

Judges 08-07-25b

We pick up our study now of Samson and his antics. It's about the only thing you can call it with the Philistines in chapter 15 of Judges Samson seeing the destruction of his erstwhile Bride and father-in-law you notice that there does not seem to be a mother anywhere in evidence He says since you would do a thing like this. I will surely take revenge on you and after that I will cease which is a Much stronger threat in Hebrew than it comes across here in English It would be something colloquially speaking You know, I'm Not going to stop until I've beaten the last ounce of tar out of you or something to that effect He attacked him hip and thigh with a great slaughter then he went down and dwelt at the cleft of the rock of Etam Now, why would he go? to a new place to live One gets the idea that he realizes that there is an escalation here and if he associates with anyone they are likely to be targets and much as in the movies that you see today when Whether it's the untouchables and Elliot Ness or whoever when they're going against the bad guys They move their family to safety anybody that they know and love they try to get them out of the picture because they will suffer collateral damage in this Escalating war and Samson realizes that you know next time the Philistines aren't going to take it out on a fellow Philistine They're going to go find some some Danites some Israelites and they're going to This this thing is escalating to the point where it's going to break into warfare between these two peoples, which is exactly God's plan So you would think If you've ever If you know the details of the story and it was it was actually made into a pretty good movie called the wind and the lion About an episode where there was an American in distress overseas Theodore Roosevelt Responded with a show of force and This is the way America used to act a hundred years ago and more if there was an American in distress somewhere in the world or a group of Americans The country would do whatever was necessary to protect its citizens.

We've kind of Gotten away from that in more recent generations but the Just as Samuel expected the Philistines Not finding any local target come up and encamp in Judah and deploy themselves against Lehi and this is a Sort of a later Name of The place that it literally says they spread themselves out for battle. It's it's a nif all it's a passive they They were spread out they they come out there to Judah it's hilly country and they have to spread out a little bit So the men of Judah asked them. Why are why have you come up against us? Why are you? Attacking us the Philistines said we have come up to arrest Samson to do to him as he has done to us and and you have a text note there.

That's accurate We have come up to bind Samson and Again, when you keep in mind the larger picture here of the people of God in the Old Testament who are not necessarily Spiritually in tune with God by faith and obedience as they should be as a nation God nevertheless Uses them he brings other nations against them and ultimately destroys those nations the Assyrians come up against Israel They are ultimately destroyed the Babylonians come up against Israel. They are ultimately destroyed not necessarily by Israel, but They are used as a scourge and then they are judged themselves And this is the larger picture that we find in in the Samson episode this section the largest by far in the book of Judges However, that's the near channel.

That's the immediate Application Would have been understandable even to the Old Testament Saints.

What is not so evident is the longer-term larger picture view Which is that God is ultimately using his people? against the largest enemies of God against the Philistines of heaven if you will the godless the fallen angels and Samson in human strength Samson operating as a human being you don't have the angel of the Lord coming down You don't have hail falling from heaven all of the destruction of the Philistines comes directly through Samson's hands There's no blight that strikes in the night, and they wake up dead in the morning. There is no fire from heaven There is no great cleft in the ground that swallows up the Philistines God does not visibly act at all Everything that takes place the visible face of that destruction on the Philistines is always Samson he is the one that slays the men of Ashkelon the coastal City there. He is the one that burns down the crops He is the one that is wreaking all of this havoc on the Philistines, and he seems to be a very unlikely Source of judgment from the God of Israel the Philistines have no idea that the God of Israel is really even involved in this He that no issue has been made of him Contrast this with the culmination of this judgment on the Philistines.

What does David say when he goes against Goliath? you come to me with a sword and A spear and a shield I come to you in the name of the Lord God of hosts David makes it abundantly clear announces it to the entire Philistine army that they are about to get their helmets handed to them because this Giant has defied the armies of the Living God and that will not stand. It's all about the God of Israel when David finishes up but in the beginning of the deliverance it's Wrapped in this Enigma it's wrapped in this riddle that is Samson he is the lion that is ultimately going to be ripped in half and out of it is going to come something sweet and This Foreshadows what's going to happen in the first advent of the Lord Jesus? He seems to be Limited Satan looks at him and says look he's getting hungry. He gets tired.

He's out here in the wilderness. I can I Can't overcome God, but I can overcome this human son of God If you are the son of God You know and he works at him through his humanity through his hunger or through his ambition or through his desire to avoid pain and suffering or his Trying to misdirect his mission to his people stand on the pinnacle of temple cast yourself off Everybody will know when the angels bear you up who you are and he he tries to deceive and misdirect He's working on the humanity of the Lord Jesus, and this is one of the things that tells us It is a source of infinite chagrin that that people Christians in particular do not understand that the Lord Jesus Operated in his humanity using the very same tools that have been given to us the very same Resources that have been given to us He learned obedience through the things that he suffered. He was sustained by the Holy Spirit of God he Lived by every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God We have been given the very same word in the very same spirit That's how we are to live our lives Jesus has been given to us in the old King James remember.

It said as an in sample It's a really great word and in sample This is a sample of how a human being can live an obedient life in the power of God through the Spirit and the Word He did not

access his deity a second person of the Trinity He didn't suddenly invoke his omnipotence or his omniscience or his omnipresence or his immutability or any of his other? Essential divine characteristics he lived in his humanity and Satan attacked him in his humanity Because he knew that he had emptied himself and taken on the form of a servant and come in the likeness of men Well, this is the Samson face. This is a defeatable foe. He's formidable He's powerful, but we think we can take him put 30 guys on him We can hold him at bay send an army against him we can take him and bind him we can bind him We've come up to bind him So the Philistines went up and camped in Judah and deployed themselves against Lehi the men of Judah said Why have you come up? Who are the men of Judah? Well, these are Samson's fellow Israelites, but all they want to do is get along Peace at any price Footprint of the great American chicken, you know, it's just peace, you know love tie-dye my shirt I'm I just don't want to go to war bring the troops home You know, why fight make love not war why have you come up against us? What did we do? We were we're lovers not fighters and look we moved east.

We gave you eight miles of space here Why'd you come up against us? What what more do you want? What can we give you? What can we hand over? How can we compromise? You didn't want my crops take my crops. Just don't we don't want to fight These are the same men of Judah at the beginning of judges that went up and were Slaughtering and healing and hacking through the Canaanites, but they've all gone soft They've lost their focus. They've lost their sense of mission and purpose.

They've forgotten their Commission and their calling they've forgotten the reason that God brought them into the land which was to be a judgment and a scourge and the means of Eliminating evil in the land. This is God's land. God has promised it to his people.

They're supposed to be clearing it out They've completely forgotten why they're there. They just want to get along. It's the same thing that happens to Christians today You and I live in a generation that does not know as believers why it's here What are we supposed to be doing? We are not supposed to be winning the world for Christ by the year 2000 Which they've missed eight years and counting now.

They didn't win anywhere near the world. They're never going to it's not our job You can't win the world as a human being God. The Holy Spirit is the evangelist.

We are simply participants in something God is doing We are not here to simply minister and meet physical needs we are here to clear the land Is Israel is a nation in the Old Testament individual believer in the new the land is our soul We are here to receive correction rebuke and instruction the doctrine of the Word of God to sanctify ourselves To present our bodies a living sacrifice Holy and acceptable to God. How many blemishes can a sacrifice have and still be acceptable to God? How much defilement and Disability can a sacrifice have to be holy and acceptable to God one leg missing One large cancerous sore on its side is okay No The call to present Ourselves as living sacrifices holy and acceptable is said to be a reasonable service There is a way to do it. We can't be sinless We can't eliminate all of our weaknesses and all of

our flaws But we can cleanse ourselves unlike an animal with a physical blemish.

We can cleanse ourselves We can make ourselves vessels of honor by Using the power of God using the cleansing grace of God through the blood of Jesus Christ and Walking in the light. We've talked about this in the study of the Gospel of John chapter 13 the bath That is the sanctification of regular consistent walking in the light It's not merely salvation. The Bible never makes an issue out of mere salvation It is how we live how we practice Nobody took one bath in the ancient world and was forever clean a bath was something regular But not nearly so regular as washing of the feet But it wasn't a one-time bath.

He didn't say circumcision. He didn't say Baptism in the mikvah it was a bath you take a bath back then maybe once twice a week something like that So the idea here is that We have the opportunity To live the same way the Lord Jesus lived and he lived as a human being But he is the other end of that Deliverance he is first advent and second advent. He is the Alpha and he is the Omega He is the beginning and he is the end In the Old Testament when you look at the Philistines Who is the beginning of deliverance Samson and he's all a picture of human strength.

You don't see any divine commission and so on and This pictures Old Testament Israel How does deliverance against the Philistines ultimately? Consummate how does it get fulfilled? You have David And he is filled with the Spirit. He is a man after God's own heart He is the one who restores the Ark of the Covenant and gets the temple underway he is the Antithesis of Samson But God begins with that which is fleshly and earthly and fallen and apart from from him and he ends it with a spirit-filled Man he starts with a judge and he ends with a king He starts with a man who fulfills his own passions and he ends with a man who has a passion for the things of God and The Philistines don't see this coming in Samson, but they sure see it coming with David But there's a there's a gap in between there is a time where you've got You know the the time of Eli and Samuel and Saul before David comes along. You've got that delay Well all of this is is subtext all of this is is Suggested and hinted at by these episodes so the Philistines go up And if you just remember that Samson represents Old Testament Israel What the law could not do in that it was weak how? Through the flesh what the law could not do and that it was weak through the flesh There's nothing in the law of Moses that says anything about get filled with the Spirit is there Find me anything in Leviticus or Deuteronomy that talks about being filled with the Spirit It's not there.

It's all rules and regulations that you're supposed to carry out in your flesh What the law could not do in that it was weak to the flesh Christ has accomplished what Samson could not do because he was weak through the flesh David is going to accomplish in the power of the Spirit But the beginning of the end comes in this fleshly instrument. This is what we so often miss God is still when his people are Insufficient and failing God is still accomplishing his purpose What is the application of that say well? I don't have to worry about my spiritual life because I'll just be Samson I'll just pursue my passions and God will still get his work done well David is going to rule for a thousand years in the Millennium Samson ends up under a pile of Philistine

rocks So I don't think that's really the way to go But remember that when we are on the receiving end of Failure or shortcoming or error or sin or abuse? When we Suffer at the hands of our fellow believers who are carnal Remember God works in everything it gives some substance to the Statement that all things work together for good We tend to think well, I might suffer a personal disaster There can be active opposition there can be believers who through their failure cause us serious damage and It is painful and it hurts a lot and we start to question whether God is really in his heaven And how could this happen to me? remember Samson God will use even Carnal wayward self-indulgent subjective believers to accomplish his larger strategic plan God's larger strategic plan for faithful believers is blessing isn't it? God resists the proud but gives grace to the humble if we are the humble We can expect the grace of God. Sometimes it's going to come in very unexpected ways Israel these men of Judah.

Do you think they're expecting great deliverance because Samson is down there making trouble with the Philistines? They are in a panic And look at what they do Why do you come up against us Philistines answer? We have come up to bind Samson to do to him as he has done to us. He has devastated us We are going to devastate him He has set our stuff on fire. We're gonna set him on fire So then it says in verse 11 then 3,000 men of Judah went down to the cleft of the rock of Etam Keep in mind LF as always means a large contingent.

It is not a specific number This is not a literal 10 sets of a hundred men And ask yourself this question the Philistines come over if the minute if Judah has got 3,000 men, you know how big a body of people 3,000 men is I? Always compare this to the assembled brigade of midshipmen that was 4,500 people and if you ever seen all those people in one place, this is a lot of warm bodies, especially in this day But but it would it's actually kind of comical because these are still relatively large contingents So here come the Philistines and the men of Judah instead of sending their three Battalions against the Philistines they send their three battalions against one man Because that's kind of as much as they feel up to Remember God said, you know when you go into the land one of you will put the flight a thousand and but if you if you get faithless and disobedient and apathetic then You will be put to flight by you know, a thousand you'd be put to flight by one man. Well, look at this they've got three battalions of Judah height men and They send all three battalions just to get Samson Because they don't want to deal with the Philistines so they went down to the cleft of the Rock of Etan and They're going to have a little Dialogue here with Samson now, I just want to point out here that All of these words are suggestive all of them are significant both backward we talked about the cleft the cloven hoof idea associated with animal sacrifice when he rips the lion in half we've talked about the Older and younger sister we've talked about the bringing the goat all of these things keep harking back Some of these things are looking forward But you notice that we seem to have a little bit of undue emphasis on the fact that he didn't just go to eat him he went to the cleft of the Rock at Etan and you can't help but think of the him, you know a Wonderful savior is Jesus my lord. I want to be height of my soul in the cleft of the Rock Shadows of dry weary land and so on and that cleft of the Rock idea Later on you see the the prophet hiding in the cleft of the Rock while the glory of God comes by whether it's Moses or Whoever so you've got the cleft of the Rock the

word for cleft is Saif s apostrophe I Y pH or F. It's safe and This is a relatively rare Word, but we're reminded of the prophet idea over in Isaiah chapter 2 and verse 21 where he talks about the caverns of the rocks and the clefts of the cliffs in Which people hide before the terror of the Lord and the splendor of his majesty when he arises to make the earth tremble remember Moses and again, we're back in Exodus and When glory he says show me your glory.

He says will you hide in the cleft of the Rock here? I'll cover you with my hand and I'll pass by and you can look after I've passed by type of thing But this also means branch it means something that is divided it could be a divide You know the great divide that they talk about in the Geographically speaking and so it comes to mean a branch branch Saif It's used this way in Isaiah 17 6 Gleanings will be left in it like the shaking of an olive tree two or three olives on the topmost bow four or five on the branches of a fruitful tree Declares the Lord in other words the the cleaving or the dividing of a fruitful tree There will be some fruit left The same thing in Isaiah 27 verse 10 the fortified city is isolated a homestead forlorn and forsaken like the desert There the calf will graze and there it will lie down and feed on its branches on its Clefts on in the in the valleys that have been left by its destruction in other words a form of this word Saifa Saif Saifa is just a feminizing of it It's used in Ezekiel chapter 31 in two places verses 6 and verse 8 All the birds of the heavens nested in its boughs and under its branches all the beasts of the field gave birth and all the great Nations lived under its shade under its under its divides under its clefts. It's something that has been Riven asunder and see once again. We had that same idea as when he tore the it's a different word, but tearing the calf Going back and What is one of the primary? designations for the Lord Jesus in prophecy The root shoot from the stump of Jesse the branch the Netser.

He will be called a Netser a Nazarene It's a it's a branch. It's the branch and this is Saif it's not the same word, but it's it's a concept. It's a it's a suggestion It's a foreshadowing Samson has gone down to dwell in the branch in the cleft It is a place of protection it is strategically Difficult to approach you've got to make a frontal assault.

You can't flank someone can't sneak up from behind He's down there for a reason. He knows they're coming after him You also have Isaiah 1033 the Lord God of hosts will lop off the bowels with a terrible crash Those who are tall in stature will be cut down and those who are lofty will be abased and these These branches are going to be chopped off by God So it has this idea As well now all of these most of these are later It's it's used Saif slightly different version of the word is used in the Psalms to talk about Under some make remember this starts with the there's two s's in Hebrew There's the the seen sheen thing that's that's the Star Trek deal with what's-his-name Leonard Nimoy doing this thing you know that's what that's what the priests do when they're I don't remember how to do it when they're when they're pronouncing the shame on the blessing That's the sheen, but the same shape letter with a dot on the other side is seen seen and sheen that's one of the hard s's in Hebrew, but the other one is psalmic which looks like a Backward Sigma, you know what a Sigma looks like in Greek We'll just turn it around and that's psalmic in Hebrew goes the other way. Well this word starts with psalmic and When you get to the acrostic psalm psalm 119 each section begins You know Aleph Bait, Gimel, Dalet,

Hei, Val, Zayin, Kei, Teit and so on when you get all the way down to psalmic the first verse in the psalmic section of psalm 119 says I Hate those who are double minded, but I love your law Well the double-minded.

This is the the cleft minded the divided mind The one of two minds because it's been divided and this is a form of this same word saif half half-hearted psalm 119 113 Elijah comes near to the people in first Kings 18 21. I just want to suggest to you how Theologically weighty this word is it's not used very many places in the Old Testament when it's used It's significant first Kings 18 21 Elijah is speaking to the people and he's comes and says how long will you hesitate between two opinions? and it's Saifa it's the same word you're how long will you hesitate between two opinions? There's two different points of view one point of view says let's get along with the Philistines. Let's accommodate.

Let's compromise Let's do whatever we have to do to not get into a conflict That's one point of view the other one says God sent us here to wipe these people out God is moving his people. He is cleaving you can't Blur these things together. You can't make it all one thing You are either going to be destroyed by the Philistines or you are going to destroy the Philistines.

It's one or the other and God is creating a cleft. He's forcing a decision. You've got to choose a or B Elijah says in 18 21 of first Kings.

How long will you hesitate? How long will you waver? How long will you limp is what it says in Hebrew. You're limping along between two opinions If the Lord is God follow him if Baal is God follow him and you remember 18 of Kings That's that's Mount Carmel. How long will you waver? It's either God or it's Baal make up your mind prophets Baal do your worst Here in a minute, we're going to take the top of this mountain off.

Let's see what you're going to decide two divided opinions So that's where Samson goes. He is down there by the cleft of the rock of Etom now etom is is another derived noun The verb eat I yt means to scream or to shriek it means to holler out First Samuel chapter 25 when Abigail explains to Nabal how close he came Nabal Screams out and his heart turns to a stone that that's the word that's used It came to be used of birds of prey eagles up in the air and so on because they screech while they're hovering so this is the this is the cleft of screeching etom is the It's it's it's screaming out. God has tried to communicate with his people through seven cycles and judges and the Throwing Samson against the Philistines here is pretty much Screeching at them from a great height You remember how the the bird the Eagles head out of the cherubim the four sides represents divinity and so on Well, God is basically now at the point of screaming at his people How long are you going to waver between these two opinions? It's the rock of screeching.

It's the it's the cleft God Divided the rock and brought forth water for his people God has divided the rock and here is deliverance in the form of Samson. Here's a chance for them to get off their Collective rear ends and and finish the mission that they were sent to the land to accomplish So there's there's a lot to this he's down at the the the cleft of the rock of screeching

screaming This term is used as for birds of prey in Job and in Isaiah and other places and There is when you think of a bird of prey you think you know, this bird is is screaming and that's a warning You know the guys in the desert and they're about to faint and if you know, they hear the buzzards circling and you hear the squawking and that's a warning Bird of prey squawking if you're in a position to be Consumed you you want to act on that warning? You know that there is something up in the sky about to swoop down So these three LF's of men of Judah go down to the cleft of the rock of Etam and they say to Samson Do you not know that the Philistines rule over us? What is this you've done? Do you not know who's in charge here? Well, this would have been a great time for a man of faith to say Do you not know that this is the theophanic kingdom? Do you not know that this is a theocracy that God rules in Israel? Don't you remember what Joshua said serve the Lord your God? He didn't say any of that He had the chance for a great sermon if he had my gift He would have gotten up on the rock of screeching and started doing some serious preaching to these guys He would have had a revival. He would have had a evangelistic service Would have said, you know, let's let's get back to our our spiritual roots Do you not know who's in charge here who rules over us? What have you done to us? Samson it's he's mr. Subjectivity.

It's all about him I've done to them what they did to me He doesn't even quote the lex talionis He doesn't say have you not read in the law of Moses an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth None of that. He just says look I They got what cut what's coming to him? They've done to them what they did to me They said to him we have come down to arrest you that we may deliver you into the hands of The Philistines we have come down literally to give you this is from not time We have come to bind you same word. We had up above we have come to bind you and give you into the hand of the Philistines Samson says swear to me that you will not kill me yourselves So they spoke to him saying no, but we will tie you securely and deliver you into their hand But we will surely not kill you and they bound him with two new ropes and brought him up from the rock Samson Think about this now Samson Permits himself to be delivered by his own people into the hands of foreigners for execution And he is bound with something that has never been used to bind Anything or anyone before they are new ropes? They're thought to be really strong They're thought to be unbreakable but Samson willingly allows the men of Judah to deliver him to foreigners for certain death Now if you haven't been able to see forward By now, there's just no hope for you.

This is the humanity of the Lord Jesus Christ in his strength But he is thought to be Mortal he is thought to be defeatable if you will so he comes to Lehi and the Philistines come shouting against him The spirit of the Lord came mightily upon him. Do you remember? The power by which Jesus Christ was raised from the dead. What does scripture say? He was raised by the spirit of Power God the Holy Spirit is the immediate Agency God the Father raised him from the dead It says that in some places God the Holy Spirit raised him from the dead.

It says that in some places But he is bound with these ropes And when the Spirit of the Lord comes mightily upon him the ropes that were on his arms became like Flax that is burned with fire and his bonds broke loose from his hands and the the word here literally means The ropes

around his arms were like flax Burned with fire and they melted his bonds melted from his hands They This this is a supernatural Action, let me ask you something has there been any notation in the scripture in this story up to this point? about Samson having supernatural strength What has he done to indicate any inherent strength of his own what has he done thus far that's out of the ordinary He grew up he went down He wanted to marry the gal the lion came against him, and he ripped the lion in half that was pretty extraordinary But what happened just before that? Spirit of God rushed upon him and he ripped the lion in half He went down and killed the 30 men of Ashkelon. Did it say that there was anything supernatural about that? There's some of the mighty men of David killed scores of guys dozens of guys Single-handed that doesn't say that they were extraordinarily gifted with strength So we have not had any direct statement that Samson is exceptionally strong have we it doesn't say that he broke The ropes with his supernatural strength does it? It says the ropes melted as Though they were burned with fire Doesn't say he broke them doesn't say he flexed his mighty muscles The ropes themselves disintegrated when the spirit came upon him he happened to see a Fresh jawbone of a donkey now He reached out his hand and took it and he killed an eleph of men with it. He killed a contingent Notice there's one contingent of Philistines That he was delivered to by three contingents of Hebrews three contingents of Judah Heights Handed Samson over to one contingent of Philistines now Is there anything that stands out in your mind in verse 15 as you look at it? He found what he found the jawbone of a donkey What kind of jawbone old dried up hardened weapon type jawbone? What kind of jawbone is it? It's fresh If it's a fresh jawbone, I assume this donkey's not standing there on all fours and Samson rips it out of his head So what kind of donkey is this It's a dead donkey, but it's freshly dead This is a corpse of a donkey Fresh right? It doesn't say an old dried donkey jawbone does it? So why do we get this detail? Do I need this detail? I would assume so or it wouldn't be in here It's a fresh jawbone of donkey.

What is the one thing in Nazirite is absolutely positively forbidden from ever doing? Don't touch anything dead You can't say well, but it's been dead so long. It's not you know, it's bleached by the Sun. It's disinfected It's just like ivory.

This is a fresh jawbone He reaches into the head of a rotting donkey and rips the jawbone with pieces of lips and whatever else are still clinging to it out of the skull with Who knows what? Clinging to it and this is what he uses. I'm just saying that's what the scripture says. It tells us it's fresh fresh jawbone Now what is the what is the spiritual significance of this? Why why do we need this detail? It's here for a reason Could have just as easily been an old dry, you know 14 year old Jawbone of a donkey, but it's not it's fresh And he found it Is he just attracted to dead corpses he found the dead lion he finds the dead donkey What are donkeys? associated with think Think Jacob think final blessing leaning on his staff talking to his sons.

Do donkeys come up at all? anywhere Somebody with the book of Judges and the and the Pentateuch. What would a donkey bring to mind? Who was who's the guy that's got the teeth the white teeth and the grapevine and and what did he tie to the vine? Help me out here tribe of Judah What's in the blessing from Jacob on the tribe of Judah? His donkey is tied to the vine, right? Jesus is going to come in riding on the foal of a donkey It's donkeys and grapes and white

teeth, this is the tribe of Judah Samson reaches into the dead donkey Pulls out the one thing that's got some structural integrity and beats the living daylights out of a thousand Philistines with it so all of these things are significant even when the donkey is dead even when the tribe of Judah is so helpless and Weak need that three contingents of them deliver up one of their own to one contingent of Philistines God will still reach into Judah to find something of strength and Use it for deliverance It's there is no other tribe that has any donkeys associated with it. There's only one.

It's Judah and It's not The jawbone of a camel. It's not the jawbone of a jackal. It's not the jawbone of the lion He doesn't happen to find the same old lion laying there at Timna.

It's not the jawbone of any other desert dwelling creature It's not the jawbone of a goat It could have been the leg bone of a bear or something It could have been anything, but it's there's a reason why it's a jawbone of a donkey, and there's a reason why it's fresh And it is a reminder Out of the eater Comes forth something to eat out of the strong comes forth something sweet out of that which seems dead Lifeless and hopeless do you think any one of this entire contingent of Philistines saw a threat in the corpse of a dead donkey lying? nearby and all of them die With jawbone marks on their bodies every single one of them is Executed is slain his life is taken from him By a weapon that they didn't see coming This is Samson within Israel. This is Judah in the time of Christ do in the act of delivering over one of their own to the Gentiles to the uncircumcised to the foreigners They are inadvertently bringing about their own deliverance, and they don't even know it they're so far gone, but it is the grace and the mercy of God because God has a larger agenda and It is important to remember that in our lives. We are part of the fabric of God's plan It is a much bigger plan that we could possibly imagine God isn't up there in heaven Thinking all day long about how to bless Sam or how to avoid any harm or challenge or difficulty coming to Sam Sam is a tiny Thread in the warp and woof of a huge fabric and to the extent that any one of us is in relationship with God to that extent we are subject to the mercy and the grace of God How much more so when we are obedient if we had faith as a grain of mustard seed if we availed ourselves at all? How much God would be willing to do for us? I has not seen ear has not heard It hasn't entered into the heart of man the things that God has prepared for those who love him look what he does When we are his enemies look at what he does for his people when they're completely out in the weeds How much more will he do for the generation of the faithful? How much better would it be instead of being passively delivered as God is going to do for faithless Israel? Wouldn't it be so much better to be marching with Joshua through the land? consciously and effectively Executing the plan and purpose of God seeing the mighty hand of God working in and around and through everything and everybody Or do you want the anemic Passive just got there by the skin of the teeth deliverance that comes through the jawbone of the dead donkey Either way God's people are going to be delivered But we have a choice of being last or first of being those who by faith and patience inherent or of those who are out side waiting for the healing leaves to be brought forth by those who earned the privilege of living in the New Jerusalem well There's a great phrase at the beginning of verse 17 and so it was and that's where we'll pick up next time father

Thank you for the wonderful pictures that you give us in your word and the graphic way that it impresses your truth Upon us we pray that God the Holy Spirit will Help us to remember and apply what we have seen and heard from your word this evening so that our lives will Accomplish your purpose in a positive way and that we will be Not only recipients and Beneficiaries of your grace, but also those through whom it can come to others.

We ask all these things in Jesus name. Amen