Samson - Gifted by God Broken by Sin

Primary Text: Judges 13 - 16
Focal Text (Used Throughout the Lesson)
Judges 13:3-5; 14:6 -9; 16:1; 16:20 & 28)

Introduction
Samson is one of the most gifted judges, but also one of the most self-destructive.

- Samson is introduced before his birth as **divinely chosen deliverer (Judges 13:3-5)**
- He is set apart as a Nazirite from the womb
- Yet his story ends not in victory, but in chains

Samson teaches us that **calling does not cancel responsiblity**, and **strength does not replace obedience.**

Samson's Calling: Set Apart by God (Judges 13:3-5)

- **A Miraculous Birth and Divine Purpose -** An angel appears to Samson's parents. **His purpose:** "He shall begin to save Isreal from the hand of the Philistines"
- **The Nazirite Vow -** Samson was set apart by God, Not drink wine or strong drink; Not to touch dead bodies, and not to cut his hair

Samson's calling was **not self-chosen** - it was God-ordained. Calling is a gift; faithfulness is a choice.

Samson's Strengths: Empowered by the Spirit (Judges 14:6)

- **Supernatural Strength** - Kills a lion with his bare hands, defeats 30 Philistines, kills 1,000 men with a donkey's jawbone
- **Courage and Fearlessness** - Willing to confront Isreal's enemies, unafraid of overwhelming odds.

Samson's strength was **not in his hair, but in God's Spirit**. God can powerfully use flawed people - but power is not the same at maturity.

Samson's Weaknesses: Character Failures (Judges 14:8-9 & 16:1)

- **Weakness #1: Lust and Poor Choices (Judges 16:1)** - chooses Philistine women despite God's law, driven by desire and not discernment. Samson's eyes led him where his calling should not have gone.
- **Weakness #2: Disregard for God's Commands (Judges 14:8-9)** - Touches dead bodies, hosts drinking feasts, treats his Nazirite vow casually. Samson broke the spirit of the vow long before he broke the symbol of it.
- **Weakness #3: Pride and Playing with Sin (Judges 16:20)** - Treats sin like a game, flirts with danger (Delilah), assumes God will always bail him out. The greatest danger is not losing strength - **but losing God's presence.**

Samson's Fall and Final Act (Judges 16:28)

- **Loss Strength and Freedom** - hair cut, eyes gouged out, reduced to a prisoner and entertainer. This mirrors his spiritual state - blind, bound, and powerless.
- **A Moment of Repentance -** God grants one final act of strength and Samson destroys the Philistine temple. This is not a triumphant ending - **it is a tragic mercy.**