

What You Need to Know About GIDEON & SAMSON:

“The Dangers of Losing the Final Lap”

Study Number Seven – Judges 15:1-20

We’ve had two episodes thus far in the life of Samson. In the first episode we met his very godly parents, Mr. and Mrs. Manoah. Very beautiful people.

He expressed faith immediately in the Lord’s promise that they were going to have a son. That son was born, they called him Samson—Sunny Samson the happy sanguine. He grew up and it says the Lord blessed him.

He had a responsibility to fulfill a Nazirite vow, which involved basically the four things that we had outlined:

1. not to touch a dead body,
2. not to eat of the fruit of the vine,
3. to be holy unto the Lord, and
4. not to let a razor touch his hair.

This was a very specific injunction by the Lord and Samson was under that vow. As long as that vow was intact, God was

faithful to honor it.

But in the second study in our last time together, he left Zorah and went to Timnah—about three and a half miles to the south—and he met a Philistine beauty and fell in love. Well at least, physical attraction toward her. She looked good to him.

And he came home and told his parents that he wanted to marry her. And the folks are very upset naturally, being godly and realizing that he was going to violate God's principles in the Word of God to marry outside the bounds of the people. And they did everything they could to avoid this.

But as the events of the chapter unfolded, we could see that it was going to go through, because basically Samson had a very defiant and stubborn spirit. He had been spoiled by giving everything to him and so why hold off sex. When that desire comes, "I've been able to satisfy everything else—when I want it I want it and I'll get it."

And with that defiant spirit of selfishness and stubbornness, Samson turns to his father and says, "Get her for me. She looks good."

So the parents went on the long trip and arranged it and then there was the feast. At the feast Samson, being the happy kind of guy he is, pondered the riddle and said, "If you men"—30 of them—"can tell me this riddle, I'm making a little wager with you. I'll give you 30 suits of clothes. But if you don't get it, you owe 30 to me." So they asked for the riddle and Samson

told them.

Well they went for seven days and the Timnite beauty who was his wife-to-be immediately questioned him for the answer. And when he wouldn't give it, she began to cry. Cry, cry, cry. It was a real sad time for Samson.

And on the seventh day she pressed him so hard for the answer that he finally yielded and told her the answer. And immediately she told those men who had threatened the burning of her house with fire.

And Samson goes up in smoke. He really burns. He is mad, upset. He accuses them of plowing with his heifer, referring to his wife-to-be. That wasn't very complimentary at all. He leaves out of there, goes down to Ashkelon, slays 30 men, takes their clothes, pays off his debt and goes back to Zorah.

He is bloody, bitter, burning and betrayed. He is upset and he heads back to the house.

Somebody said, "Samson is a he-man with she troubles." And that's just about the story of this guy's life. We're going to see it all the way through now to the conclusion.

We learned we have to watch where we're looking. When we put our focus on those things which look attractive, we always become vulnerable to the evil one. Because he can fake that vision of grandeur and beauty and turn it into something ugly and he wants to get us to bite.

And for Samson he learned that. But there was one other tragic ramification that led to our study. He's broken three of the four parts of the vow.

He has touched a dead body, he has eaten the fruit of the vine, he has had something to drink at the feast, so all that's intact is his hair.

What we're going to see in this chapter in his life is the fact that a faithful God can still use a guy who has broken three parts of a four-part vow.

And that ought to give us fresh encouragement. That's one lesson that really comes out of it. God can look beyond the failures and the heartbreak and the sad times in our lives to still future potential, and can still pick up the pieces of broken dreams, shattered lives, and mold them and remake them and use them for His glory. So it's our hope that something beautiful comes out of this study.

Now let's pick up at verse 1 with that scene set.

v. 1 But after a while, in the time of wheat harvest, it came about that Samson visited his wife with a young goat; and said, "I will go in to my wife in her room." But her father did not let him enter.

"But after a while,"

That tells us that time is the great healer. Given time anger will subside and we have a tendency to be much more objective. Instead of reacting we begin to respond.

“But after a while, in the time of the wheat harvest, it came about that Samson visited his wife with a young goat;”

Now evidently this happened during the fall or the early spring. The wheat harvest is in the month of May. And at “the time of the wheat harvest” he begins to think about his wife. He’s beginning to think about his physical desires for her. And he’s lonesome.

It says, “it came about that Samson visited his wife with a young goat;”

Now in those days when they wanted to patch up a marital quarrel or a courtship fuss, they always took something substantial to the parents as a gift. So he’s taking a young goat.

Now when we patch up a quarrel, what do we do? Flowers and candy are the old stand-by. And we get some flowers and we get some candy and we go eat crow. And we say, “Honey, I’m sorry.” And those magic words are what brings release of tears and bitterness and resentment and forgiveness and everything’s okay.

Well Samson’s following the tradition. He’s thinking more objectively and he’s going back down there. Even though he

still hasn't gotten the message that this is not the Lord's plan for his life, he's still stubborn, he's still resistant, he's still selfish. He doesn't care about this and so he goes down there.

Now look at what he says to his father-in-law. He knocks on the door:

“and said, ‘I will go in to my wife in her room.’”

Has he ever asked for permission for anything? Or has he ever sought counsel from anybody?

Not yet. In our last passage, in his defiant spirit, he was telling his father and his mother what he wanted. His mother burst into tears so he turned to his dad and said, “Get her for me.”

Why does he have that brazenness to just come to the door and say, “I’m going into my wife in her room” to his father-in-law.

He’s so used to just telling everybody what he wants, when he wants it, and never seeks any advice or counsel at all.

“But her father did not let him enter.”

Now this is the first time that anybody in his lifetime stands between him and his desire. Somebody’s stopping him and that in itself could get him very upset, because he is not used to having anybody saying no to him.

Most of his life has been characterized by everybody saying yes and him getting what he wanted when he wanted it.

v. 2 And her father said, “I really thought that you hated her intensely; so I gave her to your companion. Is not her younger sister more beautiful than she? Please let her be yours instead.”

“And her father said, ‘I really thought that you hated her intensely;’

He says, “No, that’s not true.”

“I mean you call my daughter a heifer, you got so mad and upset, I thought you hated her intensely.”

And by the way, that’s the way we can tell lust because it can move from hatred to love just that quickly. It’s a very rocky and insecure situation when we have that kind of combination.

“I really thought you hated her intensely; so I gave her to your companion.”

“Is not her younger sister more beautiful than she? Please let her be yours instead.”

Sometimes daughters from the father’s perspective are a lot more beautiful than they are from the suitor’s perspective.

And Samson's not the least bit impressed. Evidently she is not a viable candidate at all. And he is very angry. The temperature begins to rise.

Why? Because he's been restrained. His rights have been stepped on. He has been restrained. He feels he's been wronged.

And when a guy who is rebellious and stubborn has his rights violated, he's going to just go up in smoke. Just plan on it, he's going to explode.

v. 3 Samson then said to them, "This time I shall be blameless in regard to the Philistines when I do them harm."

"Samson then said to them, 'This time I shall be blameless in regard to the Philistines when I do them harm.'"

"I'm going to do something! You guys are not going to forget it!"

Now isn't this a wild little prank that he's got worked out here? People avoid this and say, "Wow, that's cruelty to animals." That's because they don't understand the passage.

Now wait a minute, these animals are not going to be hurt in this. Let's look at it.

v. 4 And Samson went and caught three hundred foxes,

and took torches, and turned them tail to tail, and put one torch in the middle between two tails.

“And Samson went and caught himself three hundred foxes, and took torches, and turned them tail to tail, and put one torch in the middle between the two tails.”

How in the world could a guy catch 300 foxes?

This term is the Hebrew term for a jackal. It is kind of a wolf-fox—a very gregarious animal. They run in packs even up to 300 or 400. And they love to be around abandoned towns and feed off the dead bodies of animals that happen to die there. They’re a scavenger type of animal, but very gregarious. And they run together, whereas the fox is a lot more isolated.

What Samson did was went down to the local dog catcher and borrowed his equipment and captured 300 of these and pinned them up. And when he got through, he went over to the lumber yard and bought himself some lumber and got out his Black and Decker workmate and proceeded to cut 150 pieces of wood.

He got himself some gauze and made a little torch on the end of it. Then he bought himself some rope and cut it up. He tied the torch with the rope with two strings extended on each end.

Then he loaded all 300 of them in his pick-up and went out and when he got ready, he took two of them out, he tied one tail to one and one to the other.

When the torch burnt down, it burnt the rope in two and those animals just went running on their merry way and all they got for their trouble was a piece of rope on the end of their tails.

v. 5 When he had set fire to the torches, he released the foxes into the standing grain of the Philistines, thus burning up both the shocks and the standing grain, along with the vineyards and groves.

“When he had set fire to the torches, he released the foxes into the standing grain of the Philistines, thus burning up both the shocks and the standing grain, along with the vineyards and groves.”

Well he’s got 150 of these pairs and so he stops by the first field. Takes one out, lights the torch and lets them go. And they’re running in two opposite directions. Their torch is just going everywhere and setting little fires.

So he drives down to the next field and sets up the next ones, lights them up, lets them go, and goes to the next one. He does that 150 times.

Now we’ve got fields and forest fires everywhere! Rampaging arsonist if we ever saw one. Samson is really letting it loose.

It doesn’t take long to get the attention of the Philistines.

v. 6 Then the Philistines said, “Who did this?” And they

said, “Samson, the son-in-law of the Timnite, because he took his wife and gave her to his companion.” So the Philistines came up and burned her and her father with fire.

“Then the Philistines said, ‘Who did this?’ And they said, ‘Samson, the son-in-law of the Timnite,’

They probably went to the civil court.

“because he took his wife and gave her to his companion.’ So the Philistines came up and burned her and her father with fire.”

Talk about pagan people. Nailed them in their house and set it on fire.

Have we seen that before? Remember at Timnah when the 30 men threatened her if she didn’t get the answer, they were going to burn them with fire?

The surest way to bring suffering upon ourselves is to avoid that suffering by sin. In our last episode she compromised to avoid it. And the fear of the wicked, comes down upon his own head.

There’s a principle from the book of Proverbs. She tried to avoid it by violating her husband’s confidence. This time it’s the end of the road.

Something like that is going to get Samson very upset. And when everyone does that which is right in their own eyes and everybody's a law to themselves, he was going to get angrier. Notice what he said in verse 7.

v. 7 And Samson said to them, “Since you act like this, I will surely take revenge on you, but after that I will quit.”

“And Samson said to them, ‘Since you act like this, I will surely take revenge on you, but after that I will quit.’”

Well he's so mad now that it says in verse 8:

v. 8 And he struck them ruthlessly with a great slaughter; and he went down and lived in the cleft of the rock of Etam.

“And he struck them ruthlessly with a great slaughter; and he went down and lived in the cleft of the rock of Etam.”

After he finished this slaughter of quite a number of them—it doesn't give us any number—he left to go down into the hills, down in the area where David used to hide from Saul.

There are many rugged places down there. In these southern Judean hills he found a refuge in the rock and stayed down there all by himself.

v. 9 Then the Philistines went up and camped in Judah,

and spread out in Lehi.

“Then the Philistines went up and camped in Judah, and spread out in Lehi.”

They got their armies together just like the Midianites did in the Valley of Jezreel and they were ready for war, probably several hundred thousand of them came up there.

v. 10 And the men of Judah said, “Why have you come up against us?” And they said, “We have come up to bind Samson in order to do to him as he did to us.”

“And the men of Judah said, ‘Why have you come up against us?’ And they said, ‘We have come up to bind Samson in order to do to him as he did to us.’”

The men of Judah have no concept about the fact that God is planning to use Samson to liberate them from the bondage to the Philistines.

“And the men of Judah said, ‘Why have you come up against us?’” and he told them.

v. 11 Then 3,000 men of Judah went down to the cleft of the rock of Etam and said to Samson, “Do you not know that the Philistines are rulers over us? What then is this that you have done to us?” And he said to them, “As they did to me, so I have done to them.”

“Then 3,000 men of Judah went down to the cleft of the rock of Etam and said to Samson,”

Now look at these statements:

“Do you not know that the Philistines are rulers over us?”

“We are content to live in bondage. Now don’t you know that there are rulers over us and you’ve got them all hassled and upset?”

“What then is this that you have done to us?’ And he said to them, ‘As they did to me, so I have done to them.’”

The men of Judah have no desire whatsoever to be free, to be God’s people, living under God’s blessing. They’re just content to stay in bondage.

And we will find in an immoral society, when the biblical absolutes are destroyed, when idolatry is the cry of the day, the will to fight and to stand for one’s convictions is gone. And there’s a desire to drift, to yield, to go along with everybody becomes the pattern of the day.

And these people are willing to stay in bondage to this heathen nation, the Philistines, and just leave it like that.

After asking those two questions, and the fact that it reveals that they’re willing to be living in bondage, verse 12 says:

v. 12 And they said to him, “We have come down to bind you so that we may give you into the hands of the Philistines.” And Samson said to them, “Swear to me that you will not kill me.”

“And they said to him, ‘We have come down to bind you so that we may give you into the hands of the Philistines.’ And Samson said to them, ‘Swear to me that you will not kill me.’”

Imagine the men of Judah wanting to deliver up one of their own to save their own skins? They’re willing to give up Samson in order to save their own lives and to placate the enemy at this point.

He says, “Be sure if you take me you won’t kill me.”

v. 13 So they said to him, “No, but we will bind you fast and give you into their hands; yet surely we will not kill you.” Then they bound him with two new ropes and brought him up from the rock.

“So they said to him, ‘No, but we will bind you fast and give you into their hands; yet surely we will not kill you.’ Then they bound him with two new ropes and brought him up from the rock.”

v. 14 When he came to Lehi, the Philistines shouted as they met him. And the Spirit of the Lord came upon him mightily so that the ropes that were on his

arms were as flax that is burned with fire, and his bonds dropped from his hands.

“When he came to Lehi, the Philistines shouted as they met him.”

They’re shouting a cry of victory because they got Samson, but it’s premature. In the next study they shout the same thing but it’s all over.

“And the Spirit of the Lord came upon him mightily so that the ropes that were on his arms were as flax that is burned with fire, and his bonds dropped from his hands.”

The Spirit of the Lord began to stir in him mightily.

Zechariah 4:6

It’s not by might nor by power, but by my Spirit saith the Lord.

Acts 1:8

You shall receive power...

v. 15 And he found a fresh jawbone of a donkey, so he reached out and took it and killed a thousand men with it.

“And he found a fresh jawbone of a donkey, so he reached out

and took it and killed a thousand men with it.”

Critics ask, “Do you really believe that a guy could be that strong that he could take the jawbone of a donkey and begin to go on a whaling expedition and knock off a thousand Philistines before they got him?”

Yes!

v. 16 Then Samson said, “With the jawbone of a donkey, heaps upon heaps, with the jawbone of a donkey I have killed a thousand men.”

“Then Samson said, ‘With the jawbone of a donkey, heaps upon heaps, with the jawbone of a donkey I have killed a thousand men.’”

He just grabbed that jawbone and he started whaling away. There were heaps here and heaps there and heaps there and heaps over here.

The focus is all on Samson here, but what about the 3,000 men of Judah that are standing there watching all of this?!

They should have taken this as the beginning of a war! And they should have started saying, “Mine eyes have seen the glory of the coming of the Lord! He is trampling out the vineyard where the grapes of wrath are stored! It’s time for freedom and battle. Let’s get on with it! Liberate yourself from these Philistines.”

Samson is a one-man show.

There are number of reasons for that:

1. He's a one man show because he has a defiant spirit.
2. He has lost the respect of his peers because of his immoral thoughts and ideas.

Nothing clobbers a man's ministry any more than personal, immoral practices. We see it in countless hundreds of ministers, who because of this have lost their ministry and effectiveness for God.

The sons of Israel, even in their apostate condition, weren't very excited about Samson and his personal life. When a man has a defiant spirit they become terribly lonely. He builds his own orbit and he flies around it. And he's the only one.

And so it's almost like everything focuses on him. He's it. And so he's a one man liberator, a one man army.

v. 17 And it came about when he had finished speaking, that he threw the jawbone from his hand; and he named that place Ramath-lehi.

“And it came about when he had finished speaking, that he threw the jawbone from his hand; and he named that place Ramath-lehi.”

That means “the jawbone height.”

The jawbone height—why? Oftentimes when there were significant things that happened the place was named after that significant happening, to give an indication of what took place there.

Verse 18 is the high point of his life. And when we skip over this chapter we miss something so very, very special.

v. 18 Then he became very thirsty, and he called to the Lord and said, “Thou hast given this great deliverance by the hand of Thy servant, and now shall I die of thirst and fall into the hands of the uncircumcised?”

“Then he became very thirsty, and he called to the Lord and said,”

This is the first time that he prayed. It’s beautiful. His prayer is so great, it almost moves us to tears.

““Thou hast given this great deliverance by the hand of Thy servant,”

“Lord, You’re the One who’s given us victory. I’m aware of that. I really thank You for it.”

“and now shall I die of thirst and fall into the hands of the

uncircumcised?”

Remember what his father called the Philistines when he said he wanted to go down to Timnah and marry one of them?

“Did you not find a bride among all of our people that you’ve got to go down and take one of those uncircumcised Philistines?” And Samson just goes up in smoke. He gets stubborn, resistant, defiant, and he’s going to carry it through. But in fellowship with God, in talking to the Lord, he’s got his daddy’s perspective.

It is only an indication that principle upon principle and precept upon precept, God could work in the lives of our kids. And sometimes when it seems the worst, God can shape them up and bring them around and they’ll begin to see things from our perspective.

And here in fellowship with the Lord, he sees them the same way his daddy does. And so God has done a real work in his life, just in these few brief experiences in Timnah.

Evidently he realizes that his parents were really for him. That in his stubbornness and rebellion he’s overlooked the fact that his folks really loved him. Right here he’s in fellowship with God and very close to the Lord.

Now the Lord is as concerned with our physical needs as He is our spiritual needs. And so He meets Samson’s strength for the battle, but He also provides him water.

As he has often done, Samson acknowledges that the battle is the Lord's. And just like David slew Goliath and used that very statement, now Samson recognizes who's responsible for this victory.

And from his prayer he says, "shall I die of thirst and fall into the hands of the uncircumcised?"

v. 19 But God split the hollow place that is in Lehi so that water came out of it. When he drank, his strength returned and he revived. Therefore, he named it En-hakkore, which is in Lehi to this day.

"But God split the hollow place that is in Lehi so that water came out of it. When he drank, his strength returned and he was revived. Therefore, he named it En-hakkore, which is in Lehi to this day."

And that just means "the crier's well." He cried for water here and the Lord supplied his need.

Verse 20—we bring down the curtain on our episode.

v. 20 So he judged Israel twenty years in the days of the Philistines.

"So he judged Israel twenty years in the days of the Philistines."

The significance of that is this, it's a rule of compromise. It is a rule of concession. They are willing to let Samson rule but they're still in bondage to the Philistines.

They have not been liberated and Israel evidently is content to live in that kind of situation. The next twenty years of Samson's life he's looked upon as kind of a hero. And he in fact does judge the nation for twenty years.

Now we're going to see how he handles success. We're going to see the tragedy of the final chapter of his life in our last episode.

Now there are a number of lessons that come out of this passage.

Lesson #1: Time is often a great healer in personal relationships.

Some Christians get so eager to live at peace with people with whom there is a real problem. But many times they go prematurely before the anger has subsided and it only creates a greater problem.

It is our responsibility when we've wronged somebody to go and deal with that. But there is also timing that is very important in that. And with a little time there can also be healing and a receptive spirit to guarantee the success of our mission in going and dealing with the situation.

So many times we want to rush right away and deal with it and we get very upset because they don't respond. There's been hurt. Just give it time.

Samson really cools down after his first difficult encounter in Timnah. So he sees things more objectively.

Lesson #2: You'll always find something standing in the way to stop you when you're getting ready to leave the will of God.

It will not be convenient to leave the will of God.

The father-in-law is standing there at the door to stop him from doing what he wants to do with this woman at Timnah. We will have to go past some red signals and do something to disregard the stop sign and the things that God puts in the way to stop us when we're getting ready to leave His will and to violate some principle of scripture. It will be very awkward and we'll have to disregard that and walk past those warning signs to pursue the path of disobedience.

Samson's got somebody standing right in the way to stop him from doing this.

Samson is still telling everybody what he's going to do. And that's an indication of a defiant spirit, a selfish and stubborn attitude.

Lesson #3: Samson tries by himself to liberate the nation Israel.

Samson should have mustered an army and sought instructions from the Lord, but he tries it all by himself.

Probably the reason for that is because of his immoral personal life. The fact that he is a defiant, stubborn individual and he doesn't have a lot of close friends around him who would be willing to commit themselves to something like this.

Lesson #4: The immorality of the men of Judah is seen in the statement, "Don't you know that the Philistines are rulers over us?"

Lesson #5: The Spirit of the Lord is the One who provides the power for the victory.

The Spirit came mightily upon him for the victory.

Lesson #6: God used the fox prank but it wasn't His perfect will.

If His will in fact had been accomplished, it would have been gathering the men of Judah around him and having a successful campaign led by the Lord like we saw under Gideon because they were liberated from the Midianites.

Lesson #7: The Lord not only provides strength for the battle but water for the physical needs.

God is concerned about our every need. And He meets it so

beautifully.

With Samson, he has a problem. He needs something to drink. The Lord takes care of that personal need as well.

Lesson #8: Samson judges Israel for 20 years, but it's in compromise, it's not in freedom.

Lesson #9: The Lord never gives up on us, does He?

Three out of four parts of this vow have been broken. But with that one part intact, God still uses him.

Oh how precious the Lord is. Maybe we feel like the Lord doesn't have anything for us to do because we've failed Him so many times. He has something for each of us to do.

Lesson #10: To seek to escape suffering by sin is the surest way to bring it upon us.

"The fear of the wicked, it shall come upon him."

Where does this study find you? Does it in fact find you with the certainty of a relationship to the Lord Jesus Christ? Is He your Savior? Have you ever invited Christ into your life?

Could we know that about you with certainty?

What's your response going to be if you're called home to be with the Lord?

“No Lord, not right now. I want to wait a while” or

“Now Lord, any time. I’m ready to go. Whatever You want.”

Then as a Christian, realize that the place where God blesses and uses us the most is when we’re in fellowship with Him. And if there’s going to be victorious in our life it’s going to be God-given.

Thanks be unto God who always leads us in a constant pageant of triumph.

Samson experiences victory. Yet that victory hinges upon his fellowship with the Lord. He is God’s man. He is expressing his faith in God. He is in fellowship when he prays and he gives God the glory for the victory.

But it all changes so quickly. As we see the final dramatic conclusion of this guy’s life, we scratch our heads and wonder how he could pray like he did and end up the way he does in the final episode.

The more we know of human nature, the more we have to listen and hear the Spirit of God say, “Watch yourself, take heed lest you also fall.”

Father, it is a serious moment as once again we allow the Spirit of God to probe through the facade, the front, oftentimes the hypocrisy and the phoniness, and root down to the real

issue. You know Father the hearts of everyone and whether they're prepared to meet You. Lord let them step out from behind the paint and the pillows, the phony front and become real people, recognizing the fact that You see it all anyway. We as human beings have limitations but Your Spirit probes beneath the surface and knows all things. And may that one, who really doesn't have any assurance of their relationship, as a result of this time we've had together, allow Jesus Christ to come into their lives. Lord, as Christians we pray that the seriousness of what You've done in Samson's life might really cause us to see how much we need to be dependent upon You and that victory only comes as You give it. And the victory comes to the man who walks in fellowship, disciplined obedience to Your Word. Lord we've received fresh courage that even though Samson fall, still the steps of the good man are ordered by the Lord and He delighteth in his way. Though he fall, he shall not be utterly cast down. The Lord upholds him with His hand. Lord it is an amazing thing to us that You can take this person so bent and so defiant, so wanting to go his own way, and still use him. That really encourages us and we thank You for that fact. Now Lord as we take leave of one another, may there be precious thoughts and memories with the time we've had to share with one another. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

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v. 10 And the men of Judah said, “Why have you come up against us?” And they said, “We have come up to bind Samson in order to do to him as he did to us.”

NOTES

v. 11 Then 3,000 men of Judah went down to the cleft of the rock of Etam and said to Samson, “Do you not know that the Philistines are rulers over us? What then is this that you have done to us?”

And he said to them, “As they did to me, so I have done to them.”

v. 12 And they said to him, “We have come down to bind you so that we may give you into the hands of the Philistines.” And Samson said to them, “Swear to me that you will not kill me.”

v. 13 So they said to him, “No, but we will bind you fast and give you into their hands; yet surely we will not kill you.” Then they bound him with two new ropes and brought him up from the rock.

v. 14 When he came to Lehi, the Philistines shouted as they met him. And the Spirit of the Lord came upon him mightily so that the ropes that were on his arms were as flax that is burned with fire, and his bonds dropped from his hands.

v. 15 And he found a fresh jawbone of a donkey, so he reached out and took it and killed a thousand men with it.

v. 16 Then Samson said, “With the jawbone of a donkey, heaps upon heaps, with the jawbone of a donkey I have killed a thousand men.”

v. 17 And it came about when he had finished speaking, that he threw the jawbone from his hand; and he named that place Ramath-lehi.

v. 18 Then he became very thirsty, and he called to the Lord and said, “Thou hast given this great deliverance by the hand of Thy servant, and now shall I die of thirst and fall into the hands of the uncircumcised?”

v. 19 But God split the hollow place that is in Lehi so that water came out of it. When he drank, his strength returned and he revived. Therefore, he named it En-hakkore, which is in Lehi to this day.

v. 20 So he judged Israel twenty years in the days of the Philistines.

QUESTIONS:

1. Read Judges 15:1-20 and in your own words pull out the main thought of this passage.

2. What happens in verses 1-3?

3. What does Samson do in verses 4 & 5?

4. How do the Philistines retaliate, according to verse 6?

5. What do the men of Judah want to do with Samson, according to verse 12?

6. What happens in verses 14-16?

7. What is Samson's request, according to verse 18?

8. What provision does the Lord make in answer to his prayer, according to verse 19?

9. What verse in the study has meant the most to you?

10. What lesson have you learned from this study?

LESSONS FROM THE PASSAGE:

What are some of the lessons we can learn from this particular study?

LESSON #1: Time is often a great healer in personal relationships.

LESSON #2: You'll always find something standing in the way to stop you when you're getting ready to leave the will of God.

LESSON #3: Samson tries by himself to liberate the nation Israel from the Philistines, through the experiences of this chapter. He should have mustered an army and received instructions from the Lord as to how this liberation should take place.

LESSON #4: The immorality and degradation of the men of Judah is seen in the statement: "Do you not know the Philistines are rulers over us?"

LESSON #5: The Spirit of the Lord is the One who provides the power for the victory.

LESSON #6: God used the fox prank but it wasn't His perfect will.

LESSON #7: The Lord not only provides strength for the battle, but water for the physical needs.

LESSON #8: Samson judges Israel for 20 years, but it is not in freedom; for it is in the days of the Philistines.

LESSON #9: The Lord still uses him even though three out of four parts of the vow are broken.

LESSON #10: To seek to escape suffering by sin is the surest way to bring it upon us.

ADDITIONAL NOTES:
