

## Episode #541 Judges 16 Part 3 – Samson 8: Samson’s Final Victory

I. In the book of Judges, we have a brief record of the early history (the first centuries) of the history of the land of Israel. We see the leaders God chose, judges, who ruled under Jehovah, the King. Through the lives and work of these judges, we can learn about God’s works and ways.

II. Samson, through the power of God, judged Israel for twenty years. Yet a mid-life crisis returned him to the sins of his youth. He loved a Philistine woman named Delilah. The Philistine lords offered her a huge sum to find out the secret of Samson’s strength. Three times he teased her with made-up magic solutions. Yet finally he got sick of her nagging and told her of his Nazirite vow. She told the Philistine lords, then cut off his hair, the symbol of that vow. The result was he lost all his strength. He madly thought he could still save himself, but he could not. The LORD had left him, and his true power was gone.

III. The last revenge and death of Samson. Judges 16:21-31.

- A. Verse 21. The Philistines get their final revenge. This was a terrible price for Samson to pay for his self-will and foolishness!
- B. Verse 22. Nazirite separation, once defiled, could be restored. Numbers 6:9-12. Yet the LORD was under no obligation to give him a second chance. Note his grace.
- C. Verse 23. They credit Dagon for Samson’s fall, and throw Dagon a celebration. Their gods were something like a mixture between a god and a mascot. They cheered for their own god win or lose. They feel their god has gotten a victory over Israel’s god.
- D. Verse 24. The Philistines speak words offensive to Jehovah.
- E. Verse 25. They are in a celebratory mood and decide it would be funny to see Samson. They were probably laughing at his helpless condition, and probably his blindness.
- F. Verse 26. The temple was built with two main supporting pillars. Archaeologists have found the remains of this, and that is indeed how it was built. Samson shows once again his cleverness in figuring out ways to get revenge.
- G. Verse 27. The temple was packed, as was the open porch on the roof. It was open so they could look down from the center of the porch, like the upper deck of a stadium. Think of the incredible weight on these pillars!
- H. Verse 28. His second recorded prayer. He wants Yahweh to empower him for one last act of revenge. Note his selfish perspective to the end: no apologies, no care for fulfilling his God-given mission. Notice Samson doesn’t mention his regrowing hair; God is the One Who mentions that, symbolizing the restored relationship.
- I. Verse 29. The bases of these were found by archaeologists.
- J. Verse 30. Samson’s third and final prayer: he wants his soul to die with the Philistines. The LORD does empower him, showing that no matter how badly we let him down, He is willing to restore His relationship with us if we will turn back to Him. Moving the pillars causes the whole temple to collapse and kill all within it. Samson’s last revenge also began to deliver Israel (Judges 13:5) out of the hand of the Philistines. This deliverance was completed by Samuel, Saul, and finally David.
- K. Verse 31. His burial is by his brothers, who we did not read of previously but obviously existed. His parents were probably now dead. Notice that his brothers had to head into Philistine territory to do this. Obviously brave men! Of course, the Philistines were in disarray at this point with all their most important people dead! They also had to dig through the bodies to find him. They bury him back home,

where the Spirit had first come upon him. He had the honor of judging Israel twenty years.

#### IV. The Remainder of Judges: Back in Time.

- A. We need to note: we have gone back in time. End of chapter 16 is the latest we get in judges; the next judge is Eli in I Samuel 1. Here we have jumped back very early in judges to the days of Othniel.
- B. Reasons: the Israelites are not all settled in their territory (chapter 18). Phinehas Aaron's grandson is still alive (20:28), which would make him well over 300 years old if this was sequential.
- C. We have seen the governmental history of Israel in the sequence of Judges and the cycle of judges.
- D. Now, before we leave this historical period, there are several other things the LORD wants to deal with. Instead of breaking up the cycle of judges and their history, He has left this portion until a separate section.

V. Samson's sad error led to enslavement and misery on this foolish, wayward servant of God. Yet his hair grew in captivity and God graciously allowed their relationship to be restored. When in the temple of Dagon, he had a chance to get revenge once more. Jehovah used this to strike a blow at the Philistines and begin Israel's deliverance, which would later be completed by Samuel, Saul, and David. Now, the book of Judges takes a trip back in time.