

A POWERFUL DEATH (JUDGE SAMSON)

Judges 13:1–7; 16:4–30

BIBLICAL PASSAGE

2 Timothy 2:4

MEMORY VERSE

No one serving as a soldier gets involved in civilian affairs—he wants to please his commanding officer. **2 Timothy 2:4**

Teenage years are a time of trial and testing. Teenagers learn much about themselves, their personal identities, and their developing personalities—their likes and dislikes. This can be a confusing time in the life of a teen and one where they make many mistakes.

Often, teenagers judge themselves harshly during these years, and certainly their peers do, too. Those who are followers of Christ may look at their mistakes and wonder if He can and will look past their failures and use them in spite of their faults.

Read Judges 13:1–7; 16:4–30. The account of Samson, the judge, is one of personal tragedy. Samson was a failure. He broke the vows of the Nazirite, showing poor character, and an inability to be set apart for God.

Nevertheless, God worked through the weaknesses and failures of Samson in order to accomplish His own purposes. Samson's story ends tragically, with the ending of his own life even as he became the instrument of God's judgment upon the Philistines.

This is an extreme example of God's ability to use failures. Teenagers, however, can learn from extremes that there is no failure of which God cannot or will not forgive them. As parents, we can teach our children of God's love, patience, and grace, through the ways in which we handle their failures, also. After all, we can remember having been their age. But we can also remember the ways in which we have failed, and how God was there to pick us up and move us in the right direction.

FAMILY DEVOTION TIME

Connect . . .

The family thinks of embarrassing moments in their lives. They must share these events, but they cannot verbally convey what happened. It must be conveyed through a game of charades. Only this time, there are no teams, but everyone plays, trying to discover what the embarrassing moment was as each member acts out an event.

Explore . . .

Family members share in reading Judges 13:1–7; 16:4–30. The family makes a list of all the blunders of Samson. Then, they answer the question: **Could God somehow work through the tragic mistakes of Samson? What were the consequences? How did God prove to be faithful even though Samson was not? What did God accomplish in spite of Samson's failures?**

Transform . . .

The family discusses: **What does God require of me in my relationship with Him? What happens when I fail? What do I need to do when I am aware of my own failures?**

Pray together that your family members will quickly see their own failures, go to God, confess, ask for forgiveness, and repent. Thank God that He does not give up on us, but works through us to fulfill His purposes.