

## OT-OV

### Lesson 77

1. Last week we continued our study of the Book of Judges.

2. When time expired I was reviewing the life of Samson.

3. Let's review some of that learned and then we will pick up with new material on page two.

3.1 The Book of Judges was written somewhere around 1100 B.C. by an unknown, most of the events recorded in the book occurred between 1400-1100 B.C. It is a story of states/tribal rights under a Theocracy and the success of the system even amidst terrible personal failures on the part of the individual Judges.

3.2 In historical sequence it covers the period of Israel's history between Joshua and Samuel.

3.3 Once more the mighty acts of God were displayed as a number of judges responded to the call of God to lead the Israelites in military exploits to rout the oppressing nations.

3.4 The Book describes a series of religious and political cycles of sin, sorrow and supplications. Some of the Judges were contemporaries serving in different parts of the country. God raised up "Judges" to deliver Israel at various times. Though each judge ruled in his tribe and in the main solved only intra-tribal problems, God in periods of exigency used certain heroes to resolve inter-tribal problems.

4. Samson was a hero from the tribe of Dan, the son of Manoah; one of the last of the judges before Samuel. He lived in the southern section of the land given to Dan.

5. Samson was born in c. 1090 B.C. at the beginning of the Philistine oppression in Zorah. Sorek lay across the valley of Sorek from Beth-shemesh, very near the Israelite-Philistine border.

6. In spite of his Godly upbringing and charismatic empowering Samson was careless about honoring God as a Nazarite. There is no Scriptural record of Judah and/or Simeon taking steps toward repentance or prayer for deliverance from the Philistines during Samson's 20-year "ministry."

6.1 Samson showed little interest in delivering the nation; he seemed more interested in self-gratification.

6.2 Samson's parents dedicated him to be a life-long Nazarite (see our earlier description of a Nazarite) even before his conception.

7. The Spirit of the Lord repeatedly came upon him to enable him to perform amazing feats of physical strength (Jdg 13:25; 14:6, 19; and Jdg 15:14).

8. In spite of his Godly upbringing and charismatic empowering Samson was careless about honoring God as a Nazarite.

9. As a young man he secretly disobeyed the prohibition against approaching a dead body (Jdg 14:8-9), publicly provided wine for a feast or drinking bout and enjoyed the pleasures of a woman.

9.1 He violated the Nazarite principle of living separated unto Jehovah by his immoral relations with the Gaza harlot and with Delilah (Jdg 16:1-20).

10. His spiritual indifference was climaxed by the cutting of his long hair, the characteristic sign of Nazarite consecration. (Num 6:5 ; Num 18-19 and Jdg 16:4-21)

11. The narrative of Samson centers around his experiences with three Philistine women.

11.1 In connection with his marriage to a woman of Timnath he killed a lion with his bare hands (Jdg 14:5-6) and slew 30 Philistines of Ashkelon for their clothing (Jdg 14:19).

Jdg 14:5 Samson went down to Timnah together with his father and mother. As they approached the vineyards of Timnah, suddenly a young lion came roaring toward him.

Jdg 14:6 The Spirit of the LORD came upon him in power so that he tore the lion apart with his bare hands as he might have torn a young goat. But he told neither his father nor his mother what he had done.

Jdg 14:7 Then he went down and talked with the woman, and he liked her.

Jdg 14:8 Some time later, when he went back to marry her, he turned aside to look at the lion's carcass. In it was a swarm of bees and some honey,

Jdg 14:9 which he scooped out with his hands and ate as he went along. When he rejoined his parents, he gave them some, and they too ate it. But he did not tell them that he had taken the honey from the lion's carcass.

Jdg 14:10 Now his father went down to see the woman. And Samson made a feast there, as was customary for bridegrooms.

Jdg 14:11 When he appeared, he was given thirty companions.

Jdg 14:12 "Let me tell you a riddle," Samson said to them. "If you can give me the answer within the seven days of the feast, I will give you thirty linen garments and thirty sets of clothes.

Jdg 14:13 If you can't tell me the answer, you must give me thirty linen garments and thirty sets of clothes." "Tell us your riddle," they said. "Let's hear it."

Jdg 14:14 He replied, "Out of the eater, something to eat; out of the strong, something sweet." For three days they could not give the answer.

Jdg 14:15 On the fourth day, they said to Samson's wife, "Coax your husband into explaining the riddle for us, or we will burn you and your father's household to death. Did you invite us here to rob us?"

Jdg 14:16 Then Samson's wife threw herself on him, sobbing, "You hate me! You don't really love me. You've given my people a riddle, but you haven't told me the answer." "I haven't even explained it to my father or mother," he replied, "so why should I explain it to you?"

Jdg 14:17 She cried the whole seven days of the feast. So on the seventh day he finally told her, because she continued to press him. She in turn explained the riddle to her people.

Jdg 14:18 Before sunset on the seventh day the men of the town said to him, "What is sweeter than honey? What is stronger than a lion?" Samson said to them, "If you had not plowed with my heifer, you would not have solved my riddle."

Jdg 14:19 Then the Spirit of the LORD came upon him in power. He went down to Ashkelon, struck down thirty of their men, stripped them of their belongings and gave their clothes to those who had explained the riddle. Burning with anger, he went up to his father's house.

11.2 Because his father-in-law gave his wife to his best man ("companion," Jdg 14:20; 15:1-2), Samson took revenge by catching 300 foxes, tying firebrands to their tails, and turning them loose in the grain fields and orchards of the Philistines.

Jdg 14:20 And Samson's wife was given to the friend who had attended him at his wedding.

Jdg 15:1 Later on, at the time of wheat harvest, Samson took a young goat and went to visit his wife. He said, "I'm going to my wife's room." But her father would not let him go in.

Jdg 15:2 "I was so sure you thoroughly hated her," he said, "that I gave her to your friend. Isn't her younger sister more attractive? Take her instead."

11.2.1 When the Philistine punished his wife's family, he avenged them with a great slaughter and then went to hide at Etam, just SE of Bethlehem.

Jdg 15:3 Samson said to them, "This time I have a right to get even with the Philistines; I will really harm them."

Jdg 15:4 So he went out and caught three hundred foxes and tied them tail to tail in pairs. He then fastened a torch to every pair of tails,

Jdg 15:5 lit the torches and let the foxes loose in the standing grain of the Philistines. He burned up the shocks and standing grain, together with the vineyards and olive groves.

Jdg 15:6 When the Philistines asked, "Who did this?" they were told, "Samson, the Timnite's son-in-law, because his wife was given to his friend." So the Philistines went up and burned her and her father to death.

Jdg 15:7 Samson said to them, "Since you've acted like this, I won't stop until I get my revenge on you."

Jdg 15:8 He attacked them viciously and slaughtered many of them. Then he went down and stayed in a cave in the rock of Etam.

11.2.2 Soon the Philistines invaded Judah to capture Samson. The fearful Israelites bound him with two new ropes to surrender him to the enemy. Jdg 15:9-13

Jdg 15:9 The Philistines went up and camped in Judah, spreading out near Lehi (NW of Bethlehem).

Jdg 15:10 The men of Judah asked, "Why have you come to fight us?" "We have come to take Samson prisoner," they answered, "to do to him as he did to us."

Jdg 15:11 Then three thousand men from Judah went down to the cave in the rock of Etam (outside Bethlehem) and said to Samson, "Don't you realize that the Philistines are rulers over us? What have you done to us?" He answered, "I merely did to them what they did to me."

Jdg 15:12 They said to him, "We've come to tie you up and hand you over to the Philistines." Samson said, "Swear to me that you won't kill me yourselves."

Jdg 15:13 "Agreed," they answered. "We will only tie you up and hand you over to them. We will not kill you." So they bound him with two new ropes and led him up from the rock.

11.2.3 As the Philistines met him, he snapped his fetters and, seeing a jawbone of an ass, killed a thousand of them with it (Jdg 15:14-16).

Jdg 15:14 As he approached Lehi, the Philistines came toward him shouting. The Spirit of the LORD came upon him in power. The ropes on his arms became like charred flax, and the bindings dropped from his hands.

Jdg 15:15 Finding a fresh jawbone of a donkey, he grabbed it and struck down a thousand men.

Jdg 15:16 Then Samson said, "With a donkey's jawbone I have made donkeys of them. With a donkey's jawbone I have killed a thousand men."

11.3 The next recorded event tells of his visit to a harlot in the Philistine stronghold of Gaza. Upon learning of his presence in the city the officials had him surrounded.

11.3.1 At midnight he arose and carried off the city's two gates. In so doing he humiliated the Philistine because the gates symbolize the strength of the city.

Jdg 16:1 One day Samson went to Gaza, where he saw a prostitute. He went in to spend the night with her.

Jdg 16:2 The people of Gaza were told, "Samson is here!" So they surrounded the place and lay in wait for him all night at the city gate. They made no move during the night, saying, "At dawn we'll kill him."

Jdg 16:3 But Samson lay there only until the middle of the night. Then he got up and took hold of the doors of the city gate, together with the two posts, and tore them loose, bar and all. He lifted them to his shoulders and carried them to the top of the hill that faces Hebron.

11.3.2 Once more Samson let his passions go unchecked. He became infatuated with Delilah. The Philistines bribed her to learn from him the secret of his strength.

11.3.3 Three times her charms and coaxings failed to get a true answer, but he finally gave in to her persistent nagging and revealed to her that as a Nazarite his unshorn hair was the key to his strength.

11.3.4 While he was asleep Delilah shaved his head and he was helpless, for the Lord forsook him. The Philistines blinded him and consigned him in the Gaza prison to grinding grain.  
(Jdg 16:4-21).

Jdg 16:4 Sometime later, he fell in love with a woman in the Valley of Sorek whose name was Delilah.

Jdg 16:5 The rulers of the Philistines went to her and said, "See if you can lure him into showing you the secret of his great strength and how we can overpower him so we may tie him up and subdue him. Each one of us will give you eleven hundred shekels of silver."

Jdg 16:6 So Delilah said to Samson, "Tell me the secret of your great strength and how you can be tied up and subdued."

Jdg 16:7 Samson answered her, "If anyone ties me with seven fresh thongs that have not been dried — E, I'll become as weak as any other man."

Jdg 16:8 Then the rulers of the Philistines brought her seven fresh thongs that had not been dried, and she tied him with them.

Jdg 16:9 With men hidden in the room, she called to him, "Samson, the Philistines are upon you!" But he snapped the thongs as easily as a piece of string snaps when it comes close to a flame. So the secret of his strength was not discovered.

Jdg 16:10 Then Delilah said to Samson, "You have made a fool of me; you lied to me. Come now, tell me how you can be tied."

Jdg 16:11 He said, "If anyone ties me securely with new ropes that have never been used, I'll become as weak as any other man."

Jdg 16:12 So Delilah took new ropes and tied him with them. Then, with men hidden in the room, she called to him, "Samson, the Philistines are upon you!" But he snapped the ropes off his arms as if they were threads.

Jdg 16:13 Delilah then said to Samson, "Until now, you have been making a fool of me and lying to me. Tell me how you can be tied." He replied, "If you weave the seven braids of my head into the fabric on the loom and tighten it with the pin, I'll become as weak as any other man." So while he was sleeping, Delilah took the seven braids of his head, wove them into the fabric

Jdg 16:14 and tightened it with the pin. Again she called to him, "Samson, the Philistines are upon you!" He awoke from his sleep and pulled up the pin and the loom, with the fabric.

Jdg 16:15 Then she said to him, "How can you say, 'I love you,' when you won't confide in me? This is the third time you have made a fool of me and haven't told me the secret of your great strength."

Jdg 16:16 With such nagging she prodded him day after day until he was tired to death.

Jdg 16:17 So he told her everything. "No razor has ever been used on my head," he said, "because I have been a Nazarite set apart to God since birth. If my head were shaved, my strength would leave me, and I would become as weak as any other man."

Jdg 16:18 When Delilah saw that he had told her everything, she sent word to the rulers of the Philistines, "Come back once more; he has told me everything." So the rulers of the Philistines returned with the silver in their hands.

Jdg 16:19 Having put him to sleep on her lap, she called a man to shave off the seven braids of his hair, and so began to subdue him. And his strength left him.

Jdg 16:20 Then she called, "Samson, the Philistines are upon you!" He awoke from his sleep and thought, "I'll go out as before and shake myself free." But he did not know that the LORD had left him.

Jdg 16:21 Then the Philistines seized him, gouged out his eyes and took him down to Gaza. Binding him with bronze shackles, they set him to grinding in the prison.

12. On the occasion of a national festival in honor of Dagon, a multitude of Philistines gathered in the temple, with about 3,000 more on the roof.

12.1 They brought Samson to make sport of him before the crowd. Meanwhile his hair (along with inner repentance) had grown, and his strength had returned.

12.2 Samson braced himself against the two middle pillars at the entrance of the temple building, and pushed them off their bases.

12.3 The roof of the portico fell, burying the five Philistine lords and all who were inside, including Samson.

12.3.1 At one stroke he was avenged for his eyes, as he had prayed, by killing more enemies in his death than the total he had killed during his lifetime.

Jdg 16:22 But the hair on his head began to grow again after it had been shaved.

Jdg 16:23 Now the rulers of the Philistines assembled to offer a great sacrifice to Dagon their god and to celebrate, saying, "Our god has delivered Samson, our enemy, into our hands."

Jdg 16:24 When the people saw him, they praised their god, saying, "Our god has delivered our enemy into our hands, the one who laid waste our land and multiplied our slain."

Jdg 16:25 While they were in high spirits, they shouted, "Bring out Samson to entertain us." So they called Samson out of the prison, and he performed for them. When they stood him among the pillars,

Jdg 16:26 Samson said to the servant who held his hand, "Put me where I can feel the pillars that support the temple, so that I may lean against them."

Jdg 16:27 Now the house was full of men and women; and all the lords of the Philistines were there; and there were upon the roof about three thousand men and women, that beheld while Samson made sport.

Jdg 16:28 And Samson called unto the LORD, and said, O Lord GOD, remember me, I pray thee, and strengthen me, I pray thee, only this once, O God, that I may be at once avenged of the Philistines for my two eyes.

Jdg 16:29 And Samson took hold of the two middle pillars upon which the house stood, and on which it was borne up, of the one with his right hand, and of the other with his left.

Jdg 16:30 And Samson said, Let me die with the Philistines. And he bowed himself with all his might; and the house fell upon the lords, and upon all the people that were therein. So the dead which he slew at his death were more than they which he slew in his life.

12.3.2 In 1972 at Tell Qasile, in the ruins of the first Philistine temple ever found in Palestine, two such stone pedestals were discovered, placed only a yard apart.

13. In spite of his failing Samson is listed with the heroes of faith in Heb 11:32.

Heb 11:32 And what shall I more say? for the time would fail me to tell of Gideon, and of Barak, and of Samson, and of Jephthah; of David also, and Samuel, and of the prophets:

14. In the end it was by his dependence of God's gifts and calling that he was empowered to perform his last act of heroism.

15. Because of Samson's lack of self-control his ministry was largely ineffective, and accordingly he wrought no permanent deliverance for Israel.

16. Appendices; Results of Apostasy, Jdg 17:1-21:25

16.1 Micha's idolatry, Jdg 17:1-13

Jdg 17:1 Now a man named Micah from the hill country of Ephraim

End Lesson