



# *ANOINTED SOLDIER*

Pastor Mark Driscoll

Samson | May 5<sup>th</sup>, 2024

Sermon Link: <https://realfaith.com/sermons/samson-anointed-soldier/>

all right you guys ready to go all right we're going to be in a book of the Bible called judges you're going to meet one of the weirdest guys in the history history of the world Amen his name is Samson now a lot of people know about him because he's big and strong and tough but Christians don't really get into the details because his life is a hot mess minus the hot he is he's got a lot of problems and issues this guy and you're GNA you're going to see it head on today in judges 15 and here's why a lot of people know about Samson but not a lot of pastors really delve into the details uh because basically there are three kinds of people there are people that meet the Lord God changes their life radical testimony it's not perfect but they're making progress throughout the course of their life other people never meet God never changed no moral progress just flat not an upward trajectory and then in the middle there are people that are a giant question mark you met these people right and some of you like I am those people welcome we're glad to have you these are the people you're like are they Believers or unbelievers do they go into heaven or they go into hell you're like I don't know because some days they live like h some days they live like hell and you and some days you're like two steps forward four steps back and you think oh my gosh they're doing good they're making BR no so that's Samson okay that's Samson and so we're going to jump right into his story we're in judges 15 this will be fun uh 15 1-2 after some days so I'll give you the backdrop so Samson in the previous chapter he saw a gal and he says she's right in my eyes wasn't the gal that God wanted him to marry but he picked her because she was attractive he didn't know if she could read or write or drive or pass a breathalizer but she was attractive so he married her and so what happens then is he's not supposed to marry her she's a Philistine and then he totally abandons her he just leaves he's supposed to be the man of God he leaves for an indefinite period of time just disappears on his wife so then he comes back so here's here's where we Pi up to St after some days at the time of the weed Harvest we all know when that is Samson went to visit his wife with a young goat okay so let me just point out the obvious you all veral process a lot right if you've abandoned your wife and you're like I think a goat's going to seal the deal um you officially have a rural relationship okay there's no chicks in Scottsdale like a goat I'm in you know like uh Happy Valentine's Day you know um it's just this is weird this is like Hebrew farmer wants a wife kind of situation going on so he shows back up with a goat and he said I will go into my wife in the chamber so he's real romantic and poetic and he's very subtle um that's a joke by the way he's this he's not the kind of guy that does like poetry could win a second grade spelling bee he just doesn't have a lot of charm but her father would not allow him to go in and her father said I really thought you utterly hated her I mean you did disappear after the wedding so I gave her to your companion the best man in the wedding next man up you know it's like football he's off the bench give me the Lefty out of the bullpen any he comes is not her sister I can't even believe this all right let's just read this ladies okay is not I mean I didn't say this by the way I'm just reading it so don't start chucking stuff at your pastor uh is not her younger sister more beautiful than she please take her instead okay I'll just I'll just hide right here um okay so so Samson good guy bad guy really bad guy marries a G's not supposed to marry abandons her returns with a goat and just thinks he's going to pick up where he left off in the relationship so he is a failed husband okay now here the Philistines are the people that he uh married the daughter of and here's what we know about these people they're enemies of God's people they're terrible people in addition they're Warriors they're Masters in Weaponry they're great at seafaring and and here's how it works their men are very powerful they're soldiers their women are very beautiful they're seductive and so the reason why they're ruling over God's people well the men in uh the nation of Israel they're afraid of their men and they're attracted to their women so they tend to sleep with

their women and then do business with their men and the moral the story is this usually what compromises your Christianity is not things you love but things you hate like money and pleasure and convenience and comfort and so what they do they don't take the path that God has given them they take the easy path that God has forbidden them these Philistines they're a constant problem for God's people and there are certain cultures and communities and groups of people that we can love but we cannot live in relationship with because their way violates the ways of God the most famous Philistine is a guy named Goliath he's like the counterbalance to Samson he is this Mighty strong Warrior but what we see here is that ultimately God's leader Samson is a terrible witness he's a terrible witness he shows up in town he marries the unbelieving woman he abandons her and then the father says this horrifying thing that we'll pick up in a moment to think that the story couldn't get any worse we're now going to get a little deeper into the darkness ready ready to read this this is one of the weirdest parts of the whole Bible and Samson said to them this time I shall be innocent he's a victim I mean this guy he sounds like he's a sophomore at a State University right like I'm a victim uh this time I shall be innocent in regards to the Philistines when I do them harm this is just Vengeance and anger my wife is laughing pray for me so Samson went and caught 300 foxes these are actual foxes like not like attractive women these are actual foxes okay and took torches well of course yes of course and he turned them tail to tail he tied their tails together and put a torch between each pair of Tails how many of you in Sunday school you're like we did not do this part of the story I did not see the burn the uh animals veggie tail and when he had set fire to the Torches he let the foxes go into the standing grain of the Philistines and set fire to the stack grain and the standing grain as well as the olive Orchards then the Philistines said who has done this well we know who it is it's the guy who's nuttier than a planner's factory the man of God Samson and they said Samson the son of law of the timite because he has taken his wife and given her to His companion he's upset and the Philistines came and it gets even crazier just amazing the Philistines came and burned her and her father with fire they had threatened previously that they were going to burn her and her father to death in the house and now they do and Samson said to them if this is what you do I swear I will be Avenged on you and after that I will quit he's like I'm going to murder you then I'm going to take a day off okay and he struck them hip and thigh with a great blow and he went down and stayed in the CEST C of cleft of the rock of Edom so he murders a bunch of dudes and goes camping and he's hiding in the in the mountains then the Philistines came and encamped in Judah and made a raid on Lehi now they're escalating with vengeance attacking God's people and the men of Judah said why have you come up against us like why are you running near us they said we have come up to bind Samson to do to him as he did to us story continues then 300 men of Judah first time that we see a military group form and it's not to attack their enemies it's to attack their leader then 300 men of Judah went down to the Clift of the rock of Adam and said to Samson do you not know that the Philistines are rulers over us we'll pick that up they accept this as a fact what then is that you have done to us and he said to them and this is the definition of vengeance by the way as they did to me so I have done to them right he's not really a deep thinker he's not a turn the other cheer he's not that guy and they said to him we have come down to bind you that we may give you under the hands of the Philistines and Samson said to them swear to me that you will not attack me you yourselves they said to him no we will only bind you uh and give you into their hands we will surely not kill you so they bound him they tied him up they arrested him with two new ropes and brought him up from the Rock first of all what's Samson's perspective of his difficult life circumstances I'm a victim okay he's American he just is he's he's he's American what he's saying is life is hard I must be a victim it's surely not my

fault question is there for those of you that have been with us or read in the story and if you want to know more there is a study guide to help you learn it I like to help people learn the Bible but just with me verbal process some hypothetical possibilities where he has contributed to his own misery uh yeah he marries a Philistine cuz she's attractive even though God says no he bullies his mom and dad in order to marry her anything else he's drinking and gambling with the Philistines which he's not supposed to be doing breaks the Nazarite vow he breaks this Nazarite vow that Jesus gave him back before his birth in numbers 13 excuse me in uh Judges 13 you could see it in number six so he's touching dead corpses he's drinking alcohol um he's doing things that he's not supposed to be doing his whole life is Rebellion against God and then suddenly he comes to the realization like it's obviously not my fault okay now here's here's why we laugh here's why we laugh you want to know why it's not our life we're all blind to our own blind spots right see sometimes it's really easy to see somebody else's sin and failure because we're looking in on their life but from our perspective it makes sense to us this is where we've got to be honest and ask okay am where am I blind in my own blind spots just because things are bad doesn't mean that something bad has been done to you something bad may have been done by you that's the story of Samson in addition he then gets Vengeance on a whole town so he marries a gal abandons her the father thinks he's not coming back so he marries the daughter off hey how many of you would say well maybe the father's in the right here I mean I don't know at the very we don't know how long he was gone but I just know this if you have the wedding and then they jump in the car and there's tin cans on the back and the groom drives away without the bride that's usually an indicator that it's not going well okay so there he goes so what does Samson decide not to get Vengeance on the father but on all the Philistines this is what Vengeance does bitterness and Vengeance escalates so he is going to take Vengeance on a h toown now let me ask you this um what do you think about him catching 300 foxes there's not a more convenient way to do arson you know and some of the Bible commentaries be like oh it's not uh foxes it's jackals I'm like either way 300 seems like a real commitment right like specifically 300 how long does it take to catch 300 jackals and then in addition you've got to find a way to tie their tails together my assumption is some are opposing this concept there's at least a few jackals like I'm putting up a fight you know and then he puts a torch between the Tails of the 300 tied jackals so he's got a so just think about this the dude has to catch 300 Foxes or jackals he has to find let's say roughly I'm doing public school math but 150 torches and then he's got to find a way by being bit by all the animals to tie their tails together to get the Torches in to light the Torches and then send them out right there has to be another way right and if you're here and you're like it makes sense call 911 you you're not doing good you're not doing good at all okay so how many of you have never read this story in the Bible you're like what the how many of you are like I like foxes um sorry um so so does he look a little crazy do you know why he's a little crazy okay when you get bitter and vengeful you get a little crazy you ever met somebody that's bitter unforgiving vengeful in a conflict lost sight of everything and just was determined to do damage they get a little crazy he's a little crazy but what he wants to do here he wants to destroy their crops and he wants to collapse their economy to punish them because one dude married off the woman that he abandoned this is what we see in Vengeance it just escalates and you think well this isn't even I need to get even well the other side doesn't think that it's even so they're going to escalate and so all that happens is Vengeance just leads to destruction and that's what we see happening over and over in his life here's a couple life lessons from this season of Samson's life number one people get used to oppressive government he is trying to deliver God's people and God's people 3,000 men show up and they're like what are you doing don't you understand quote

the Philistines rule over us what they're saying is we're fine with that you can get so used to a Godless oppressive government that you just tolerate it and then suddenly you're defending it I know this couldn't happen today this is an old book and it talks about things from the ancient past has no relevance to our own day right and I'll be honest with you guys the Philistines are still running the show they're still running the show and what God's people here did they just surrendered to us they just said the Philistines are in charge and we've just learned to live with that in addition number two some cultures are just thoroughly corrupt there's something in our day called multiculturalism and diversity equity and inclusion and what it says is this that cultures are basically sacred and that all cultures are equally good so we should honor and we should support and we should then uh embrace all the different cultures well and yeah what's always interesting is you're like hey I got a Bible can we do that they're like no no no we're not that tolerant uh we don't embrace that kind of diversity uh what we see here is Philistine culture is corrupt and evil let me let me just verbal process it with you since we got nothing else to do but give me some examples of where so how how do we see right in this section that that Philistine culture is not something that God's people should be learning about or getting a minor in you know I'm taking Philistine studies yeah it's good yeah it's really good praise praise de gone so um you're going to meet him in chapter 16 so what are some things in Philistine culture that from God's perspective you're like that's just corrupt and evil gambling well yeah they're gambling drinking with Samson so they're Bad Dudes what about uh what about the men in the town saying uh back in chapter uh 14 if we don't figure out the riddle that you have we're going to take your wife and her dad and we're going to burn them to death in their house that is a sick culture okay sick culture and then what does the dad do when Samson shows up he's a Philistine dad you remember it he's like oh I sold off sorry I sold I married off uh your previous wife but that's okay I have another daughter you can marry her instead she's prettier right I mean okay let me start with the ladies how many of you have a problem with this man oh it's unanimous look at that it's the first time there's ever been a unanimous vote in the history of any church that's amazing I won't even ask the men to vote cuz I don't want to ruin our streak but anyways I've got two daughters could you even imagine like oh here's my prettier daughter what what that you thinking that you have a broken Soul saying that you're going to have a broken skull okay that's the way this is going to work I'm wrapping now um didn't know I had it in me it's a new it's a new spiritual gift little little hip hop okay um and so within this too I mean how many of you at this point would not marry your daughter off to Samson he's good at drinking gambling and murdering honey he's the one and he he he he abandoned your sister it's okay Christmas won't be odd so the whole Philistine culture it's just corrupt to its core and you can see it why where how they how they treat women it's really disgusting I mean you hear it all the time you know people are like oh Christianity it it it denigrates women no wherever Christianity goes it it it liberates women says that women are made the image and likeness of God the women in the Bible tend to be some of the godliest like we saw with Deborah back in judges and Jesus' own mother Mary and it's women who were first at the empty tomb of Jesus and and honestly um wherever the Bible is taught men are supposed to protect and love and serve and bless women and children yeah that's that's the way it's supposed to go and so wherever the Bible isn't taught you see men using their power to Doon to to dominate and to devastate women and children and that's what's Happening Here the dad's like hey you're a crazy you know drinking gambling murderer um here's my little girl and I'll tell you a man of God would be willing to die like if you want my daughter you got to get over my Corps but I will get In Harm's Way because that's what God made men to be and to do to get between danger and harm and women and children and he's

failing in his duty in addition a couple of things I want to point out as well uh number one uh I told you that uh people get used to oppressive government number two some cultures are corrupt number three nobody made the Bible up how many of you if you're like hey man let's make up a crazy religion I think we're going to need a book okay all right somebody get a pen I got a I got a few thoughts about Jackal and foxes you sure that needs to go in there oh it does like this like if they don't believe the resurrection they're going to believe this you know so this is going to get them for sure how many of you if you were going to make up fictitious stories you'd leave this one out and be like I don't know about that 300 Jackal and the Torches I don't that seems a little farfetched there are things in the Bible that nobody would make up cuz nobody would even think of it like dudes are like uh Jackal you like Jackal I like torches I got I got an idea we can put the Torches between the Jackal oh Shazam let's call it the Old Testament all right so I mean it's just nobody made this up I'm tired does this makeing sense okay I get a little loopy uh okay so now we'll make a pivot toward a serious point now that we're having halfway through the sermon uh seems time and so what we're seeing here is that Vengeance escalates until everybody loses that's it Vengeance say and what he says is this he I think he probably says it like this as they did to me I did to them I think he says it like that you know probably with a can of you know beer but he he's all he's saying is you hit me I hit you you hit me I hit you and they're at War for more than 20 years him and the Philistines and all it does is escalate because once you're attacked you feel like it's unfair so you need to escalate and then they feel like that was unfair so they escalate the result is complete Devastation and loss so here's what I want to talk to you about don't do Vengeance don't do it if you do Vengeance you don't just dig a grave for your enemy you also dig a grave for yourself and what happens in Vengeance you get to a point of a lose lose scenario that's where Samson is headed if you come back we'll deal with chapter 16 and it's a lose lose he commits suicide to kill his enemies everybody dies and and so ultimately you know something is of the Lord when it's a win-win everybody's blessed you know it's of the sinful flesh when it's a win lose somebody wins somebody loses somebody gives somebody takes you know it's not of the lord it's of the enemy of the Lord when it's a lose lose this is a situation where nobody wins everybody loses the next chapter is going to be no one winning and everyone losing let me just tell you what the Bible says about vengeance and let me say this Vengeance makes great movies and bad lives how many of you you like Vengeance movies Batman that was quick was very quick that's like a trauma trigger Batman was quick okay very quick right some of you accepted Liam Nome in your heart you're like oh another stacking body movie thank you Lord Jesus I'll read the Old Testament on my way okay so what happens is that we like Vengeance movies but we don't like Vengeance lives okay and so the Lord warns us repeatedly about vengeance what happens is we feel offended we don't forgive that's bitterness hurt grief you know carrying an offense maintaining a record of wrongs so then we respond you hurt me I hurt you that's Vengeance then they get bitter and then they respond with more Vengeance and in the end everyone dies let me just read a little scripture to you on this uh Proverbs 20:22 do not say I will repay evil wait for who the Lord and He will deliver you let me let me say this it's one thing to trust God with your sin it's a whole another thing to trust God with your enemy sin I just thought of that it went better than I was expecting but it's like God I trust you to deal with my sin he's like what about their sin you're like no need I got it no no you got to trust the Lord with their sin and your sin okay and it takes Faith to trust the Lord with all sin how about the next verse uh Isaiah 35:4 say to those who have an anxious heart and anxiety comes when you've been hurt offended betrayed attacked or you're being threatened there's anxiety that comes we all know what this feels like there's anxiety he says say to the one with an anxious heart be strong fear not

just so you know the number one command in the whole Bible more than any other command is fear not behold your God will come with vengeance with the recompense of God he will come and save you what God says is if there's a need for vengeance I got this I will take care of them now here's what we don't like the patience of God sometimes are like God you said Vengeance and I've waited 13 seconds see sometimes God is patient because they come to repentance the the Lord reminds me in Romans it's the kindness of God that leads to repentance you know what would be better than God destroying them is maybe them apologizing to you that would heal it and sometimes we we want God's Vengeance on our time well God's Vengeance comes on his time and here's what I know about me I'm very glad that God was patient with me because I deserve Vengeance but instead he was patient and he saved me okay and so the Vengeance the the Wrath the justice went to Jesus on the cross the grace the mercy the Forgiveness came to me but I've been doing this job long enough when Grace and I first got married um I was a I'm a counter puncher by Nature I know that's shocking you know I got saved and we were in class and they're like today we're going to study about the pacifist I was like oh who are the pacifists they're those are the people if you punch them in the mouth they don't respond I was like oh those are not pacifists those are losers that's what I thought like I wish I could fight those people like this is easy you know one punch go home you know it's easy and I remember in class even in college uh I said well I don't agree with that they said well what are you I said I'm a pass the fist that's what I said in college I grew up fighting I grew up in combat I grew up in sports and boxing and and I grew up literally in a dangerous neighborhood and then I became a Christian and you read all the verses and God's like vengeance is mine not yours and honestly I really struggled with that my wife Grace would be like you need to trust the Lord I was like I trust the Lord to help me knock them out that's what I trust you know like me and the Lord I trust us and you know and then and then and then over the years what I found is sometimes when I'm angry I say things that I later regret is it just me okay this seems to be contagious okay um how many of you you get angry or upset or anxious and you do something and later you regret it you're like and how many of how many of us sometimes you wait and you're like the Lord actually took care of it and what I love about it when the Lord takes care of it then I have a clear conscience like I didn't say or do anything the Lord took care of it in addition you can't get blamed for it they're like did you see what happened I was like I know you should take it up with him I was blessing my enemies and God was smoking them so give you one more verse uh we're having a good time tonight this is good uh Romans 12:17-21 repay who no you're like what about Sally or Tony no one for evil God says it's evil but give thought to what is Honorable in the sight of all right if you lose your temper you'll lose your character if possible it's not always possible but if possible so far as it depends on you do your part live peaceably with all beloved you are loved by God he's got you never avenge yourselves we've got whole movies called Avengers never AV yourselves but leave it to the wrath of God for it is written quotes the Old Testament vengeance is mine here's a promise I will repay says the Lord do not be overcome by evil but overcome evil with good okay I love you I'm your pastor I thank you for letting me teach the Bible and laughing at some of my jokes I appreciate that but let me ask you a serious question cu I love you um who are you bitter against who are you unforgiving of who are you still hurt by who when you hear their name or see their face or receive their call or text or they show up on your social media you get anxious you're bothered when someone is speaking about them you want to tell your side of the story if you hear that some something good happened to them you're frustrated by that their good day is your bad day their bad day is your good day okay we've all got these people and so what do we do with them well what he says is we've got to give them to the Lord

and what we can think is they're getting away with everything no no no no no we're giving them to the Lord and He will deal with everything here's what I want you to know the Holy Spirit wants you to just ask him who do you need to start ignoring he like you know what I will not engage CU if I engage I will enrage that leads to the escalating cycle of Vengeance who do you just need to block let me say this is good for the soul there're just some people on social media like you're gone I'm not going to deal with you anymore okay there's other people on your phone like I'm going to block you I block somebody many like I have a I have a parade of block people they could form a small nation um and somebody came to recently they're like uh yeah you made a mistake he blocked me I was like no I prayed about it and uh and I feel delivered you know I just do there are certain people you're like I love you I'm not going to attack you I forgive you and I bless you but I'm done with you yeah there's a boundary for you you can't show up at my house you can't call text or email you can't just show up on my social media feed we are not going to continue together because if we do all we do is just cause Vengeance and escalation so I am exiting and God can deal with you now um what happens with this I was thinking about as I was praying for you Samson's whole life is just Vengeance like every every chapter you're like so it says repeated I'll give you an example verbal process so chapter 14 it says this over and over he went down says again then he went down it says again he went down it says again he went down his whole life down that's where bitterness and Vengeance go CU hell is the place where the only culture is bitterness and Vengeance if you choose bitterness and Vengeance you're literally walking down the stairs to hell that's what your life looks and feels like if you choose forgiven and trusting God's Wrath you're literally going up cuz heaven is the culture where all the forgiven people are and all the forgiving people are and so Samson's life is just this case study in Vengeance and again let me let me say this so in Chapter 13 preceding his birth Jesus showed up we looked at this Jesus showed up said you're Barren but now you're blessed you're going to have a baby boy yay he's going to have the Holy Spirit he's going to have a calling on his life he's going to have a warrior Spirit he's going to be used to the Lord yay by the end of his life chapter 16 seduced by Delilah eyes gouged out held as a prisoner of war in the temple of decon pushing the pillars of the temple so that the roof collapses killing him and murdering thousands of his enemies see I'm guessing Samson never once in his Vengeance cycle thought at the end I hope I'm betrayed by a woman a prisoner of war have my eyes gouged out and commit suicide but here's what happens and this is the image I got when I was praying for you when we choose bitterness and Vengeance we get very short-sided you know what shortsightedness is you can't see the long range view all you see is the immediate if you're bitter or vengeful toward anyone literally you're putting them right here you can't see God you're just focused on them in addition you can't see the future you only see the present and you're not looking at the consequence instead you're just obsessed with the Vengeance by forgiving them you're getting rid of your nearsightedness you're able to look up and see God and say I trust you to deal with them and you're able to make decisions in light of your future because you're able to be long-sighted and not shortsighted uh let me give give you an example of this maybe an example will help um I don't shout out their names but have you ever met two people that they just decided that they hated each other and they were going to destroy each other even if it destroyed themselves that's Samson of the Philistines I told this story to the to the men a little while ago I'll share it with you so uh my wife Grace and I previously lived out of state we bought a house they built a really nice like custom special house across the street and Grace was like oh I love that house so I'm thinking someday I got to buy that house so I was talking to the neighbor nice guy I was like hey I know you just built the house just moved in if you ever sell this house my wife



really likes this house I really like my wife see if we put a deal together put my wife in that house that's my Endzone and he said okay well if I ever decide to sell it I'll come to you first before I go to market I said that'd be great so it was just a few months later he came to me he's like uh you still interested in our house I like yeah you just built it and moved in he's like yeah we're getting a divorce I hate my wife we're selling the house I was like well how much do you want he's like I don't know we haven't got an appraisal yet he's like how much can you afford I was like I don't know I haven't you know run the numbers I said well let me see what my house is worth and go talk to a mortgage broker and figure out what I might qualify for and I said I'll come and bring you my best offer I'm not going to try and lowball you um and he said okay I'll go do some research and I'll say something here too I did tell him I said I do Pastor a church why don't you guys come you know I'd love to talk to you about Jesus we can get you some counseling he's like no I hate her she hates me we're not going to your church I was like okay I tried so and I kept asking him so I got a number I came back and I went to him and I was like all right sir here's the number that I can afford he's like yeah that's not the number that the house is worth it's worth more than that I said well sorry that's all I can afford and uh he looked at me you got a smirk he's like I'll sign it that'll really K my wife off he said uh that's kind of a lowball offer he said I'm going to send it to her I said no I don't want to do that he's like no send me the send me the offer I'll sign it just to get her I was like okay this is bitterness and Equity I'm very conflicted very conflicted very conflicted so um so so he sent her the the the number she countered with a lower number now I'm in a reverse bidding war the number keeps going down all right so he gets he gets it he calls me over he's like can you believe that she lowered the number she's trying to stick it to me he's like there's no way I'm going to let her do he's like I'm signing it I was like what I was said wait let me just I said sir free pastoral counseling right now in the yard I was like okay so you have this much money you got an attorney she got an attorney you are burning piles of money most of your wealth is in the house and you are willing to lose a considerable amount of money so that she also loses a considerable amount of money he's like yeah I hate her and if she loses money I'm fine if I lose money as long as she loses money so we bought the house so and we pray for them every day but I don't know if I should have told that story that way um but but that isn't that not a classic case study in Vengeance you're like I going to hurt you and if it hurts me that's okay as long as I hurt you that's what Vengeance does that's Samson and the Philistines all right you guys ready for the rest of the story all right here we go judges 15 14-20 wait a minute too I should take a vote so the house story um keep it for future Services don't keep it put it on the internet delete all the comments what should we do with that story okay you're terrible people um judges 15 14- 20 when he came to Lehi uh the Philistines came shouting to meet him right so now there's the fight then the spirit of the Lord he wasn't constantly filled and empowered with the Holy Spirit and sealed like we are in the New Covenant Grace was asking me about this today but he had temporary empowerments of the spirit where he was given great power of the 12 judges that ruled over the course of 300 years in the Book of Judges the Holy Spirit empowers him more than any other the spirit of the Lord rushed upon him so now he's going to get really strong and the ropes that were on his arms became as flax that had caught fire and his bonds melted off his hands he's been he's been held as a p now he's just breaking free and he just happened to find this guy doesn't have a lot of Planning by the way just h a fresh Jawbone of a donkey and if you read it in the King James it's awesome aome um it's what your kids want to name their Punk B anyways and put out his hand and took it so he just picks up a Jawbone of a donkey oh and the Jawbone of a donkey is fresh the reason that's important then the Jawbone is a little stronger and it still has the teeth in it one

guy said yep okay that dude goes hunting okay and with it he struck how many men you know you're a tough guy when you're like what' you do today I slaughtered a thousand men was something I found on the ground you're like wow and Samson said with the Jawbone of a donkey Heap upon heaps with the Jawbone of a donkey I have struck down a thousand men as soon as he had finished speaking he threw away the Jawbone out of his hand I don't know about you I would have mounted that above my mantle I would have told my great grandkids let me tell you about jaw bone day son and that place was called Rath jabon Hill uh the story continues uh and he was very thirsty and he called upon the Lord first time that we hear him pray in his whole life and said this is a terrible prayer you've granted this great salvation by the hand of your servant and shall I now die of thirst and fall into the hands of the uncircumcised like what a I'm thirsty and they're uncircumcised that's the worst beginning of a prayer life in the history of the world and God split open the hollow place that is at Lehi and water came from it and when he drank his Spirit returned and he revived therefore the name of it was called en haakor it is at Lehi collar Springs is what it means to this day and he judged Israel in the days of the Philistines for 20 years so here's the story he shows up he has so much power he can kill a thousand men with the Jawbone of a donkey probably 9 to 12 Ines long teeth in it this guy is just an absolute wrecking ball he is an Unstoppable force in addition he is violating the Nazarite vow back in Judges 13 Jesus came down told his mom and dad Nazarite vow you go to number six it's all in the study guide that includes don't touch a corpse what's he doing here touching the corpse of a donkey he's violating his Holiness vow this is the first time that we see him praying what do you think about his prayer not very great he treats God like a waitress and a diner hey my water's out you let me die here this is pretty rude uh in addition he only cares about physical things he never prays for wisdom or discernment or forgiveness or Joy the only thing he prays for is physical provision he's a man who is just driven by Pleasure and the physical he just wants sex and food and sleep and water he doesn't want anything of wisdom in the spirit and so a couple of things that we learn here looking at the story and we learn things about Samson and ourselves um number one a culture can deteriorate to the point but even there were even The Godly leaders are a disaster at this point in Israel's history the life of Samson goes from the nation being around 260 years years of age to around 400 years of age he rules for 20 years he's around 20 when he begins ruling so he begins his rule at roughly the age that we are currently at as a nation in America would you agree with me that if we continue on our current path morally and spiritually that in 50 years the holy people are going to look like Samson see we look at Samson we're like how could that guy be a believer he is a Believer imagine how bad everyone else was yeah and and let me just make an observation when a culture deteriorates you don't get a lot of good candidates for political office right how many of you looking at Samson you're like oh let's let's vote for him and then our kids can grow up and be like him you would never want your kids to grow up and be like Samson but here's the big idea he's the best option they got because things are so bad wow now I know that's not us but just imagine if it was that's a joke um in addition number two angry bitter vengeful people they die lonely and brutally uh if you're angry and vengeful you need to know that you are a very unpleasant person to be around and so what happens with Samson he's all alone even his own people betray him even his own people are like we're scared of him you can be a believer but so bitter and angry and vengeful that even your own spouse your own kids your own grandkids your own friends they're just like oh we love you uh but we can't be with you because we don't trust you you're a very unhealthy unwell dangerous person and so he dies a brutal lonely death let me explain something that we're learning here as well so most of the time when the the Bible is taught especially in the Old Testament particularly

the character studies like Samson either it is poorly taught or not entirely taught how many of you you've heard a little bit about Samson May some of you how many of you is were in it you're like I didn't hear this I didn't like next week is the prostitutes you're like oh I'm sure he ends well prostitute suicide that's how he ends you're like why why did I not know this this well because most Bible teaching is I don't want to be too critical and I say that right before I get super critical but but it's wrong and it's bad and it's poor and it's something called moralism and moralism is how non-christians and bad Christians study the Bible so when it comes to Samson it's a lot of moralism moralism is this wrong thinking there are good people and bad people so when you open the Bible find the good people and do what they did and then find the bad people and don't do what they do so they open the Bible and Samson is supposed to be a good guy he's in Hebrews 11 the list of Heroes of the faith okay so that would make who's the bad guys the Philistines so if you're a moralist you're like ah the the good guy does some bad things true like the good guy does a lot of bad things let's just review it it says we got nothing else to do name some of the bad things that the quote unquote good guy does Mur murder thousands of murders he's a serial killer okay okay he he drinks a lot he gambles a lot he bosses his parents around he marries a Philistine he abandons a Philistine he's terrible to foxes next week he's going to hire a prostitute and he's going to commit suicide how many of you like it's really hard to just say he's the good guy be like Samson so because are is it true that sometimes the Philistines they look just as bad as he does but he looks just as bad as them so this is the problem the problem is if you go to the Bible looking for good people and bad people you'll never understand understand the Bible cuz the Bible is not about good people and bad people it's about bad people and a good God so the hero of the story is never someone it's always one person Jesus Christ let me just verbal process for you the Bible is for us but it's not about us I've been teaching the Bible 30 some years and here's what I know it's for me but it's not about me the hero is God the problem is me the Bible begins in the beginning God so it's about him Jesus comes a verbal process with you Jesus says in John chapter 5 he's arguing with the religious guys who were doing moralism he says you think you understand the scriptures you diligently study them but you don't understand that they testify about me and you don't understand the Bible unless you love me so if you open the Bible and you don't get to Jesus you're a false teacher that's the whole point okay that's the whole point of the thing the whole point of the Bible is is I'm a sinner he's a savior I'm the bad guy he's the good guy I'm the Samson or I'm the Philistine and he's the God who saves me from myself that's Jesus okay Jesus teaches the Bible this way again just verbal process so at the end of Luke's gospel after he raises from the dead there are two occasions where it says that he opened the Old Testament and he showed them how everything was about him so the hero of Samson's life is not Samson it's Jesus who showed up in Judges chapter 13 it's Jesus who showed up and put a calling on his life it's Jesus who showed up and opened his mother's womb it's Jesus who sent the Holy Spirit repeatedly to anoint him from Heaven and the problem with moralistic Bible teaching it opens the story it's like well then um let's skip all the bad parts and let's just pull out the good parts and if you do that you miss Jesus and you don't help anyone Samson needs Jesus and Samson let me say this he ain't Jesus right he's not and so ultimately this is what we do as well this is what we do to ourselves and to our enemies so the truth is we all are made the image of likes of God and we have a conscience so we have some we have some good days we also are Fallen Sinners and Rebels so we have some bad days so we're all like Samson some days he's killing God's enemies and other times he's violating God's Commandments when we present ourselves we tend to what present our good days not our bad days not our bad days when we talk about our enemies we present their bad days we don't talk about any of their good good days

sometimes the quote unquote good guys do some bad things sometimes the quote unquote bad guys do some good things in the days of Jesus there was a whole group called The Samaritans they were like the Philistines they were the bad guys but Jesus tells a story about one of them who was the blank Samaritan the Good Samaritan the point is this if all we talk about is our good days we're not being honest and if all we talk about is their bad days we're not being honest here's what I love about the Bible I love everything about the Bible but one of the things I love most about the Bible it's honest about all the days they're like here's Samson's bad days and his good days and it's going to be honest that that he's a broken flawed troubled man and he needs to be forgiven and he needs to be redeemed and he needs to be saved and he's such a broken mess that really what Samson needs he needs to go into the ground and then resurrect with Jesus and start over because God isn't about making people better he's about making them new and a better version of Samson ain't going to be enough and so the hero of the whole story is not Samson it's Jesus and I love the fact that the Bible is honest and it is in fact the most honest book that's ever written so let me just uh let me hit a few things and then we'll we'll spend some time in worship so so here's what we learn about God so we read the story and as we read the story Jesus showed up in Chapter 13 and he's over the story and ultimately when we read the story we've got two options I'm either Samson or the Philistines right I'm either Samson or the Philistines I'm either the person that is breaking God's Commandments and needs to turn from sin and trust in Jesus or I'm the believer that knows better but is in the process of self-destruction and I need to repent before I destroy myself in addition one of the things we learn about God from this section of the story is that God Saves people purely by Grace amen every other religion says that you basically either save yourself or participate in your salvation through something called your Works your good deeds outweigh your bad Deeds you reincarnate pay off your karmic debt either you pay God back or you and God work off that debt together Samson is not a man who could stand before God and be like you need to let me in look at my life he's saved by the grace of God he's not saved by The Works of Samson you and I are saved by the grace of God through our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ not by our works so that none of us can boast okay this is this is how it works so what we don't need to do is we don't need to deny the days that we're like Samson of the Philistines we need to repent of the days we're like Samson and the Philistines and then number three one other lesson about God God continually pursues and delivers those who are in the process of causing their own self-destruction see here's what I know about the Lord Jesus Christ who showed up in Judges 13 he saves from sin death hell the wrath of God and I always like to say this and he saves me from me how many of you you were trying to wreck yourself and Jesus was trying to redeem you you kept going down and he kept pulling you up you kept making a mess and he kept cleaning up your mess that's the story of Samson let me say that's the story of every believer uh let me let me close with one thought that I had as I was praying for you this week so Samson's biggest problem was bitterness and Vengeance his biggest problem was bitterness and Vengeance he hated them they hated him he would war with them they would war with him that's his life so what's the solution it's worship you have two choices you can devote your life to Vengeance against them or worship up to him but you can't have both you can't have worship of him and Vengeance toward them what's really interesting Samson here let me let me just sort of think out loud with so Samson just won a battle a big battle did he stop and worship God no we've been in judges for some months was there another battle earlier in the book where there was a great Victory from the anointing power of the Holy Spirit and then they stopped and they worshiped and they they invited all of God's people to worship and they wrote a special song Just To Worship Deborah if you go back to Judges chapter 5 there's a whole

chapter I think it's 31 verses Deborah is the strategist Barack is her leader and implementor and Soldier God gives them a victory they're like shut everything down everybody stop right now everybody come out Holiday close the schools shut down the business God showed up God did something we're going to stop right now we're going to worship him we're going to thank him we're going to meet with him we're going to rejoice in him we want everyone to learn how to worship right now here's what Samson does nothing what's interesting coming up in chapter 16 there is a season before his death where Samson is captured by his enemies they bring him to the Temple of deon you learn about this it's their demonic counterfeit false god and they think that their demonic counterfeit false God has delivered the servant of the one true God into their hands so what do they do they worship their demon god I'll read it to you now the Lords of the Philistines gathered to offer a great sacrifice that's worship to Deon not Jesus Deon their God demonic counterfeit false god and to Rejoice they had a band they sang songs people were clapping it was a party and they said what quot our God the pagans are more excited about their God than Samson is excited about Jesus Christ they take time to worship a demon and he doesn't take time to worship His Creator Our God has given our enemy into our hand and when the people saw him they they praised their God when he defeated them he didn't praise His God when they capture him they praise their God for they said our God they give credit to a demon God has given our enemy into our hands the ravager of our country who has killed many of us eight times in that chapter they talk about our God here's what would have helped Samson if he would have just stopped and worshiped stop going out in Vengeance start going up in worship our English word for worship comes from an old English word worship and it means ascribing majesty and credit and glory to the one who is worthy so worship is literally worshiping Jesus who is worthy couple of things are we're going to worship now number one you can't be a healthy person without worship Samson is a man who has the Holy Spirit and a calling on his life and technically a Ministry job is a politician but he's not healthy cuz he doesn't worship Christians who just come into church hear the sermon and leave those are not healthy people people who think it's all about information and not transformation those are not healthy people they may be saved but they are not well and when we worship number two a place of worship becomes a thin place I use this language all the time the old Kelts used to talk about this a thin place is where Heaven and Earth are a little closer together right now in heaven Jesus Jesus Christ is alive and well he's died for our sins he's risen he's ascended right now surrounding Jesus are Divine beings and departed Saints they're in the Unseen realm and they're worshiping him and guess what happens when we worship Him We join them all of a sudden our Praises go up to him and his Spirit comes down to us and all of a sudden we know that we're forgiven and we can forgive and we know that the wrath of God was poured out on the cross of Jesus and that allows us to not pour out wrath on our enemies but to trust Jesus to deal with them it also allows us to get people out of the purview of our shortsighted vision so we could see our future and we could see our savior and so here's what I want you to do we're going to spend some time in worship number one who do you need to forgive and just release to the Lord and number two I want you to begin right now in our time of worship or if you're joining us online in your time of worship just start by thanking God Samson gets anointed to the Holy Spirit and he never says thank you Samson gets to defeat enemies of God's people and he never says thank you God even brings water supernaturally to refresh him he never says thank you this is a time for all of us just to stop and to meet with God and to say I forgive them and I worship you and to start with what I told my kids at the dining room table over and over when they were little isz thankful prayers as we're worshiping just not to draw attention but to just just to make your heart and requests

known to God just let them know what you're thankful for and if you're here with someone testify to them and let them know what you're thankful for and why you appreciate Jesus Christ is our God if you need to kneel kneel you want to raise your hands raise your hands you want to take communion take communion you want to come to the front and just spend some time face down you're welcome to I love you with all my heart and I I really believe that this could be a moment of Deliverance for all of us it could be a moment where we just stop responding to them and we start responding to him Lord Jesus we thank you that you are the hero of scripture you're the hero of the story of Samson and you are the hero of the story of Our Lives Lord Jesus I thank you that you are the Savior and deliverer Sam Samson was not the Savior and deliverer that we needed Jesus we thank you that you are our judge and you're a greater judge than Samson we thank you that our sins were judged on the cross and we thank you that now we can stop and we can worship you and Jesus I pray as we do we would forgive our enemies and we would encounter your presence and we would get healthy and unburdened and well so that we could look up to see you and we could look into our future with hope and joy in Jesus' name amen please stand and join us and spend some time in worship