



SERMON NOTES

Sunday, August 29, 2021 | Pastor Scott Boerckel

“A Tragic Hero”

Judges 15

1. Individualism makes revenge justifiable.
(Judges 15:1-9)
2. Revenge seeking leads to strange bargains.
(Judges 15:9-13)

3. God accomplishes His purposes, even through sinful revenge seeking. (Judges 15:14-20)

Table Talk

- 1) How does Samson reveal that he believes in the Middle East notion of “eye for eye”? How do we know that Samson is not simply emotionally reacting but is acting in a premeditated way for revenge? (vv. 1-5)
- 2) How do the Philistines respond to Samson’s “eye for eye” justice? (v. 6) How does Samson respond to what the Philistines do? (v. 8) How does Samson think wrongly that what he does in verse 8 will put an end to the “eye for eye” justice? (v. 7)
- 3) What are some of the problems with “Lex Talionis” or “eye for eye” justice? How do we see the Timnite wife of Samson as a victim in this story? How have you seen this kind of justice played out among modern nations or among families? How does the individualism of Rousseau complicate this problem of retributive justice? What is the Gospel way out of “eye for eye” justice?
- 4) In what ways does “eye for eye” justice cause the Israelite nation to make a strange bargain with the Philistines? Why do they sell Samson out? Why does “eye for eye” justice place you out of control of the outcome? (vv. 9-13)
- 5) Does the Spirit of the LORD coming upon Samson mean that the LORD approves of Samson’s revenge seeking? Why or why not? How is Samson used as an instrument of God to judge the Philistines? Does God’s use of Samson for this purpose mean that God thinks that Samson is acting righteously? (vv. 14-17) How does God show grace to Samson? (v. 18) What do you think of Samson’s “prayer” in verse 18? Why might we consider Samson undeserving of an answer to his prayer?
- 6) Look at Galatians 5:13-15; Romans 12:14-21; Colossians 3:12-17; Mark 11:25; and Matthew 5:38-48. How does Jesus’ and the New Testament ethic differ from Samson’s ethic? In what ways are these ethics of non-retaliation applicable to you and your family? In what ways are these ethics applicable to nations and international conflicts? In what ways are these ethics applicable to the church?