



## Sermon Notes

November 4, 2007

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Journey Through Judges #16  
*Samson Defeats the Philistines*  
Judges 15:1-20

**Judges 15:9-17** <sup>9</sup>Then the Philistines came up and encamped in Judah and made a raid on Lehi. <sup>10</sup>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." <sup>11</sup>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." <sup>12</sup>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." <sup>13</sup>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.

<sup>14</sup>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. <sup>16</sup>And Samson said,

"With the jawbone of a donkey,  
heaps upon heaps,  
with the jawbone of a donkey  
have I struck down a thousand men."

<sup>17</sup>As soon as he had finished speaking, he threw away the jawbone out of his hand. And that place was called Ramath-lehi.

### Introduction

Continuing our story from last week...

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### 1. Anger, Revenge and more Revenge (1-8)

#### a. Samson Returns for his Wife (1-3)

- Samson: "I'm back! I want my wife!"
- Father: "Uh...I gave her to your best man...but can I interest you in her even-more-beautiful younger sister?"
- Samson: "Now I'm really mad, and I am not responsible for what I am about to do to the Philistines."

#### b. Flaming Foxes, Fiery Fields (4-5)

- The Philistines' stacked grain, standing grain and olive orchards burn, thanks to Samson's fox (jackal?) hunting trip

#### c. Furious Philistines (6)

- They blame his father-in-law and wife, burn them to death
  - See Judges 14:15

#### d. Samson vows revenge...but just one more time (7-8)

- "*If this is what you do, I swear I will be avenged on you...*"
  - "*...and after that I will quit.*"
- Samson kills a number of Philistines and goes into hiding

### Anger...

...rarely leads to good – Eph. 4:26-27, Prov. 29:22, James 1:19-20  
...defeats a mighty man – Prov. 16:32  
...in haste is folly – Prov. 14:17, 29, Eccl. 7:9  
...must be put off - Col 3:8, Ps. 37:8, Prov. 19:11  
(But what about *righteous* anger?!)

### Revenge...

...can be a never-ending cycle  
...belongs to the Lord – Deut. 32:35-41, Rom. 12:19, Heb 10:30, Psalm 94:1, Nahum 1:2

### 2. Accomodating the Enemy (9-13)

#### a. A Philistine Camping Excursion into Judah (9)

- Men of Judah: "*Why have you come up against us?*"
- Philistines: "*We have come up to bind Samson, to do to him as he did to us.*"

- b. 3000 (pathetic) men of Judah go to hand Samson over (10-11)
- *Do you not know that the Philistines are rulers over us?*
  - *What then is this that you have done to us?*
  - *We have come down to bind you, that we may give you into the hands of the Philistines.*

**Accommodating Sin:** We can become so enslaved to sin that we oppose someone who stands up for the truth.

- Compare John 11:45-53 – Jesus & Chief Priests, Pharisees

- c. Samson lets them tie him up to be given to the Philistines (12-13)
- Just don't kill me yourself

- Likely Translation: I don't want to have to hurt you!

**Faith:** We see glimpses of the faith for which Samson is commended in Hebrews 11:32ff

### 3. Defeating the Enemy (14-17)

- a. The Spirit of the Lord rushes upon him, the ropes melt off (14)
- b. Samson finds a fresh jawbone of a donkey and uses it to strike down 1000 Philistines (15)
- c. Samson composes a little poem about it (16)
- Hebrew word for "heap" and "donkey" are very similar

**God's Sovereignty** – This victory was orchestrated by God – Judges 14:4

### 4. Revival for the Weary (18-20)

- a. Thirst leads to Samson's first recorded prayer (18)
- "You have granted this great salvation by the hand of your servant, and shall I now die of thirst and fall into the hands of the uncircumcised?"*
- Samson recognizes that the Lord gave him the victory
    - Judges 7:2
  - Spiritual strength doesn't exempt us from physical need
    - Elijah – 1 Kings 19:1-8
- b. God miraculously answers Samson's request
- Reminds us of Moses & Israel – Ex 17:6, Num. 20:8,11
- c. *And he judged Israel in the days of the Philistines twenty years.*

**The Lord Revives the Weary:** Isaiah 40:29-31, 42:3, 57:15

### Our Response

1. Put off unrighteous anger and the sin that so often comes with it, and put on the character of Christ, as your mind is renewed in Him

**Col. 3:8-10** *But now you must put them all away: anger, wrath, malice, slander, and obscene talk from your mouth. [9] Do not lie to one another, seeing that you have put off the old self with its practices [10] and have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge after the image of its creator.*

2. Do not accommodate sin. Be ready for the resistance that will come when you stand up for what is right.

**1 Cor. 16:9** *for a wide door for effective work has opened to me, and there are many adversaries.*

3. Trust in the Lord for victory over sin, and trust in Him for revival in your spirit, especially when you are weary after a victory.

**Isaiah 40:31** *but they who wait for the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings like eagles; they shall run and not be weary; they shall walk and not faint.*

### Questions for Application

1. Have you ever let anger lead you to take revenge? How did the cycle end?
2. How can you discern what is righteous anger vs. unrighteous anger?
3. How can we become so deceived by sin that we oppose someone who is standing up for God's truth? Has this ever happened in your experience?
4. Describe a time when the Lord revived your spirit. Did it involve physical as well as spiritual nourishment?
5. How do you see God sovereignly working in this passage (see Judges 14:4)? How does this give you faith for the challenges you face?
6. Pray together for the Lord's strength to stand firm and trust Him for victory in the spiritual battles you face, even when others do not stand with you.

### Questions, Comments? - [inthebeginning@look.ca](mailto:inthebeginning@look.ca)

If you have questions or comments about today's message, please drop me an email to the address above. Thanks,

Tim

