

Judges 14

December 22, 2011

Last week we studied Samson's Birth and Samson's Brawn, this evening we study Samson's "Bride" and Samson's Bet...and in the end it get's pretty bad.

I. Samson's "Bride"

V. 1-2

Notice again, we read in v. 1 that Samson went **down** to Timnah. This would be true **geographically**, for Timnah was 4 to 6 miles south of Samson's home; this would be true in **topography**, for Timnah was 800 feet lower in elevation than Samson's home; but more than anything else, this would be true **Spiritually**, for as we study Chapter 14 of Judges, we see the beginning of the actual downfall of Samson. We see the word down is found in vs. 1, 5, 7 and 10.

Reminds me of Jonah 1:3 "But Jonah arose to flee to Tarshish from the presence of the LORD. He went **down** to Joppa, and found a ship going to Tarshish; so he paid the fare, and went **down** into it, to go with them to Tarshish from the presence of the LORD."

Samson went down when he shouldn't have. He ventured into places to he shouldn't have been; he sinned with his feet and then sinned with his eyes.

Notice again what we read in v. 1, "Now Samson went down to Timnah and **saw** a woman in Timnah of the daughters of the Philistines."

The NLT and NET says, "a Philistine girl caught his eye..."

They say men are visual, and I would have to say that most of the time this is true.

There are tons of visual valleys in this world we live in. 1 John 2:16, "For all that *is* in the world--the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life--is not of the Father but is of the world."

I can't tell you how many men have been "caught" and brought down in the same way Samson was; they sinned with their feet and they sinned with their eyes.

This is why our Lord Jesus said in Luke 11:34 ""The lamp of the body is the eye. Therefore, when your eye is good, your whole body also is full of light. But when *your* eye is bad, your body also *is* full of darkness."

And this is why Job said, Job 31:1 ""I have made a covenant with my eyes; Why then should I look upon a young woman?"

Now, if you see a young woman, or a so-called, good-looking guy or gal, it's not a sin; but when that first look turns into a second look, and you start taking mental pictures...checking her out like that...than that lust will turn you to dust.

It got so bad with Samson that without even meeting her, he wanted to marry her, in other words, it was ALL about looks. He then commands to get her for him as a wife.

V. 3

Samson sinned with his feet; he sinned with his eyes; and most importantly he sinned with his heart.

Who did Samson want to please?

Himself! (we'll see the same thing later – notice v. 7)

No wonder Samson would only **begin** to deliver Israel (13:5)!

What a contrast to Jesus...as we celebrate Christmas, when Jesus came to earth as a baby, He came as a bondservant; I love Jesus' words in John 6:38 ""For I have come down from heaven, not to do My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me."

And then again in John 8:29 ""And He who sent Me is with Me. The Father has not left Me alone, for I always do those things that **please Him**.""

Shouldn't the choice of our **lives** and the choice of our **wives** be pleasing to the Lord first and foremost?

This was simply wrong, and Samson's parents knew it; notice again their objection in v. 3 (read).

How did they, and how do we know it's wrong? It goes diametrically against God's clear command – that a believer can not marry a non-believer.

Exodus 34:12-16

Deuteronomy 7:1-3 ""When the LORD your God brings you into the land which you go to possess, and has cast out many nations before you, the Hittites and the Girgashites and the Amorites and the Canaanites and the Perizzites and the Hivites and the Jebusites, seven nations greater and mightier than you, "and when the LORD your God delivers them over to you, you shall conquer them *and* utterly destroy them. You shall make no covenant with them nor show mercy to them. "Nor shall you make marriages with them. **You shall not give your daughter to their son, nor take their daughter for your son.**"

And by the way that's not just an OT civil law for the nation of Israel, but it's a command of Christ for all Christians!

2 Corinthians 6:14-18 "Do not be unequally yoked together with unbelievers. For what fellowship has righteousness with lawlessness? And what communion has light with darkness? And what accord has Christ with Belial? Or what part has a believer with an unbeliever? And what agreement has the temple of God with idols? For you are the temple of the living God. As God has said: "I will dwell in them and walk among *them*. I will be their God, and they shall be My people." Therefore "Come out from among them and be separate, says the Lord. Do not touch what is unclean, and I will receive you." "I will be a Father to you, and you shall be My sons and daughters, Says the LORD Almighty.""

This is something that both children and parents need to be aware of and hold to with all of their hearts!

Unfortunately, Samson's parents were all talk; they objected verbally, but as we saw last week, they let Samson lead them, when it's supposed to be the other way around.

We'll see, later in v. 10, that the father not only attends the wedding, he ends up approving of the wedding.

So God's hands are tied right? Samson's in sin and so are his parent.

Not exactly – look what we read next:

V. 4

Remember the cycle?

Disobedience, Discipline, Despair----Deliverance

God would give His people an element of relief, pockets of peace, drops of deliverance...and although God didn't **choose** this wedding, He would **use** this wedding to move against the Philistines.

God doesn't **author** evil, but He does **allow** evil; and in His sovereignty He is able to take anything and everything and accomplish His purposes.

Remember Joseph?

Genesis 50:20 ""But as for you, you meant evil against me; *but* God meant it for good, in order to bring it about as *it is* this day, to save many people alive."

Remember Jesus?

Acts 2:23 ""Him, being delivered by the determined purpose and foreknowledge of God, you have taken by lawless hands, have crucified, and put to death;"

It may not have been the **best** or easiest thing for Joseph or Jesus, but it was the **best** thing for the people of God.

And it definitely was not the right thing for Joseph's brothers to sell him into slavery, or for the Jews and Romans to crucify Christ, but God in His amazing sovereignty was able to use their wrongs for His rights.

When it looks like Satan rules, just remember, God over-rules! His so-called victories are really and ultimately his defeats.

V. 5-6

This time Samson not only goes down to Timnah, but worse; he came to the **vineyards** of Timnah.

What's a man whose taken a Nazarite vow, doing in a vineyard – he's not supposed to cut his hair, touch a corpse, or come near anything of the vine, including wine, or grapes, no, not even a raisin!

But there he is, sinning with his feet.

May God give us the wisdom to stay away, to never play with sin, cause look what happens: (v. 5b)

When Samson comes to the vineyards of Timnah, a young lion comes roaring against him.

I can't help but think of 1 Peter 5:8 "Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour."

In one sense, Samson brought this upon himself. We're not only to pray, Lord lead me not into temptation, we're also to obey, and not lead ourselves into temptation.

But thank God for His grace in all of our lives, including Samson, cause it's here for the first time that we read of the Spirit of the LORD coming mightily upon Samson and with God's strength, he's able to tear the lion apart with his bare hands.

Remember, Samson's Birth, Samson's brawn? We read last week that Spirit began to move upon him, here the Spirit comes mightily upon him; we'll read that again in v. 19 and again in 15:14.

He had a very unique gift; he's an illustration of the power of God in the life of the believer, not something we earn, but made available to us as His children.

Ephesians 6:10 "Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might."

Philippians 4:13 "I can do all things through Christ who **strengthens** me."

Not superman but supernatural strength from Jesus Christ.

What would you do if suddenly you were given the strength to tear a lion apart? I mean, there you were about to die and God stepped in, God came in, to save your life?

Wouldn't the logical conclusion be to live for the God who gave you life?

Yes...but unfortunately, not too many people know the simple saving logic.

V. 7

The wake-up call was completely ignored; Samson continued his downward spiral, and the he-man with a she-weakness did not flinch in his attempt to please himself.

V. 8-9

Now, for those of you who have a sweet-tooth, you might not see the sin in this but this was much more than a cavity this is full on depravity.

Part of His vow to God was not to defile himself with a corpse...and Samson pay no never mind to the vow he made to God...why? He wanted some honey.

It might be interesting to note that Samson didn't tell his parents. This tells us a couple of things #1: he knew it was wrong and #2: he didn't have good communication with them; we read the same thing in v. 6.

One thing I would say to parents is that if at all possible; maintain the lines of communication with your children as much as possible. Remember, communication is relationship.

V. 10

Since we read that the father went down to the woman, this means that the father gave the green light, and approved of the wedding – even though it violated God's clear command.

No wonder Samson, a man with so much potential, only began; no wonder Samson, a judge with so much power, was over-powered by his flesh, because his parents were not good heeders of God's word, they were not good leaders of the God's chosen child.

- Samson's Birth, Brawn, Bride

II. Samson's Bet

V. 11-15

Now, it is possible that Samson did this for fun; but more than likely Samson did this for fashion...he figured this would be a great opportunity to pick up 30 fine linen robes and 30 sets of festive clothing...as the NLT calls it.

But whether it was done out of fun, or covetousness, it was definitely **not** an exercise of wedding wisdom.

It eventually brought the men to the place of threatening Samson's bride with her life and the life of her father's house.

This reminds me of the greed of Gehazi.

2 Kings 5:25-27 "Now he went in and stood before his master. Elisha said to him, "Where *did you go*, Gehazi?" And he said, "Your servant did not go anywhere." Then he said to him, "Did not my heart go *with you* when the man turned back from his chariot to meet you? *Is it* time to receive money and to receive **clothing**, olive groves and vineyards, sheep and oxen, male and female servants? "Therefore the leprosy of Naaman shall cling to you and your descendants forever." And he went out from his presence leprous, *as white as snow*."

Gehazi was greedy for gold and groves, riches and clothing, it led to leprosy, In Joshua 7, we read that Achan coveted the Babylonian garment...and it led to his death.

Not only do we see Samson **longing**...we also see Samson "**loning**."

The NET translates 14:11, "When the Philistines saw he had no attendants, they gave him 30 groomsmen who kept him company."

Samson was a loner, he isolated himself; he didn't even have a single friend to speak of.

Proverbs 18:1 "A man who isolates himself seeks his own desire; He rages against all wise judgment."

Wiersbe said this, "...Samson was a loner; unlike previous judges, he never 'rallied the troops' and (never) tried to unite Israel in throwing off the Philistine yoke. For 20 years he played the champion, but he failed to act the leader."

V. 16-18

Samson was strong, but not strong enough.

This time it was his wife, leading to his defeat; next time it would be Delilah, which led to his death.

His wife pressed him, she pressured him, she not only tried, she cried; “you hate me, you don’t love me!” And unfortunately she did what a lot of wives did, she got her way, by nagging him; and unfortunately Samson did what a lot of husbands do, he gave in to his wife’s manipulation.

Some might say, what she would say, there’s was no other solution; but even thought this is a sticky-situation all the way around – if she would have simply communicated to Samson, the words of their threat – do you think, with God’s help, Samson could have taken care of it?

Of course!

So Samson loses the bet, and notice how bizarre this is:

V. 19-20

Why would God give Samson the victory?

As Wiersbe said, “Instead of going to a wedding, Samson was supposed to go to war.”

God gifted him and gave him power over the Philistines!

And the same is true for us.

But whatever you do, don’t think that just because you still have that Spirit, or that position, even though you’re not keeping your promises to God and living in obedience to Him, that it aint no thing but a chicken wing.

It really is.

May we learn from the man, Samson – the brother who only began.

(General commands – personal commands)

“I can do all things through Christ Who strengthens me.”