

JUDGES

Lesson 7 w/Answers

Samson: Part 3 of 3

With this lesson, we conclude our three-part look at the life of Samson. The story of Samson and Delilah is perhaps one of the most famous, or infamous, stories in the entire Bible. We will discover, once again, that Samson's wandering eyes and weakness around manipulative women will be his downfall.

It will also be clear that, through all of this, God's purpose, the eventual destruction of the Philistines and the end of their oppression of the Jews, is moved forward through the life and acts of Samson. In spite of his total disregard for his Nazirite Vow; and despite, at times, his total disregard for God and God's presence in his life, Samson will nevertheless play a key part in the eventual destruction of the Philistines

Read Judges Chapter 16 and answer the following:

1. How long did Samson lead Israel? (Judges 15:20 and 16:31)
 - a. ANSWER: Samson led Israel for 20 years.
2. Review Judges 16:1, and answer the following questions pertinent to Samson's trip to Gaza.
 - a. What did he do as soon as he got there?
 - i. ANSWER: He slept with a prostitute.
 - b. Is this what you would expect the leader of Israel to do?
 - i. ANSWER: No. Clearly not.
 - c. Have we ever observed this type behavior in other world leaders?
 - i. ANSWER: Yes, more often than we care to remember. This appears to be common behavior by many in powerful leadership positions.
 - d. What is the common reaction to this type behavior when it is made public?
 - i. ANSWER: It is interesting to see the various kinds of reactions to this behavior when it becomes public knowledge. Many will simply discount it as the behavior of a powerful man, but those who follow God's laws are appalled and disappointed, particularly when it is their leader
3. Delilah made four attempts to learn the source of Samson's strength. Each time he gave her a different answer. List each of them below.
 - a. Judges 16:6-9
 - i. ANSWER: Just tie me with seven fresh bowstrings, not dried.
 - b. Judges 16:10-12
 - i. ANSWER: Tie me securely with new ropes that have never been used.
 - c. Judges 16:13-14
 - i. ANSWER: Weave seven braids of hair into the fabric on the loom and tighten it with a pin.
 - d. Judges 16:15-17
 - i. ANSWER: He tells her the truth, i.e., that cutting his hair will take away his strength. This is because his strength came from God, and now the sign from God that set him apart will be gone.
4. Why did Samson finally tell Delilah the truth? (Judges 16:16)
 - a. ANSWER: She nagged him constantly until he was unable to take it any longer.
5. What was the sad truth that Samson did not know when he awoke and discovered that his hair had been cut? (Judges 16:20)
 - a. ANSWER: Samson did not realize that the Lord had left him. How sad. Can you imagine living a life where the Lord was with you and now He has left you? This was Samson's immediate dilemma.
6. After they subdued him, what did the Philistines do to Samson, and where did they take him? Can you see the irony here, both in what they did and where they took him? (Judges 16:21)
 - a. ANSWER: The irony here is that, after they blind Samson, they take him down to Gaza, the very city where he had torn off their city gates (Judges 16:1-3); and they give him woman's work to do, i.e., grinding the grain.

7. God gives Samson a new beginning. How do we know this? (Judges 16:22)
 - a. ANSWER: God still is not finished with Samson and the work he has for Samson to do. We know this as we see Samson's hair beginning to return.
 8. What notable people were present at the celebration described in Judges 16:23?
 - a. ANSWER: The Philistines in those days had a five-city government; and the leaders of each of the five Philistine cities—Ashkelon, Ashdod, Gaza, Ekron, and Gath—are present. Essentially, all of the leadership within the Philistines are now present at one place and at one time.
 9. Who did Samson eventually turn to for help? (Judges 16:28)
 - a. ANSWER: At the end of his life, Samson finally turns to the Lord to ask for help.
 10. What does Judges 16:30 tell us about Samson's greatest achievement?
 - a. ANSWER: Judges 16:30 tells us that Samson "killed many more when he died than while he lived," referring to the Philistines.
 11. If Samson's story is in the book of Judges because his life symbolizes something to the Jews, what is it? Was he a living picture of something that the Jews might recognize?
 - a. ANSWER: Samson reflects a life of living for pleasure and selfishness. He shows all of us the results of that lifestyle; and demonstrates to us that, as leaders, it also affects those that we are responsible for. He is the picture of someone God chose to be his witness—who instead sought after selfish and worldly pleasures and ignored the role God had for him. In the end, his role was taken from him and given to someone else. Perhaps this is a picture of the Nation of Israel and the passing of their responsibilities to Jesus.
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As Samson's life comes to a tragic but victorious close, God's purpose to discomfort the Philistines is dramatically achieved. Looking at it from the outside, we see Samson and his life in a way that Samson himself could not see. His pride, lustful eyes, and unholy lifestyle blinded him both figuratively and literally from seeing God's will for his life

Let's pray that we will never be this blind, and that we will always be mindful of the things around us that can so easily distract us from seeing and knowing God's will.

Romans 12:1-2 comes immediately to mind, due to relevance to this lesson. Can we commit this week to begin the process of asking God to cleanse us from our sin, so that we can offer ourselves as a living, holy sacrifice; and asking Him to transform us so that we may know and do His perfect will?

Let's vow to learn from Samson's mistakes, and to avoid the lusts and desires of this world so that we may live and walk uprightly with God.

May God richly bless you as you continue to read and study His Holy Word!

In Christ,

Wes