

Recap of 7/30/17 (Judges 14:1-9):

1. God raised up Samson to begin to “begin the deliverance of Israel from the hands of the Philistines” (Judges 13:5). The means God chose to begin the provocation of the Philistines is the marriage of Samson to a Philistine woman, Judges 5:14: “His parents did not know that this was from the Lord, who was seeking an occasion to confront the Philistines”.
2. The common understanding of Samson’s marriage to the Philistine woman is that it was another of his rash, sensual actions which God overruled for His own purposes. This view can be seen in the following quote by Don Campbell: “..., God can and does overrule our foolish mistakes and our sins to accomplish His purposes. This fact, however, can never be used as an excuse or justification for doing wrong.” While it is true that God operates just that way in our lives many times, the question remains is that what is happening here?
3. A second, more probable explanation that fits both the purpose of God in this section, as well as in the book of Judges, is expressed by Matthew Henry: “But this treaty of marriage is expressly said to be of the Lord, vs. 4. Not only that God afterwards overruled it to serve His designs against the Philistines, but that He put it in Samson’s heart to make this choice, that He might have occasion against the Philistines.”
4. James M. Gray puts our limited understanding of Samson in perspective when he writes: “...Samson’s life is so full of inconsistencies and mysteries considered from the divine standpoint, that again we can only wait the explanations until we shall know as we are known.”
5. We can learn from this that God doesn’t always work in the way we anticipate. He will always accomplish His purposes despite the frailty, sinfulness, and wrong motives of the vessels He uses. We must not miss, as the Israelites did, what God is doing.
6. Many see in chapter 14 a warning against marrying outside of the faith (Exodus 34:16; Deuteronomy 7:3). This is a legitimate secondary application of this passage. Paul, in the New Testament, in 2 Corinthians 6:14-18, warns against being unequally yoked with unbelievers. While this passage is often, rightly, applied to marriage, it really is a warning against all intimate alliances with an unbeliever, as in a business partnership, for instance.