. Holmes were there.

Have you seen the new permanent platform and stage in the Community Park—Good work.

Folks attending the Goodwood Sports Day will be well looked after for lunch and meals by the Women's Institute and with the new stage and we hear the hydro line may be put in by the time of the Sports Day.

To the Norton family we send our sympathy.

Mr. and Mrs. Robert Feaster are holidaying at Balmy Beach near Penetang.

Mr. P. H. Davey is spending holidays at Island Grove, Lake Simcoe.

Mrs. E. J. Hill of Newmarket is visiting her sister Miss Davey at Island Grove where the Daveys spent the weekend.

Carson Pollock who met with a serious accident near Keswick is now out of his cast and is im-

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proving each day.

Mr. and Mrs. E. J. Davey visited the Correspondent on their way to Goderich and Palmerston.

The 'Down on the Farm,' poetry of last week's issue was very interesting to Toronto readers.

Patronize the Women's Institute booth at the Sports Day at Goodwood, on the grounds also see you have your tickets for the street dance after the entertainment.

Goodwood Cemetery Decoration Day was one of the best also Toronto folk enjoyed the quartette from Bethesda. The Scribe's request for a two minute silence in respect to the late Isaac Wagg also our friend Mr. McCullough was much appreciated by both families.

The explanation of Mr. McCullough's gift was in accordance with his friend's wishes, and for this space of time taken. The Correspondent wishes to thank the Trustees for their kindness for this request.

Goodwood Sport Day stickers on autos were noticed in Sutton, Richmond Hill and Toronto streets this past week.

Miss Greta Hatley has returned from her holidays.

Sorry our friend Mrs. George Lee is still on the sick list. We hope she will soon be well again.

It is expected our friend Mr. Vaughan Bluman will take Rev. Mr. Holmes' work over on Sunday, August 28th, as our friend Mr. Holmes is anxious to have a little holiday during the week.

Tribune advertising pays.

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