### Judges

## Chapter 16

1Sometime later, Samson went to Gaza, and there he [met up with] a prostitute and [had sex] with her.  
  
2Well, when this was reported to the Gazites (when they were told that Samson was there), they surrounded [the house] and quietly waited for him all night long inside the city gates... [Their plan] was to wait until he left at dawn, then [catch him] and kill him. 3However, Samson only slept there until midnight.  
  
For he got up and went out to the city gate, and [because it was locked], he pulled its two posts [out of the ground], lifted them (along with the locked gate) onto his shoulders, and he climbed to the top of the mountain in front of HebRon and left them there!  
  
  
4Well after this, he fell in love with a woman who lived by the river at Sorech, whose name was DeliLah. 5So the leaders of the Philistines came to her and said:  
  
 ‘Seduce him and find out where he gets all his great strength (what the real source of his strength is), so we can take him, bind him up, and humble him!  
  
 ‘[If you’ll do this], we’ll give you 1,100 silver coins.’  
  
6So DeliLah said to Samson:  
  
 ‘Please tell me where you get all your strength… Is there any way that you could be tied up, captured, and imprisoned?’  
  
7And Samson replied:  
  
 ‘Yes; if I were tied up with 7 ropes that have been soaked in water, I’d be as weak as any ordinary man.’  
  
8So the leaders of the Philistines brought her 7 wet ropes and she used them to tie him up, 9as their men hid in her bedroom.  
  
Then she shouted:  
  
 ‘The Philistines are coming, Samson!’  
  
And he broke the ropes as though they were burned threads; for no one realized how strong he really was.  
  
10And then DeliLah said to Samson:  
  
 ‘You’ve misled me and lied to me!  
  
 ‘Now, tell me how you can really be held.’  
  
11And he said to her:  
  
 ‘I would have to be tied up with new ropes, not with ropes that have been used for work… Then I’d be as weak as any other man.’  
  
12So DeliLah took new ropes and tied him up, as the men who were waiting in her bedroom [prepared themselves to] run out when she shouted:  
  
 ‘The Philistines are here Samson!’  
  
But he broke the [ropes] off his arms like threads.  
  
13And again, DeliLah said to Samson:  
  
 ‘Look, you’ve deceived me and lied to me!  
  
 ‘Now, please tell me how you can be held.’  
  
And he said to her:  
  
 ‘If the 7 locks on my head were woven together into a braid and then nailed to a wall, I’d be as weak as any other man.’  
  
14So after he fell asleep, DeliLah took the 7 locks on his head and braided them, then she nailed them to the wall and shouted:  
  
 ‘The Philistines are here, Samson!’  
  
But when he woke up, he just jerked the nail that held the braids out of the wall... 15And DeliLah asked Samson:  
  
 ‘How can you say that you love me when your heart doesn’t belong to me?  
  
 ‘This is the third time that you’ve deceived me! For you haven’t really told me where you get all your strength.’  
  
16Well, she kept nagging him and complaining all night long, until he was exasperated to the point of dying. 17So he told her all the things that were in his heart, saying:  
  
 ‘A razor must never touch my head; for I have been a person dedicated to God since [I came from] my mother’s belly... So if [my hair] should be shaved, my strength would leave me and I’d become as weak as any other man.’  
  
18DeliLah realized that what he said this time came from his heart, so she sent for the Philistine rulers and said:  
  
 ‘Come here one more time, for he’s told me what’s in his heart.’  
  
And as a result, all the Philistine rulers came there and laid the silver in her hands.  
  
19So then DeliLah allowed Samson to fall asleep on her knees, and she [motioned to] a man who cut the 7 locks off his head… And his strength left him.  
  
20As a result, when DeliLah shouted:  
  
 ‘The Philistines are here, Samson!’  
  
...he woke up thinking, ‘I’ll just shake myself free and leave, as I’ve done before.’ However, he didn’t know that Jehovah had left him.  
  
21So the Philistines captured him, put his eyes out, bound him in brass fetters, and took him down to Gaza, where they locked him in a dungeon.  
  
22However, during the time he was there, his hair started to grow back again… And soon it became as long as it had been before.  
  
  
23Well thereafter, the leaders of the Philistines assembled to offer a big sacrifice to their god Dagon and to celebrate what they claimed their god had done by giving their enemy Samson into their hands... 24So when the people saw him, they started singing praises to their god, saying:  
  
 ‘You’ve given our enemy who destroyed our land and who killed many of our people into our hands!’  
  
25And after everyone had been worked into a joyful frenzy, they said:  
  
 ‘Now, bring in Samson and have him [act the fool] before us.’  
  
So they sent for Samson, and he was brought from the dungeon to stand as a fool before them. They led him by the hand and stood him between the [temple] columns.  
  
26And Samson said to the young man who was holding his hand:  
  
 ‘Please let me feel the columns that support the building, so I can steady myself on them.’  
  
27Well, the building was filled with men and women, including all the leaders of the Philistines, and almost 3,000 more people had perched themselves on the roof (they’d all come to watch and to make fun of Samson).  
  
28Then Samson called to Jehovah and said:  
  
 ‘O Jehovah, my Lord,  
  
 ‘Please remember me and give me strength just one last time, O God, so that I can make the Philistines pay for the loss of my eyes.’  
  
29And at that, he braced his hands against the two columns that supported the building and pushed – one with his right hand and the other with his left.  
  
30And Samson said:  
  
 ‘Let my woman also die along with the Philistines!’  
  
So he bent over and shoved, and the temple collapsed, killing the leaders and all the people in it! And in his death, Samson killed more than he’d killed during the rest of his lifetime.  
  
31Well thereafter, his brothers and the rest of his father’s house went there and recovered his body, then they buried it between Well thereafter, his brothers and the rest of his father’s house went there and recovered his body, then they buried it between <span class="placename">SaraAhWell thereafter, his brothers and the rest of his father’s house went there and recovered his body, then they buried it between <span class="placename">SaraAh</span> and Well thereafter, his brothers and the rest of his father’s house went there and recovered his body, then they buried it between <span class="placename">SaraAh</span> and <span class="placename">EsthaOlWell thereafter, his brothers and the rest of his father’s house went there and recovered his body, then they buried it between <span class="placename">SaraAh</span> and <span class="placename">EsthaOl</span>, in the tomb of his father ManoEh.  
  
For he had Judged IsraEl for 20 years.