

## Teasing With Sin — Judges 16:4-21

### I. INTRODUCTION

#### A. *Samson & Delilah*

1. The story of Samson and Delilah has been the inspiration for not a few movies and plays
2. It is a story of great passion and drama
3. It is also a story of one of the greatest *failures* in the bible

#### B. *Potential Wasted*

1. Each of us probably knows at least one person who has a tremendous gift or talent
2. Their life holds great promise and potential
3. But due to their lack of self-control and discipline, that gift is wasted
4. It breaks our hearts to see people with such potential wasting their lives on petty and worthless things

#### C. *Samson*

1. That is the story of Samson's life
2. Hollywood tends to focus on the love affair between Samson & Delilah: Good lovin' gone bad.
3. But that is not the lesson the Holy Spirit would have us glean from Samson's life
4. Let's see if we can't discover what we can learn from him . . .

### II. TEXT

#### A. V. 4

{4} **Afterward it happened that he loved a woman in the Valley of Sorek, whose name was Delilah.**

1. Samson's story begins in ch. 13, so clearly we are jumping in to the middle of it
2. In fact, this passage begins the climax and the end of his story
3. Let's recap what has happened so far
  - a. Israel sinned again, God turned them over to the Philistines — a persistent thorn in Israel's side for centuries
  - b. then God raised up Samson to be Israel's deliverer
  - c. at his birth, and angel told his parents he was to be a Nazarite
    - a separated one
    - not to touch any fruit of the vine, no wine, grapes, raisins
    - a razor never to touch his head
    - never to touch a dead body

- wholly devoted to the Lord all his days
- d. but Samson's story reads like the tale of the proverbial rebel
  - he violated nearly all of the aspects of his vow
  - worst of all, rather than being separated to the Lord, he kept going after Philistine women
  - we keep reading how he saw this or that Philistine woman, sometimes harlots, and entered into relations with them
  - he even married one gal, though this was strictly against God's command
- e. yet still God used him and brought Israel a moment of freedom from the oppression of the Philistines
- 4. Samson was unlike the other judges of Israel
  - a. for they were leaders who led the armies of Israel against their foes
  - b. Samson was different in that he was a loner
    - stuck to himself
    - didn't lead armies
    - didn't need to
  - c. Samson's ability to deliver Israel was based in his great strength
  - d. the Spirit of the Lord would come upon him and he would deliver the people of Israel with his own hands
  - e. Philistines would come on him in great numbers, but he would defeat them all
- 5. Hollywood loves to present Samson as being a big hulking beast of a man
  - a. massive chest, arms, and legs
  - b. but really, it wasn't his muscles that made him strong
  - c. it was the Spirit of God
  - d. Samson was probably a pretty normal looking guy
  - e. but when the Holy Spirit came on him, he was endued with superhuman power
  - f. face it, some of the things he is described as doing have nothing to do with physical strength = they were miraculous
- 6. But Samson never went against the Philistines because he knew it was his duty to deliver Israel
  - a. he always fought them because they stood in the way of something he wanted for himself
  - b. or he was ticked off at them for something they had done to him
  - c. while God did bring deliverance for Israel through Samson, Samson's actions were selfish
- 7. As we come to the last chapter of Samson's life, we see the same selfish pattern once again
- 8. v. 4 tells us he fell in love with a woman named Delilah in the Valley of Sorek
  - a. this valley, something of a Philistine stronghold of the time

- b. doesn't say that Delilah was a Philistine, but we can conclude that from what happens next

### **B. Vs. 5**

**{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."**

1. The Phil. leaders wanted to be rid of Samson
2. They kept tabs on him
3. When they discovered this new rel. with Del., they pounced on it
4. If Del. had been Jewish, doubtful they would have approached her - after all, Samson was the Jewish hero
5. No, she was a Phil., so they appeal to her patriotism as well as her greed
6. It was clear to the Phil. leaders that Samson's strength was not due to his size
  - a. it was due to something else
  - b. and they thought if they could just learn the secret, they could overcome him
7. So they bribe Del. to deliver Samson in to their hands

### **C. Vs. 6-9**

**{6} So Delilah said to Samson, "Please tell me where your great strength lies, and with what you may be bound to afflict you."**

1. What an interesting question for Del. to ask
  - a. if she really loved him —
  - b. wouldn't she be asking how to safeguard his strength?
2. But Del. has succumbed to the lust of greed and wants to deliver him to the Phil. so she can get the reward

**{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."**

3. It is hard to understand how Samson could have been so naive as to not see what Del. was attempting
4. But it points up the truth that when a person willfully gives themselves up to sin, they lose their insight in to spiritual things and often their common sense as well
5. I have seen this time and again
  - a. a man or woman who has walked with the Lord
  - b. grown, shown real fruit
  - c. but gets caught up in some sin
  - d. they start making bad choices
  - e. loved ones try to talk tot hem, but they wont listen

- f. pretty soon, they are way off doing really bizarre things
  - 6. Anyone with common sense would have seen what Del. was doing to Samson,
  - 7. But Samson had chosen the road of sexual immorality, and his common sense was lost
- {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.**

- 8. Samson submits to her while she ties him up!
- 9. AND HE SUBMITS TO IT
- 10. Oh friend, do you see what sin will do to you if you do not resist it?
- 11. Sin will enslave you, it will bind you in chords, it will attempt to weaken you and take you captive
- 12. After Samson is tied up, Del. calls for the Phil. who were lying in wait in one of her rooms
- 13. They come running in, and Samson quickly breaks the bonds and goes after the Phil.

**D. Vs. 10-12**

**{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."**

- 1. Why is Samson still with Del.?
- 2. Doesn't he realize she wants to destroy him?
- 3. Yes he does - but he doesn't care!
- 4. He thinks that he will be able to get what he wants from her without getting in trouble
- 5. He doesn't really love her; he merely wants her
- 6. He figures he'll take what he wants as long as he can without it costing him, then he'll leave
- 7. How many people go after sin with the same mindset
  - a. they know that something is wrong and potentially harmful
  - b. but they think they can do it for so long without getting hooked or in trouble
  - c. like a man having an affair
    - just for a little while
    - things not going well at home
    - need this comfort, want this little fun on the side
    - but he'll quit before it gets too serious
    - he won't let it go too far
  - d. you know what — the little lies we tell ourselves at the beginning of

- sin always get bigger as we progress in that sin
- e. once we start teasing with sin, it gets real hard to stop
- 8. That is the lesson this passage teaches us
- 9. We must not tease with sin
  - a. we must not flirt with it,
  - b. play with it
  - c. toy with it
- 10. Rather, we must shun it and stay clear

**{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.**

- 11. Can you see how sin has warped Samson’s sensibilities?

#### **E. Vs. 13-14**

**{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.**

- 1. Careful Samson! Now you are beginning to divulge the true secret of your strength
- 2. His strength lay in the grace of God and in his being a Nazarite
- 3. As a Nazarite, not allowed to have a razor touch his head
- 4. He doesn’t reveal that if his head was shaved he would be weak, but he does reveal that the secret lies in his hair
- 5. Now, this would make for an interesting picture
  - a. all his life, never had a hair cut
  - b. long, long hair
  - c. he says that he will be weak if his locks are weaved on a loom, like a piece of cloth
  - d. then he submits to her while she takes the time to get a loom, and proceed to weave his hair into the web of the loom
  - e. took so long he fell asleep
- 6. Samson KNOWS she is trying to turn him over to the Philistines!! He KNOWS it
- 7. But still he submits to her!
- 8. Why? Because sin has blinded him
  - a. he still thinks he can get away before he gets in trouble
  - b. do you think he can?

9. Oh what danger there is when we try to rationalize our sin
10. Of what a deceit is our pride that we think we can play with fire and not be burnt

**F. Vs. 15-21**

**{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.”**

1. This is it—Samson reveal the secret of his strength
2. Del. wore him down
  - a. how? why?
  - b. because he stayed with her
  - c. day after day he stayed with her
  - d. day after day, she pestered him
  - e. it was all she talked about
  - f. he was there for the pleasure of immorality
  - g. but she sulked till he gave her what she wanted
3. All Samson had to do was to pick up and leave, and her pestering would not have bothered him anymore
4. All he had to do was go, leave, depart from the place of sin
5. Then, even after he revealed the secret, he could have fled
6. But no - he stayed

**{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.**

**{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.**

7. Time and again in his life, Samson had trifled with God and had defied his Nazarite vow
8. This was the final insult to God
  - a. Samson had trifled his strength and calling away

- b. he had defied God for the last time
  - c. God now turns him over to his sin
9. In Gen. 6 we read that God's Spirit will not always strive with men and women
- a. God will convict, draw, woo
  - b. His gracious Spirit will strive with us and try to turn us
  - c. and while God is sovereign over His creation
  - d. because we are created in His image, He has dealt to us a measure of sovereignty
  - e. He honors our choices
  - f. yes He will strive with us over sin
    - because He knows we don't know any better
  - g. but if we persist in our sin; even when we do know better
  - h. there comes a point at which He says,
  - i. "No more will I strive with you. You want your sin - you can have it."
  - j. this is what happened to Samson
10. Samson was so spiritually numb by this time, he had no idea the Spirit of the Lord had left him
11. He rose and shook himself as at times past - but his strength had departed

**{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.**

- 12. Just as Samson was blinded by the Phil., so sin blinds us to the truth
- 13. And the more we pursue sin, the more dimly we see things as they really are
- 14. Eventually, we will end up blind

### III. CONCLUSION

#### A. *Chicken*

- 1. James Dean - the consummate rebel
  - a. East of Eden, Rebel Without A Cause, Giant
  - b. even his off screen persona bore the image of a rebel
- 2. One movie, played chicken with a rival
  - a. backed cars up from edge of cliff
  - b. both were to accelerate toward cliff
  - c. first one to stop, the chicken
  - d. guys had done this before
  - e. but Dean was determined to set the record by not stopping his car at all
  - f. he would bail out and let car sail over the edge
  - g. his rival was determined to outlast him

- h. so when he waited and waited for Dean to stop
- i. by the time he realized what Dean was going to do, it was too late
- j. he tried to bail out too, but he got caught on the door handle and went over the cliff with his car

**B. *Same With Sin***

- 1. A fitting picture of what many people do with sin
- 2. They play chicken with it
- 3. They know they shouldn't get involved with sin
- 4. But still they are attracted to it
  - a. satan is a master tempter
  - b. knows how to hide the pain and sorrow of sin in a veneer of pleasure
- 5. People don't usually just up and commit sin at the first temptation
  - a. no, they are sucked in, slowly but surely
  - b. they play chicken with sin
  - c. they try to see how much of the temptation they can endure without giving in
  - d. that's right, they actually pursue the temptation, not the sin itself, just the temptation
  - e. but eventually, they give in and commit the sin itself
- 6. Cutting weight for wrestling
  - a. big tournament, state finals for Greco-Roman, at our school
  - b. tried to cut 12 lbs. - I made it
  - c. started a few weeks before
  - d. cut back on all food, specially candy
  - e. fasted several days a week, and keep up a grueling schedule of work, school, and wrestling practices
  - f. I used to love to sit and watch my friends eat
  - g. I gained a sense of vicarious pleasure watching them
  - h. I would tell them I would throw away their candy wrappers for them, but would take them and smell them
  - i. my mouth would water, my stomach would start rolling as it got ready for some food
  - j. then I would walk by the food machines just to look at the choices
  - k. often, the longing for a Snickers would overwhelm me
  - l. with shaking hands and furtive glances over my shoulder, I would buy one and eat it in one bite

**C. *Don't Tease With Sin***

- 1. Let's learn from Samson
- 2. We do not battle sin by pursuing it
- 3. We must avoid temptation
- 4. We must flee the place of temptation



5. We must remove from our lives those things that encourage sin
6. A child in Sunday School was reciting the Lord's prayer for his class and was heard to say, "Lead us not into temptation, because we can find the way there all by ourselves."

**D. *Things to Do***

1. Be honest about sin
2. Be on the watch for rationalizations why sin is okay for you
3. That is a slippery slope you do not want to be on
4. Don't let the devil tell you it's okay because you'll be able to stop before you get in to trouble — trouble is exactly what he has in mind for you
5. Best way to avoid sin = pursue God.
6. (Psa 119:37) Turn away my eyes from looking at worthless things, And revive me in Your way.
7. (2 Tim 2:22) Flee youthful lusts; but pursue righteousness, faith, love, peace with those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart.
8. (James 4:7) Submit to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you.