



**Men's Huddle**  
**November 5, 2009**  
**Samson: Part I**  
**Judges 13 & 14**  
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The book of Judges stands in stark contrast to Joshua. There, an obedient people conquered the land through trust in the power of God. But in Judges, a disobedient and idolatrous people are frequently defeated because of their rebellion against God. In seven distinct cycles of sin, Judges shows how the nation has set aside God's law and in its place "everyone did what was right in his own eyes" (21:25). Result: corruption from within and oppression from without. From time to time God raises up military champions to throw off the yoke of bondage and restore the nation to pure worship. But all too soon the "sin cycle" begins again as the nation's spiritual temperature grows steadily colder.

Talk Thru the Bible, page 58

**I. Old Testament History 101**

A. The book of Judges is an account of Israel's history between taking the \_\_\_\_\_ (described in Joshua) and the time of \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_ (described in 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Samuel). It is called Judges because it describes the 350-year period in Israel's history before there were \_\_\_\_\_, when the Israelites were governed by a series of \_\_\_\_\_ called Judges (ca 1400-1050 B.C.).

- B. One of the purposes of the book of Judges it to demonstrate the need for better, stronger, more spiritual leadership that would be coming in godly kings like David. Therefore, Judges shows things that are \_\_\_\_\_, that Israel must change or she will \_\_\_\_\_ the land she has recently been given by God.
- C. In other words, Judges describes a 350 year \_\_\_\_\_. The book is a mix of \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_, deliverance and judgment, as both the leaders and the people are up and down spiritually. Samson is one of the most poignant illustrations of this. He achieves remarkable \_\_\_\_\_ and yet commits gross \_\_\_\_\_. We will study Samson by looking at the good, the bad and the ugly. Fasten your seat belt.

## II. Samson's early life--Judges 13:1-7, 24-25

- A. Samson, \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ were several of the Bible's better known Nazarites. A Nazarite, from the Hebrew word meaning \_\_\_\_\_ is described in Numbers 6. A Nazarite was a class of men set apart to God. They took special vows of \_\_\_\_\_ that others didn't in order to especially serve God. They abstained from wine, didn't cut their hair, and avoided defilement from dead bodies. Sometimes it was a voluntary and temporary thing as in Numbers 6 and other times permanent and involuntary as here with Samson. Think monks!
- B. Samuel, who comes later, served God and his people selflessly, faithfully and totally. Samson lived a life of service but also used his strength to push his own \_\_\_\_\_. Samson's Nazarite observances were primarily \_\_\_\_\_; Samuel's however, were an outward sign of what God was doing \_\_\_\_\_. God called both men to serve with faith and courage, but only Samuel was \_\_\_\_\_. Point: what you do doesn't matter nearly as much as \_\_\_\_\_. That was true in the OT and it's still true today.
- C. Positive: Samson was \_\_\_\_\_ by God, set apart at his \_\_\_\_\_ to deliver Israel from the Philistines. Samson was God's man.

### III. Samson's failed first marriage—Judges 14:1-20

A. Was it right for Samson to marry this Philistine woman? \_\_\_\_\_, God clearly prohibited Jews from intermarrying with the Canaanites (Ex. 34:11-16, Dt. 7:1-4)

B. Now look at verse 4. How could this be “from the Lord” if God clearly had forbidden it? Answer—the \_\_\_\_\_ of Samson, in marrying a non-Jew, wasn't from the Lord, the consequence, that is the deliverance of the Israelites from Philistine domination was. The verse emphasizes the later.

Our conclusion is that Samson was neither directed nor tempted by God to do what God had specifically prohibited in his Word. God wanted the defeat of the Philistines, but that did not give Samson carte blanche. Moreover, God's blessing on one or more aspects of a person's life is no indication that everything that person does is approved. Samson was plain bullheaded about this decision, and he refused to listen to his parents or to God. But neither Samson's foolishness nor his stubbornness would prevent the design of God from being fulfilled.

*More Hard Sayings of the Old Testament, Walter C. Kaiser, Jr., pg. 133*

C. Negative

Surprise! Samson is cited in the faith hall of fame in Hebrews 11:32 as an example of \_\_\_\_\_.

“ And what more shall I say? I do not have time to tell about Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah, David, Samuel and the prophets, who through faith conquered kingdoms, administered justice, and gained what was promised; who shut the mouths of lions.”

Hebrews 11:32-33

Samson was called by \_\_\_\_\_, bound by Nazarite vow, repeatedly empowered by the Holy Spirit with supernatural strength, greatly gifted, and a man who possessed apparently a keen \_\_\_\_\_ in God. Yet chapter 14 reveals he is \_\_\_\_\_, narcissistic, disobedient, and \_\_\_\_\_.

However, as we will develop next week, his greatest weakness \_\_\_\_\_ his \_\_\_\_\_ and inability to control his \_\_\_\_\_ (cf. 16:1).

The point is Samson is a sobering \_\_\_\_\_. He is a picture of the believer \_\_\_\_ God, who has been blessed \_\_\_\_ God, who refuses to live \_\_\_\_ God. Instead he lives \_\_\_\_\_ self.

Read Judges 21:25. That's exactly what Samson is doing in 14:3b...Samson, the key leader to Israel, is saying \_\_\_\_\_ is right in my own eyes, I will \_\_\_\_ what is right in \_\_\_\_\_.

Somewhere along the way the movement of Jesus Christ became civilized as Christianity. We created a religion using the name of Jesus Christ and convinced ourselves that God's optimal desire for our lives was to insulate us in a spiritual bubble where we risk nothing, sacrifice nothing, lose nothing, worry about nothing. Yet Jesus' death wasn't to free us from dying, but to free us from the fear of death. Jesus came to liberate us so that we could die up front and then live. Jesus Christ wants to take us to places where only dead men and women can go.

I wonder how many of us have lost our barbarian way and have become embittered with God, confused in our faith because God doesn't come through the way we think He should. Is it possible that the transforming power of the church has been lost because we keep inviting people to step into the comfort, safety, and security of Jesus Christ? We've created a religious culture in which—even though we're the most blessed society in the history of the planet—our best-selling literature still focuses on how we can be more blessed. Maybe we need to step way back to the beginning of this movement.

The original call of Jesus was so simple, so clean, so clear: "Follow Me." He wants us to surrender our lives to Him and follow Him into the unknown. And if it means a life of suffering, hardship, and disappointment, it will be worth it because following Jesus Christ is more powerful and more fulfilling than living with everything in the world minus Him. Have we forgotten this? Have we become so refined and so civilized that the benefits of our faith have become more precious and more valuable to us than the Benefactor of our faith?

*The Barbarian Way*, Erwin Raphael McManus, pg. 48-49

Men, think theologically, live radically, give generously, speak up boldly, serve sacrificially because you love, worship and follow the king of kings.

Questions:

--Why is wasted spiritual potential such a big problem for us as men?

--Does your agenda conflict with God's in any way?

--What does Samson challenge you to do differently?