

Questions arise, how can God use a man like Samson? A man who obviously desires to be w/ pagan women & prostitutes more than taking seriously his call as a Nazarite. Not giving evidence that he care for the cries of his own people to deliver them from the oppression of the Philistines. Seems he cares more about himself than being a servant of the Lord.

He marries a Philistine woman against his parents' wishes as they protest & warn. Yet we discover 14:4 *'It is of the Lord'* in order to defeat the Philistines. A fact that *'God works all things together for good for His glory*

Even Samson's lust God uses to accomplish deliverance of Israel. Jesus was delivered up by evil men by the will of God to accomplish divine purposes. *Ps 76:10 For the wrath of man shall praise Thee; With a remnant of wrath Thou shalt gird Thyself.*

It was the Lord's doing in coming to Manoah & wife announcing the child & them dedicating him as Nazarite. Yet we find he was not totally committed but willful, self-centered & not a spiritual man. He has no inclination to deliver Israel, no spiritual motivation, so God uses his carnal, selfish-self—his sense of being wronged which incited anger & revenge to bring about deliverance to Israel. God can use bad motives to bring about his good purposes.

Ch 14 Samson feeling betrayed by his wife in telling his riddle to the 30 companions when she was threatened. Samson goes and kills 30 Philistines & gets garments then leaves in anger, not consummating the marriage.

Ch 15

Judges 15

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. 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." 3 Samson then said to them, "This time I shall be blameless in regard to the Philistines when I do them harm." 4 And Samson went and caught three hundred foxes, and took torches, and turned the foxes tail to tail, and put one torch in the middle between two tails. 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. 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. 7 And Samson said to them, "Since you act like this, I will surely take revenge on you, but after that I will quit." 8 And he struck them ruthlessly with a great slaughter; and he went down and lived in the cleft of the rock of Etam.

Calms down, comes back to take wife & finds she's been given away married to best man—he is justly angry & father thinks worst of him, living in culture of violence, his people willing to burn their house if don't get answer to riddle. Pr **6:34 NIV** *For jealousy arouses a husband's fury, and he will show no mercy when he takes revenge.*

Pacify w/ Younger sister may have been better but Samson's ego at stake—wife betrayed him, 30 companions bettered him, father blindsided him. Maybe father & 30 planned it to spite him & Israel—**worst kind of humiliation**.

He seeks revenge—fields on fire a great loss Hebrew **jackals** cross wolf/fox in packs 150 tails tied sticks of fire between they terrified ran into fields for shelter, fire breaks out consuming the fields—likely at night. In time of harvest straw dry in stacks, standing

Bad choices—Her betrayal came back on her & family —giving in to evil never profits it only delays consequences.

Samson took revenge and brought havoc then went to Etam to see if it had any effect--bring a restraint on them.

9 Then the Philistines went up and camped in Judah, and spread out in Lehi. 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." 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?"

The men of Israel no longer have will to be free from bondage—**Stockholm syndrome**—having a psychological bond w/ their oppressors. Sin can do this to a person—debase, dispirit, destroys will to fight—**reduced to cowards**

Blame Samson instead of real enemy, ungrateful for inconvenience—want to get back to status quo. Jesus said many good works have I done which do you stone me for.

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

What cowards they were, rejecting a deliverer & choosing servitude to Philistines instead. Similarly the Jews bound Jesus & handed Him over lest Romans take away these leaders place & nation. Samson submitted as Jesus was bound 'no man takes my life I lay it down willingly' I could ask my Father and He would send 12 legion of angels to rescue me'

Samson was delivered up by his people to be killed by the enemy.

MH 'Justly is their misery prolonged who oblige their worst enemies and thus abuse their best friend'

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

Shouts turned to Shrieks when Spirit came upon Samson--

Army sent against one man. Delivered up by men of Judah, tribe to bear Messiah, they rather serve Philistines than have Samson of tribe of Dan better them--even save them. Some willing to divide the church than yield their opinion and position for the good of unity. Samson selfishly takes vengeance on the Philistines for what they did to him and yet Israel benefits so it is w/ the providence of God. Notice the men of Judah did not come to his aid Jawbone is a foolish thing 'that the excellency of the power might be of God and not man'

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

Josephus surmises God disciplines Samson w/ an insatiable thirst for not mentioning God in his memorial tribute but attributes it all to himself. Yet God mercy splits the rock and gives refreshment. Afflictions come to remind us to be thankful to God. Plus His mercies are more than our folly.