

“The Victory of Faith, Part 5”
“The Life of Samson, Part 2”
(Hebrews 11:32-40)

Introduction: Last week, we began to look at the life of Samson and paused at the first event in his life, which had to do with his choosing of a wife. As you will recall, I stopped here to point out the involvement which parents, especially fathers, should have in the marriage of their children, especially in their daughters, and how important it is for you as parents to make sure that your children develop proper relationships with the opposite sex and at the proper times in life. There is so much that could be said about the biblical pattern of relationship, engagement, and marriage, but we will not take the time to look at them this evening, since this begins to take us too far from the subject. But I would like to begin with what is a clear problem in Samson’s request of his father.

I. Remember that last time we noted that there was nothing wrong with the way in which Samson went about getting a wife, for it was not uncommon for a man to ask his father to get him a particular wife, even in the context of betrothals. The problem was that Samson asked his father to get him a wife who was a Philistine.

A. Look at the immediate response of his parents.

1. “Then his father and mother said to him, ‘Is there no woman among the daughters of your relatives, or among all our people, that you go to take a wife from the uncircumcised Philistines?’” (Judges 14:3).
 - a. It wasn’t so much that she was a Philistine, although the Philistines were the enemies of God’s people. But the problem was that she was uncircumcised. She was not from the covenant people of God.
 - b. The Lord was very specific with regard to the involvement of His people with those who were idolaters, especially in marriage.
 - (i) We see this as early as in the life of Jacob. Shechem, the son of Hamor, saw Jacob’s daughter Dinah and desired her so strongly that he violated her. Then he went to his father Hamor and asked him to get her for him as a wife. But Dinah’s brothers deceived Hamor and Shechem, by telling them a half-truth. They said, “We cannot do this thing, to give our sister to one who is uncircumcised, for that would be a disgrace to us. Only on this *condition* will we consent to you: if you will become like us, in that every male of you be circumcised, then we will give our daughters to you, and we will take your daughters for ourselves, and we will live with you and become one people. But if you will not listen to us to be circumcised, then we will take our daughter and go. Now their words seemed reasonable to Hamor and Shechem, Hamor's son” (Gen. 34:14-18).
 - (ii) It was true that at least Shechem would need to be circumcised. But the removal of his foreskin was only the very least of the problem. What he needed was a circumcised heart. He needed to turn from his idolatry, embrace the Lord as the true God and His religion as the true religion, and become part of the covenant people of God.

- (iii) Jacob's sons did not bother to tell them this, for they were planning to allow them to circumcise themselves and the men of the city, so that while they were in pain, they could come and kill them all for violating their sister.
- (iv) But the point here is that the covenant people of God were not allowed to marry outside of the covenant.
- (v) Moses warned the people, when they were about to enter into the land of Canaan, "Furthermore, you shall not intermarry with them; you shall not give your daughters to their sons, nor shall you take their daughters for your sons. For they will turn your sons away from following Me to serve other gods; then the anger of the LORD will be kindled against you, and He will quickly destroy you" (Deu. 7:3-4). This warning was specifically against their intermarrying with the Canaanites. But it was primarily for their idolatry that the warning was given.
- (vi) The Lord also warned His people through Joshua, after they were already in the land. Joshua said, "So take diligent heed to yourselves to love the LORD your God. For if you ever go back and cling to the rest of these nations, these which remain among you, and intermarry with them, so that you associate with them and they with you, know with certainty that the LORD your God will not continue to drive these nations out from before you; but they shall be a snare and a trap to you, and a whip on your sides and thorns in your eyes, until you perish from off this good land which the LORD your God has given you" (Josh. 23:11-13). They were sure to turn the people of God aside from their faithfulness to the Lord. Therefore, if they married them, the Lord would turn away from them.
- (vii) But this is exactly what the people of God did, again and again. They violated this command, and committed spiritual adultery against the Lord, to the point where the Lord finally issued them a divorce. He drove them out of the land into exile.
- (viii) But after this, the Lord in His mercy again brought them back into the land, in preparation for the sending of His Son. But even when back in the land by His great mercy, they began to commit this same sin, so that when Ezra learned that the people had again intermarried, especially the leaders of the people, he tore his robe, pulled hair off his head and out of his beard, and then sat down appalled until evening. And then he fell to his knees, stretched out his hands towards heaven, and prayed, "'O my God, I am ashamed and embarrassed to lift up my face to Thee, my God, for our iniquities have risen above our heads, and our guilt has grown even to the heavens. Since the days of our fathers to this day we *have been* in great guilt, and on account of our iniquities we, our kings *and* our priests have been given into the hand of the kings of the lands, to the sword, to captivity, and to plunder and to open shame, as *it is* this day. But now for a brief moment grace has been *shown* from the LORD our God, to leave us an escaped remnant and to give us a peg in His holy place, that our God may enlighten our eyes and grant us a little reviving in our bondage. For we are slaves; yet in our bondage, our God has not forsaken us, but has

extended lovingkindness to us in the sight of the kings of Persia, to give us reviving to raise up the house of our God, to restore its ruins, and to give us a wall in Judah and Jerusalem. And now, our God, what shall we say after this? For we have forsaken Thy commandments, which Thou hast commanded by Thy servants the prophets, saying, ‘The land which you are entering to possess is an unclean land with the uncleanness of the peoples of the lands, with their abominations which have filled it from end to end *and* with their impurity. So now do not give your daughters to their sons nor take their daughters to your sons, and never seek their peace or their prosperity, that you may be strong and eat the good *things* of the land and leave *it* as an inheritance to your sons forever.’ And after all that has come upon us for our evil deeds and our great guilt, since Thou our God hast requited *us* less than our iniquities *deserve*, and hast given us an escaped remnant as this, shall we again break Thy commandments and intermarry with the peoples who commit these abominations? Wouldst Thou not be angry with us to the point of destruction, until there is no remnant nor any who escape? O LORD God of Israel, Thou art righteous, for we have been left an escaped remnant, as *it is* this day; behold, we are before Thee in our guilt, for no one can stand before Thee because of this” (Ezra 9:6-15).

(ix) I think it’s plain from this, isn’t it, that intermarriage with the heathen was wicked in the sight of God? In the eyes of Samson’s parents, this was a clear departure from the right ways of the Lord.

2. Now why do I bring this up? I would like to show you that in the New Covenant, this same thing is true.
 - a. The church and the world are deadly enemies. There is and can be no harmony or peace between the two. James writes, “You adulteresses, do you not know that friendship with the world is hostility toward God? Therefore whoever wishes to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God” (4:4).
 - b. There cannot even be any fellowship between the two, for the corrupting influences of the world will work on the good morals of the Christian. Paul writes, “Do not be deceived: Bad company corrupts good morals” (1 Cor. 15:33). There can be casual relationships for the purpose of evangelism, but no close friendships with the world. Even the most godly are susceptible to sin.
 - c. This is why it is a terrible sin to marry one who is of the world. Again, Paul in writing his second letter to the Corinthians, says, “Do not be bound together with unbelievers; for what partnership have righteousness and lawlessness, or what fellowship has light with darkness? Or what harmony has Christ with Belial, or what has a believer in common with an unbeliever? Or what agreement has the temple of God with idols? For we are the temple of the living God; just as God said, ‘I will dwell in them and walk among them; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people. Therefore, come out from their midst and be separate,’ says the Lord. ‘And do not touch what

is unclean; and I will welcome you. And I will be a father to you, and you shall be sons and daughters to Me," says the Lord Almighty" (6:14-18).

- d. There can be no doubt that this applies to that most intimate of unions, that of marriage. But in case there is any doubt in your mind, Paul writes in 1 Corinthians 7:39, "A wife is bound as long as her husband lives; but if her husband is dead, she is free to be married to whom she wishes, *only in the Lord.*"
 - e. Now you might think that this is obvious, but there have been many, men especially, who have denied the faith only to become involved with a pretty unbeliever. I know one man who left the Christian faith twice to go into a cult, both times because he became involved with a woman who was a part of that cult. I know another man who became enamored with a girl who was a non-Christian, because she took a liking to him, and he began to question these passages. That relationship has since been broken off, but I'm sure that he is now struggling with how he betrayed His Lord, simply for the sake of a woman. The Lord tells us in no uncertain terms in His Word that such a relationship is sinful and should never even be a consideration. Outward beauty is not the determining factor for whether or not you should marry someone. Inward righteousness and holiness is. Physical beauty fades away, but holiness is a beauty which will never fade.
 - f. Children, listen carefully. You will never be married in this church, at least by me, if you ever decide to marry a non-Christian. From what I understand of the history of this church, a family left it once because the pastor refused to marry their daughter to an unbeliever. The pastor made the right decision. The parents were in deep deep sin. Parents, you also listen carefully. You must never give your consent to a marriage between any of your children and a non-Christian. And fathers, you must never give the hand of your daughters to one who is of the world. I have decided that I will never give the hand of either of my daughters to an unbeliever, even if my daughter is unconverted herself. If she is under my authority, which she is, I cannot give her away to the world, even if her heart is in it. There is always the hope that she might turn to Christ later in life, or near the end of it.
- B. But now let us return to the account of Samson. Having said all of this, I want to point out that sometimes the Lord makes some exceptions to the rule, when it is for His glory.
1. Notice what the author of the book of Judges records next about Samson's request for a Philistine bride.
 - a. He writes, "However, his father and mother did not know that it was of the Lord, for He was seeking an occasion against the Philistines. Now at that time the Philistines were ruling over Israel" (14:4).
 - b. This was of the Lord. Through this request of Samson and his subsequent marriage to this woman, He was bringing judgment on the Philistines for their sins and their sinful oppression of His people.
 - c. This shows us two things. First, it shows us that the Lord uses the sinful actions of men to accomplish good things. It was sin on the part of Samson

to marry this woman. But God ordained that it would happen, so that He could bring His judgment on the Philistines.

- d. But second, it shows us that one of the ways in which the Lord bring about His judgment is by exposing His enemies to those things which will make them sin all the more, so that He might destroy them. In the course of this marriage, and the events which happen after it, Samson exacts a terrible revenge on the Philistines for their treachery. This was the beginning of the Lord's judgment on the Philistines. But we will see more about this next week.
2. But now let me close with showing how this event in the life of Samson pictures the person and work of Christ.
 - a. It appears that the only women Samson loved were Gentile women. They were all Philistines.
 - b. Even though this was sinful on his part, because of the existing conditions of the covenant at that point in the history of redemption, it reveals something of the coming work of Christ.
 - c. When the Christ was to come, it was prophesied that He would be married to a foreign woman, one outside the covenant people. One messianic Psalm states, "Kings' daughters are among Thy noble ladies; at Thy right hand stands the queen in gold from Ophir. Listen, O daughter, give attention and incline your ear; forget your people and your father's house; then the King will desire your beauty; because He is your Lord, bow down to Him. And the daughter of Tyre *will come* with a gift; the rich among the people will entreat your favor. The King's daughter is all glorious within; Her clothing is interwoven with gold. She will be led to the King in embroidered work; the virgins, her companions who follow her, will be brought to Thee. They will be led forth with gladness and rejoicing; they will enter into the King's palace" (45:9-15).
 - d. This messianic marriage, and the marriage of Samson with the Philistine woman, are both pictures of the same thing: when the Messiah was to come, He would join Himself not only with the Jews, but also with the Gentiles. This is a picture of Gentile salvation. In that Samson is seen here to marry one of his enemies, this is a picture of Christ being joined with those who formerly were His enemies. I have never asked if anyone here is from Jewish descent, but chances are that none of you are. We are all Gentiles and formerly enemies of God and His Christ. This then is a picture of our salvation, of our union with Christ. Peter writes, "For you once were not a people, but now you are the people of God; you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy" (1 Pet. 2:10). We were outcasts in the sight of God, but now we have been reconciled to Him in Christ. Let us rejoice then in the fact that the Lord has had mercy on us. Amen.