

How a Nation Unravels: The Book of Judges

Lesson 8

Judges 16

February 27, 2022

A Muscle Man with a Sex Addiction

Introduction

The story of Samson and Delilah is one of the most popular stories from the Old Testament, recounted in children's books and love songs. However, it is a story of betrayal, disobedience, and deception. But, it is also an encouraging story of the sovereignty and faithfulness of God.

As we learned in the last lesson, although Samson was a judge and a Nazirite, he consistently disobeyed God out of pride, anger, and lust. As a result, God saw to it that his life of privilege and physical prowess was replaced with blindness, weakness, and enslavement.

Still, however, God did not abandon him. On the contrary, God used Samson despite his disobedience. When Samson cried out to God, God restored Samson to his full strength, using him to help fulfill His will of ridding Canaan of the Philistines.

In the same way God used a disobedient Samson to fulfill his will, God also uses us. Even when our hearts are selfish and wayward, God's faithfulness and sovereignty will always prevail, and He will always use us for His purposes.

Memory verse: "Then Samson prayed to the Lord, "Sovereign Lord, remember me. Please, God, strengthen me just once more, and let me with one blow get revenge on the Philistines for my two eyes."—Judges 16:28

Pray and read Judges 16. What questions or observations do you have about this passage?

What does the passage say?

1. What did Samson do when he escaped from the prostitute's room? (Judges 16:3)
2. What did the Philistine leaders ask Delilah to do? (Judges 16:5)
3. How many times did Samson give Delilah a false answer before finally telling her the real reason for his phenomenal strength? (Judges 16:4-17)
4. What did the Philistines do with Samson once they caught him? (Judges 16:21)
5. What did Samson do before pushing the pillars out to kill the 3000 Philistines? (Judges 16:28)
6. How did God respond to Samson's prayer? (Judges 16:28-30)

What does the passage mean?

1. Israel as a nation had instructions not to intermix with the Philistines. Why then would Samson, as a leader of Israel, philander with a Philistine prostitute and then fall in love with a Philistine woman (Delilah)? (Deuteronomy 7:1-4; Judges 16:1, 4)
2. Why did Samson simply refuse not to tell Delilah the source of his strength? (Judges 16:5-17)
3. Think about Samson's motivation for asking the Lord for his strength to be regained so that he could push the pillars apart. Was Samson asking for this out of obedience so that he could follow God's will, or was it for pride and vengeance? (Judges 16:27-30)

2. Samson’s prayer at the end of his life was ambiguous: it could be seen as Samson humbly reaching out to God or as Samson seeking God’s help to satisfy his personal vengeance. How do you think God sees prayers that center on “please get me out of this horrible situation,” as opposed to prayers that seek His help in doing His will? (Judges 16:28)
3. God did not abandon Samson and continued to use Samson to fulfill His will even though Samson had been disobedient for most of his life. Pray for a few moments and write down some times that God continued to use you, even when your heart was not entirely focused on following Him. (Judges 16)