

# Samson and the Foxes

(Judges 15)

Yearly Theme: “Love Is...”

Series Title: *Kind of a “BIG” Deal*

July 14<sup>th</sup>, 2019

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## Something to think about:

As we continue today, in our series on the story of Samson in the book of Judges, we see this scenario played out continually in the Biblical narrative. Samson is often too busy concerning himself with himself that he doesn't recognize, or call on, God unless he wants something from him. Let's take a look...

Turn in your Bibles to: *Judges 15:1-20*

**Key Point: “Pride leads to destruction.”**

There are two ways that pride is evidenced in destruction:

- **The destructive nature of pride can come in the form of rage.**

*Judges 15:3-6 (NLT),<sup>3</sup> Samson said, “This time I cannot be blamed for everything I am going to do to you Philistines.”<sup>4</sup> 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.<sup>5</sup> 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.*

<sup>6</sup> “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.

Contrasted with...

*Romans 12:17-21 (NLT),<sup>17</sup> Never pay back evil with more evil. Do things in such a way that everyone can see you are honorable.<sup>18</sup> Do all that you can to live in peace with everyone. 19 Dear friends, never take revenge. Leave that to the righteous anger of God. For the Scriptures say, “I will take revenge; I will pay them back,” says the LORD.<sup>20</sup> Instead, “If your enemies*

*are hungry, feed them. If they are thirsty, give them something to drink. In doing this, you will heap burning coals of shame on their heads.”<sup>21</sup> Don’t let evil conquer you, but conquer evil by doing good.*

What else can we learn from this passage? Pride that leads to destruction, and that is sometimes masked in rage, can also lead to...

- **The destructive nature of pride always leads to death death.**

*Judges 15:15-17 (NLT),<sup>15</sup> Then he found the jawbone of a recently killed donkey. He picked it up and killed 1,000 Philistines with it.<sup>16</sup> Then 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!”<sup>17</sup> When he finished his boasting, he threw away the jawbone; and the place was named Jawbone Hill.*

Contrasted with...

*Jeremiah 9:23-24 (NLT),<sup>23</sup> This is what the LORD says: “Don’t let the wise boast in their wisdom, or the powerful boast in their power, or the rich boast in their riches. 24 But those who wish to boast should boast in this alone: that they truly know me and understand that I am the LORD who demonstrates unfailing love and who brings justice and righteousness to the earth, and that I delight in these things. I, the LORD, have spoken!”*

## Something to take home:

When we measure ourselves by ourselves the measure of ourselves becomes a distorted reality of the truth. Samson’s reality was based on his own estimation of himself, and because of this He left a wake of destruction wherever he went. Samson’s pride and boasting blinded Him to the realities of God’s hand on his life. Samson’s pride led to many destructive tendencies in uncontrolled behavior and anger. Samson’s pride masked itself in rage, and impulsivity. Samson’s pride caused him to act first and then expect God to come through for him.

Have you allowed pride to hold sway over you? Have you noticed the destructive nature of pride in others? The only way to overcome pride is through humility, and humility only comes through surrender, and surrender only comes through submission to Christ.

**Key Point: “Pride leads to destruction.”**



# Samson and the Foxes

(Judges 15:1-20)

Series Title: *Kind of a "BIG" Deal*

## KICK STARTERS:

- ⇒ How would you define the word "rage?"
- ⇒ How can pride and selfishness lead to rage?

**SCRIPTURE:** (Before studying this material, consider listening to the corresponding message online at: <http://www.northmaincog.org/media/sermon-media>)

Judges 15:1-20 (NLT)

<sup>1</sup> Later on, during the wheat harvest, Samson took a young goat as a present to his wife. He said, "I'm going into my wife's room to sleep with her," but her father wouldn't let him in.

<sup>2</sup> "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."

<sup>3</sup> Samson said, "This time I cannot be blamed for everything I am going to do to you Philistines."<sup>4</sup> 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.<sup>5</sup> 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.

<sup>6</sup> "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.

<sup>7</sup> "Because you did this," Samson vowed, "I won't rest until I take my revenge on you!"<sup>8</sup> So 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.

<sup>9</sup> The Philistines retaliated by setting up camp in Judah and spreading out near the town of Lehi.<sup>10</sup> The 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."

<sup>11</sup> 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?"

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

<sup>12</sup> 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."

<sup>13</sup> "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.

<sup>14</sup> As 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.<sup>15</sup> Then he found the jawbone of a recently killed donkey. He picked it up and killed 1,000 Philistines with it.<sup>16</sup> Then 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!"

<sup>17</sup> When he finished his boasting, he threw away the jawbone; and the place was named Jawbone Hill.

<sup>18</sup> Samson was now very thirsty, and he cried out to the LORD, "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?"<sup>19</sup> So 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.

<sup>20</sup> Samson judged Israel for twenty years during the period when the Philistines dominated the land.

## GROUP DISCUSSION:

1. Give a brief synopsis of what is going on in the text for today's study...  
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2. Was Samson justified in his actions after realizing that his wife had been given away to his best man (vv. 1-5)? Explain...  
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3. How do the Philistines respond to Samson burning their crops of grain (v. 6). Were the Philistines justified in their actions against Samson? Explain...  
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4. How does rage and impulsiveness lead to destruction? How could these situations have turned out differently, and for the better?  
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\_\_\_\_\_
5. After taking matters into his own hands, and killing many of the Philistines who burned his wife and father-in-law alive, where does he go (v. 8)? What do the Philistines do in response (v. 9-10)? What do the men of Judah do in response to the Philistines attacks against them (vv. 11-13)?  
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\_\_\_\_\_
6. After being handed over to the Philistines, what happens to Samson (v. 14)? How does Samson subdue the Philistines (v. 15)? How does Samson boast after his victory over the Philistines (vv. 16-17)?  
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7. After taking credit for the great victory over the Philistines, Samson complains to God about being thirsty (vv. 18-20). Why do you suppose Samson only gives credit to God when he needs something from Him? How does this happen in everyday life today?  
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8. Read these two passages and compare them to Samson's behavior in Judges 15: *Romans 12:17-21* and *Jeremiah 9:23-24*...  
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## SELF-EVALUATION/APPLICATION:

- ⇒ **WHEN WE MEASURE OURSELVES** by ourselves the measure of ourselves becomes a distorted reality of the truth. Samson's reality was based on his own estimation of himself, and because of this He left a wake of destruction wherever he went. Samson's pride and boasting blinded Him to the realities of God's hand on his life. Samson's pride led to many destructive tendencies in uncontrolled behavior and anger. Samson's pride masked itself in rage, and impulsivity. Samson's pride caused him to act first and then expect God to come through for him.
- ⇒ Have you allowed pride to hold sway over you? Have you noticed the destructive nature of pride in others? The only way to overcome pride is through humility, and humility only comes through surrender, and surrender only comes through submission to Christ.
- ⇒ **MEMORY VERSES:** *Judges 15:19; Jeremiah 9:24; Romans 12:21.*