

Lesson 7 – Judges 15-16

Text: Judges 15-16

Main Characters: God, Samson, Delilah, Philistines, Israelites

Key Passages:

- Judges 16:20 – After his hair had been cut, Samson still thought he would still be strong.
- Judges 16:28 – Samson seemed to finally understand that his power was from the Lord.
- Hebrews 11:32 – Despite all of Samson’s faults and poor decisions, God counted him as faithful.

Main Storyline:

After a while, Samson returned to Timnah to visit his “wife.” Unfortunately, when he arrived, the woman’s father informed him that he had given her to Samson’s best man. He offered Samson her younger sister instead. Samson, enraged once again, went and caught 300 foxes. He tied the foxes’ tails together and set torches between them. Then he set them all loose to burn the Philistines’ crops.

The Philistines asked around and found out that Samson was responsible for this. When they discovered that he had done it because of his father-in-law and “ex-wife,” they went and burned her and her father with fire, killing them. In response, Samson attacked the Philistines and killed many men.

The Philistines decided to put an end to Samson by arresting and killing him in Judah. They came to Judah and told the people of Judah that they had come to arrest Samson. Three thousand men came to Samson, rebuking him for starting trouble with the Philistines. Samson defended himself, saying that he was just taking revenge. Samson finally agreed to be bound by the men of Judah and delivered to the Philistines under the condition that the men of Judah would not kill him. When Samson was given to the Philistines, he broke the ropes binding him easily. Then he took a donkey’s jawbone and killed 1000 Philistines with it. After fighting them all, God provided Samson with water.

Samson later went to Gaza (another Philistine city) and took a harlot there. When the men of Gaza found out, they plotted to kill him. Unfortunately for them, Samson left the city in the middle of the night and escaped out of the city by pulling the gates out of the ground.

Near the end of Samson’s life, he fell in love with another Philistine woman, Delilah. The lords of the Philistines asked Delilah to find out the secret to Samson’s strength, bribing her with money, and Delilah agreed to do so. Delilah asked Samson the secret of his strength, and Samson lied about it. Then Delilah put Samson to sleep on her lap while she tried to use his “secret” against him to take away his strength. Delilah then woke up him, claiming that the Philistines were coming to attack him. Samson woke up and was ready to defend himself, still possessing his supernatural strength. Delilah continued to press him for lying to her. Samson gave her two other fake “secrets” before finally divulging that his hair was not supposed to be cut. When Samson woke up the fourth time with his hair cut, he thought he would still be strong, but God had left him. The Philistines imprisoned him and gouged his eyes out.

The Philistines decided to have a huge celebration in the temple of their god in honor of Samson’s capture. During the feast, they decided to bring Samson out to “entertain” them. After he had performed for them, he asked the boy with him to bring him to the pillars of the temple. Once there, he asked God to give him strength one last time. Samson was able to destroy the temple, killing more Philistines in his death than he had during his entire life. Samson judged Israel for twenty years.

Lessons/Applications:

- 1.) We cannot allow our pride to blind us to the fact that God is the source of everything we have.
- 2.) Even those who live wicked lives can turn back to God if they truly repent of their sins.
- 3.) We must be careful not to be too deeply associated with those who do not love the Lord.