

JUDGES 14:1-4
NO RESPECT!

Please turn in your Bibles this morning to Judges chapter 14 as we are looking at a very interesting Judge in Israel, Samson!

If you remember from our last study, God had called Samson before he was even born, while he was still in his mother's womb.

We see this in Judges 13:3-5, where we are told, **“And the Angel of the Lord appeared to the woman and said to her, ‘Indeed now, you are barren and have borne no children, but you shall conceive and bear a son. Now therefore, please be careful not to drink wine or similar drink, and not to eat anything unclean. For behold, you shall conceive and bear a son. And no razor shall come upon his head, for the child shall be a Nazirite to God from the womb; and he shall begin to deliver Israel out of the hand of the Philistines.’”**

Look at all this potential for this man, all that he was going to do for the Lord. His responsibility was to walk accordingly, and he would see God not only work in him, but through him and he would **“... begin to deliver Israel out of the hand of the Philistines.”** Judges 13:5.

I find that interesting because we don't see that with the other Judges in Israel. They delivered the children of Israel from the bondage that they were in by the hands of their enemy, but not here.

Let me show you what I mean with these other Judges by starting out with the standard, what God was going to do with these Judges. We are told in Judges 2:18, **“And when the Lord raised up judges for them, the Lord was with the judge and delivered them out of the hand of their enemies all the days of the judge; for the Lord was moved to pity by their groaning because of those who oppressed them and harassed them.”**

That was the standard for these Judges, that they would deliver the children of Israel from the bondage they were in. And in the book of Judges we see that played out.

In Judges 3:9-11 we see this played out for us. We are told, **“When the children of Israel cried out to the Lord, the Lord raised up a deliverer for the children of Israel, who delivered them: Othniel the son of Kenaz, Caleb’s younger brother. The Spirit of the Lord came upon him, and he judged Israel. He went out to war, and the Lord delivered Cushan-Rishathaim king of Mesopotamia into his hand; and his hand prevailed over Cushan-Rishathaim. So the land had rest for forty years. Then Othniel the son of Kenaz died.”**

We see this in Judges chapter 3, where we are told, **“But when the children of Israel cried out to the Lord, the Lord raised up a deliverer for them: Ehud the son of Gera, the Benjamite, a left-handed man. . . . And at that time they killed about ten thousand men of Moab, all stout men of valor; not a man escaped. So Moab was subdued that day under the hand of Israel. And the land had rest for eighty years.”** Judges 3:15, 29-30.

And in Judges 3:31 we are told of another Judge that delivered the children of Israel from the bondage that they were in. We are told, **“After him was Shamgar the son of Anath, who killed six hundred men of the Philistines with an ox goad; and he also delivered Israel.”**

Remember the story of Deborah the Judge in Judges 4:23-24, where we are told, **“So on that day God subdued Jabin king of Canaan in the presence of the children of Israel. And the hand of the children of Israel grew stronger and stronger against Jabin king of Canaan, until they had destroyed Jabin king of Canaan.”**

And just one more, and that is Gideon and we are told in Judges 8:28, **“Thus Midian was subdued before the children of Israel, so that they lifted their heads no more. And the country was quiet for forty years in the days of Gideon.”**

And yet, with Samson, we are told that he did not deliver the children of Israel from the bondage that they were in at the hands of the Philistines, but he began to deliver them.

And I think that there is a good reason he did not complete the task, and the reason is simple. He lived a carnal life and thus, God could not use him to his full potential!

Like Samson, I am sure we can think of many people, either in our lives or in our culture, who had great potential.

And as we look at their lives, some have lived up to their potential, while others fizzled out and failed to reach the level their talent could have produced.

Samson came into the world with great potential, but his pride, recklessness, and lust made him his own worst enemy.

And I think this is an important lesson for us as well. And in our study this morning we are going to focus on the topic – ***NO RESPECT!***

Now I know that you are wondering what that is all about, or how I came to that title. But you will clearly see the downward spiral of Samson and next week that is what we will be focusing on, as Samson goes – ***DOWN, DOWN, DOWN!***

What I want to focus on this morning are summed up in these three points that will come out of the text we will be looking at. They are,

NO RESPECT FOR GOD – JUDGES 14:1-2

LEADS TO NO RESPECT FOR PARENTS – JUDGES 14:2-3

GOD IS STILL WORKING IN SPITE OF US – JUDGES 14:4

So with that as our introduction, let's begin reading in Judges chapter 14, beginning in verse 1 and let's see what the Lord has for us this morning as we study His Word and look at this next Judge, Samson.

JUDGES 14

VERSES 1-2

I have titled these verses – ***NO RESPECT FOR GOD!*** And you will see why in a minute.

First of all, the city of Timnah was located about 4 miles into Philistine country and thus, he went into the camp of the enemy!

And notice the first point we see here is that **“Samson went down to Timnah.”**

Now we might not think much about that, but when it speaks of Samson going down, it was not just to get to Timnah, it was also speaking of his walk with the Lord, his spiritual life.

Instead of going up to God, he was going down to the enemy.

And let me say this. Anytime you walk into the camp of the enemy, the enemy will be more than willing to tempt you, and that is exactly what we see here.

As he goes into the camp of the Philistines, the enemy, he sees a beautiful woman and she catches his eye.

Think about that. When you go fishing do you put a lemon on your line? Of course not!

You get a big juicy worm and you put it on in such a way that the fish can't see the hook, and this worm catches the fish's eye!

Now I am not saying that women are worms, please don't e-mail me about that. The point I am making is that a woman does not put on ugly clothes, no make-up to go out. She dresses herself up to draw attention, and that, I am sure, is what we see here with this woman.

Keep in mind the open immorality that was going on in Timnah. So I am sure that she was not out there just enjoying the weather. She was trying to entice someone, and this kind of activity just stimulated the interest of Samson.

In fact, it aroused his flesh so much that he wants to marry this woman that caught his eye and he doesn't even know anything about her except that she is *HOT!*

Now, remember what we read in Judges 13:25, "**And the Spirit of the Lord began to move upon him at Mahaneh Dan between Zorah and Eshtaol.**"

Notice that the Spirit of God has come upon Samson to empower Him for the work that he was to do.

But, in saying that, the Holy Spirit does not make us into robots to obey. The Holy Spirit will guide us, direct us, lead us, but He will not force us to do things. It is up to us to walk by faith and obey the Lord or quench the work of the Holy Spirit in our lives.

And I think that is what we are beginning to see here. Samson refused to listen to the Lord and thus, he is beginning to quench the work that the Holy Spirit is doing in his life and in the end, we are told in Judges 16:20, that Samson, “**. . . did not know that the LORD had departed from him.**”

Is it possible to move and keep moving away from the Lord that you move so far you don't even recognize that fact? I think so.

Please understand that I am not saying that we can lose our salvation, or the Holy Spirit will leave us. Not at all.

What I am saying is that we can hinder the work that God wants to do in our lives that He will let us go on our own, do what we want, with the idea that we will turn back to Him. He loves us too much to let us continue to go down that path and again, we will see, at the end of his life, that Samson does return to the Lord and sadly, in his death he will kill more Philistines than in His life!

Let me also say this because we should be attracted to our spouse. That is probably the first thing that attracted us to each other.

And the problem comes when that is all it ends up being, a physical attraction, a superficial attraction, and it won't last, it doesn't last.

Now, in these verses I see that Samson is not respecting the Lord because he is not obeying the Lord.

You see, as we respect the Lord there should be that obedience to Him. Otherwise we are saying that we respect Him, but our actions speak differently.

How did Samson disrespect the Lord?

First of all, he should have never placed himself in the camp of the enemy.

Listen to this warning given to the children of Israel in Exodus 23:32-33, **“You shall make no covenant with them, nor with their gods. They shall not dwell in your land, lest they make you sin against Me. For if you serve their gods, it will surely be a snare to you.”**

In other words, don't make alliances with the enemy, don't befriend them, don't dwell among them.

Now people get upset by that, but what is the reason that God is telling them and us not to dwell with them?

He tells them that they will turn your heart from Him, and you will serve their gods, and this will be a snare to you, a good looking worm that will cause you to be hooked! Don't do it!

Again, we are told in Exodus 34:12-16, long before they even entered the land, **“Take heed to yourself, lest you make a covenant with the inhabitants of the land where you are going, lest it be a snare in your midst. But you shall destroy their altars, break their sacred pillars, and cut down their wooden images (for you shall worship no other god, for the Lord, whose name is Jealous, is a jealous God), lest you make a covenant with the inhabitants of the land, and they play the harlot with their gods and make sacrifice to their gods, and one of them invites you and you eat of his sacrifice, and you take of his daughters for your sons, and his daughters play the harlot with their gods and make your sons play the harlot with their gods.”**

God is calling for the children of Israel to separate themselves from the Canaanites, don't follow in their religious practices of worship, which many times involved sexual activity.

Don't become close friends with them or they will bring you down.

Don't marry them or you will fail!

Again, that seems harsh, doesn't it?

But, when you understand the corruption, the evil, the wickedness of these people, that the enticement was going to be too much for the children of Israel, they would take a bite of the bait and they would be hooked!

As I have said so many times before. As Christians, we are to be in the world, but the world is not to be in us. Just like a boat can only function in water, but when the water gets into the boat, it is sunk!

So true with our own lives. As soon as we begin to let the world into our lives, into our churches, we are going to begin to sink and it does not take that much water to bring a boat down and it doesn't take that much of the world to bring us down!

Secondly, he was not to marry outside of the children of Israel, especially a Philistine!

We have read of this in Exodus but let me show you here in Deuteronomy 7:3-4 where we are told, **“Nor shall you make marriages with them. You shall not give your daughter to their son, nor take their daughter for your son. For they will turn your sons away from following Me, to serve other gods; so the anger of the Lord will be aroused against you and destroy you suddenly.”**

And yet, for Samson, he demands that his parents get this woman for him, he wants her as his wife! Samson let the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes and the pride of life control his life instead of the Spirit of God!

Now, how does this apply to us today?

Again, I have touched on this, but I think it is important to drive this point home.

First of all, we are not to hang around the enemy or the camp of those who are not saved. In other words, don't go looking around for something that you should not be looking for! It isn't that we are not to talk with sinners or go where sinners are to share our faith.

In fact, as you read the Scriptures you will see that Jesus went to them and ministered to them. He did not condone their sin or join in it, but He brought them to God. But we are not to go after things that God has warned us not to go after!

Secondly, we are not to date or marry an unbeliever. I know, not popular but that is just what God has said and it is important that we listen.

In II Corinthians 6:14-18 Paul tells us, **“Do not be unequally yoked together with unbelievers. For what fellowship has righteousness with lawlessness? And what communion has light with darkness? And what accord has Christ with Belial? Or what part has a believer with an unbeliever? And what agreement has the temple of God with idols? For you are the temple of the living God. As God has said: ‘I will dwell in them And walk among them. I will be their God, And they shall be My people.’ Therefore ‘Come out from among them And be separate, says the Lord. Do not touch what is unclean, And I will receive you.’ I will be a Father to you, And you shall be My sons and daughters, Says the Lord Almighty.”**

Now this is not only speaking of marriage, it is speaking of partnerships, business relationships as well.

But here in Judges it does fit the picture as Samson wants this woman to be his wife!

Why does God tell us that? In fact, some get angry at God for this or they ignore what God is saying, just as Samson is doing, and as we will see over the next several weeks, when you don't obey God there are consequences that you will face, and it won't be good!

Here's the thing. The most important person in your life needs to be Jesus, that is important to establish.

Thus, if you date or marry an unbeliever you have two people moving in opposite directions, one towards God and the other away from God and that does not work! That is just what God says and I think He knows what He is talking about more than the way that you feel!

Can you imagine two animals yoked together, like an ox and a donkey. How is that going to work?

Not good and that is the point that Paul is making when he speaks of being unequally yoked together!

In other words, what we are seeing in the life of Samson is that he has – ***NO RESPECT FOR GOD!***

Let me share this with you because it will lead us to our next point. We are told,

I was raised during a time when parents taught their children to be respectful. I was taught how to say, “yes, sir,” or “no, sir” and to respect what other people had. I was taught that the House of God, no matter what religion or race it belonged to, was God’s House and grounds and that you respected and honored it.

If I ever talked back to my parents and disrespected them, as I see some children do today, I would not be able to sit down for a week because they would have taken me back and put the rod of punishment on the place that God put on mankind to receive that punishment.

I was never slapped in the face, or beaten on the arms or legs until they bled, but punishment was placed where it was intended to be placed.

Part of our problems in our nation today is founded in the lack of respect for God, parents, authority and others. We have a selfish society of, “what can I get out of this,” instead of, “what can I do for others.”

. . . The problem that we see is that the people have no fear of God because they don't know who He is. They only see a building and not the one that occupies the building.

America may be known as a Christian Nation, but that doesn't mean that all the people of America are Christians and fear God.

If people truly feared and respected God, we would not see the things that we are seeing happening in our nation. People would not be killing people, burning other people's property, stealing other people's things or disrespecting and belittling others.

If people followed after God they would be working together to better others, loving all people, respecting authority, be in God's house worshipping Him and preparing their life for the life after this Earth called eternity.

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The problem begins with the fact that there is – ***NO RESPECT FOR GOD!***

And then, what is manifested in the lives of people is that this – ***LEADS TO NO RESPECT FOR PARENTS!***

And not just parents, but everyone and we see that played out in our nation today. Our focus here is that Samson does not have any respect for his parents because he does not respect God!

Let's read on and you will see how this is played out!

VERSES 2-3

Make no mistake about it, as you turn from God, as you do your own thing, as you walk according to the flesh and not the Spirit, that inward dryness will be manifested in outward actions, and that is what we are seeing here.

You see, the vertical axis of Samson's life was off, his relationship with God. And, because of that, his relationships with others are off, his horizontal axis, and we see that here with his relationship with his parents.

Look at how this is played out as we look at how this turning from God **LEADS TO NO RESPECT FOR PARENTS**, and like I have said, it turns out that there is no respect for anyone!

Samson saw this beautiful Philistine woman; he was smitten by her and he wants to marry her.

So he goes and tells his parents that he wants her!

Now his parents, being Jewish, understood what God had commanded them. And thus, they try to tell Samson that this is not a good idea. It would be better for him to marry from the children of Israel than from these Gentile nations. There were plenty of Jewish women to pick from!

But Samson said, "... 'Get her for me, for she pleases me.'" Judges 14:3.

And here was this man of God, Samson, called from his mother's womb, who was walking by sight, "she pleases me" and not by faith!

And because of his begging for this woman, his parents give in and they will make the arrangements for this marriage, and we will see that as we continue on next time.

Now, just a little side note to parents here. Please don't compromise what you believe, what God desires because your child or children are pressuring you, making you feel guilty, or even that you want them to like you so you cave in.

This is so important?

Why?

Because you are not helping them, you are hurting them!

As a parent, you are not their friend. I know, that is not politically correct, or it is old fashioned, but it is true, and yet, many don't play the role of a parent, but a friend.

Really, how is this working that you are a friend to your children? I look around and it is not too good.

Yes, there are times where your relationship is great with your children, as long as you allow them to do what they want.

But when you don't, look out!

Don't cave in, you still need to be the parent and do what is right!

We as parents are to ***TRAIN UP*** our children, not let them do whatever they want!

And yes, Samson was older, but it would seem that they caved into Samson's requests even when he was younger and he just played that card once again, pressuring his parents into something he wanted but should not have had! "***Hey, I was called by God, give me what I want!***" mentality!

Now, look at this disrespect that Samson has for his parents. They tell Samson that he should not do this, and he rejects what they are telling them. Again, here is this man of God who is not walking accordingly because his relationship with God is off.

He went down to Timnah and he was disobeying God and that lead to him lusting after a woman, not love, lust, and disobeying his parents.

Let me share this with you, it is from January 2019, and we are told,

By now, you have likely seen the California McDonald's fight that is making its way around the internet.

As *Yahoo* explains, the fight began when a young mother asked several teens to leave the McDonald's play area where her two young children were playing. The teens did not take kindly to this request, challenging the mother to a fight instead. When she refused, the teens took the fight into the restaurant and began hurling items at random, breaking a monitor and nearly hitting an employee in the head.

The final tally of the fight? Several thousands of dollars in damage, some minor injuries, and one very shaken mother.

And who can blame her? Assault isn't exactly what one expects to encounter when taking young children out for fast food and playtime.

But if we're honest, should we really find such an incident surprising? Probably not. There are a few factors at play here, both of which have become a prominent aspect of our culture.

The first is the prevalence of prolonged childhood, a state which is marked by immaturity and dependence upon peers. Once upon a time, teens were individuals on the cusp of adulthood. As such, they acted responsibly, many holding jobs and devotedly bringing home financial contributions for the benefit of their parents and younger siblings, rather than killing time with friends in a play area at McDonalds.

Family doctor and psychologist Leonard Sax explains what we see instead in his book, *The Collapse of Parenting*:

In American culture today, same-age peers matter more than parents. And parents are reluctant to change the rules – to insist, for example, that time with parents and family is more important than time with same-age peers – because parents are suffering from the “role confusion” described by Elias. They are unsure what authority they ought to have and how to exercise it. As a result, it’s much harder for American parents to teach Fulghum’s Rules to their kids. And the older the child, the more true that is. In one study, the attitude of American teenagers toward their parents was described as “ingratitude seasoned with contempt.”

But the second aspect at play is the lack of respect not only for parents, but for all adults in general. The fact that the teens refused and attacked a concerned mother over a simple and reasonable request is evidence that we’ve somehow drilled into kids that they know better than those older and wiser than themselves.

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We see the results here and we can blame a lot of different things, but I think the major thing that is missing, which is causing a lack of respect for people, is that as a nation, we have turned from God. These are just the results that are being manifested in people’s lives – ***NO RESPECT!***

Look at Psalm 36:1-4 and you will see how this is played out. We are told, **“An oracle within my heart concerning the transgression of the wicked: *There is no fear of God before his eyes. For he flatters himself in his own eyes, When he finds out his iniquity and when he hates. The words of his mouth are wickedness and deceit; He has ceased to be wise and to do good. He devises wickedness on his bed; He sets himself in a way that is not good; He does not abhor evil.*”**

The actions that are manifested in their lives are not a result of anything but this, **“There is no fear of God before his eyes.”** And apart from God, we do our own thing, we do what makes us feel good, we do what we think is right.

And, without a plum line to go by, their walk and even our walk will be crooked, it will be off.

I want you to listen to this, because, as you do, you will see a heart broken person over what they are seeing in America, and then, I will tell you why this is happening, again. This article is from 2019 and we are told,

I was raised to have manners; to say ‘please’ & ‘thank you’ and to always show respect to my elders, whether I knew them or not. That’s what my parents and grandparents taught us. We were also taught to be law abiding citizens. So what happened here America? The lack of respect is an ongoing problem everywhere . . . it doesn’t matter where you go; you see it in public places like stores, restaurants, parks and on our busy highways. What is even more disturbing is the lack of respect given to our men in Blue; our Police Officers (Law Enforcement).

I am in utter shock that people have no problem killing officers today! It's a sad state of affairs. Where did this element of people come from? It feels as if something worse is on the horizon, though I'm not sure what. Maybe they should pull violent video games off the shelves, because it's clearly out of control. People are becoming so desensitized it's alarming.

Recently 2 officers were killed in the same day in Wisconsin: different incidents. Today, I was reading about another officer that died when responding to a store robbery in St. Louis, Missouri. What I found so disturbing was that the clerk actually streamed his death (while on the ground) on Face Book!!! What the hell was that about? She should be fired. Before the officers' family could be notified, it was on live streaming as he took his last breath.

I'm so deeply saddened and sick at society's behavior today; talk about lacking respect!? Every single day that these men and women put on their uniforms, they know . . . there's a chance that something bad will happen, but they do it to keep us safe; like our veterans have and those currently serving. They all deserve **RESPECT**.

When I see an elderly or disabled person walking towards a door or trying to cross a street, I show them respect and help them, that's what everyone should do . . . but it doesn't happen. I respect the illegal immigrants that file their papers and try to do it the right way when entering America; I do not respect those that barge through and feel entitled regardless of what **OUR LAWS SAY**.

This is a problem within our society. If people don't respect the law and we let everyone stay . . . what does that say? We need to uphold law and order, but instead . . . some look the other way. Where are the morals and values America? Like the clerk that streamed the officers' death, she might have been able to save his life . . . but oh no! She streamed it instead while watching over him. We cannot have that kind of behavior in our world, it's **NOT OKAY**.

For what it's worth parents, **PLEASE** teach your children to be respectful, while teaching them that there are consequences when not following the rules; just like the laws we have in place. Choose to make a difference . . . it might save a life.

- <https://bit.ly/32HGqjZ>

Can you have respect for people apart from God?

That is a good question and the answer is a simple, **YES!**

The reason I say that is because God has built into us a consciousness, the knowledge of what is right and what is wrong.

Then why don't we see more respect for people today?

Because we have hardened our hearts so much to what God has placed in our hearts that we don't feel things are wrong anymore. We are numb to them.

In fact, all this behavior we are seeing, this lack of respect, this lawlessness is a result of self-love or selfishness, it is all about us today!

I know, some of you may not like to hear that, you may even be offended by that. But listen carefully to what Paul wrote in II Timothy 3:1-4, "**But know this, that in the last days perilous times will come: For men will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, unloving, unforgiving, slanderers, without self-control, brutal, despisers of good, traitors, headstrong, haughty, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God.**"

As you read through this you will see that there are 19 general characteristics of man, a time of social disintegration, the wickedness of man's heart manifested in his actions. And, interestingly enough, Paul says that these things will climax in the "**last days**" or in the days we are living in now, and we see that happening right before our eyes!

Paul calls them "**perilous times**" or times of stress because the evil of man is rampant!

One writer put it like this regarding this word, "The word was used in classical Greek both of dangerous wild animals and of the raging sea. Its only other New Testament occurrence is in the story of the two Gadarene demoniacs who were as savage and untamed as wild beasts and whom Matthew describes as 'so *fierce* that no one could pass that way' (Matthew 8:28)." (Stott)

Now, keep in mind who Paul is speaking of here. Yes, we see these characteristics in the unsaved, but Paul is speaking of leaders in the church, Christians, so-called believers.

And I want you to see what is at the top of this list, "**lovers of themselves**" or self-love!

Make no mistake about it, self-love is the foundation for all these other depravities.

Calvin put it like this, "But readers should note that *lovers of themselves*, which comes first, can be regarded as the source from which all the others that follow spring."

It is out of this self-love that we see this lust for money, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, unloving, unforgiving and-so-on.

And here's the thing. I can understand this going on in this world because they have rejected God. They don't have a moral compass anymore; it is all about them.

But again, Paul is speaking to Christians here and this should not be manifested in our lives, these are just the things of the flesh!

And if you are fighting with others, mad at others, nasty to others, if it is all about you, I can tell you what your problem is! And this is free of charge.

The problem is – ***YOU!***

And the solution is simple. Repent and get right with God because apart from doing that, your relationship with others is going to be off.

We see this in the Ten Commandments.

The first four deal with our relationship with God, and that has to be foremost.

Then, the next six commandments deal with our relationship with others, with our fellow man.

You will never be able to treat man as God desires apart from you surrendering your life to Him!

You will never be able to love as God desires apart from you surrendering your life to Him!

For Samson, his relationship with God was off and that made his relationship with others, and specifically here, with his parents off as well, he did not show them respect!

Not a great way to start out for Samson, but, and our last point – ***GOD IS STILL WORKING IN SPITE OF US!***

VERSE 4

Now this may seem confusing. God was going to judge the Philistines and thus, “**. . . his father and mother did not know that it was of the LORD – that He was seeking an occasion to move against the Philistines.**”

Now, as you read that it is easy to come to the conclusion that what Samson did was not wrong. What the parents of Samson allowed Samson to do was not wrong.

You see, this was of the **LORD**, it is what it says, so how can it be wrong?

First of all, God did not make Samson do this, marry this Philistine woman.

Now you may be wondering how I came to that conclusion, and the reason is simple, God does not go against His Word – **NEVER!**

I know today that many feel that God can change what He has said, update His Word to us to fit our lifestyle, what we want to do, what society is telling us is right and what is wrong, and they don't have a problem with that.

But this is a huge problem and if you feel that way, then the God you worship is meaningless. He should not be worshiped! **NOT AT ALL!**

Now you may be offended by that, and if you are, you need to repent and get right with God! Sorry, but you are so wrong. God does not contradict His Word, **NEVER!**

You see, in Psalm 138:2 we are told, **“I will worship toward Your holy temple, And praise Your name For Your lovingkindness and Your truth; For You have magnified Your word above all Your name.”**

God has magnified His Word above His name and in the name of God it is the totality of who He is, the Becoming One! And thus, if we can't trust His Word, if we have to update His Word, then His name is meaningless, and God is meaningless. He does not deserve our worship.

Do you see how important that is? I hope so!

So when God told the children of Israel to stay away from the Gentiles, not to marry them, He is not going to go back on His Word.

Then what is happening here with Samson and what he did?

It is simple, God used the sin of Samson for good as he will kill some of the Philistines, but that does not justify his actions.

God can take and use the evil of men for His plans and His purposes, but I wonder what He could do with those who are obedient to Him? I wonder if Samson could have delivered the children of Israel from the Philistines if he was walking with God?

Let me show you how this is played out for us in the Scriptures, how God can take the evil we do and use it for good!

We see this with the story of Joseph in the book of Genesis. His brothers hated him, they envied him, and they were going to kill him, but instead, they threw him in a pit until some slave traders came by and then they sold their brother Joseph to them.

And God was with Joseph through all this evil he was enduring. And in the end, what his brothers meant for evil, God brought about good.

And you know the story, after the death of their father, Jacob, Joseph's brothers, who were living down in Egypt with Joseph, were afraid that Joseph might kill them. And listen to what Joseph tells them in Genesis 50:19-20, "**Joseph said to them, 'Do not be afraid, for am I in the place of God? But as for you, you meant evil against me; but God meant it for good, in order to bring it about as it is this day, to save many people alive.'**"

Now think about this for a minute.

As we have seen, if Joseph's brothers never sell him to the Midianites, then Joseph never goes to Egypt.

If Joseph never goes to Egypt, he never is sold to Potiphar.

If he is never sold to Potiphar, Potiphar's wife never falsely accuses him of rape.

If Potiphar's wife never falsely accuses him of rape, then he is never put in prison.

If he is never put in prison, he never meets the baker and butler of Pharaoh.

If he never meets the baker and butler of Pharaoh, he never interprets their dreams.

If he never interprets their dreams, he never gets to interpret Pharaoh's dream.

If he never gets to interpret Pharaoh's dream, he never is made prime minister.

If he is never made prime minister, he never wisely administrates for the severe famine coming upon the region.

If he never wisely administrates for the severe famine coming upon the region, then his family back in Canaan perishes from the famine.

If his family back in Canaan perishes from the famine, then the Messiah can't come forth from a dead family.

If the Messiah can't come forth, then Jesus never came.

If Jesus never came, then you are dead in your sins and without hope in this world.

Yes, they meant this for evil, what they did to their brother Joseph, but God used it for good!

That is what we are seeing here with Samson. He was not walking with God. He was doing his own thing. He was not only disrespectful to God but to his parents. And in spite of that, God was going to use this for good as He will destroy some of the Philistines!

How does this apply to us today?

We can try to justify our actions, make them sound so good, and they are not of God, they go against what His Word has said.

I will give you this example from my own life.

When I met Julie, I was not a Christian. Not even close. I believed in evolution, that was my god. I guess I believed I was a monkey's uncle or whatever!

But Julie was a Christian. And when we met, we fell in love. I saw no problem with this and Julie, well, she thought, because I was so nice, that I was a Christian and didn't know it.

In other words, she justified her relationship with me based on a false idea, I was not a Christian.

We obviously got married and it was probably some three years or so before I turned to Jesus Christ as my Lord and Savior.

But, during those years, we did not go to church, I was hampering Julie's relationship with God, even though I did not know it.

This was not good, and yet, God was gracious and merciful to Julie and I did come to know the Lord, as I have said.

But that is not what happens most of the time, let me be clear on that.

Do not try to justify marrying or dating a non-Christian with the idea that some good may come out of it, they may get saved.

Yes, that may happen but most of the time it doesn't, but even if it did, it doesn't justify your sin, it just shows that God is gracious and merciful!

Years ago, Pastor Chuck, from Calvary Chapel of Costa Mesa shared how many counseling sessions they have regarding this issue of marrying an unbeliever.

It was not a good thing and God has warned us in His Word. So be careful!

And here's the thing. Before you get married the unbelieving partner will agree to anything, even go to church.

But as soon as that ink dries on the marriage certificate, it is over, and they are not interested in God anymore. Be wise, listen to what God is telling you!

No matter how much good God can bring out of even the bad things we do, He can always bring far better out of our obedience – and we ourselves experience much less pain.

Listen to how Warren Wiersbe sums this up for us. He wrote,

The Lord had given Samson a godly heritage, and he had been raised to honor the Lord; but when Samson fell in love, he wouldn't listen to his parents when they warned him. Samson had wandered four miles into enemy territory where he was captivated by a Philistine woman and decided to marry her. This, of course, was contrary to God's Law (Ex 34:12-16; Deut 7:1-3; and see 2 Cor 6:14-18).

Samson was living by sight and not by faith. He was controlled by "the lust of the eyes" (1 John 2:16) rather than by the Law of the Lord. The important thing to Samson was not pleasing the Lord, or even pleasing his parents, but pleasing himself (Judg 14:3,7, see 2 Cor 5:14-15).

When God isn't permitted to rule in our lives, He overrules and works out His will in spite of our decisions. Of course, we're the losers for rebelling against Him; but God will accomplish His purposes either with us or in spite of us (Est 4:10-14).

Samson should have been going to a war instead of to a wedding, but God used this event to give Samson occasion to attack the enemy. Because of this event, Samson killed thirty men (Judg 14:19), burned up the enemy crops (15:1-5), slaughtered a great number of Philistines (vv. 7-8), and slew 1,000 men (v. 15). Samson hadn't planned these things, but God worked them out just the same.

- Warren Wiersbe, *The Wiersbe Bible Commentary – OT*, p. 461

I truly believe that these are important lessons for us to learn and apply to our lives.

We looked at this morning – ***NO RESPECT FOR GOD!***

And we saw that this vertical axis, Samson's relationship with God was off because he was doing things that were contrary to what God had said. He was disobeying the Lord and when a person does that, he is not respecting the Lord. It is as simple as that.

The only solution to that is to repent and get back to the Lord, obey what He is telling you and don't let your flesh drive you, but let the Lord guide you by His Word and by His Spirit!

And we saw how not respecting the Lord, having our relationship with the Lord off, ***LEADS TO NO RESPECT TO PARENTS!***

And there tends to be no respect for anyone. It ends up being all about you, what makes you happy, what you want, when you want it and it is not a good thing. We need to put God first, then others and then yourself and you know what that brings into our lives when we have things in order? It brings us ***JOY!*** In other words, ***JESUS, OTHERS*** and ***YOU!***

And lastly, we saw that even with Samson not walking with the Lord, by not respecting others, ***GOD IS STILL WORKING IN SPITE OF OURSELVES!***

Now please don't use this as a loophole to disobey the Lord, to treat others without respect. But our God is gracious and His plans, His purposes will come to pass in spite of what we do or don't do. But how much better to walk with the Lord, treat people with respect, and see the blessings that God will bring in and through our lives!