



BIBLE RADIO PRODUCTIONS

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BIBLE ADVENTURES SCRIPT:

A1852 ~ Samson and the Foxes.

Welcome to Bible Adventures. Help for today. Hope for tomorrow. Jesus is Lord of all.

We are currently working our way through the Old Testament stories of the Bible. God's people, the Israelites, have settled into their promised land of Canaan and God has been guiding them through the appointment of various prophets and judges.

Today we're going to talk about Samson. In Samson's day, increasing lawlessness had swept through the land. The Israelite people seemed to have forgotten their God or covenant relationship with Him. They'd slipped away from godly living to the point that they now behaved little better than the original pagan Canaanites of the land. It's recorded in the book of Judges a number of times, that there was no king in Israel to maintain God's holy standards, and everyone did what was right in their own eyes rather than God's.

However, God, by His own grace and kindness, didn't abandon the Israelites. Samson was a special person in God's eyes even before his birth. Samson's mother couldn't have children, but an angel of the Lord appeared to her and told her that she would have a special baby. She was instructed not to eat any unclean foods listed by Moses in Numbers, Chapter 6; nor was she to eat grapes or drink wine or strong drink. The child was to be a Nazirite from birth and he would begin delivering Israel from their enemy, the Philistines.

A Nazirite was a Hebrew person who voluntarily took a vow of separation from the world and devoted himself to the service of the Lord, often for a limited time and under certain rules. Some Nazirites were appointed by God before their birth, to live as *Nazarites* all their lives, as Samson and John the Baptist in the New Testament did. Not only were the Nazirites not to drink wine or strong drink, they were to refrain from gratifying the desires of the body. Instead, they were to keep their desires under control so they wouldn't become an easy target for Satan's attacks and temptations. This principle teaches us that we should take the utmost care to avoid sin, and all that borders on it or leads us to it through temptation.

Nazirites were also not to cut their hair or beard, as this signified neglect of the body. Those who separated themselves for God were to keep their consciences pure from dead works and not to touch unclean things. All the days of their separation, they must remain holy to the Lord. This was the meaning behind all these outward observances and without such, their efforts were of no value. No penalty or sacrifice was appointed for those who wilfully broke their vow of being a Nazarite.

The Lord Jesus is our Christian example and for His sake and by His power, we, like the Nazirites, must renounce worldly pleasures, abstain from fleshy lusts, and be separate from sinful living, make open profession of our faith, moderate our natural affections, be spiritually-minded, devoted to God's service, and be a good example of Jesus to all around us.

Samson's parents came from the tribe of Dan. When Joshua allotted the land of Canaan to the 12 different tribes of the Israelites, the Danites were given the southern Mediterranean coastal land around present-day Gaza, as well as four other cities where the Philistines lived. But the Danites never claimed the Philistine land because they lacked faith in God that they would victoriously drive out the people living there. While Samson was growing up, the Philistines were ruling over Israel and the people of Judah had accepted this, because they'd been allowed to live in peace as long as they paid the Philistines tribute money.

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Although the Philistines' early history is uncertain, they were known as a war-like tribe that lived in Canaan from the time of Moses. So aggressive as fighters were they, that the Lord God of Israel decided not to bring the newly released Israelite slaves from Egypt into Canaan by the way of the Philistines. As listed in Exodus, Chapter 13, God said that if the Israelites were to face war at that time, they would change their minds and return back to Egypt.

Much of the history of the Philistines is derived from accounts in the Bible, where they are portrayed as the enemies of both the Israelites and God. In the 10th Century BC, they possessed iron weapons and chariots, while the Israelites had no such similar equipment for combat. The Philistines were able to raid and sometimes occupy Israelite towns as far east as the Jordan River valley, while their own fortified towns remained secure from counter-attack.

While God allowed the Philistines to punish the Israelites for their disobedience to His instructions and law, the time came for God to deal with the Philistines. For a period of time, God uses ungodly people to accomplish His purposes but eventually, they too, will be punished for their ungodliness. Now the time had come for God to use Samson to carry out part of that punishment.

In the book of Judges, Chapter 14, we're told that young Samson saw a Philistine woman that he decided that he would marry. Although God had forbidden the Israelites to intermarry with the other nations living in Canaan, Samson insisted to his parents that she was the woman for him. In doing this, Samson willfully set out to disobey God. Did God guide Samson to be disobedient? No, but God did use Samson's disobedience for His purposes. God is never the author of evil.

Samson's parents protested his choice of a Philistine woman. They knew that he was making a wrong decision and he would regret it later – just as Christians today are told in the Bible not to marry non-Christians. But Samson wouldn't listen to his parents. In Bible times, it was the responsibility of the parents (particularly the fathers), to arrange marriages for their children. So Samson and his reluctant parents travelled to the town where the Philistine woman lived. On the way, he was separated from his parents for a brief time and he was attacked by a lion. The Spirit of the Lord came on him and in that instant gave him the power to kill the lion with his bare hands. God was letting Samson know what he could do in the strength of the Spirit of the Lord, despite his disobedience to the Lord Himself.

While the final arrangements for Samson's marriage were being made, Samson went back to have a look at the dead lion. He saw a hive of bees in the dead lion's carcass and he helped himself to some of the honey. He also gave some of it to his parents, but he didn't tell them where it came from. If he had, then as his parents were godly people, they would have refused to eat such an unclean thing. In Leviticus, Chapter 11, it was forbidden to touch the dead body of an animal, and doing so made the person unclean in God's sight.

The wedding feast for Samson and his bride was a major event that lasted 7 days. Riddles seemed to be a popular form of entertainment at that time. But when Samson gave a riddle about the dead lion that he had killed with a hive of bees in it, did he take the reward he wanted too far? The 30 young men he spoke to felt as though they were going to be cheated. We have to remember that in those days, two of Israel's judges ahead of Samson was considered rich just because they could afford to have a donkey for each of their sons to ride on. So we have to ask: what possible use could Samson want with 30 sets of garments for?

Some people want to know what's wrong with this type of gambling. Sometimes, as in this example, there's some mental effort involved, as though the prize is being earned. The idea of getting something for nothing or very little, appeals to most people. But it can develop into an addiction whereby the gambling person sets a limit on what they're going to spend, but when that limit is reached, they still continue on until they have no money left. In some households where gambling addiction controls just one person, often there's no money left to pay the bills or buy necessary food. As a result, families break up and family members feel an unhealthy sense of poverty.

Gambling causes the person with a gambling addiction to willingly risk something that they value in hope of getting something even greater of value back. Gambling can stimulate the brain's reward system much like drugs can, leading to its addictive nature. There is help available for addicts who are willing to be honest enough to say that they need help and are prepared to stop taking money from others to finance their addiction.

In today's Bible Adventure, Samson's attitude was wrong. How can someone change their attitude? They can do so by changing their patterns of thoughts and what they think about. What you think with your mind changes your brain and body, either for good or for trouble. A learned man once said that if you realized how powerful your thoughts are, you'd never allow yourself to think another negative thought.

Modern science is finally catching up with the Bible. In 2 Timothy, Chapter 1, it says: "God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind." Now it's scientifically proven that what you think every moment of every day becomes a physical reality in your brain and body, affecting your mental and physical health. These thoughts bundled together become your attitude or 'state of mind'. It's your attitude and NOT your DNA or genes that determine the quality of your life.

Our awesome God created us to be wired for love, so all our mental brain waves are made only for the positive. This means that we have a natural optimism bias wired into us. Even when we make bad choices, it's quite possible to change our brain back to the positive again. Learn how your thoughts impact your spirit, soul and body. This is true for all walks of life. If you refuse to forgive someone, or foster anxiety and depression in your life, and or you neglect your duties as a caregiver to members of your family, you first need to choose to get your mind right. In our mind is where Satan primarily wars against us.

The Apostle Paul wrote in Philippians, Chapter 4: "In conclusion my friends, fill your minds with those things that are good and that deserve praise: things that are true, noble, right, pure, lovely, and honourable." And in Romans, Chapter 12, he says: "Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind." God gave us the Scriptures with the intention that we become fully familiar with them so we can grow our relationship with Him.

In 2 Corinthians, Chapter 5, Verse 9, it says: "So whether we are at home or away, we make it our aim to please him. For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may receive what is due for what he has done in the body, whether good or evil."

The drama is from The Bible In Living Sound.

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