

Without A King - "Grace Greater Than Our Failures"

Good Morning Newsong Church!!!! It is so good to be here with you this morning and worship God together. I want to take a second to welcome our first time guest! Welcome everyone watching online!!! My Name is Jacob, I'm the youth director here at newsong church. I'm so glad you are here today, I believe God has a word for you!

Right now we are in a sermon series , called Without a King, we are going through the book of judges .

We have been learning that even though it chronicles the 400 year history of Israel,

It's a reflection of our own culture today...

The bible isn't just a book of stuff that happened but its about what ALWAYS HAPPENS

Israel had lost its way...Their moral compass was broken...Their nation had become lawless...There was chaos in the streets...Their political leaders were self-serving and corrupt...

Their spiritual leaders were weak and backslidden...They were full of confusion and compromise

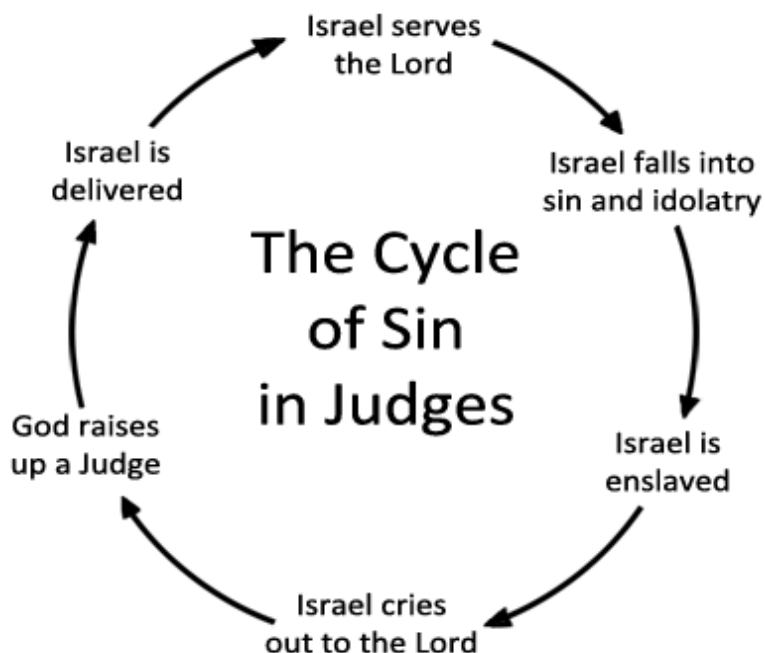
Even though God commanded the Israelites to be holy and set apart, very little difference could be found between the Israelites and their Neighbors. They looked and acted just like the culture. And guess what, when they fell away from God, They fell HARD.

Our series verse and what sums up the book of Judges
Series Verse:

25 In those days Israel had no king; everyone did as they saw fit.

Judges 21:25 (NIV)

We've been learning that the israelites are in this cycle,
PM called it the sin cycle



Something we have seen is that in every cycle, Israel falls away further from God and even the judges become more corrupt!

Now the Philistines were a brutal enemy...

They were very advanced in their weaponry and military. they had weapons that were made of iron...giving them an advantage over other nations...

They were cruel to those that they conquered...history tells us that when the Philistines conquered a city, they didn't just kill the men, they tortured and mutilated them while they were still alive...

Like the other enemies of Israel they were pagan...They worshiped multiple “gods” including Baal, Ashtoreth, and Dagon...

And all the evil practices that went with them

They were known for their wild and crazy week-long drinking parties...Where anything and everything goes...

So they were strong...they were cruel...and they were depraved...and they had Israel under their thumb for 40 years...

Today we are going to be looking at Judges chapters 15 & 16, looking at the life of probably the most famous judge but also messed up. Samson was supernaturally strong, so he might of had the strength of the hulk but he still could have looked like Bruce Banner

Last week we learned that Samson was dedicated to God before he was born, he was to be a Nazerite. set apart for God and to become a judge that would deliver Israel from the philistines . Numbers chapter 6 gives you even more

details on what was required to be a Nazirite but here are just a few things.

1. A Nazirite was not allowed to Drink wine or any type of Alcohol
 - You couldn't have raisins, or Grapes or even chocolate covered Raisins
 - They couldn't have any Juice, that means no Arizona Ice teas either. So you're basically drinking Water and milk
2. You couldn't be near dead things or touch dead things
3. You weren't allowed to cut your hair during the time of the Vow

● *But he told me, 'You will become pregnant and give birth to a son. You must not drink wine or any other alcoholic drink nor eat any forbidden food. For your son will be dedicated to God as a Nazirite from the moment of his birth until the day of his death.'*
Judges 13:7

Samson was set up for success. He had a spiritual advantage through his vow, and a physical advantage through his super strength. But even though he was set up for success, his choices led him to failure because he compromised on sin. He is a prime example of talent vs character.

As I was beginning to put this message together and studying the life of samson this quote kept coming to my mind.

“Sin will take you farther than you want to go, keep you longer than you want to stay, and cost you more than you want to pay.”

Pray

Let's Dive into chapter 15, Just a quick recap, the last chapter ended with Samson losing a bet, then him killing

30 philistine men and Samson storms off to go back to his parents. And top it all off his wife to be gets married to someone else!

1 Later on, during the wheat harvest, Samson took a young goat as a present to his wife. Guys take notes, most people would bring flowers or chocolate to impress a girl or maybe a new Iphone but samson brought a Goat! He is so romantic. He said, "I'm going into my wife's room to sleep with her," but her father wouldn't let him in.

2 "I truly thought you must hate her," her father explained, "so I gave her in marriage to your best man. But look, her younger sister is even more beautiful than she is. Marry her instead."

Now he finds out that his wife, isnt his wife anymore!!

Samson is so upset and look at what he says

3 Samson said, "This time I cannot be blamed for everything I am going to do to you Philistines." In other words, Samson was ready to throw down!

4 Then he went out and caught 300 foxes. He tied their tails together in pairs, and he fastened a torch to each pair of tails. 5 Then he lit the torches and let the foxes run through the grain fields of the Philistines. He burned all their grain to the ground, including the sheaves and the uncut grain. He also destroyed their vineyards and olive groves.

Yeah did I mention this book is a Rated R. We are seeing a distorted image of a judge here. In the past we've seen judges fight against the enemies of Israel who were

oppressing them. Right now samson is fighting the enemy, but hes not doing it for justice hes doing it for revenge.

For the first thing for your notes,

*“Samson was **IMPULSE** led, Not spirit led”*

The spirit of God was upon Samson but Samson does not submit to the spirit of God! Everything he has done so far is an act of selfish revenge. He is not doing this because God told him to or to give God glory or to protect his people. This was a personal war for him.

Samson was impulsive and reacted based on his emotions, his lust, his stomach

Sometimes people are driven by anger and getting back at someone. Even Christians will say well I have a Godly reason to be angry and that can be true. But the bible teaches us not to sin in our Anger!

There is a way to express and vent frustration or anger and not let it turn into a sinful wrath against someone else.

The book of James says this

James 1:19-20 NLT

19 Understand this, my dear brothers and sisters: You must all be quick to listen, slow to speak, and slow to get angry. 20 Human anger does not produce the righteousness God desires.

Proverbs 25:28

A person without self-control

is like a city with broken-down walls.

A city without walls is defenseless to its enemies, so is a christian without self control! We have to decide whether we are going to be driven by our will or God's will. Lets see how the philistines respond to samson burning down their crops.

6“Who did this?” the Philistines demanded.

“Samson,” was the reply, “because his father-in-law from Timnah gave Samson’s wife to be married to his best man.” So the Philistines went and got the woman and her father and burned them to death. (Judges 14:15) Getting

Revenge just leads to more revenge

7“Because you did this,” Samson vowed, “I won’t rest until I take my revenge on you!” 8So he attacked the Philistines with great fury and killed many of them. Then he went to live in a cave in the rock of Etam.

9The Philistines retaliated by setting up camp in Judah and spreading out near the town of Lehi. 10The men of Judah asked the Philistines, “Why are you attacking us?”

The Philistines replied, "We've come to capture Samson.

We've come to pay him back for what he did to us."

11 So 3,000 men of Judah went down to get Samson at the cave in the rock of Etam. They said to Samson, "Don't you realize the Philistines rule over us? What are you doing to us?"

Samson, don't you understand the Philistines rule over us? What are you doing to us? Why are you attacking us?

The Israelites quickly forget about God, and are siding with their oppressors and would not dare to fight back against them. They would rather go after their own Judge and keep the comfort of their sinful lifestyle, than repent

and be set free from oppression !! The spiritual climate reached a new low, first we saw that Israel was not crying out to God for their sins but now we see them crying out against the person who is supposed to deliver them.

But Samson replied, "I only did to them what they did to me."

12 But the men of Judah told him, "We have come to tie you up and hand you over to the Philistines."

"All right," Samson said. "But promise that you won't kill me yourselves."

13 "We will only tie you up and hand you over to the Philistines," they replied. "We won't kill you." So they tied

him up with two new ropes and brought him up from the rock.

Up until this point this is the most selfless thing we see samson do and most rational , knowing if he decided to fight back against the 3000 men he would have to kill the very people he was told to deliver or if he escaped the israelites would be left defenseless to the philistines!

14As Samson arrived at Lehi, the Philistines came shouting in triumph. But the Spirit of the LORD came powerfully upon Samson, and he snapped the ropes on his arms as if they were burnt strands of flax, and they fell from his wrists. 15Then he found the jawbone of a

recently killed donkey. He picked it up and killed 1,000 Philistines with it.

16Then Samson said,

“With the jawbone of a donkey,

I’ve piled them in heaps!

With the jawbone of a donkey,

I’ve killed a thousand men!”

17When he finished his boasting, he threw away the

jawbone; and the place was named Jawbone Hill.

18Samson was now very thirsty, and he cried out to the

LORD,

This is the first time we see Samson pray!

“You have accomplished this great victory by the strength of your servant. Must I now die of thirst and fall into the hands of these pagans?” 19So God caused water to gush out of a hollow in the ground at Lehi, and Samson was revived as he drank. Then he named that place “The Spring of the One Who Cried Out,” and it is still in Lehi to this day.

20Samson judged Israel for twenty years during the period when the Philistines dominated the land.

Chapter 16

1One day Samson went to the Philistine town of Gaza and spent the night with a prostitute.

So Samson was impulse led, not spirit led. Immediately in chapter 16 we see an example of the compromise in his life! He has sex outside of marriage with a pagan prostitute. Geographically, Samson went down to Gaza from where he lived to meet with her, and spiritually, he is going downward, too.

Not only does he sleep with her in philistine territory, but the Philistines catch on that he is there. they plot to kill him. So they wait by the main gates of the city to capture him and kill him in the morning.

3But Samson stayed in bed only until midnight. Then he got up, took hold of the doors of the town gate, including

the two posts, and lifted them up, bar and all. He put them on his shoulders and carried them all the way to the top of the hill across from Hebron.

Samson carried the gates of the city away on shoulders! That is pretty cool but if we dig a little deeper. Samson is prideful, hes not afraid to get caught in sin and he is almost showing off. The philistines wanted to kill samson, samson was basically saying, oh you want to kill me? I'll just take your city gates away, now you're defenseless.

So Samson started in a town he was not supposed to be in, doing things he shouldn't have done. Samson is continuing the same pattern of falling into sin, Doing whatever impulse comes to him.

Let me just keep it 100% , The spirit is not going to tell you to sleep with your boo thing, your boyfriend or girlfriend , that's called being impulse led and lust lead.

This makes me wonder how much Samson's story would've changed if he had some Godly friends in his life. If he had some accountability!! They would have knocked some sense into him. This is why its important that we have good christian community! People can come alongside you in prayer, someone who can understand what its like to be christian in a world that does as they please. Someone to call you out when you're acting like samson! We need christian community.

Proverbs 27:17

17As iron sharpens iron,

so a friend sharpens a friend.

Lets continue to see what happens next in verse 4

4Some time later Samson fell in love with a woman named

Delilah, who lived in the valley of Sorek.

Here we go again, Samson falls in love with another

Philistine woman, it says he fell in love but it might be

better translated as he lusted after her. Especially

because there is no indication she loved him and

especially because she tries to find his weakness.

Something interesting I learned is that Delilah's name means “devoted to” , being devoted to someone or something... Many bible scholars say that Delilah was a temple prostitute, who was devoted to Dagon , the false god the philistines. Samson was living a secret life of Sin and look what happens next.

5The rulers of the Philistines went to her and said, “Entice Samson to tell you what makes him so strong and how he can be overpowered and tied up securely. Then each of us will give you 1,100 pieces of silver. 6So Delilah said to Samson, “Please tell me what makes you so strong and what it would take to tie you up securely.”

He was living a secret life of sin, compromise after compromise. He felt comfortable in his sin. Now we see Delilah secretly plotting against him! Samson has this unconfessed sin, that he hasn't given to God, meaning he hasn't turned away from and it is literally leading him down a path to his own demise. The enemy wants to use compromise to lure you from, being in community, he wants to keep you distracted with your phone , with social media.

Hidden Sin has Public consequences

Samson is so blinded by sin, his lust and pride, he doesn't even see that Delilah literally is asking how to destroy him!!

7 Samson replied, "If I were tied up with seven new bowstrings that have not yet been dried, I would become as weak as anyone else."

8 So the Philistine rulers brought Delilah seven new bowstrings, and she tied Samson up with them. 9 She had hidden some men in one of the inner rooms of her house, and she cried out, "Samson! The Philistines have come to capture you!" But Samson snapped the bowstrings as a piece of string snaps when it is burned by a fire. So the secret of his strength was not discovered.

This becomes a game of almost Cat and mouse, Delilah is asking Samson again and again what is the true secret

to his strength. Samson doesn't say hey i know what you're doing, i'm getting out of here. But he continues to toy with his sin until it becomes his trap.

She says, you have been lying to me , you don't like me, you won't tell me what the secret to your strength is. So please tell me!

15Then Delilah pouted, “How can you tell me, ‘I love you,’ when you don’t share your secrets with me? You’ve made fun of me three times now, and you still haven’t told me what makes you so strong!” 16She tormented him with her nagging day after day until he was sick to death of it.

17 Finally, Samson shared his secret with her. “My hair has never been cut,” he confessed, “for I was dedicated to God as a Nazirite from birth. If my head were shaved, my strength would leave me, and I would become as weak as anyone else.”

See Delilah did not overpower Samson, His compromise did! Samson kept going back into a situation he should not have been in the first place. He allowed himself to be in a position of temptation. When temptation is coming your way and you feel yourself going towards that sin, Shut the door! Get yourself out of there. *Samson should've opened the door and ran back to his parents once Delilah asked him “how can I capture?”* When it

comes to temptation, and everyone can be tempted with something, when it comes knocking at your door, Don't answer it! Let Jesus answer it for you!

18 Delilah realized he had finally told her the truth, so she sent for the Philistine rulers. “Come back one more time,” she said, “for he has finally told me his secret.” So the Philistine rulers returned with the money in their hands.

19 Delilah lulled Samson to sleep with his head in her lap, and then she called in a man to shave off the seven locks of his hair. *In this way she began to bring him down,* and his strength left him.

20 Then she cried out, “Samson! The Philistines have come to capture you!”

When he woke up, he thought, “I will do as before and shake myself free.” But he didn’t realize the LORD had left him.

Hidden Sin has public consequences

Samson deceived himself by thinking he had everything under control, but when you give into sin, it controls you.

You would think Samson as a Judge, a warrior, would have some discernment and be ready when danger is near, but his conscience was defiled and moral senses were destroyed, Just like the spiritual state of israel. His own bad decisions left him vulnerable to his enemies.

21 So the Philistines captured him and gouged out his eyes. They took him to Gaza, where he was bound with bronze chains and forced to grind grain in the prison.

Sin blinded samson, oh its no big deal its just a little sin

Samson was bound by sin , Hey I don't have a problem
I can quit whenever i feel like it.

And if we are not careful, sin will blind me and you. If we
compromise with lust, pride, hatred, jealousy, or gossip,
one day we will find that we are farther away from God
than we ever wanted to be. And we might become people
that we never wanted to become.

But look at this:

22 But before long, his hair began to grow back.

This is God's grace. Out of everything, This my favorite verse from the whole story of Samson!! Even though Samson didn't deserve it, His hair began to grow back. His hair is a representation of his vow to God, and we're going to see God move again.

23 *The Philistine rulers held a great festival, offering*

sacrifices and praising their god, Dagon. They said,

"Our god has given us victory over our enemy

Samson!"

24When the people saw him, they praised their god, saying, "Our god has delivered our enemy to us! The one who killed so many of us is now in our power!"

25Half drunk by now, the people demanded, "Bring out Samson so he can amuse us!" So he was brought from the prison to amuse them, and they had him stand between the pillars supporting the roof.

26Samson said to the young servant who was leading him by the hand, "Place my hands against the pillars that hold up the temple. I want to rest against them." **27**Now the temple was completely filled with people. All the Philistine rulers were there, and there were about 3,000 men and women on the roof who were watching as Samson amused them.

28 Then Samson prayed to the LORD, "Sovereign LORD, remember me again. O God, please strengthen me just one more time. With one blow let me pay back the Philistines for the loss of my two eyes." **29** Then Samson put his hands on the two center pillars that held up the temple. Pushing against them with both hands, **30** he prayed, "Let me die with the Philistines." And the temple crashed down on the Philistine rulers and all the people. So he killed more people when he died than he had during his entire lifetime.

31 Later his brothers and other relatives went down to get his body. They took him back home and buried him between Zorah and Eshtaol, where his father,

Manoah, was buried. Samson had judged Israel for twenty years.

Blind, bound, Samson cries in his final prayer to God!
Lord remember me! God never forgot Samson! He
patiently waited for him to turn away from his sin and turn
back to God. In the same way God has not forgotten you!
If you have been running from God and you think you are
too far at this point, Don't be like samson. Don't wait until
its your last moment to say God remember me. YOU ARE
NEVER TOO FAR GONE for Jesus to step into your
situation.

With Jesus, your **FAILURE** isn't **FINAL**

Sin will keep you longer than you wanted to stay....

**But where sin abounds, Grace abounds all the
more!!!**

There is no sin too great for God's grace to cover.

Church When you accept Jesus into your heart, you are justified through Christ! Jesus paid the penalty for our sin, so we don't have to face it alone.

***If the worship team could come up as we begin to
close***

Samson showed us that you can have the ability and gifting but Godly character is more important than any other talent. We need to be Setting our foundation in christ and not the things we have in this world and especially not in ourselves

You might be here dealing with Compromise, letting small sin in your life, Turn away! Don't be like Samson, Shut the door and ask Jesus to strengthen you. His blood can wash you new today and his grace is more than enough. Let him transform you!

Lamentations 3:23 NLT

23 Great is his faithfulness;

His mercies begin afresh each morning.

If you are dealing with shame or guilt of your past sins, of your past failures. Your past does not define you! You are a new creation in Christ when you accept Jesus in your life and follow him.

Romans 8:38-39 NLT

38 And I am convinced that nothing can ever separate us from God's love. Neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons,[a] neither our fears for today nor our worries about tomorrow—not even the powers of hell can separate us from God's love. 39 No power in the sky above or in the earth

below—indeed, nothing in all creation will ever be able to separate us from the love of God that is revealed in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Let's all stand together for a moment in the presence of the Lord.

You might be here today and you don't call yourself a christian, and you are feeling the weight of sin in your life, Feeling like you can't go any further. You might be thinking you are sooo far away from God. All you have to do is turn to him and will meet you immediately!

Lets pray

With every head bowed, If you are here and you call yourself a christian, and maybe you have fallen into a sin cycle of your own or maybe you started to have a little compromise in your walk with God. Jesus is Faithful to forgive you and restore you when you turn to him! There is no condemnation in christ! If you feeling like you have been impulse led instead of God led or dealing with a compromise, our prayer team is ready and would love to pray with you!

Let's take a moment and worship together

Pray

