

The Book of
JUDGES

Testing the Heart of God's Children



Process of Temptation

Judges 16:1-31
Lesson 16

Introduction

With the opening of chapter 16, we move toward the climax of the drama of Samson's life. Israel is not anxious to have the status quo challenged, Samson increasingly provokes the Philistines and continues to do whatever he thinks is right.

Scripture tells us that, "*There is a way that seems right to a man, but its end is the way of death.*" Prov 14:12 Samson's life was spent in seeking what he desired and it left him with a defiled conscience, and destroyed moral senses. He even deceived himself into thinking he had everything under control. When he broke the final stipulation of his Nazarite vow, allowing his hair to be cut, the Lord left him and he was taken prisoner.

Samson squandered the gifts God gave him on his own sensual gratification. With so much potential, his greatest enemy was himself. His continual yielding to his fleshly desires culminates in his sad end, blind, bound and imprisoned. His greatest act was performed when he was weak and broken as he finally cried out to the Lord.

"Samson, the last judge God sent to His people, was the most paradoxical man of them all: a deliverer who couldn't deliver himself, a conqueror who couldn't conquer himself, a strong man who didn't know when he was weak" – Wiersbe If we look closely we can see God working through it all. Remember God said Samson, would begin to deliver Israel out of the hands of the Philistines. God accomplished exactly what He purposed. The "Sun" has begun to dawn upon Israel.



LOOKING FOR GOLD - WHAT DOES IT SAY?

The first step in mining for gold is getting the lay of the land. **Carefully observe the text** looking to see where you might dig to find hidden treasure. **Mark your text** looking for repeated words, contrasts or similarities. Look for answers to, Who? What? When? Where? Why or How?

Setting the scene: Read 2 Sam. 12:14, Rom. 2:24, 1 Cor. 11:31-33 for added insight. Use an atlas or other sources to place the cities in the appropriate place on your map. Pay attention to who's inheritance they are occupying.

Judges 16:1-3

1 Now Samson went to Gaza and saw a harlot there, and went in to her. 2 When the Gazites were told, "Samson has come here!" they surrounded the place and lay in wait for him all night at the gate of the city. They were quiet all night, saying, "In the morning, when it is daylight, we will kill him." 3 And Samson lay low till midnight; then he arose at midnight, took hold of the doors of the gate of the city and the two gateposts, pulled them up, bar and all, put them on his shoulders, and carried them to the top of the hill that faces Hebron.



Digging Deeper

Dig deeper using other resources such as a dictionary, concordance, maps, cross-references. Notate where you found it to share with the group. Look for commands to obey or questions to be answered. What does God want you to know about Himself?

Judges 16:4-22

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

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

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." **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.

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.

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."

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.

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. **22** However, the hair of his head began to grow again after it had been shaven.



Judges 16:23-31

23 Now the lords of the Philistines gathered together to offer a great sacrifice to Dagon their god, and to rejoice. And they said: "Our god has delivered into our hands Samson our enemy!" **24** When the people saw him, they praised their god; for they said: "Our god has delivered into our hands our enemy, The destroyer of our land, And the one who multiplied our dead." **25** So it happened, when their hearts were merry, that they said, "Call for Samson, that he may perform for us." So they called for Samson from the prison, and he performed for them. And they stationed him between the pillars. **26** Then Samson said to the lad who held him by the hand, "Let me feel the pillars which support the temple, so that I can lean on them." **27** Now the temple was full of men and women. All the lords of the Philistines were there — about three thousand men and women on the roof watching while Samson performed.

28 Then Samson called to the Lord, saying, "O Lord God, remember me, I pray! Strengthen me, I pray, just this once, O God, that I may with one blow take vengeance on the Philistines for my two eyes!" **29** And Samson took hold of the two middle pillars which supported the temple, and he braced himself against them, one on his right and the other on his left. **30** Then Samson said, "Let me die with the Philistines!" And he pushed with all his might, and the temple fell on the lords and all the people who were in it. So the dead that he killed at his death were more than he had killed in his life. **31** And his brothers and all his father's household came down and took him, and brought him up and buried him between Zorah and Eshtaol in the tomb of his father Manoah. He had judged Israel twenty years.





BOILING IT DOWN – WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

What **lesson** can I draw from my observations?

State each lesson in a simple sentence (aim for 10 words or less).

Judges 16:1-3 _____

Judges 16:4-22 _____

Judges 16:23-31 _____



REFINED AS GOLD - HOW CAN I APPLY IT?

How should it change me? Ask yourself, "What **course of action** do I need to take to apply each lesson?" (aim for 10 words or less)

Judges 16:1-3 _____

Judges 16:4-22 _____

Judges 16:23-31 _____

CHALLENGE: Use cross-references to find correlating scripture that backs up a main point of the chapter. Summarize your findings in your own words.



STORING UP YOUR TREASURE . . .

What does the Nazarite Vow signify? Num. 6:1-8

See if you can identify the process of sin pictured in this chapter.

What was the result of each downward step?

How did God use Samson in spite of his wasteful living?

What words or phrases are repeated?

CHECKING FOR CLARITY: See if you can boil down the meaning of **each section** into one or two words. This helps you fully understand what the author is trying to convey. (It's fun to alliterate if you want to try) Did you catch the vision?

Judges 16:1-3 _____

Judges 16:4-22 _____

Judges 16:23-31 _____

BARS OF GOLD: State the main **point** of the passage in the form of a title.

FLEX YOUR MUSCLES: Can you discover an N.T. example of this O.T. truth?



HIDE YOUR TREASURE IN YOUR HEART

He who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct, because it is written, "Be holy, for I am holy." 1 Peter 1:15-16

Radiating His Truth . . .

When sin comes it will not come as something ugly and destructive but as something that presents itself as desirable, good and fulfilling – Gary Inrig

Message Notes
