

The Spirit of the Lord Rushed Upon Him - Judges 15:1-20
Notes, Family Worship, Bible Reading

Notes from the Sermon

As we continue the Samson story this week, the question the Philistines keep asking, “Where does this guy get this power?” Often our images of Samson have him looking like Arnold Schwarzenegger or the Rock, this huge guy with an unbelievable physique and super-hero like ninja skills. But think about it, if this was actually the appearance of Samson the Philistines would not wonder about the source of his strength. While the Philistines do not understand why Samson keeps going into fits of rage that end up with burnt fields and carnage everywhere, the inspired storyteller helps us, the reader, to know the answer to this question exactly.

When he came to Lehi, the Philistines came shouting (a war cry) to meet him. Then the Spirit of the Lord rushed upon him...

Judges 15:14

This is not the first time we are told the Spirit of the LORD came on Samson. Go back and look at Judges 13:24-25, 14:6, and 14:19. Furthermore, the story begins with the promise the Angel of the LORD made to his parents that Samson would be a Nazerite from birth who would save Israel from the Philistines. God’s purpose at this point in the grand story of the Bible is to rescue His covenant people from the influence, idolatry, and power of the Philistines. Samson is the chosen vehicle for this task. So the Holy Spirit comes on Him multiple times giving Samson unbelievable power for his battle against the Philistines. What begin as fits of rage and vengeance turn into holy moments of deliverance for Israel. As we mentioned in the last sermon, though, this rescue looks considerably different from the previous stories in Judges. The Israelites have so deeply intermingled with the Philistines that they no longer look and act different at all. They have embraced the gods and moral ethics of the Philistines, they have accepted and embraced Philistine rule over them, and they are intermarrying giving their daughters to Philistine men and taking Philistine women as wives. As we read the story we are to realize that they are just one generation from being lost as a people, from Israel disappearing from the story as a distinct redeemed people for God. The rescue of Samson is not so much a military campaign as it is a point of aggression and agitation that forces the Philistines back to the position of despising and rejecting the Hebrews. For this purpose, Samson, his sexual brokenness, and his fits of rage induced revenge make him effective for the task.

Yet, while the answer to the Philistine question was about the source of Samson’s power, we might ask why and how the Holy Spirit would come upon a moral, self-absorbed mess of a man. The answer to this question is the one that helps us as we read this story in Judges. And the answer is actually glorious. First, we are introduced the work and might of the Holy Spirit who is the person of God giving the presence of God to the people of God for the purpose of God bringing the power of God. This is exactly who the Spirit is on Samson in the story. God Himself gives His fighting and rescuing presence through Samson for Israel. In doing so, the Spirit saves Israel from both the Philistines, and more importantly, from themselves through the empowering of Samson. At the same time Samson’s self-glorifying song show us that Samson does not truly understand what God is doing in and through him. So the trajectory of the story for Samson is downhill, as God empowers him while also giving him completely over to his sinful lust and self-absorption. This is such a beautiful reminder that gifts and a huge ministry are not the most important thing the Spirit does. Rather, the true evidence of the Spirit is the Fruit of the Spirit, the transformation of our character into the image of Jesus.

But this story also helps us get a glimpse into the third person of the Trinity, and th

work He does. In the Old Testament the Spirit comes on people in moments for specific tasks. He comes on Samson as a warrior, David as king, on Samuel as priest and prophet. Yet the experience of the Spirit is external, on specific individuals, and for the given mission. The Holy Spirit is the presence of God, so to dwell within a person would destroy them before the cross of Christ. But oh, after the cross has provided atonement that allows for complete cleansing of the Temple of our lives, after Pentecost believers are baptized (immersed) in the Spirit who takes up permanent residence inside the believer and for all of life. He is internal, life driven, and eternally dwelling in and with us. And this Spirit is the power for our life change and the missional task given by God. This same spirit that led Samson to kill thousands with the jawbone of a donkey and then drop the mic (or jawbone) dwells within you if you are a follower of Jesus. So why don't we experience this power? Maybe its because we don't really believe this reality and therefore don't cry out to see Him act in glory in power to change our lives and use us for His glory.

Bible Reading for the Week

Daily Bible Readings

Sun	Mon	Tues	Weds	Thurs	Fri	Sat
Leviticus 1	Leviticus 2	Leviticus 3	Leviticus 4	Leviticus 5	Leviticus 6	Leviticus 7

Reading from this past week's sermon: Judges 15:1-20

Reading in preparation for this coming Sunday: Judges 16:1-31

Family Worship

Song - *His Glory and My Good*

https://youtu.be/4yQ42RU3Nh8?si=esg_LqrNq73rb3Nu

Gospel Project

Unit: Jesus' Ministry Began

Story: Jesus' First Followers

Big Picture Question: Is Jesus God or human?

Answer: Jesus is fully God and fully human.

Scripture: John 1

New City Catechism

Question 16: What is sin?

Answer: Sin is rejecting or ignoring God in the world he created, not being or doing what he requires in his law.

Verse: 1 John 3:4

Judges 15:1-20

- What is the source of Samson's power? Why is the answer of this question so important if we are to truly understand the story of Samson?
- Does it bother you that the Spirit of the LORD (Holy Spirit) comes on Samson? Why does this feel uncomfortable in the story? Have you ever known anyone who it seemed the Lord used mightily, yet their character was a hot mess?
- Who is the Holy Spirit and what is His role? Why do we tend to find it more comfortable to speak about our relationship with God the Father and Christ the Son than the Holy Spirit?
- What is the difference between the Old Testament people's experience of the Spirit of the LORD and our experience of the Spirit? What changed and why is this so important for us to realize?

Prayer

*Pray that we would have a greater love for and dependance on the Holy Spirit.

*Pray for our church picnic this weekend.