

Journeying Toward the Resurrection Luke 19:35-40



*Great Swamp Baptist Church
March 9, 2025*

Great Swamp Baptist Church

Sunday Morning Worship

10:30 AM

Announcements

Pastor Ralph Lee

Call to Worship

Invocation

Mack Pope

Pastoral and Offertory Prayer

Pastor Ralph Lee

Worship by Giving

Offertory Special

Message

Pastor Ralph Lee

Invitation

Benediction Prayer

Sunday Mornings
Following The Song Service:



Nursery Workers

For Today:
Tammy & Myra

Next Sunday 03/16:
Sophia & Teresa G.



Teacher:
Olivia Stanley



Greeters for Today:
Mike Davis

Next Sunday 03/16:
Courtney & Betty

DEACON OF THE WEEK:

Mack Pope



Phone: 843-540-6636

**NEXT WEEK'S
DEACON:**
Keith Gamo



*From
the
Pastor's
desk:*



The Strength of Samson Judges 13-16

Introduction:

Our school administrator Donna Carter asked me a few weeks back to prepare a lesson on the life of Samson to share with our high school students because they were going to go see a play on the life of Samson. I agreed to do so and thoroughly enjoyed preparing this message.

There is much that we can learn from the life of Samson that is very applicable to the times in which we live. For the book of Judges begins with a very sad assessment of the nation of Israel. Tragically the book reveals the fact that once Joshua whom God used to lead the nation into the promised land, had died, plus those that knew him and served with him died, then the next generation of the Israelites, "... knew neither the Lord nor what he had done for Israel." (Judges 2:10). And this resulted in Israel sinning against God, and God thus judging them by allowing neighboring nations to conquer them and rule over them with oppression.

It was during their oppression that they would finally cry out for God's deliverance confessing their sins. Therefore God raised up these judges to deliver the nation from the hands of their oppressors. There were 12 of them altogether and Samson was the last of the 12.

Now each of the judges had to deal with a nation that continued a downward cycle of sin, and each judge also displayed in their own lives sadly a moral failure as well. By the time we come to Samson the nation has reached its lowest point and of all the judges Samson displayed the worst moral behavior. As a matter of fact Samson was the only one of the judges who didn't ultimately accomplish what God had raised the judges to do, which was to free the nation from their oppressors.

In spite of Samson's moral failures God still managed to use Samson to accomplish what he intended on him fulfilling, though I believe there could have been more had Samson not strayed. In other words there were many missed opportunities.

Now the one thing that most people know about Samson is that he accomplished some strong feats in defeating his enemies, and it's that strength of Samson that I want us to focus on in this message which I am simply entitling the strength of Samson. And let us pray that we can learn from his example how we might allow God's strength to empower us.

I. First let's notice that Samson started strong (chapter 13)

Now what I'm referring to here in this point is the fact that Samson's life got started off on a good strong foundation. This chapter seems to suggest that though he was brought into a time in which the nation's moral breakdown was extremely bad, he himself was brought into the world in a unique way and to a unique family that was not as caught up in the moral downslide, and therefore allowed Samson to receive a much better spiritual upbringing thus giving them a strong start in life.

There were at least three things that caused Samson to start strong. The first as already pointed out was his unique birth. Samson's mother before his birth was childless and unable to get pregnant. She was barren. However an angel of the Lord appeared to her and revealed to her that she was going to get pregnant and give birth to a son. So Samson's birth was a miracle from God who uniquely made it possible for his mother to get pregnant.

Now I'm sure that Samson was reminded over and over how special he was because God caused a miracle to happen for him to come into the world. Being reminded of this fact would have given him strength and confidence that God had chosen him for His service.

The second way in which Samson started out strong was by his God given calling to the Nazirite vow from his conception on through the rest of his life. The Nazirite vow was a vow in which a person usually for a temporary period of time made a complete dedication to God for some special purpose. During that time they would abstain from fermented drinks and from eating grapes and raisins as well. Also, they were not to cut their hair for the whole period of their vow, as a sign of their dedication to the Lord. Finally they were not to touch dead bodies of a person. For Samson however it appears that the part of the vow he was to primarily keep all his entire life was to never cut his hair to display that his life was to be dedicated to God. So he constantly was reminded by his parents and every time he saw a reflection of himself that his life was meant to be dedicated to God.

The third way in which Samson started strong was by his upbringing. This chapter gives us a picture of Samson's parents as being spiritually minded parents. For they were chosen by God to be Samson's parents. They listened to God and prayed to God and worshipped Him as well thus clearly suggesting to us that they used their spiritual influence to teach and guide Samson.

The fourth and final way in which Samson started strong was through the stirring of the Spirit of the Lord in his life as he was growing up. God blessed him in a way in which clearly Samson understood that God had a special purpose and calling on his life.

So as we can see Samson was blessed with many advantages as he was growing up that could and should propel him forward to live a life that was completely dedicated to our blessed God. However it appears that these came a point and time in his early adulthood that he decided that all the advantages that we discussed that helped to start him strong were good enough to last him for the rest of his life, and that he therefore didn't need to focus on them much anymore because they would be sufficient enough to cover for his future.

However that kind of attitude will only propel you down a slippery slope away from the Lord. For God's purpose and plan for our lives is that we take those advantages that any of us have received from our past and build and grow on them into the present and future in order to stay strong for our God.

In the New Testament we are challenged, encouraged and commanded to keep on growing in our faith and not be satisfied with our past advantages. The Apostle Peter gives us one of those challenges to keep on growing. "Therefore dear friends, since you have been forewarned, be on your guard so that you may not be carried away by the error of the lawless and fall from your secure position. But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To Him be glory both now and forever! Amen."

May our Blessed Lord help us to keep building and growing on the things that we were blessed to start with.

II. Second, let us notice that Samson didn't stay strong (chapters 14-16)

In our first point we took a long look at the many ways that Samson's life had a strong spiritual start. But as he reached adulthood Samson seems to separate his spiritual upbringing from the choices and practices that he chose to live by.

The example that we see that first jumps out that shows that Samson chooses not to let his spiritual upbringing to influence the choices and practices of his life is in his choice for a wife. It was a very fleshly choice. He was driven primarily by what he saw to make his choice for his wife. In other words it was her beauty that attracted him and not her spiritual qualities. As a matter of fact her spiritual upbringing was totally different than his because she was a Philistine and their religion was a pagan religion, an ungodly religion. God had instructed the people of Israel to not marry into the lives of persons outside of their own nation because they might easily be convinced to fall into the pagan religion of those other nations.

Now the sad part of this is that Samson not only went against what he knew that God said about this matter but he also directly made his decision even though his parents did all that they could to convince him not to make this wrong choice.

What Samson had done was to make a choice to be a man of his time. To him this was no big deal because a lot of people were making the same choice. He may have thought hey it's a new day and that's how we do it now. However we must never make our choices based upon what everyone else is doing but rather what God has called us to do even if it's not popular.

Now it's true that God actually used Samson's choice to carry out His will. However I believe that had Samson allowed his strong upbringing to be a greater influence on his life then God could have done even greater things through him. I believe that his life was a life of missed opportunities. So the question for us I believe is will we choose to allow our strong faith that we began with when we trusted Christ as our Lord and Savior continued to influence our choices and practices, or like Samson will we choose instead to be a people of our time because everyone else is anyway? Tragically the Book of Judges ends up telling us that "In those days Israel had no King; everyone did as they saw fit." (vs 21:25). May this not be said of us and may we not miss out on lost opportunities to serve the Lord because of making the wrong kind of choice.

III. Third, let's notice that it was Samson's weakness that made him strong.

Now so far we've really been looking at primarily spiritual strength. However we all know that what Samson was primarily known for was his physical strength. But the truth is that in and of himself Samson wasn't a strong man. He wasn't an incredible huck with a strong physic. The scripture is quite clear that when he performed his acts of strength, that it was because "the Spirit of the Lord came powerfully upon him..." (vs 14:6).

Also we are told that when he lost his strength it was because "the Lord had left him." (vs 16:20). So Samson strength came from the Lord himself not from Samson. As a matter of fact it was when Samson was at his lowest stripped of practically of everything even his eyesight that God through his humility and weakness led Samson to accomplish his greatest act of service to God. His way God gets the glory not Samson or any of us. So may we all come to a place in our lives that we learn that our strength comes from the Lord God and is given to us to be used of for his glory and honor.

Conclusion:

May it be said of us that we are a people who start strong, stay strong by the strength of our Lord.

Jesus Loves You,
Ralph Lee

Shellem Cline Concert
coming Sunday,
April 6th!!



<i>Tuesday</i>	<i>11th</i>	<i>Wallace Malphrus</i>
<i>Thursday</i>	<i>13th</i>	<i>Alice Way</i>
<i>Friday</i>	<i>14th</i>	<i>DeKelly Pittinger</i>



Monday, March 10th:
 Jason & Vanessa Smoak



Showing: **The Forge**
Sunday, March 16th
Concessions at 6:00 p.m.
Movie starts at 6:45 p.m.

Please bring finger foods for your family
as well as to share with everyone else!
Tea and popcorn will be provided by the church.

Come watch an amazing movie!



**Week of Prayer for North American Missions
and the Annie Armstrong Easter Offering
March 2nd thru March 9th**

Church Happenings

Coosawhatchie Baptist Church

♦ *Sunday, March 16th @ 10:30 am:* **Jonathan Wilburn** in concert

Maye River Baptist Church

♦ *Friday, March 21st:* Movie Night - "**Overcomer**" - Food served (snacks & hot dogs) @ 6:30 pm and movie begins @ 7:00 pm

Port Royal Baptist Church

♦ *Saturday, March 15th @ 4:00 pm:* **Youth Movie Night** - \$10 Fundraiser for 2025 Summer Bible Camp, includes hot dogs, chips, drinks, dessert, popcorn and FUN

♦ *Sunday, March 23rd @ 5:00 pm:* "**Messiah in the Passover**" -- a Chosen People Ministries Experience, complete with Passover Service and Seder Dinner

Red Dam Baptist Church

♦ *Saturday, March 1st:* **2025 Spring Soccer Season** for boys & girls ages 5 to 13, begins March 1st and runs through April 26th (Saturdays only)

St. Helena Baptist Church

♦ *Friday, March 14th:* **Annual Oyster Roast & Burgers for Community Outreach**

Jeremy Camp

**SAVANNAH CONVENTION CENTER
SAVANNAH, GA
MARCH 28 & 29, 2025**

Hosted by Everyday Mission Trip

MEGA REVIVAL EVENT

GREG LAURIE

10,000 PEOPLE EACH NIGHT

EVENT PROGRAM

MEGA MINISTRY EXPOSITION
4:00PM — 6:00PM

JEREMY CAMP WORSHIP
6:00PM — 7:00PM

GREG LAURIE MESSAGE & INVITATION
7:00PM — 8:00PM

JEREMY CAMP WORSHIP CONCLUSION
8:00PM — 8:30PM

Men's

Multi-Church Fellowship

Thursday, March 20, 7:00 pm

Red Dam Baptist Church

488 Red Dam Church Rd.

For more information contact
Wilbur Daley at (843) 305-0110

MEN'S Fellowship



(formerly Grandmothers Group)

The next meeting will be held TOMORROW,
Monday, April 7th at 11:30 a.m. in the MPB.

Now Hiring
Apply Today

OPEN POSITION: Church Secretary

If you are interested in working as the church secretary,
please send your resume to greatswampbc@gmail.com,
give it to a deacon, or drop it off in the church office.



**Operation
Christmas Child**
A PROJECT of SAMARITAN'S PURSE

Items for March are listed below. You
can also give a monetary donation if you
can't or don't want to shop. We have
750 boxes to fill. Thank you!

-Hats

-Gloves

-Matchbox Cars

-Tennis Balls

-Toothbrushes



Wednesday Night Supper

Meals served from
6:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.
\$5.00 per person or
\$15.00 per family of four or more.
No meal deliveries.



Sunday Morning Breakfast

Breakfast will be served
from 8:30 a.m. to
9:00 a.m.
\$5.00 per person or
\$15.00 per family of
four or more.

GSBC Prayer Page

Church Leadership

*Sunday School
SFCA-Donna Carter
Child Development
Ministries
Ralph Lee, Jr. - Pastor
Deacons
Youth Program*

Leadership

*President / Vice President of
the United States of America*

Bereavement

Unspoken

Hospitals

Other Health Needs

*Ralph Lee
Julia Rushing
Pinky Rushing
Amy Hannah
Arthur Pearson
Earl Dean Pope
Rachel Mixon
Maria Coles' Brother*

Surgery/Recovery

Cancer/Treatments

*Revel Crosby - 4 years old
(Leukemia)
Ken Lawler
Rachel Vaughn
Ella Gourlay - 10 years old
(Leukemia)*

Nursing Centers

*Byron Vaigneur - Legacy at South Pointe
Tommy & Erma Cooler - Ridgeland Nursing Home
David Sauls - Florence Place Assisted Living
Doby Cleland - Life Care Center of HHI*

Please Continue To Remember

Homebound

<i>Rose Boyles</i>	<i>Tom Hinely</i>
<i>Judy Smith</i>	<i>Ann Blocker</i>
<i>Barbara Mills</i>	<i>Red & Helen Malphrus</i>
<i>Kenny Smith</i>	<i>Diane Hannah</i>
<i>Shirley Malphrus</i>	<i>Ann Long</i>
	<i>Donald Malphrus</i>

Pray For Our Military

*Sgt. Jared Blanton - Deployed
Matthew Mills - US Marines -
Okinawa, Japan
Jericho Malphrus - Sp. Agent/Air Force -
Pinehurst, NC.
Andrea C. Daring - Charleston, SC
Schuyler Johnson - Basic Training Marines*

Church Staff

Pastor: **Pastor Ralph Lee, Jr.**.....jehu27@gmail.com

Sunday School Director: **Mike Davis**.....greatswampbc@gmail.com

Administrative Assistant: **Jennifer Meador**.....greatswampbc@gmail.com
843-726-3631

School Administrator: **Donna Carter**.....dcarter@sfcaweb.org

Stewardship

TITHES	This Week	Weekly Budget	Surplus / Deficit
	\$7,202.95	\$5,172.63	\$+2,030.32
<i>Online Offerings</i>	<i>\$146.80</i>		
Designated Funds			Acct. Balances
Annie Armstrong	\$52.00		\$52.00



Great Swamp Baptist Church
9009 Tarboro Rd.
PO Box 446
Ridgeland, SC 29936

Sunday School.....9:15AM
Morning Worship.....10:30AM
Wednesday Night Service.....7:00PM

Email: greatswampbc@gmail.com
Website: greatswampbaptistchurch.com
Church Office: (843) 726-3631