

1. Samson's emotional and hasty choices produced results that he regretted

Judges 15:1-2 "Later on—it was during the wheat harvest—Samson visited his bride, bringing a young goat. We would bring flowers, but he brought a goat, so romantic... He said, "Let me see my wife—***show me her bedroom.***"

But her father wouldn't let him in. He said, "I concluded that by now you hated her with a passion, so I gave her to your best man. But her little sister is even more beautiful. Why not take her instead?"

Emotional and hasty choices produce results that we will regret.

2. Samson responds in anger.

Judges 15:3-6 *"Samson said, "That does it. This time when I wreak havoc on the Philistines, I'm blameless."*

"Samson then went out and caught three hundred jackals. He lashed the jackals' tails together in pairs and tied a torch between each pair of tails. He then set fire to the torches and let them loose in the Philistine fields of ripe grain. Everything burned, both stacked and standing grain, vineyards and olive orchards—everything. The Philistines said, "Who did this?" They were told, "Samson, son-in-law of the Timnite who took his bride and gave her to his best man." The Philistines went up and burned both her and her father to death."

When we respond in anger, there will be a great cost.

3. Samson seeks revenge.

Judges 15:7-8 *"Samson then said, "If this is the way you're going to act, I swear I'll get even with you. And I'm not quitting till the job's done!"*

With that he tore into them, ripping them limb from limb—a huge slaughter. Then he went down and stayed in a cave at Etam Rock."

Seeking revenge will put us in a hole.

4. Philistines respond with revenge.

Judges 15:9-14 *"The Philistines set out and made camp in Judah, preparing to attack Lehi (Jawbone). When the men of Judah asked, "Why have you come up against us?" they said, "We're out to get Samson. We're going after Samson to do to him what he did to us."*

Three companies of men from Judah went down to the cave at Etam Rock and said to Samson, "Don't you realize that the Philistines already bully and lord it over us? So what's going on with you, making things even worse?"

He said, "It was tit for tat. I only did to them what they did to me."

*They said, "Well, we've come down here to tie you up and turn you over to the Philistines." Samson said, "Just promise not to hurt me."
"We promise," they said. "We will tie you up and surrender you to them but, believe us, we won't kill you." They proceeded to tie him with new ropes and led him up from the Rock. As he approached Lehi, the Philistines came to meet him, shouting in triumph. And then the Spirit of God came on him with great power. The ropes on his arms fell apart like flax on fire; the thongs slipped off his hands."*

When we respond with revenge it creates a cycle of revenge.

"The problem with revenge is that it never evens the score. It ties both the injured and the injurer to an escalator of pain. Both are stuck on the escalator as long as parity is demanded, and the escalator never stops." — Lewis B. Smedes

5. Samson basks in his own glory.

Judges 15:15-17 *"He spotted a fresh donkey jawbone, reached down and grabbed it, and with it killed the whole company. And Samson said,
With a donkey's jawbone
I made heaps of donkeys of them.
With a donkey's jawbone
I killed an entire company.
When he finished speaking, he threw away the jawbone. He named that place Ramath Lehi (Jawbone Hill)."*

"I have" statements are dead ends.

If we live in pride there is an absence of heartfelt worship.

*"The reason proud people rarely worship is because worship is, ultimately, an act of humility."
— Mark Atteberry*

Pride and religion often go together. But pride and worship never do.

If we live in pride, our life will be marked by foolishness.

James 4:6 *"God opposes the proud, but shows favor to the humble."*

A life with pride is lived in isolation.

Act 14:14b-15 *“But when the apostles Barnabas and Paul heard of this, they tore their clothes and rushed out into the crowd, shouting: “Friends, why are you doing this? **We too are only human, like you. We are bringing you good news, telling you to turn from these worthless things to the living God, who made the heavens and the earth and the sea and everything in them.**”*

1. Remember what you are
2. Remember why you are here

WHO ARE YOU AND WHY ARE YOU HERE?

3. Remember who you were created to worship and serve.

6. Samson finally seeks God for his needs.

Judges 15:18-19 *“Now he was suddenly very thirsty. He called out to God, “You have given your servant this great victory. Are you going to abandon me to die of thirst and fall into the hands of the uncircumcised?” So God split open the rock basin in Lehi; water gushed out and Samson drank. His spirit revived—he was alive again! That’s why it’s called En Hakkore (Caller’s Spring). It’s still there at Lehi today.”*

Let our needs drive us to God as our source.

Judges 15:20 *“Samson led Israel for twenty years in the days of the Philistines.”*

Fusion Group Questions:

1. What did the Holy Spirit speak to me through this message and text?
2. How do I need to respond in obedience?
3. Have you ever used anger as a tool? Perhaps to control and intimidate your employees or your family members? If so, think about those people right now. How would you describe their feelings toward you? Do they love you or just tolerate you? Are they around you because they want to be or because they have to be? How might those feelings be changed if you were to stop using angry outbursts as a tool?

4. Interact with this quote *“The problem with revenge is that it never evens the score. It ties both the injured and the injurer to an escalator of pain. Both are stuck on the escalator as long as parity is demanded, and the escalator never stops.”*
5. What is the difference between revenge and justice?
6. Why does good oppose the proud?
7. Compare Samson’s drinking of the water that God provided with Jesus providing water to the woman at the well in John 4. What did Jesus say about meeting our deep needs?