

Connection Group Discussion Questions

For the week of July 19, 2015

Judges 16:18-22

New Revised Standard Version (NRSV)

¹⁸ When Delilah realized that he had told her his whole secret, she sent and called the lords of the Philistines, saying, "This time come up, for he has told his whole secret to me." Then the lords of the Philistines came up to her, and brought the money in their hands. ¹⁹ She let him fall asleep on her lap; and she called a man, and had him shave off the seven locks of his head. He began to weaken, and his strength left him. ²⁰ Then she said, "The Philistines are upon you, Samson!" When he awoke from his sleep, he thought, "I will go out as at other times, and shake myself free." But he did not know that the LORD had left him. ²¹ So the Philistines seized him and gouged out his eyes. They brought him down to Gaza and bound him with bronze shackles; and he ground at the mill in the prison. ²² But the hair of his head began to grow again after it had been shaved.

Common English Bible (CEB)

¹⁸ *When Delilah realized that he had told her his whole secret, she sent word to the rulers of the Philistines, "Come one more time, for he has told me his whole secret." The rulers of the Philistines came up to her and brought the silver with them.*

¹⁹ *She got him to fall asleep with his head on her lap. Then she called a man and had him shave off the seven braids of Samson's hair. He began to weaken, and his strength left him. ²⁰ She called out, "Samson, the Philistines are on you!"*

He woke up from his sleep and thought, I'll escape just like the other times and shake myself free. But he didn't realize that the LORD had left him. ²¹ So the Philistines captured him, put out his eyes, and took him down to Gaza. They bound him with bronze chains, and he worked the grinding mill in the prison.

²² *But the hair on his head began to grow again right after it had been shaved.*

Connection Questions:

1. The book of Judges is in a transitional time for the tribes of Israel. Browse through this book in your Bible and see if you find any common themes in the composite of stories.
2. How are the stories in Judges different from the stories we find in the leadership of Moses and Joshua?
3. Just before the story about Samson, the Israelites were under the rule of the Philistines for 40 years because of their unfaithfulness to God. Discuss any questions you might have about God's relationship with Israel because of this event.
4. Do you see any similarities in Samson's story compared to the birth of Jesus? If so, what do these similarities tell us about the nature of God?
5. What are some of the positive results of Samson's leadership for the Israelite tribes?

6. What are the different ways that temptation weaves its reality through the Samson story?

7. What does this story tell us about temptation as it relates to salvation history? What role does God play? Is he more like a judge or an advocate assisting humanity with this human condition?

8. The physical body is one of many gifts given to us by God. What are ways we are neglectful of this gift? What are ways we can be respectful of this gift? What role can God play in assisting us in the choices we make?

9. Samson is killed by the Philistines after they discover the secret to Samson's strength. When we make bad choices, in our confrontations with temptation, what are some common results?

10. Can we be prepared for temptations as they surface in our lives? If so, how? How can God play a role in that preparation?