

JUDGES CHAPTER 16

JUDGES FEATURED IN THIS CHAPTER

OTHNIEL

ABIMELECH

ELON

EHUD

TOLA

ABDON

SHAMGAR

JAIR

SAMSON

DEBORAH

JEPHTHAH

ELI

GIDEON

IBZAN

SAMUEL

WHEN

- Most scholars place the period of the Judges between 1450 B.C. and 1000 B.C.
- Most scholars place Samson's life between 1175 and 1075 B.C.

WHERE

- The Philistines tried to ambush Samson at Gaza, but he escaped with the gates of the city and went to Hebron.
- Delilah lived in the Valley of Sorek which ran next to the city of Timnah.
- Samson was imprisoned in Gaza.



CHARACTERS

- **Samson** – The 13th judge of Israel. He was a Nazarite from birth (Num 6). The Spirit of God empowered him with supernatural strength.
- **Delilah** – Samson's lover who lived in the Valley of Sorek.
- **The Philistines** – God allowed the Philistines to oppress Israel for 40 years when the Israelites broke their covenant with the Lord.

OUTLINE

- SAMSON ESCAPES WITH THE GATES OF GAZA (16:1-3):
 - + Samson went into a prostitute's house in Gaza and spent the night.
 - + When the Philistines found out, they set an ambush to kill him in the morning.
 - + Samson got up at midnight, tore the gates of the city off the walls, left town, and carried the gates about 37 miles (60km) and put them on top of a hill close to Hebron.
- SAMSON AND DELILAH (16:4-22):
 - + Samson fell in love with a woman named Delilah.
 - + The Philistine lords told Delilah they would each give her 1,100 pieces of silver if she could figure out the secret of Samson's great strength.
 - + Delilah asked Samson to tell her how he could be bound. He lied to her and told her if he was bound with 7 fresh bowstrings, he would lose his strength and be like a normal man.
 - + The Philistines brought Delilah the bowstrings and set an ambush for Samson.
 - + Delilah tied Samson with the bowstrings and cried out, "The Philistines are upon you, Samson!"
 - + Samson snapped his bindings with ease and the Philistines failed to catch him.
 - + The same thing happened two more times.
 - + The 2nd time, Samson told Delilah she needed to bind him with 2 new ropes. That turned out to be a lie.
 - + The 3rd time, Samson told Delilah she needed to braid the 7 locks of his head into a web. That was also a lie.
 - + By the 4th time, Samson was so tired of Delilah, he told her the truth (dumb).
 - + He told her he would lose his strength if his head was shaved. This was true because Samson's hair was part of his vow to God as a Nazarite (Num 6).
 - + When Delilah realized he was telling the truth, she called the leaders of the Philistines to her, and they set another ambush.
 - + While he slept, Delilah had a man shave off Samson's hair.
 - + Samson awoke but his strength was gone.
 - + The Philistines captured him, gouged out his eyes, put him in shackles, and put him to work grinding grain in the prison.
 - + "But the hair of his head began to grow again after it had been shaved."
- THE VICTORY AND DEATH OF SAMSON (16:23-31):
 - + The Philistines gathered to offer sacrifices to their idol Dagon and to celebrate the capture of Samson.
 - + They requested Samson be brought to their celebration to mock him.
 - + Samson asked the young man who was leading him to show him the pillars that supported the building.
 - + When his hands were on the pillars, Samson prayed to God saying, "O Lord God, please remember me only this once, O God, that I may be avenged on the Philistines for my two eyes."
 - + Grasping the supporting pillars, Samson pulled them down with all his might.
 - + As the building collapsed it killed Samson, at least 3,000 people, and all the lords of the Philistines.
 - + Samson judged Israel 20 years.

APPLICATION

- Samson's life teaches us about God's grace towards imperfect people.
- Samson's name is found alongside that of Abraham, Joseph, and Moses in Hebrews 11, a chapter honoring people of great faith.
- Don't let Samson's life become a license for sin, instead let it teach you about the abundance of God's forbearance and kindness towards imperfect people.

OTHN
EHUD
SHAN
DEBO
GIDEC
ABIM
TOLA
JAIR
JEPHT
IBZAI
ELON
ABDC
SAMS
ELI
SAMU