

## News & Notes

Sunday, September 29, 2009

**Remember in Prayer:** Mary Baily; Dot Ketchum; Dallas King; John and Deliah Mann; Carl Perkins; Ann Ray; Curtis Ray; Katherine Shaw; Ruby Tapp; Calvin Ursery; Joan Wilkerson; Alvie Williford;

**Pantry item** for the month of September is dental floss.

**Sympathy** is extended to the families of Peck Willbanks and Eugene Williford.

**Ashland Events:** Today: Elder's meeting at 4:00 PM; Baby shower for the Bennett's in conjunction with the scheduled fellowship meal following evening service.

**Area Events:** Beginning today: Gospel meeting at the Union congregation; September 28: Lectureship at the Charleston congregation; October 3: Youth devotional at the Beech Hill congregation; Beginning October 4: Gospel meetings at the Antioch, Beech Hill, and Theo congregations.

### Sermon in Preview:

AM: Gaius – Well Beloved

PM: Last-Sunday-of-the-Month Singing

### For the Record (September 20, 2009):

Attendance: 72      Contribution: \$1101.00      Budget: \$1459.00

### The Ashland Church of Christ

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#### Sunday:

Bible Study 9:30 AM

Worship 10:30 AM

Worship 5:00 PM

#### Wednesday:

Bible Study 7:00 PM

#### Shepherds:

Barney King

Jeff Roberson

Carrol Street

# ASHLAND ANNOUNCER

*"Note Those Who So Walk"*

Philippians 3:17

2Thessalonians 3:14

## Samson – Give Me a Head with Hair

Jeremy Northrop

Judges 17:6 and 21:25 shows the time period in which Samson lived was a very wicked time for Israel: "In those days there was no king in Israel; everyone did what was right in his own eyes." Israel had been under bondage to the Philistines for 40 years (Judges 13:1). Samson was to be born and live under the Nazirite vow from birth. It was declared by an angel of the Lord that Samson would "begin to deliver Israel..." (Judges 13:5). Samson was a mighty man as indicated when he killed 1000 men with the jawbone of a donkey (Judges 15:16). He also was to judge Israel for 20 years (Judges 15:20). The inspired book also tells of Samson's shortcomings. One of them was his encounter with Delilah in Judges 16:1-22.

Numbers 6:1-21 tells of the Nazirite vow to which Samson placed his allegiance. They were people who were separated for the service of God. They could not consume anything from the vine (grape juice, grapes) (Numbers 6:4). They could not cut their hair (Numbers 6:5). They could not touch or even go near a dead body (Numbers 6:6). If they were to leave the Nazirites or were only committed to them for a time, there were certain exit rituals in which they had to engage (Numbers 6:13-20). Samson was a Nazirite or under this vow from the womb (Judges 13:4). Many things about Samson's life are of interest. He married a Philistine to whom Israel was in bondage (Judges 14:1-5). He once challenged 30 people to a riddle (Judges 14:12-15). They were not able to solve the riddle and, in turn, asked his wife for

help (Judges 14:15-18). She was unfaithful to him having a relationship with his best man (Judges 14:20). Judges 15:1-20 tells how Samson took revenge on his father-in-law. The account telling how Samson lost his power shows the poor decisions and deception which took place and ultimately led to his defeat.

### **Decision**

Samson made a decision to have a relationship with a harlot (Judges 16:1). First, it is wrong to have a sexual relationship with a harlot (a person of low moral character). Then, it is wrong to have a sexual relationship outside of marriage (Hebrews 13:4). Samson was guilty. Further, he made a decision to take revenge on the Gazites as indicated in Judges 16:3. Revenge is not right (1Peter 3:9).

Today, it is easy to see that Satan will use such tactics as sexual temptation and revenge to prevent people from entering into Heaven's gates. A person is at their weakest when they are not living right morally. Samson seemed not to care about God and His will so Satan was getting a hold on him. Peter declared, "Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour" (1Peter 5:8). Christians today must be aware of the relationships in which they are involved. Do those relationships improve a relationship with God? Will they help one to live for God? "Do not be deceived: 'Evil company corrupts good habits'" (1Corinthians 15:33).

### **Deception**

Delilah and the Philistines who tried and eventually succeeded in overthrowing Samson had many traits which the Devil still uses today. They were sneaky (Judges 16:5). They were extremely persistent (Judges 16:5, 8, 12, 14, 17). They were eventually successful in finding out where Samson strength was (Judges 16:21). This deception points out several things about Samson and the Devil.

Samson obviously had a problem with priorities. He kept interacting with Delilah even though she proved her deception. She asked him where his strength was and he did not tell her

initially. But, Satan through the Philistines was very persistent. Samson kept playing with fire and eventually got burned! He should have run when first learning of the deception which was taking place.

Today, Satan will operate in the same way. He will be sneaky. He will be persistent. Often times, he is very successful in preventing people from obeying God's will. Christians must be ever on guard for the wiles of the devil. Again, 1Peter 5:8 says, "Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour." Christians must have their priorities in the right place (Proverbs 3:5-6).

### **Defeat**

Samson broke the Nazirite vow when Delilah and the Philistines shaved his head (Numbers 6:5, Judges 16:19). He lost his strength and the Philistines blinded him (Judges 16:21). His commitment was broken and he was defeated. Today, defeat will come to the Christian who loses his or her commitment. Christians must keep their focus knowing the only way they can overcome all things is through Christ (Philippians 4:13).

Throughout the life of Samson, it is clear that he could be arrogant. He lost when he thought he was strong without God. Paul warned Christians: "Therefore let him who thinks he stands take heed lest he fall" (1Corinthians 10:12). He also exhorted: "Stand fast therefore in the liberty by which Christ has made us free, and do not be entangled again with a yoke of bondage" (Galatians 5:1).

In the rest of Judges 16, it is recorded that Samson made himself right with God and was able to defeat the Philistines (Judges 16:28-30). No doubt, his blindness was a constant reminder of the mistakes he made. He eventually died with the Philistines (Judges 16:30-31). Yet, the chilling reality is he could have died before repenting to God.

Today, everyone has a decision to either humble themselves before God or be wise in their own eyes (James 4:10, Proverbs 3:7).