

Old Testament Israel: Law, **Judges**, Kingdoms

Story of Samson

Next Week: Judges 17-21 Civil war, destruction of Benjamin

Scripture Judges 13-16

Judges 13 (1-6, 17-20)	Samson's parents and the Angel of the Lord
Judges 14:1-11	Samson's betrothal, the lion
Judges 14:12-20	Samson settles his bet, loses the girl
Judge 15:1-8	Burning foxes and slaughtering Philistines
Judges 15:9-20	Samson vs 1,000, reigns 20 years
Judges 16:1-3	Samson's night in enemy territory
Judges 16:4-22	Delilah's betrayal
Judges 16:23-31	Samson's end, vs 3,000

Discussion:

Note the evidences of the "angel of the Lord" being God, especially receiving sacrifice.

Note that the language in chapter 15 does not imply that Samson did all the work with the foxes (or jackals) unaided – his 30 companions and the high wager for a riddle are two clues that he was wealthy to some degree.

Note that the jawbone would have been a reasonably sized and shaped one-handed club, which would also have some tendency to cut – less than an ax, but more than a club.

Discuss the prohibitions of the Nazirite vow – dead animals, strong drink, cutting hair. Samson's predicted weakness makes sense in consideration of his guilt of violation of the first two oaths – his answer to Delilah makes sense.

Open Question:

Why do you think that Samson was different than the other judges, having supernatural strength and slaying enemies without armies or direct actions by God?