

20220220 Judges 15 – The Bondage of Sin: it blinds, binds, grinds



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On Wednesday night, we talked about how precarious our position becomes when we isolate ourselves from others of the faith. Satan usually isolates us before he assassinates us. We should be conscious to surround ourselves with those who are genuinely interested in our spiritual welfare, and who are intent on helping us to become all that God desires for us to be. Those who do not genuinely love you or desire good for you, will fill your life with negativity and they will often be a stumbling block to you becoming who you were meant to be.

In chapter 15, we read that after the wheat had been harvested, Samson went down to consummate his marriage with his wife and she had already been given away by the father-in-law. Samson went into a fit of anger and tied the tails of 300 foxes together and he sent them through the Philistine fields burning up all of their grain and their vineyards. The Philistines retaliated by going to the home of his wife and they burned up the house, the wife, and her family.

Samson again retaliated and went and killed a “great number of them” both “hip and thigh”. It just means that slaughtered them top to bottom. Then his own countrymen from Judah came and arrested him and tried to turn him over to the Philistines but he broke free from his bonds. The chapter ended with him crying out to the Lord and we see God work mercifully in his life providing him with water out of a rock. Let’s move on now and read chapter 16.

16 Now Samson went to Gaza and saw a harlot there, and went in to her. ² When the Gazites were told, “Samson has come here!” they surrounded the place and lay in wait for him all night at the gate of the city. They were quiet all night, saying, “In the morning, when it is daylight, we will kill him.” ³ And Samson lay low till midnight; then he arose at midnight, took hold of the doors of the gate of the city and the two gateposts, pulled them up, bar and all, put them on his shoulders, and carried them to the top of the hill that faces Hebron.

Here Samson is back in the heart of the Philistines, in Gaza, visiting a prostitute. This reminds us of one of the characteristics of sin, ***“As a dog returns to his vomit, so a fool repeats his folly”***— ***Proverbs 26:11***. Obviously Samson’s weakness is desire for women in general and Philistine women in particular. So the Philistines come to get him, and he gets up, goes and tears the city gates down and waves them from a neighboring hill. What in the world is this all about? I think he was up there taunting them letting them know that they were vulnerable. They were accessible to their enemies.

Philistine Woman No.3: Delilah

⁴ *Afterward it happened that he loved a woman in the Valley of Sorek, whose name was Delilah. [her name means ‘devotee’ so she was probably a temple prostitute in the temple of Dagon]*

⁵ *And the lords of the Philistines came up to her and said to her, “Entice him, and find out where his great strength lies, and by what means we may overpower him, that we may bind him to afflict him; and every one of us will give you eleven hundred pieces of silver.”*

Over and over Samson is trapped by his lust, and the trap is baited with women. Satan knows how we’re each vulnerable. Some are enticed by power and control. Others are trapped when their ego pushes them to want to be the center of attention. Others are tempted by sexual desire that seems unquenchable. James, the brother of Jesus tells us, “*Each man is tempted when he is drawn away by his own lust and enticed.*” (James 1:14) It is our own desire that determines the bait in the trap. Strongs 1185 *deleázō* (from *delear*, "bait") – properly, to *bait* a hook or set a trap with bait; (figuratively) *entice* a victim into a moral trap, luring them in through their own desire. Samson goes from a pagan wife, to a prostitute, and now to a temptress Delilah. Her name tells us that she was probably one of the woman at the temple of Dagon whose job was to engage in sex with visitors who came. It was her job.

⁶ *So Delilah said to Samson, “Please tell me where your great strength lies, and with what you may be bound to afflict you.”* ⁷ *And Samson said to her, “If they bind me with seven fresh bowstrings, not yet dried, then I shall become weak, and be like any other man.”*

Instead of running for the door, Samson flirts with the truth. He’s getting nearer and nearer to committing moral and spiritual suicide.

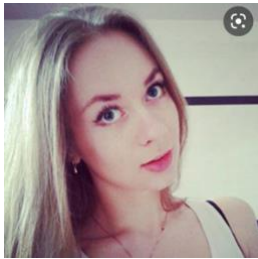
⁸ *So the lords of the Philistines brought up to her seven fresh bowstrings, not yet dried, and she bound him with them.* ⁹ *Now men were lying in wait, staying with her in the room. And she said to him, “The Philistines are upon you, Samson!” But he broke the bowstrings as a strand of yarn breaks when it touches fire. So, the secret of his strength was not known.*

¹⁰ *Then Delilah said to Samson, “Look, you have mocked me and told me lies. Now, please tell me what you may be bound with.”* ¹¹ *So he said to her, “If they bind me securely with new ropes that have never been used, then I shall become weak, and be like any other man.”*

¹² *Therefore Delilah took new ropes and bound him with them, and said to him, “The Philistines are upon you, Samson!” And men were lying in wait, staying in the room. But he broke them off his arms like a thread.* ¹³ *Delilah said to Samson, “Until now you have mocked me and told me lies. Tell me what you may be bound with.” And, he said to her, “If you weave the seven locks of my head into the web of the loom” —¹⁴ *So she wove it tightly with the batten of the loom, and said to him, “The Philistines are upon you, Samson!” But he awoke from his sleep, and pulled out the batten and the web from the loom.* ¹⁵ *Then she said to him, “How can you say, ‘I love you,’ when your heart is not with me? You have mocked me these three times, and have not told me where your great strength lies.”**

16 And it came to pass, when she pestered him daily with her words and pressed him, so that his soul was vexed to death, 17 that he told her all his heart, and said to her, "No razor has ever come upon my head, for I have been a Nazirite to God from my mother's womb. If I am shaven, then my strength will leave me, and I shall become weak, and be like any other man."

Ladies and gentlemen, be careful with whom you share your heart. Our emotional and spiritual intimacy should be only with those who are one with us in the faith, and for those who have our best spiritual interests at heart. Samson was so confused by his own flesh, that he began to reveal his inmost secrets with someone set on destroying him. His hair was an outward sign of an inward covenant that he had made with God, but he began to think his strength came from his hair. The desires of his flesh were destroying the covenant that he had made with God. Good judgment is often destroyed by the power of the flesh.



The flesh can destroy our ability to make wise decisions. We must keep it in check by the operation of the Holy Spirit in our lives. Years ago, a close friend of mine came to visit me, and I saw conduct in him that alarmed me. I had led him to Christ back at A&M. He was married (although his marriage was falling apart), and he had come to Navasota to attend a funeral with me. He confided in me that he had met a young eastern european woman online who was now living in Nigeria. He told me she was in desperate straights and he had been sending her money to take care of bills and buy her a cell phone so they could communicate. He had even arranged to meet with "her" secretly on a cruise or something. I was shocked, and I pretty much unloaded on him. I begged him to remember who he was in Christ and what God expected of him. It was not a pleasant conversation. I went online and did a search of the person's name with whom he was communicating. I found that he had been communicating with men overseas who were posing as a certain "woman". My friend was weary with the fight in his own marriage, and he was giving himself over to the flesh. He was not yielding himself to the Holy Spirit and availing himself of the power of God in his life.

Samson too had just given up! He was weary of the fight because he was trying to keep his feet on two different sides of the fence. Step by step he just gave himself over to the worst in himself. Instead of giving himself over to God, he became the worst version of himself. And here, at the end, he decided to commit moral and spiritual suicide revealing the most intimate spiritual details of his heart to an unbeliever.



*18 When Delilah saw that he had told her all his heart, she sent and called for the lords of the Philistines, saying, "Come up once more, for he has told me all his heart." So, the lords of the Philistines came up to her and brought the money in their hand. 19 Then she lulled him to sleep on her knees, and called for a man and had him shave off the seven locks of his head. Then she began to torment him, and his strength left him. **[she began the torment and the Holy Spirit departed from him]** 20 And she said, "The Philistines are upon you, Samson!" So, he awoke from his sleep,*

and said, "I will go out as before, at other times, and shake myself free!" But he did not know that the LORD had departed from him.

²¹ Then the Philistines took him and put out his eyes, and brought him down to Gaza. They bound him with bronze fetters, and he became a grinder in the prison. ²² However, the hair of his head began to grow again after it had been shaven.



So, what's the bottom line? The big idea is that: 1) sin **blinds** you where you cannot see the whole picture. It distracts you from the things of God and attracts you to the things that appeal to your own desires. 2) Then sin **binds** you. It enslaves you and becomes that which dominates your life. Remember, God is a liberator, not a dominator. Sin is a dominator and enslaver. Even the word "Baal" itself means dominator. Sin slips its cold hands around you and makes you a captive. 3) Lastly, sin **grinds** you down. You get involved in things that you should have never been involved with, and all of those fruits of the Spirit that you were meant to experience become displaced. Instead of love, there is hate. Instead of joy, there is despair. In place of peace, there is turmoil. Instead of patience, there is impatience and intolerance. Gentleness is replaced with harshness. Goodness gives way to wickedness. Faithfulness is replaced by hopelessness. Meekness is replaced by bragging, ego, and self. And self-control goes out the window. Sin blinds, binds, and grinds. Let's finish up.

Samson Dies with the Philistines

²³ Now the lords of the Philistines gathered together to offer a great sacrifice to Dagon their god, and to rejoice. And they said:

*"Our god has delivered into our hands
Samson our enemy!"*

²⁴ When the people saw him, they praised their god; for they said:

*"Our god has delivered into our hands our enemy,
The destroyer of our land,
And the one who multiplied our dead."*

They are praising their gods claiming that they had delivered God's man into their hands.

²⁵ So it happened, when their hearts were merry, that they said, "Call for Samson, that he may perform for us." So, they called for Samson from the prison, and he performed for them. And they stationed him between the pillars. ²⁶ Then Samson said to the lad who held him by the hand, "Let me feel the pillars which support the temple, so that I can lean on them." ²⁷ Now the temple was full of men and women. All the lords of the Philistines were there—about three thousand men and women on the roof watching while Samson performed.

Dagon was the god of the grainfields and he was a fish god. This was a feast to Dagon and archeologists have found halls that fit this passage. Dagon was there between two pillars that held it all up, and Samson asked to be placed between those pillars.

²⁸ Then Samson called to the LORD, saying, "O Lord GOD, remember me, I pray! Strengthen me, I pray, just this once, O God, that I may with one blow take vengeance on the Philistines for my two eyes!" ²⁹ And Samson took hold of the two middle pillars which supported the temple, and he braced himself against them, one on his right and the other on his left. ³⁰ Then Samson said, "Let me die with the Philistines!" And he pushed with all his might, and the temple fell on the lords and all the people who were in it. So, the dead that he killed at his death were more than he had killed in his life. ³¹ And his brothers and all his father's household came down and took him, and brought him up and buried him between Zorah and Eshtaol in the tomb of his father Manoah. He had judged Israel twenty years.

His people came and gathered him and buried him in the Tomb of Manoah. What do we

SO WHAT IS THE BIG IDEA:

Sin is a tyrant. It is a great destroyer. What does John 10:10 tell us. Satan wants to kill, steal, and destroy EVERYTHING that God wants to do in your life. Friends, true power is found in holiness. By holiness I am not talking about going around in a robe chanting and being some sort of monk. I am talking about being a Christ-Follower that is absolutely sold out to letting the Spirit of God rule and direct your steps and your life. That is power. That is victory. But when a believer is involved in sin and enveloped in compromise, there is no power. When the Holy Spirit fills your life and sustains your life are you able to withstand the pressures of the world. Listen to the Apostle Paul speaking to the church in Thessalonki about the power of the Spirit.

*⁵ For our gospel did not come to you in word only, **but also in power, and in the Holy Spirit and in much assurance,** (1 Thessalonians 1:5 NKJV). So how do we avail ourselves of this wonderful power of God?*

"For the word of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God."(1 Corinthians 1:18). So, what is the gospel?

Presentation of the Gospel: Romans 3:23, Romans 6:23, Romans 5:8, Romans 10:9-10

Let us pray.