



Shepherd's Path

A Shepherd's Personal Devotions

God is Our Rescuer Series, Lesson 24

Lesson Title: Your Strength Comes From the Lord

Take Home Point: God arms me with strength.

Warm-Up:

In the months preceding January 1986, the Space Shuttle *Challenger* was carefully prepared for launch. Computer systems were verified, the spacecraft and launch vehicle were checked out, ground and shuttle crews were trained, and the mission payload was placed in the cargo bay. Everything was ready. But as we all know, the shuttle was destroyed in an explosion during the launch because one component failed. It didn't matter how strong all the other parts were or how complete the preparations; the crew and the ship were lost and the mission failed because of the weakness of one small part.

Read: Judges 14-16

Observation (What happened?):

Was Samson required to live a good and righteous life before he was used by the Lord to be judge of the Israelites for 20 years?

Did Samson know the true source of his strength?

Interpretation (What does it mean?):

What was Samson's real weakness in his heart?

Why do you think God continued to bless Samson in spite of how he lived and sometimes used his strength?

Insight:

The temptation is to disparage and look down on Samson for what might have been. "If only he had focused his life and great strength on serving the Lord instead of himself, what might he have accomplished?" But like many characters in the Old Testament, Samson is not so unlike you or me, and his story opens our eyes to examples of God's faithfulness and sovereignty. No matter what Samson did, God never forsook him, and God will never forsake us. How often do we let our own weakness get in the way of living for God? Yet God is faithful to us, and will restore fellowship with us every time we call on him in repentance (read 2 Timothy 2:11-13). Samson used his strength in vengeful ways, but for 20 years the Lord used him to lead Israel against the Philistines' oppression. God is still sovereign, and he uses our failures to draw us to himself and to help others (read Genesis 50:20). How good and wise is the God of Samson, you, and me!

Application (What does it mean to me?):

What strength is God calling you to use for him and his people?

What does the life of Samson tell you about the kind of people God can and does use?