

Living the Right Message

Judges 16:1-3

Introduction - You're actions demonstrate what you really b_____ about God.

- A. Samson made the hall of faithfulness in Heb 11:32 because he was a g_____ man and faithful to his life's purpose
 - a. Samson ended the Philistine rule when he killed 1000 soldiers with a fresh j_____ of a donkey.
 - b. Samson judged Israel for _____ years (15:20)
 - c. Samson's entire life is often judged by the story of Samson and Delilah. But there is a story that precedes this that most skip over (16:1-3)
- B. This is a story of sending the right message by the way you live.

Why did Samson go to Gaza?

- A. Facts about Gaza
 - 1. One of the _____ major cities in Philistia
 - 2. A separate l_____ ruled each of these cities (see Jdg 3:3; 16:5)
- B. Things to note
 - 1. Samson did not go o_____, but secretly.
 - 2. There is no indication that anyone saw him except the prostitute.
- C. Samson went to Gaza to continue fulfilling his life's purpose, to make sure the Philistines were making no attempt to control Israel.

Why did Samson go to a prostitute?

- A. There are two actions to note
 - 1. Samson s_____ a prostitute - the NLT wrongly omits this. Every other version has this action because it is in the Hebrew text (the original language of the book of Judges)
 - 2. What was the second action?
 - a. Note the following four translations
 - 1) NAS – *[he] saw a harlot there, and went in to her.*
 - 2) KJV – *[he] saw there an harlot, and went in unto her.*
 - 3) NIV – *where he saw a harlot. He went in to spend the night with her.*
 - 4) NLT – *[he] spent the night with a prostitute.*
 - b. Note that the NAS and KJV do not use the word *into*
 - 1) "In" is an adverb and indicates w_____ Samson went (he went inside her house)

- 2) “To” or “unto” is a preposition with the prostitute as the object. Going to her does not require us to mean sex as the NIV and NLT imply.
- c. The Hebrew text literally reads, *he went in her*.
 - 1) This phrase is used 13 times in the Hebrew Bible
 - a) Ten times it refers to sex only because the c_____ is of marriage or conceiving (Gen 29:21,23; 30:3,4; 38:2,18; Deut 21:13; 22:13; 25:5; Ezek 23:44; Ruth 4:13).
 - b) Twice it clearly DOES NOT refer to sex
 - i. 2 Sam 12:24 – David went in where Bathsheba was and the next phrase is the sexual term;
 - ii. Jdg 4:22 – Barak went in Jael’s tent (the word tent is not in the Hebrew but the next sentence demands that we understand that as the location).
 - 2) Judges 16:1 – there is nothing in the context that demands us to understand this as a sexual act and the rest of the story does not line up with that interpretation.
- B. Samson saw the prostitute and secretly went in to her place of residence for a reason that lines up with his role as a judge.
 1. In Josh 2:1-11
 - a. Where did the spies that Joshua sent into Jericho go? - to a p_____ place.
 - b. Why did they go to such a place? – to find out the talk of the t_____.
 - c. What was the talk? – everyone was t_____ of the God of Israel for all the miraculous plagues he put on Egypt.
 2. In Judges 16:1 - Samson went in the prostitute’s place to find out if there was any talk of the Philistines strategizing against Israel.
- C. Word leaked out to the city leaders that Samson was in the prostitutes place
 1. They plot to k_____ Samson at first light by a surprise attack as he exits the city gate.
 2. They were s_____ all night (may have slept), thinking that Samson would not leave until sometime after sunrise.
- D. Samson discovered their plot and lay until m_____ and then got up (I doubt that he went to sleep but waited until the ambushers were asleep).

What message was Samson sending?

A. Samson's symbolic actions

1. Uprooted the city gate, its posts, and its iron bars (according to archeology this would weigh no less than four t_____, which would make this feat humanly impossible) – *you are not challenging me, but my God.*
2. Carried the city gate 40 miles to Hebron, an major I_____ city. *Your gate belongs to Israel.* (God promised this in Gen 22:17)
3. Carried the gate to the top of a m_____ - *the God of Israel is the almighty and His power extends everywhere.*
 - a. God communicated from mountains (Ex 3:1; Ps 74:2; 1 Kgs 18:20)
 - b. Pagans believed that some gods dwelled on mountains (e.g. Z_____ 's palace on Mt. Olympus).
 - c. Some believed that the God of Israel was the God of the mountains and his power was diminished elsewhere (see I Kgs 20:23)

B. Samson's actions were pointing the Philistines to the one true God.

Conclusion

A. Truths about every believer

1. Eph 2:10 – we were created in Christ Jesus to do good w_____
2. Matt 5:16 – we are commanded to do good works in such a way that would point people to g_____ God.

B. Do you believe that God CAN use you to accomplish His eternal plan? What do your actions say?

1. Do you default to pastors and missionaries as God's instrument? (*They know a lot more than me. They are more qualified*)
2. Be w_____ to be used by God and He will use you.

C. Do you believe that prayer makes a difference? What do your actions say?

1. Do you lean on the "spiritual" people to pray because they are "more connected?"
2. Are YOU praying?
 - a. Jms 5:16 – prayer is powerful through a person who is r_____ related to God (definition of a righteous person).
 - b. Lk 7:7 – be p_____ in your prayers.

D. Your actions reveal what you really believe – LIVE the right message – let your actions point people to the Lord.