

God's Underdogs (Samson): Top Dog to Underdog

Judges 13-16

📖 Judges 13:5b (NIV) “No razor may be used on his head, because the boy is to be a Nazirite, set apart to God from birth, and he will begin the deliverance of Israel from the hands of the Philistines.”

Indulgence leads to weakness.

📖 Judges 14:1–3 (NIV) “Samson went down to Timnah and saw there a young Philistine woman. ² When he returned, he said to his father and mother, “I have seen a Philistine woman in Timnah; now get her for me as my wife.” ³ His father and mother replied, “Isn’t there an acceptable woman among your relatives or among all our people? Must you go to the uncircumcised Philistines to get a wife?” But Samson said to his father, “Get her for me. She’s the right one for me.”

📖 Judges 14:4 (NIV) “(His parents did not know that this was from the LORD, who was seeking an occasion to confront the Philistines; for at that time they were ruling over Israel.)”

Defiance leads to weakness.

📖 Judges 14:5-6 (NIV) “Samson went down to Timnah together with his father and mother. As they approached the vineyards of Timnah, suddenly a young lion came roaring toward him. ⁶ The Spirit of the LORD came upon him in power so that he tore the lion apart with his bare hands as he might have torn a young goat. But he told neither his father nor his mother what he had done.”

📖 Numbers 6:2b–4 (NIV) “If a man or woman wants to make a special vow, a vow of separation to the LORD as a Nazirite, ³ he must abstain from wine and other fermented drink and must not drink vinegar made from wine or from other fermented drink. He must not drink grape juice or eat grapes or raisins. ⁴ As long as he is a Nazirite, he must not eat anything that comes from the grapevine, not even the seeds or skins.”


📖 Judges 14:7-9 (NIV) “Then he went down and talked with the woman, and he liked her. ⁸ Some time later, when he went back to marry her, he turned aside to look at the lion’s carcass. In it was a swarm of bees and some honey, ⁹ which he scooped out with his hands and ate as he went along. When he rejoined his parents, he gave them some, and they too ate it. But he did not tell them that he had taken the honey from the lion’s carcass.”

📖 Numbers 6:6 (NIV) “Throughout the period of his separation to the LORD he must not go near a dead body.”


Vengeance leads to weakness.

📖 Judges 15:1–2 (NIV) “Later on, at the time of wheat harvest, Samson took a young goat and went to visit his wife. He said, “I’m going to my wife’s room.” But her father would not let him go in. ² “I was so sure you thoroughly hated her,” he said, “that I gave her to your friend. Isn’t her younger sister more attractive? Take her instead.”

📖 Judges 15:3–5 (NIV) “Samson said to them, “This time I have a right to get even with the Philistines; I will really harm them.” ⁴ So he went out and caught three hundred foxes and tied them tail to tail in pairs. He then fastened a torch to every pair of tails, ⁵ lit the torches and let the foxes loose in the standing grain of the Philistines. He burned up the shocks and standing grain, together with the vineyards and olive groves.”


 Judges 15:6–8a (NIV) “When the Philistines asked, “Who did this?” they were told, “Samson, the Timnite’s son-in-law, because his wife was given to his friend.” So the Philistines went up and burned her and her father to death. ⁷ Samson said to them, “Since you’ve acted like this, I won’t stop until I get my revenge on you.” ⁸ He attacked them viciously and slaughtered many of them.”


Arrogance/Ignorance leads to weakness.


 Judges 16:4–6 (NIV) “Some time later, he fell in love with a woman in the Valley of Sorek whose name was Delilah. ⁵ The rulers of the Philistines went to her and said, “See if you can lure him into showing you the secret of his great strength and how we can overpower him so we may tie him up and subdue him. Each one of us will give you eleven hundred shekels of silver. ⁶ So Delilah said to Samson, “Tell me the secret of your great strength and how you can be tied up and subdued.”


1. Judges 16:7-9 Arrogance Ignorance
2. Judges 16: 10-12 Arrogance Ignorance
3. Judges 16:13-15 Arrogance Ignorance
4. Judges 16: 19-20 Arrogance Ignorance

God’s absence means weakness.

 Judges 16:19b–20 (NIV) “...his strength left him. ²⁰ Then she called, “Samson, the Philistines are upon you!” He awoke from his sleep and thought, “I’ll go out as before and shake myself free.” But he did not know that the LORD had left him.”

 Proverbs 27:12 (NIV) “The prudent see danger and take refuge, but the simple keep going and suffer for it.”

 Judges 16:21 (NIV) “Then the Philistines seized him, gouged out his eyes and took him down to Gaza. Binding him with bronze shackles, they set him to grinding in the prison.”

 Judges 16:22, 28-30 (NIV) “But the hair on his head began to grow again...²⁸ Then Samson prayed to the LORD, “O Sovereign LORD, remember me. O God, please strengthen me just once more, and let me with one blow get revenge on the Philistines for my two eyes.” ²⁹ Then Samson reached toward the two central pillars on which the temple stood. Bracing himself against them, his right hand on the one and his left hand on the other, ³⁰ Samson said, “Let me die with the Philistines!” Then he pushed with all his might, and down came the temple on the rulers and all the people in it. Thus he killed many more when he died than while he lived.”

When your family looks at you, do they see a person in control or out of control? Would others say that you are careless or careful? Is what people see an accurate representation of you? Do you keep the vows that you make? What part of Samson’s story most resonates with you? Do you think that you would be immediately aware of the LORD’s absence if He were to leave you?

