

Samson, Fired Up!

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by

Rev. Charles W. Pendleton, Jr.

When we saw Samson last yesterday, he had left his wedding at Timnah, raged to Ashkelon, where he killed 30 Philistine's for their clothing, to pay of a bet. He runs back to Timnah to requite his debt to his 30 wedding companions, and abruptly heads home to Mom & Dad's place in Zorah, of Dan; seemingly dumping his bride "*at the altar,*" so to speak.

Today we pick up in Judges 15, verse 1.

Judges 15:1-8

¹Later on, at the time of wheat harvest, Samson took a young goat and went to visit his wife. He said, *“I’m going to my wife’s room.”* But her father would not let him go in.

²*“I was so sure you hated her,”* he said, *“that I gave her to your companion. Isn’t her younger sister more attractive? Take her instead.”*

³Samson said to them, *“This time I have a right to get even with the Philistines; I will*

really harm them.” ⁴So he went out and caught three hundred foxes and tied them tail to tail in pairs. He then fastened a torch to every pair of tails, ⁵lit the torches and let the foxes loose in the standing grain of the Philistines. He burned up the shocks and standing grain, together with the vineyards and olive groves.

⁶When the Philistines asked, “*Who did this?*” they were told, “*Samson, the Timnite’s son-in-law, because his wife was given to his companion.*”

So, the Philistines went up and burned her and her father to death. ⁷Samson said to them, “*Since you’ve acted like this, I swear that I won’t stop until I get my revenge on you.*” ⁸He attacked them viciously and slaughtered many of them. Then he went

down and stayed in a cave in the rock of Etam.

So, Samson didn't have a clue that he wasn't actually married. At least, not as far as any of the Philistine's were concerned. The father of the gal Samson was sweet on, was so convinced that Samson was never coming back again, that he gave Samson's would-be-bride, to one of the 30 Philistine men who were his "companions."

Not even the gesture of giving Samson the younger (prettier, by the way) sister, put him in a better mood. Instead, he flew into a

rage – a rage that lasted long enough to gather 300 foxes, tie their tails together with a torch in between them, and then set those 150 torches on fire. Those crazy legged foxes each pulling this way and that, set ablaze three different crops, to the ruination of the Philistine economy in that region:

- **the standing grain** (shocks – it being wheat harvest time vs. 1)
- **the vineyards** vs. 5
- **the olive groves** vs. 5

What was Samson's rationale for why this was a good idea?

“I have a right to get even with the Philistines; I will really harm them.”

Not, “The Lord wants me to destroy their local economy, so I’ll do this...” Not, “The Lord has told me to kill the Philistines.”

“I have a right to get even...”

Said every bully, ever!

Filled with righteous indignation? No!

Filled with self-pity. Filled with self!

That poor gal from Timnah (probably the pretty, younger sister too, if you look at the original threat the 30 Philistines had made to

entice her into obtaining the answer to Samson's riddle) – she never had a chance. She was doomed to die a fiery death as soon as she got involved with Samson, it seems.

Initially, if she failed to get them the information they wanted; and now, for getting Samson mad enough to ruin those three crops!

And of course, that just makes Samson madder and madder. After they kill his 'wife' and her father (or father's household), he tells the Philistine's, "*Since you've acted like this, I swear that I won't stop until I get my revenge on you.*" **Vs. 7**

Look again, at the last verse we read.

⁸ *“He attacked them viciously and slaughtered many of them. Then he went down and stayed in a cave in the rock of Etam.”*

God’s sovereignty is intact! His will is being accomplished!

“The Lord, was seeking an occasion to confront the Philistines...” **Judges 14:4**

We have no problem looking at the scriptures and seeing written, ¹²*“But the Lord hardened Pharaoh’s heart and he*

*would not listen to Moses and Aaron, just as the Lord had said to Moses.” **Exodus 9:12***

Again, no problem reading, “⁸*The Lord hardened the heart of Pharaoh king of Egypt, so that he pursued the Israelites, who were marching out boldly.*” **Exodus 14:8**

If God can harden the heart of a man who does not honor Him, so that he will do the will of God; why not move the heart of a man of Israel, to work the havoc He intends for the Philistine’s to be punished with.

I know some of you bristle with the thought that this Nazarite young man from Dan, was not “all that, and a bag of chips!” He is a hero of the Bible; you say!

And in some respects; he was. God worked His will through Samson. How? He knew Samson’s pig-headed, stubborn, childish, weak natured tendencies; and He used them to punish a nation He intended to punish.

Outside of being big and strong, and occasionally having the Spirit of the LORD come over him powerfully, you’re not going to want your child to emulate Samson.

He'd been brought up by parents who I'm sure, let him know that God had plans for his life. They certainly explained to him why it was that he didn't cut his hair, or why he couldn't even eat a grape or raisin, never mind drink wine or other strong drink. He was a Nazarite, and that was special. But somehow it got to him and made Samson feel entitled.

He forgot to nurture his spiritual heritage. He was a man of Herculean proportion, but he was a spiritual 99-pound weakling.

No, Samson is not the man to emulate; and we will see this continue to be the case. A

rainbow after the rain? Perhaps, but nothing on the near horizon for now.

PRAYER

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