

Introduction

- Last of the major judges
 - we've spiralled down a long way!
 - Samson seems a most unlikely here!
 - there is very little turning to God here in these chapters!
 - the people seem to have accepted their oppressors (15:11) - they've forgotten their true identity as God's people
 - not a hopeful scenario for learning about God's activity - and yet here, in these verses, he most definitely reveals himself!

Structure

- Want to talk about the structure to get us going!
 - events surrounding birth in chapter 13:1-24;
 - then whole of his childhood skipped over in one verse (13:25)
 - adult life through rest of 14-16
 - the telling of his adult life is divided into, probably, two sections: 14/15 and 16
 - in each Samson goes somewhere; in each he meets an attractive woman; in each there is something of a riddle (in 16 riddle is of his strength); in each he is betrayed by a woman for money and handed over to his enemies; in each, at the critical moment, the Spirit comes upon him and he has a great victory
 - and, at the end of each section, Samson calls on God (Israel, tellingly, does not call on God!)
- Structure of the narrative, some pointers to features of the text
 - point is it is carefully constructed that we might learn from it!
 - this is a theologian reflecting carefully on what has happened, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, giving us important lessons!
 - lets pay careful attention to what is happening here - it is most avowedly **not** an accidental collection of gory, morally repugnant tales!

Samson Points up the Problem of Sin

- All the character flaws, the fighting against what he was called to be
 - him not living up to his calling as a Nazirite - indeed, is the whole debate with Delilah him want to get free from the constraints of such a calling, to be like other men?
 - he's morally acting just like everyone around him - 15:11b
 - cf Othniel! bad comparison!
- [Samson's sin points to Israel's sin... and to ours](#)

Samson Points out God's Perseverance

- God didn't give up on Samson; God was able to redeem Samson's most terrible flaws and still bring something of worth out of a situation!
 - we might look at our life and think, what could God make of this?
 - God has a perseverance and a power that is beyond what we can take in!
- [God's perseverance with Samson points to his perseverance with Israel... and with us!](#)

Samson Points to God's Saving Provision

- Throughout this whole sorry episode God is providing a Saviour for his people, unlooked for, unasked for
 - today's generation has no thought for God, no felt need for a Saviour
 - yet God has provided!
- See parallels with Christ...
 - whole birth narratives parallel

- critically, "The man of God, alone, forsaken, mocked by the crowd, stretches out his arms, defeats the enemy and delivers his people through his own death!"
- God's redeeming of Samson points to his redeeming work in Israel, rescuing her from the trough that is the end of Judges:
 - not just into the glory of the monarchy
 - but most critically to the saving provision he makes in Christ for all people of all times - for us and our generation!

Conclusion

- Samson Points up the Problem of Sin
- Samson Points out God's Perseverance
- Samson Points to God's Saving Provision