

LESSONS THIS QUARTER

- 1) 04 Dec 2016 ..... Joshua 1:1-18
- 2) 11 Dec ..... Joshua 2:1 – 6:27
- 3) 18 Dec ..... Joshua 7:2 – 12:24
- 4) 25 Dec ..... Christmas Message Luke 1:26-38
- 5) 01 Jan 2017 ..... Joshua 13:1 – 22:34
- 6) 08 Jan ..... Joshua 23:1 – 24:33
- 7) 15 Jan ..... Sanctity of Life Prov 24:10-12; Mark 10:46-49
- 8) 22 Jan ..... Judges 1:1 – 5:31
- 9) 29 Jan ..... Judges 6:1 – 12:15
- 10) 05 Feb ..... **Judges 13:1 – 16:31**
- 11) 12 Feb ..... Judges 17:1 – 21:25
- 12) 19 Feb ..... Ruth 1:1 – 2:23
- 13) 26 Feb ..... Ruth 3:1 – 4:22

INTRODUCTION

- Samson – the Judge who made decisions based on his emotions
  - ♦ How many times have we heard from others that we need to check our minds at the door and worship God with our feelings?
  - ♦ The Israelites got themselves into big trouble when they did that
  - ♦ The God of the Bible commands us to be sober-minded. It's not that we check our emotions at the door before we worship God, but our emotions do not take the lead
  - ♦ We worship God in spirit (righteousness) and in truth
  - ♦ Samson's decisions were often based on satisfying his sexual wants, his anger, or his desire for vengeance. Few of his decisions were based on doing the right thing, the right way, at the right time, for the right reason

| Passage          | Comments  |
|------------------|---|
|                  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• vv14-15. "The Spirit of the Lord came upon him mightily" when it was time to do the Lord's work – and he killed 1000 with a donkey's jawbone</li> <li>• v18. Then Samson suffered a near death experience – but God still delivered</li> <li>• <b>Principle.</b> A Valley of Despair often follows a great spiritual victory – so be ready for it</li> </ul>   |
| 16:1-31          | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• v1. <b>6th Emotional Decision</b> – Sexual Desires Again</li> <li>• v4. <b>7th Emotional Decision</b> – Sexual Desires Rule</li> <li>• vv16-17. <b>8th Emotional Decision</b> – Weariness led to his downfall. Be not weary in well doing.....Gal 6:9</li> <li>• v20. The Lord had left him. Samson did not take his God-given gift of strength seriously – he used it for his own gain, and not for God's</li> <li>• vv26-30. <b>9th Emotional Decision</b> - Based on Vengeance again, &amp; it looks like God honored his decision to kill 3000 by giving him the strength to topple columns                     <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>♦ Was this a good prayer or one where God sent leanness to his soul.....Ps 106:15</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Over the course of 20 years Samson single-handedly killed more than the Japs killed at Pearl Harbor or the terrorists killed on 9/11/2001</li> <li>• Tragically, Samson had a greater spiritual impact in his death than in his life. With all of his shortcomings, he still warranted a mention in Heb 11:32 as a man of faith</li> </ul> |
| Note on Emotions | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Emotions are a God-given ability to help us make sense of various conditions in our surrounding from pleasure to danger – should we fight, flight, or have fun</li> <li>• When we make decisions based purely on our emotions and not on God's Word we will often find ourselves doing what is right in our own eyes</li> </ul>  |

| Passage                                   | Comments  |
|---|---|
| Judges 13:1-25                            | <p><b>History Keeps Repeating Itself – Will They Ever Learn</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• For the 7<sup>th</sup> and final time in Judges, it is recorded "the Israelites...did what was evil in the Lord's sight"</li> <li>• Once again, God changed the course of history through the prayers of a childless woman</li> <li>• v25. The Lord began to direct, stir, or disquiet him                     <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>♦ He either had trouble living with the status quo, or he just could not sit still</li> </ul> </li> </ul>  |
| Once-Barren Women of the Bible            | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Sarah, 90-years old, delivered the covenant-child Isaac</li> <li>2. Rebekah delivered Jacob after Isaac prayed for her</li> <li>3. Rachel, once long-humiliated, brought forth Joseph</li> <li>4. Hannah, once tormented, prayed &amp; delivered Samuel</li> <li>5. Manoah's wife, after seeing AOTL, delivered Samson</li> </ol>   |
| Note on Nazarite: Vows see Numbers 6:6-21 | <p>One who made a temporary or a permanent vow of strict separation to God. Attributes included:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Abstinence from wine and strong drink</li> <li>2. Refraining from getting a hair cut</li> <li>3. Avoidance of contact with the dead</li> </ol> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Only 3 were Nazarites for life, and they were chosen by God – Samson, Samuel, and John the Baptist</li> </ul>  |
| 14:1-20                                   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• v1-4. <b>1st Emotional Decision</b> – Married for Looks. Samson's desire to have a Philistine wife went against God's direct command not to marry someone outside the faith, but this desire was permitted by God</li> <li>• v6. Samson's gift from God was superhuman strength</li> <li>• vv12-13. <b>2nd Emotional Decision</b> – Based on Greed</li> <li>• vv19-20. <b>3rd Emotional Decision</b> – Based on Anger. Samson's gamble didn't pay off, so he killed 30 men, stole their clothes, and left his wife behind</li> </ul> |
| 15:1-20                                   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• v3. "This time I shall be blameless" – Even Samson knew his previous actions of murder were not noble</li> <li>• v4. <b>4th Emotional Decision</b> – Based on Revenge. Burned the grain fields to punish his in-laws</li> <li>• v7. <b>5th Emotional Decision</b> – Again, Based on Revenge, he slew untold numbers</li> </ul>   |

CONCLUSION/APPLICATIONS

- Samson's faith may not have been much to brag about, but the little faith which was evident was enough for God to use to bring peace to the land of Israel for 20 years
- Recall what Jesus said that if our faith was as small as a grain of mustard seed we can accomplish much for God's Kingdom
- But do we do things God's way or do we do things our way?
- Be like Samson and trust God for the strength you need when you need it. BUT, don't be like Samson and use God's gifts selfishly
- **What great things do we plan to accomplish for God this year?**

NEXT WEEK: **Judges 17-21.** The tribe of Benjamin gets nearly wiped out for protecting "certain worthless fellows" who sought to rape a man, but who gave his wife to be raped instead, then cut her up in 12 pieces...all because "everyone did what was right in his own eyes"

