

THE RIGHT VIEW OF EVIL
JUDGES 15:9-17

According to the Word of God, we live in a world that is evil!

But even if the Bible didn't declare it so,
all we need to do is look around us today.

What is worse than living in an evil world?

Being complacent to the evil around us!

This is illustrated for us in the life of Samson.

1. The Israelites were supposed to have driven out the wicked inhabitants of the Promised Land (cf. Dt. 7:1-6).
2. They failed to do so, and these people now were creating problem after problem for the nation of Israel.
3. God's people would cry out for help and the Lord would send them a judge to deliver them.
4. Soon the Israelites would slip back into disobedience and the Lord would allow them to be oppressed until they would cry out for help.
5. Throughout the book of Judges we see the cycle of disobedience/obedience repeat itself.
6. Samson had been chosen by God to be a judge of Israel, but, as we see from his life, he wasted his time and energy on pursuing his own selfish desires because his wife had revealed the answer to his riddle and because his wife was given to his friend.
7. Samson was strong physically, but weak spiritually.

8. He had been carrying on a one-man revenge campaign against the Philistines.
9. Now the Philistine army has come up and encamped in one of the cities of Israel, preparing for some sort of act of war.

Read: Judges 15:9-17

⁹ *The Philistines went up and camped in Judah, spreading out near Lehi.* ¹⁰ *The men of Judah asked, "Why have you come to fight us?"*

"We have come to take Samson prisoner," they answered, "to do to him as he did to us."

¹¹ *Then three thousand men from Judah went down to the cave in the rock of Etam and said to Samson, "Don't you realize that the Philistines are rulers over us? What have you done to us?"*

He answered, "I merely did to them what they did to me."

¹² *They said to him, "We've come to tie you up and hand you over to the Philistines."*

Samson said, "Swear to me that you won't kill me yourselves."

¹³ *"Agreed," they answered. "We will only tie you up and hand you over to them. We will not kill you." So they bound him with two new ropes and led him up from the rock.* ¹⁴ *As he approached Lehi, the Philistines came toward him shouting. The Spirit of the LORD came upon him in power. The ropes on his arms became like charred flax, and the bindings dropped from his hands.* ¹⁵ *Finding a fresh jawbone of a donkey, he grabbed it and struck down a thousand men.*

¹⁶ *Then Samson said,
"With a donkey's jawbone
I have made donkeys of them.
With a donkey's jawbone
I have killed a thousand men."*

¹⁷ *When he finished speaking, he threw away the jawbone; and the place was called Ramath Lehi.*

10. There are two groups of people here:

- a. the bad guys are the Philistines,
- b. and the good guys are Samson and the men of Judah.

11. The problem is that the good guys are acting like the bad guys and no one is pleasing the Lord!

I want to share three thoughts from our passage on having the right view of evil:

I. God declared War on Evil

A. Many folks don't like war

1. All around town you will find yard signs that are blue and white.
2. They have a picture of a dove on them with the words, "War is Not the Answer."
3. I want you to understand that I don't like war...
4. It bothers me that some have family members who today are in harm's way in Iraq, Afganistan and other places.
5. I wish it wasn't happening, but it is!
6. Why is there war? Because we live in an evil world!

B. The natural world is simply a reflection of the spiritual world.

1. Since nearly the beginning of time there has existed a war... a war on evil.
2. It was God who declared this war!

3. When Satan tempted man in the garden God didn't say...
 - a. "Let's have a truce."
 - b. He didn't say, "Let's find a way to peacefully co-exist."
 - c. He didn't say, "Oh well, win some, you lose some."
4. God looked at Satan and said, "This is war!"

¹⁵ *And I will put enmity
between you and the woman,
and between your offspring and hers;
he will crush your head,
and you will strike his heel.*" (Gen 3:15)

C. We are in a war!

¹⁸ *Timothy, my son, I give you this instruction in keeping with
the prophecies once made about you, so that by following them
you may fight the good fight,* (1Tim 1:18)

1. The first step toward a proper view of evil
is to realize that we are in a war...
2. And that it was God who declared this war against evil!

II. God Wants Us to Win This War

A. Consider the men of Judah's surprise.

¹⁰ *The men of Judah asked [the Philistines], "Why have you come to
fight us?"* (Judg 15:10)

1. Their ancestors had followed the Lord.
2. God told them to drive the evil people out of the land,
and they set about to do just that.

3. God had explained why it was necessary for them to do so, and they believed Him.
4. But just a few generations later, the men of Judah were no longer faithful men.
 - a. They were no longer willing to obey the Lord's Word.
 - b. They were no longer uncomfortable around evil.
 - c. They saw no danger of associating with evil.
 - d. They were complacent and apathetic and no longer willing to be engaged in the battle that their God had declared.

B. God wants us to win this war, rather than seeking to coexist with the enemy.

1. At least a thousand Philistines came and encamped near the city of Lehi.
2. How do the men of Judah respond?
3. ¹⁰ *Why have you come to fight us?*
4. Since when do we ask the enemy why?
5. But you see, they were comfortable with the enemy... the idea of going to battle against them never entered their minds.

C. What about us?

1. Are we ready to do battle against evil, or have we become so complacent that we would rather just get along?

2. Does it seem radical for us to take a stand against the evil around us?
3. I am not talking about marching around the square carrying signs...

I am talking about living a life that proclaims Christ to this evil world!

4. And we cannot win the war if we are unprepared to do battle!

¹¹ *Put on the full armor of God so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes. (Eph 6:11)*

D. Consider their response to the enemy. (v. 11)

¹¹ *Then three thousand men from Judah went down to the cave in the rock of Etam and said to Samson, "Don't you realize that the Philistines are rulers over us? What have you done to us?" (Judges 15:11)*

1. Once they found out what the enemy was up to, they chose to help them!
2. This is amazing!
3. They had 3000 men... they could have easily driven the 1000 Philistines out of town, but instead they took their men and set out to capture Samson so they might hand him over to the enemy!
4. Their justification, "*Don't you realize that the Philistines are rulers over us?*" (v. 11)
5. Now here is something that was sure to please God...

*the people of the Almighty Sovereign Creator of the Universe
had given up on even trying for victory.*

E. What about us?

1. Are we any different than the men of Judah?
2. Have we said to ourselves before,
“What’s the use?”
“No one wants to hear the gospel anymore.”
3. “It is just too hard to live an upright life
in such a wicked world.”
4. “I know my priorities are not what they should be but...”
5. That kind of thinking...that kind of living...helps the enemy!

III. **God is Ready to Give us Victory**

A. The end of this story is absolutely amazing!

1. Because even though His people didn't deserve it
2. And even though His servant was far from perfect...
 - a. The Spirit of the Lord came upon Samson...
 - b. He broke those ropes like they were thread...
 - c. Then he found the fresh jawbone of an donkey
and used it as a weapon to win a great victory!

B. Now, there is a message here for us today.

1. Aren't we glad that God is willing
to use imperfect people?

2. Aren't we glad that God doesn't give up on us as fast as we sometimes give up on others?
3. Aren't we glad that God overrules in the lives of men?
 - a. Even though the children of Israel were living in sin at this point in their history, God still had a plan and purpose for them.
 - b. He had made promises to them that He was not about to break.
 - c. This was the tribe of people through whom the Messiah would come.
4. Think of what God could have done if the men of Judah had been obedient.
5. Think of what He could do through us if we will simply be obedient.

How are we to have a right view of evil?

Realize that God has declared war on evil

Realize that God wants us to win the war

Realize that God is ready to give us the victory

⁵⁷ *But thanks be to God! He gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. (1 Co 15:57)*

⁴ *This is the victory that has overcome the world, even our faith. (1 John 5:4)*