

severe man, taking what I did not deposit and reaping what I did not sow? <sup>23</sup> Why then did you not put my money in the bank, and at my coming I might have collected it with interest? <sup>24</sup> And he said to those who stood by, 'Take the mina from him, and give it to the one who has the ten minas.' <sup>25</sup> And they said to him, 'Lord, he has ten minas!' <sup>26</sup> 'I tell you that to everyone who has, more will be given, but from the one who has not, even what he has will be taken away. <sup>27</sup> But as for these enemies of mine, who did not want me to reign over them, bring them here and slaughter them before me.'"

What a terrible thing to have God's **chosen** and **empowered** people unwilling to use the things He's given them. God has given us money, God has given us talents, God has given us strength, and God has given us time. He's given us all we need to reach and save and impact and serve this world in His name. **How do we respond? Do we rise like Othniel, Ehud, Deborah and Barak, and Gideon—taking up the work? Or do we sit back like the men of Judah, trying to tie the hands of the servants of God?**

That doesn't work. *When he came to Lehi, the Philistines came shouting to meet him. Then the Spirit of the Lord rushed upon him, and the ropes that were on his arms became as flax that has caught fire, and his bonds melted off his hands. <sup>15</sup> And he found a fresh jawbone of a donkey, and put out his hand and took it, and with it he struck 1,000 men. (JG 15.14-15)*

God's will **will** be done. Even when we fight against Him and His servants, He is Lord: all will bow. *Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, <sup>6</sup> who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, <sup>7</sup> but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. <sup>8</sup> And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. <sup>9</sup> Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name, <sup>10</sup> so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, <sup>11</sup> and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. (PH 2.5-11)*

Every knee will bow: so, let's live that way! **Can you imagine having a powerful man who could kill thousands with a jawbone come and tell you he's on your side and say, "Nah, that's fine, we'll just be slaves"?** Yet we do that every day.

**2TM 1.6-7** ~ *For this reason I remind you to fan into flame the gift of God, which is in you through the laying on of my hands, <sup>7</sup> for God gave us a spirit not of fear but of power and love and self-control.*

## **CONCLUSION:**

Even in 2026, Superman continues to be popular and appealing to a world that desperately wants a hero—someone to deliver, someone to save. Merchandise estimates state that Superman merchandise is expected to grow in value to 26.2 billion dollars by 2034. That's half the annual GDP of Vermont. But it's understandable: every culture needs a hero—whether modern or ancient.

The story of Samson has barely begun and already, we see that the people of Israel needed a hero—whether they realized it or not. And so, in Samson, we see a hero raised as a bit of an object lesson for the Israelites (more on that tonight). He was **chosen** and **empowered** of God—and despite that, the people rejected him—a pattern continually repeated by God's people even today.

**1PT 4.7-11** ~ *The end of all things is at hand; therefore be self-controlled and sober-minded for the sake of your prayers. <sup>8</sup> Above all, keep loving one another earnestly, since love covers a multitude of sins. <sup>9</sup> Show hospitality to one another without grumbling. <sup>10</sup> As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God's varied grace; <sup>11</sup> whoever speaks, as one who speaks oracles of God; whoever serves, as one who serves by the strength that God supplies—in order that in everything God may be glorified through Jesus Christ. To him belong glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.*

## **INVITATION**

#701 [TPCL-Samson][1.2]  
02/16/2026

**Samson: I Need a Hero**

PC Pchd

tpcl: Samson

**QUESTION:** Why in the world did God choose Samson?

## **TRN TO JG 13**

### **INTRODUCTION**

#### **LITERATURE/Superman/Origin – Jerry and Joe & Origin - 1938**

Since his creation in 1938, Superman has captured the imagination of millions. Showing on lunchpails, video games, movie screens, and under-roofs, the superhero created by the two young Jewish men from Ohio has proven to be as immortal in real life as he is in the comic books. Most argue that the character had its roots in americana. But it's impossible to imagine that another strong-man character wasn't at least in the back of the mind of his two Jewish creators.

### **BACKGROUND**

**JG** is an interesting book: covering the period between the death of Joshua and the rise of Samuel, the last judge, the book covers around 350 years of Bible history. In its pages, we see the Jewish people circling the drain: moments of success followed by repeating downward cycles away from God and into sin. And as the pattern repeats, at the book's center are the judges—men who served to help return the people to God time and time and time again.

However, time and time and time again, the people would turn, again, from God. Repeated twice in the book (once in **JG 17.6** and again in **JG 21.25**) is the phrase that would serve as their spiritual obituary: *In those days there was no king in Israel. Everyone did what was right in his own eyes.* Due to a lack of spiritual maturity and leadership, the people continually turned away from God and to their own desires and failings. As the old song goes: **"They needed a hero"!**

#### **LITERATURE/Superman/Origin – Difficulty Selling**

It's insane for us to hear things like that; today, the character is a multi-billion-dollar franchise—his origin and powerset known far and wide! And the rights to this character were sold for \$130. But the fact is, neither Joe nor Jerry knew what their character would come to mean to his audience.

In much the same way, when we come to the last of the judges of the book, we begin to wonder if there's even a point: **is there even a market for a judge to a people who continually reject his God?** For that reason, when we come to Samson, we see a very different kind of Judge.

In many ways, Samson is the closest thing we have in the Old Testament to a comic book hero—and whenever you go through children's art and Sunday School material, you'll see him represented everywhere! But before we consider the man, himself, we have to ask ourselves **what led to his rise as the final judge of the book: what was his origin and powerset, and what can we learn about him, the people of Israel, and ourselves by it?**

#### **BD1: His Origin - He Was Chosen (JG 13.2-5)**

**ILL—Superman's Origin** (from the planet Krypton; planet going to blow up; places him in a rocket to save him and only him) **He is chosen** by his parents to be the sole(ish) survivor of their planet—given an opportunity to live on among man on Earth.

**EX:** The story of Samson actually begins before his birth. We see his father—a Danite named Manoah. He and his wife were unable to have children—she was barren. But then, God sends the angel of the Lord. And when he arrives, he gives a message that seems a bit familiar!

**JG 13.3b** ~ *"Behold, you are barren and have not borne children, but you shall conceive and bear a son.*

**Do you realize what God is pointing to here in this parallel?** Look to **GN 17.15-19** ~ *And God said to Abraham, "As for Sarai your wife, you shall not call her name Sarai, but Sarah shall be her name." 16 I will bless her, and moreover, I will give you a son by her. I will bless her, and she shall become nations; kings of peoples shall come from her.* 17 *Then Abraham fell on his face and laughed and said to himself, "Shall a child be born to a man who is a hundred years old? Shall Sarah, who is ninety years old, bear a child?"* 18 *And Abraham said to God, "Oh that Ishmael might live before you!"* 19 *God said, "No, but Sarah your wife shall bear you a son, and you shall call his name Isaac. I will establish my covenant with him as an everlasting covenant for his offspring after him.* God frames the arrival of Samson to parallel Isaac: the son of Abraham. Isaac was **chosen**—his birth evidenced it! And the same was true of Samson: **he was chosen**.

**Could you possibly have a greater pedigree than to have your miraculous birth announced by the angel of the Lord?** But that wasn't all: his being chosen would mean he would be a Nazirite from birth.

**JG 13.4-5** ~ *Therefore be careful and drink no wine or strong drink, and eat nothing unclean, 5 for behold, you shall conceive and bear a son. No razor shall come upon his head, for the child shall be a Nazirite to God from the womb, and he shall begin to save Israel from the hand of the Philistines."*

#### **NUMBERS/Nazarite Vow/Origin of Vow**

His vow from birth was a sign of his being chosen—much like someone else we know! God had looked to Israel as His chosen people, and He promised them: *Now therefore, if you will indeed obey my voice and keep my covenant, you shall be my treasured possession among all peoples, for all the earth is mine; 6 and you shall be to me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.' These are the words that you shall speak to the people of Israel.*" (**EX 19.5-6**)

**AP:** Samuel was chosen of God: just as the Jewish nation, and just as He has chosen His church, today! *But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light. (1PT 2.9)* From the outside: it'd be easy to assume that if God had chosen this man, he'd clearly be something special. We have certain things we'd expect from a person who was chosen of God!

#### **BD2: His Powerset - He was Empowered (JG 14.6; 14.19; 15.10-15)**

**ILL—Superman's Power** (empowered by yellow sun; able to leap tall buildings in a single bound; turn back time; super-ventriloquism) As a result, Superman is still arguably **the most powerful** comic hero: and blessedly, he chooses to use that power for service of those who need it most.

**JG 13.4-5** ~ *Therefore be careful and drink no wine or strong drink, and eat nothing unclean, 5 for behold, you shall conceive and bear a son. No razor shall come upon his head, for the child shall be a Nazirite to God from the womb, and he shall begin to save Israel from the hand of the Philistines."*

**BKGRND:** That had to be a comfort to his parents: they'd likely heard the stories of the judges before them—Othniel, Ehud, Deborah and Barak, and Gideon—each had led the charge against their oppressors. And then, we see in the next chapter that God had provided a special blessing to Samson in response to his being chosen and his Nazirite vow: *Then the Spirit of the Lord rushed upon him, and although he had nothing in his hand, he tore the lion in pieces as one tears a young goat. But he did not tell his father or his mother what he had done. (JG 14.6)*

**EX:** What Gideon, Deborah and Barak, Ehud, and Othniel wouldn't have given for that kind of strength! Samson, alone, seems to have this gift of strength, shown multiple times across his chapters: *And the Spirit of the Lord rushed upon him, and he went down to Ashkelon and struck down thirty men of the town and took their spoil and gave the garments to those who had told the riddle. In hot anger he went back to his father's house. (JG 14.19)*

Time and time again, Samson is personally opposed by Philistines—and time after time, **he was empowered**. God and His Spirit rush on him and he tears mighty beasts, strikes first 30 men, and then, later, even more: *When he came to Lehi, the Philistines came shouting to meet him. Then the Spirit of the Lord rushed upon him, and the ropes that were on his arms became as flax that has caught fire, and his bonds melted off his hands. 15 And he found a fresh jawbone of a donkey, and put out his hand and took it, and with it he struck 1,000 men. (JG 15.14-15)*

But...there's one thing we never see. Samson never leads an army. Samson never rescues a town or even so much as a single solitary person. Instead, time and time again, we see him using the power and strength God has given him in protection of himself. And that's interesting! **Why would God choose and empower this man for him to only use His power for short and temporary bursts of personal protection and deliverance?**

**EX:** To understand that, we have to look at Israel, herself, at this point. There's a recurring phrase in **JG**: *"the people of Israel cried out to the Lord". JG 3.9, 3.15, 4.3, 6.6-7, 10.10, 10.15:* each time that God raises a Judge, it's in response to the people *"crying out to the Lord"*. But that doesn't happen with Samson. **Why?**

**Remember that last example of Samson's power?** Let's go back there real quick. Just before Samson strikes the 1000 with the jawbone of the donkey, the Philistines had raided on the city of Lehi. The men of Judah come to him, and the entire structure of **JG** makes us assume that they're going to ask for help: to *"cry out to the Lord"* for help. But that's not what happens!

**JG 15.10-13** ~ *And the men of Judah said, "Why have you come up against us?" They said, "We have come up to bind Samson, to do to him as he did to us." 11 Then 3,000 men of Judah went down to the cleft of the rock of Etam, and said to Samson, "Do you not know that the Philistines are rulers over us? What then is this that you have done to us?" And he said to them, "As they did to me, so have I done to them." 12 And they said to him, "We have come down to bind you, that we may give you into the hands of the Philistines." And Samson said to them, "Swear to me that you will not attack me yourselves." 13 They said to him, "No; we will only bind you and give you into their hands. We will surely not kill you." So they bound him with two new ropes and brought him up from the rock.*

**EX:** The people who'd previously called for God to deliver them were asking the man **empowered by God** to just give himself up. And so we see an interesting picture of Israel, as a people: a **chosen** people who have the blessing of God (shown by His **empowering** of Samson), and yet who flat out refuse to do anything good with it.

**AP:** The story of Samson paints Israel as having the strength of God on their side but not having the will to use it—the will to resist the godless people and temptations of the world. What a tragedy! And how familiar. For we see examples among His people, today.

**LK 19.11-27** ~ *As they heard these things, he proceeded to tell a parable, because he was near to Jerusalem, and because they supposed that the kingdom of God was to appear immediately. 12 He said therefore, "A nobleman went into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom and then return. 13 Calling ten of his servants, he gave them ten minas, and said to them, 'Engage in business until I come.' 14 But his citizens hated him and sent a delegation after him, saying, 'We do not want this man to reign over us.' 15 When he returned, having received the kingdom, he ordered these servants to whom he had given the money to be called to him, that he might know what they had gained by doing business. 16 The first came before him, saying, 'Lord, your mina has made ten minas more.' 17 And he said to him, 'Well done, good servant! Because you have been faithful in a very little, you shall have authority over ten cities.' 18 And the second came, saying, 'Lord, your mina has made five minas.' 19 And he said to him, 'And you are to be over five cities.' 20 Then another came, saying, 'Lord, here is your mina, which I kept laid away in a handkerchief; 21 for I was afraid of you, because you are a severe man. You take what you did not deposit, and reap what you did not sow.' 22 He said to him, 'I will condemn you with your own words, you wicked servant! You knew that I was a*