



SHALOM HARTMAN
מכון הרטמן
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The Book of Judges: Society in Danger, Leadership in Crisis

Dr. Orit Avnery

1

Deuteronomy 17:14-20

When you have come into the land that the Lord your God is giving you, and have taken possession of it and settled in it, and you say, 'I will set a king over me, like all the nations that are around me', you may indeed set over you a king whom the Lord your God will choose. One of your own community you may set as king over you; you are not permitted to put a foreigner over you, who is not of your own community. Even so, he must not acquire many horses for himself, or return the people to Egypt in order to acquire more horses, since the Lord has said to you, 'You must never return that way again.' And he must not acquire many wives for himself, or else his heart will turn away; also silver and gold he must not acquire in great quantity for himself. When he has taken the throne of his kingdom, he shall have a copy of this law written for him in the presence of the levitical priests. It shall remain with him and he shall read in it all the days of his life, so that he may learn to fear the Lord his God, diligently observing all the words of this law and these statutes, neither exalting himself above other members of the community nor turning aside from the commandment, either to the right or to the left, so that he and his descendants may reign long over his kingdom in Israel.

2



Speculum Humanae Salvationis, Westfalen oder Köln, 1360

אהוד בן גרא

3

פרק ג
 טו ויזעקו בני-ישראל אל-אל-יהוה ויקם יתוה להם מושיע את-אהוד בן-גרא בן-הימיני איש אטר גד-ימינו וישלחו בני-ישראל בידו מנחה לעגלון מלך מואב.

Chapter 3

The Israelites again did what was evil in the sight of the Lord; and the Lord strengthened King Eglon of Moab against Israel, because they had done what was evil in the sight of the Lord. In alliance with the Ammonites and the Amalekites, he went and defeated Israel; and they took possession of the city of palms. So the Israelites served King Eglon of Moab for eighteen years.

But when the Israelites cried out to the Lord, the Lord raised up for them a deliverer, Ehud son of Gera, the Benjaminite, a left-handed man.



תנך מורגן

4



German stained glass, panel 14, Church of St Etienne, Mulhouse, France. Sonia Halliday Photo Library

Josephus, The Antiquities of the Jews, Book V

There was a young man of the tribe of Benjamin, whose name was Ehud, the son of Gera, a man of very great courage in bold undertakings, and of a very strong body, fit for hard labor, but best skilled in using his left hand, in which was his whole strength; and he also dwelt at Jericho.



Unknown, about 1400 – 1410 The J. Paul Getty Museum, Los Angeles

5

Ehud made for himself a sword with two edges, a cubit in length; and he fastened it on his right thigh under his clothes. Then he presented the tribute to King Eglon of Moab. Now Eglon was a very fat man.

...and said, 'I have a secret message for you, O king.' So the king said, 'Silence!' and all his attendants went out from his presence. Ehud came to him, while he was sitting alone in his cool roof-chamber, and said, 'I have a message from God for you.' So he rose from his seat. Then Ehud reached with his left hand, took the sword from his right thigh, and thrust it into Eglon's belly; the hilt also went in after the blade, and the fat closed over the blade, for he did not draw the sword out of his belly; and the dirt came out.



Speculum humanae salvationis Germany, between 1350 and 1400

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At that time they killed about ten thousand of the Moabites, all strong, able-bodied men; no one escaped. So Moab was subdued that day under the hand of Israel. And the land had rest for eighty years.



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Eglon Slain by Ehud by James Tissot



פורד מדיקס בראון

7



הדפס הנמצא ברשות ספריית אוניברסיטת אוקלהומה

דבורה, ברק ויעל

8

פרק ד

א וַיִּסְכְּלוּ בְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל לַעֲשׂוֹת הַרַע בְּעֵינֵי יְהוָה וַאֲהוּד מָת:

Judges 4:1–16

The Israelites again did what was evil in the sight of the Lord, after Ehud died.



מיניאטורה מהמאה ה-13



Salomon de Bray



9

Between the Story of Ehud and the Story of Barak, Devorah, and Yael

- Detailing the story of the murder vs. a quick description of the battle
- Ehud and Yael are trusted by their victims, using gifts and deception.
- Both instances contain personal initiative by people acting alone, with only two figures on the stage: the killer and the victim.
- Use of the root תקייע (3:21, 4:21)
- The murder takes place in a private space (Eglon's room and Yael's tent)
- Both depict the seeing and finding of the corpse (3:25, 4:22)
- Both depict the widening battle, a descent from the hill, and pursuit of the leader (3:20–28, 4:14)
- Both victories involve the total annihilation of the enemy (3:29–30; 4:16, 23)



תנ"ך מורגן

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Judges 4:17-24

Now Sisera had fled away on foot to the tent of Jael wife of Heber the Kenite; for there was peace between King Jabin of Hazor and the clan of Heber the Kenite. Jael came out to meet Sisera, and said to him, 'Turn aside, my lord, turn aside to me; have no fear.' So he turned aside to her into the tent, and she covered him with a rug. Then he said to her, 'Please give me a little water to drink; for I am thirsty.' So she opened a skin of milk and gave him a drink and covered him. He said to her, 'Stand at the entrance of the tent, and if anybody comes and asks you, "Is anyone here?" say, "No." ' But Jael wife of Heber took a tent-peg, and took a hammer in her hand, and went softly to him and drove the peg into his temple, until it went down into the ground—he was lying fast asleep from weariness—and he died. Then, as Barak came in pursuit of Sisera, Jael went out to meet him, and said to him, 'Come, and I will show you the man whom you are seeking.' So he went into her tent; and there was Sisera lying dead, with the tent-peg in his temple.



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Unknown
Rudolf von Ems (Austrian, about 1200 - 1254)



- Between Yael and Rahav
- A foreign woman
- Who surprisingly helps the Israelites
- A man finds refuge with her
- The woman uses deception and distraction
- Pursuit fill the background of the story. The woman determines its outcome.
- The story takes place in the woman's private dwelling
- There are sexual connotations
- The men are presented ironically
- The women are totally in control in the story, using the men they want to help
- Israelite-Canaanite war

12

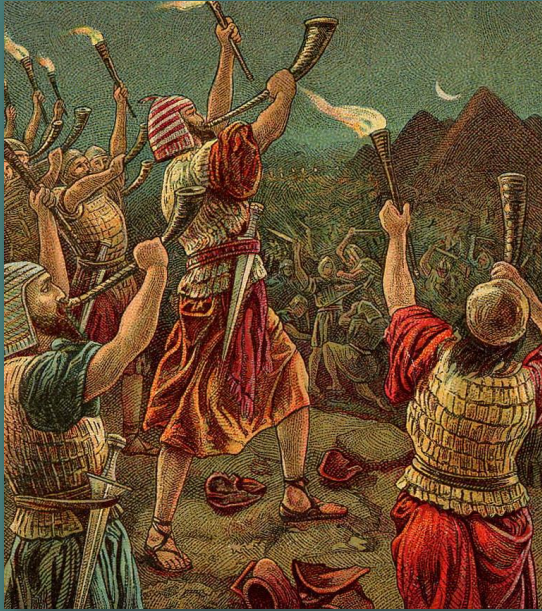


illustration from a Bible card published by the Providence Lithograph Company, 1907

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מחרוזת סיפורי גדעון

13

Judges 6:11-14

Now the angel of the Lord came and sat under the oak at Ophrah, which belonged to Joash the Abiezrite, as his son Gideon was beating out wheat in the wine press, to hide it from the Midianites. The angel of the Lord appeared to him and said to him, 'The Lord is with you, you mighty warrior.' Gideon answered him, 'But sir, if the Lord is with us, why then has all this happened to us? And where are all his wonderful deeds that our ancestors recounted to us, saying, "Did not the Lord bring us up from Egypt?" But now the Lord has cast us off, and given us into the hand of Midian.' Then the Lord turned to him and said, 'Go in this might of yours and deliver Israel from the hand of Midian; I hereby commission you.'



תנ"ך מורגן



Rudolf von Ems



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Judges 6:17-24

Then he said to him, 'If now I have found favour with you, then show me a sign that it is you who speak with me. Do not depart from here until I come to you, and bring out my present, and set it before you.' And he said, 'I will stay until you return.'



Unknown, about 1400 - 1410, The J. Paul Getty Museum, Los Angeles,

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Judges 6:17-24

So Gideon went into his house and prepared a kid, and unleavened cakes from an ephah of flour; the meat he put in a basket, and the broth he put in a pot, and brought them to him under the oak and presented them. The angel of God said to him, 'Take the meat and the unleavened cakes, and put them on this rock, and pour out the broth.' And he did so. Then the angel of the Lord reached out the tip of the staff that was in his hand, and touched the meat and the unleavened cakes; and fire sprang up from the rock and consumed the meat and the unleavened cakes; and the angel of the Lord vanished from his sight.

Then Gideon perceived that it was the angel of the Lord; and Gideon said, 'Help me, Lord God! For I have seen the angel of the Lord face to face.' But the Lord said to him, 'Peace be to you; do not fear, you shall not die.'

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Rudolf von Ems, Copyright Hochschule Fulda.

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Judges 6:34-40

But the spirit of the Lord took possession of Gideon; and he sounded the trumpet, and the Abiezrites were called out to follow him. He sent messengers throughout all Manasseh, and they too were called out to follow him. He also sent messengers to Asher, Zebulun, and Naphtali, and they went up to meet them.



Nach manassen und effann
Unknown
about 1400 - 1410, The J. Paul Getty Museum, Los Angeles



Da die geiden von geidige
Ab das geiden wer geidigen
Rudolf von Ems, Copyright
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17

Then Gideon said to God, 'In order to see whether you will deliver Israel by my hand, as you have said, I am going to lay a fleece of wool on the threshing-floor; if there is dew on the fleece alone, and it is dry on all the ground, then I shall know that you will deliver Israel by my hand, as you have said.' And it was so. When he rose early next morning and squeezed the fleece, he wrung enough dew from the fleece to fill a bowl with water. Then Gideon said to God, 'Do not let your anger burn against me, let me speak one more time; let me, please, make trial with the fleece just once more; let it be dry only on the fleece, and on all the ground let there be dew.' And God did so that night. It was dry on the fleece only, and on all the ground there was dew.



J Goeree Dutch, 17th century

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Judges 7:1-8

Then Jerubbaal (that is, Gideon) and all the troops that were with him rose early and encamped beside the spring of Harod; and the camp of Midian was north of them, below the hill of Moreh, in the valley.

The Lord said to Gideon, 'The troops with you are too many for me to give the Midianites into their hand. Israel would only take the credit away from me, saying, "My own hand has delivered me." Now therefore proclaim this in the hearing of the troops, "Whoever is fearful and trembling, let him return home." ' Thus Gideon sifted them out; twenty-two thousand returned, and ten thousand remained.



איור, 1908

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Then the Lord said to Gideon, 'The troops are still too many; take them down to the water and I will sift them out for you there. When I say, "This one shall go with you", he shall go with you; and when I say, "This one shall not go with you", he shall not go.' So he brought the troops down to the water; and the Lord said to Gideon, 'All those who lap the water with their tongues, as a dog laps, you shall put to one side; all those who kneel down to drink, putting their hands to their mouths, you shall put to the other side.' The number of those that lapped was three hundred; but all the rest of the troops knelt down to drink water. Then the Lord said to Gideon, 'With the three hundred that lapped I will deliver you, and give the Midianites into your hand. Let all the others go to their homes.' So he took the jars of the troops from their hands, and their trumpets; and he sent all the rest of Israel back to their own tents, but retained the three hundred. The camp of Midian was below him in the valley.



תניך אלבה, 1430



Unknown about 1400 – 1410, The J. Paul Getty Museum, Los Angeles

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Judges 7:9-15

That same night the Lord said to him, 'Get up, attack the camp; for I have given it into your hand. But if you fear to attack, go down to the camp with your servant Purah; and you shall hear what they say, and afterwards your hands shall be strengthened to attack the camp.' Then he went down with his servant Purah to the outposts of the armed men that were in the camp. The Midianites and the Amalekites and all the people of the east lay along the valley as thick as locusts; and their camels were without number, countless as the sand on the seashore. When Gideon arrived, there was a man telling a dream to his comrade; and he said, 'I had a dream, and in it a cake of barley bread tumbled into the camp of Midian, and came to the tent, and struck it so that it fell; it turned upside down, and the tent collapsed.' And his comrade answered, 'This is no other than the sword of Gideon son of Joash, a man of Israel; into his hand God has given Midian and all the army.' When Gideon heard the telling of the dream and its interpretation, he worshipped; and he returned to the camp of Israel, and said, 'Get up; for the Lord has given the army of Midian into your hand.'



Rudolf von Ems,
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Judges 7:16-22

After he divided the three hundred men into three companies, and put trumpets into the hands of all of them, and empty jars, with torches inside the jars, he said to them, 'Look at me, and do the same; when I come to the outskirts of the camp, do as I do. When I blow the trumpet, I and all who are with me, then you also blow the trumpets around the whole camp, and shout, "For the Lord and for Gideon!"' ...

So the three companies blew the trumpets and broke the jars, holding in their left hands the torches, and in their right hands the trumpets to blow; and they cried, 'A sword for the Lord and for Gideon!' Every man stood in his place all around the camp, and all the men in camp ran; they cried out and fled. When they blew the three hundred trumpets, the Lord set every man's sword against his fellow and against all the army; and the army fled as far as Bethshittah towards Zererah, as far as the border of Abel-meholah, by Tabbath.



ניקולה פוסן, 1654



Unknown, about 1400 - 1410,
The J. Paul Getty Museum, Los Angeles

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And he said, 'Get up; for the Lord has given the army of Midian into your hand.'...

Look at me,

when **I** come to the outskirts of the camp,

When **I** blow the trumpet, I and all who are with me,

and shout, "For the Lord and for Gideon!" '

and do the same;

do as I do.

then **you also** blow the trumpets
around the whole camp,

'Follow after me; for the Lord has given your enemies the Moabites into your hand.' (3:28)

'Up! For this is the day on which the Lord has given Sisera into your hand.' (4:14)

'This is no other than the sword of Gideon son of Joash,
a man of Israel;

into his hand God has given Midian and all the army.' (7:14)



Unknown, about 1400 - 1410,
The J. Paul Getty Museum, Los Angeles

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Judges 8:22–32

Then the Israelites said to Gideon, 'Rule over us, you and your son and your grandson also; for you have delivered us out of the hand of Midian.' Gideon said to them, 'I will not rule over you, and my son will not rule over you; the Lord will rule over you.' Then Gideon said to them, 'Let me make a request of you; each of you give me an ear-ring he has taken as booty.' (For the enemy had golden ear-rings, because they were Ishmaelites.) 'We will willingly give them,' they answered. So they spread a garment, and each threw into it an ear-ring he had taken as booty. The weight of the golden ear-rings that he requested was one thousand seven hundred shekels of gold (apart from the crescents and the pendants and the purple garments worn by the kings of Midian, and the collars that were on the necks of their camels). Gideon made an ephod of it and put it in his town, in Ophrah; and all Israel prostituted themselves to it there, and it became a snare to Gideon and to his family.



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Rudolf von Ems: Weltchronik. Böhmen (Prag), 3. Viertel 14. Jahrhundert. Hochschul- und Landesbibliothek Fulda



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Or.avnery@gmail.com

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גיובני אנטוניו פלריני

יפתח

27

Judges 11:1-11

Now Jephthah the Gileadite, the son of a prostitute, was a mighty warrior. Gilead was the father of Jephthah. Gilead's wife also bore him sons; and when his wife's sons grew up, they drove Jephthah away, saying to him, 'You shall not inherit anything in our father's house; for you are the son of another woman.' Then Jephthah fled from his brothers and lived in the land of Tob. Outlaws collected around Jephthah and went raiding with him.



פסל מעשה ידי אמיל וולף
בחצר כנסייה בעיירה ארבך
בגרמניה



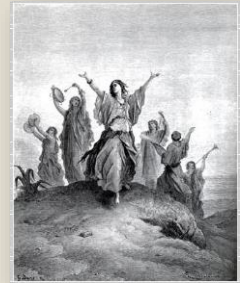
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Judges 11:29-30

And Jephthah made a vow to the Lord, and said, 'If you will give the Ammonites into my hand, then whoever comes out of the doors of my house to meet me, when I return victorious from the Ammonites, shall be the Lord's, to be offered up by me as a burnt-offering.'



Unknown, about 1400 - 1410, The J. Paul Getty Museum, Los Angeles

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Judges 11:32-35

Then Jephthah came to his home at Mizpah; and there was his daughter coming out to meet him with timbrels and with dancing. She was his only child; he had no son or daughter except her.

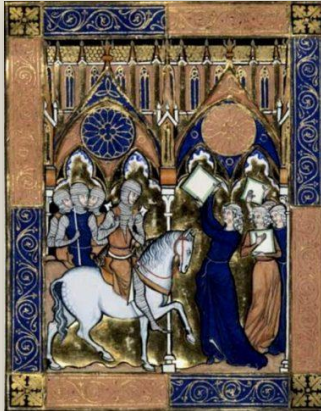


גיון אורסט מיליי
ציור משנת 1896

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Judges 11:32–35

When he saw her, he tore his clothes, and said,
 'Alas, my daughter!
 You have brought me very low;
 you have become the cause of great trouble to me.
 For I have opened my mouth to the Lord,
 and I cannot take back my vow.'



אמן לא ידוע - 1270
 ספר התהילים של לאי הקדוש Lat. 10525, f. 53v



James Tissot (1836-1902)

Judges 11:32–35

She said to him, 'My father, if you have opened your mouth
 to the Lord, do to me according to what has gone out of
 your mouth, now that the Lord has given you vengeance
 against your enemies, the Ammonites.'



תניך אלבה, מאה 15



בת יפתח. אלכסנדר קבנל, 1879

And she said to her father, 'Let this thing be done for me: Grant me two months, so that I may go and wander on the mountains, and bewail my virginity, my companions and I.' 'Go,' he said and sent her away for two months. So she departed, she and her companions, and bewailed her virginity on the mountains. At the end of two months, she returned to her father, who did with her according to the vow he had made. She had never slept with a man. So there arose an Israelite custom that for four days every year the daughters of Israel would go out to lament the daughter of Jephthah the Gileadite.



אמן לא ידוע - 1270
ספר התהילים של לואי
הקדוש, f. 10525, f.
54v



אמן לא ידוע - 1320
ספר התהילים של המלכה מרי
Royal 2 b. vii, f. 41r

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Judges 11	Genesis 22
to be offered up by me as a burnt-offering	and offer him there as a burnt-offering
She was his only child	Your only son
so that I may go and wander on the mountains,	On one of the mountains
she returned to her father	So Abraham returned to his young men
No mention of the mother, Jephthah's wife	No mention of Sarah, the mother
My father... my daughter	My father... my son



Rudolf von Ems,
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Tamar Messer's Gallery

מוניג ביזכריות יוצרים

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Differences:

- Abraham was commanded to sacrifice, in contrast to Jephthah who volunteered to sacrifice without any command
- The son's name is known, while the daughter remains anonymous
- Abraham conceals the matter of the sacrifice from his son, while Jephthah reveals it to his daughter (and even blames her!)
- The text details Abraham's preparations, while regarding Jephthah the text is quite brief
- The *Akedah* narrative ends well, while the Jephthah narrative ends tragically
- Abraham is blessed with an abundance of descendents, while Jephthah brings about the end his own lineage



probably modeled 1725, cast 1730-37
Massimiliano Soldani Italian

35



ציור של ואן דייק מהמאה ה-17

שמשון

36

Judges 13:1-7

The Israelites again did what was evil in the sight of the Lord, and the Lord gave them into the hand of the Philistines for forty years.

There was a certain man of Zorah, of the tribe of the Danites, whose name was Manoah. His wife was barren, having borne no children. And the angel of the Lord appeared to the woman and said to her, 'Although you are barren, having borne no children, you shall conceive and bear a son. Now be careful not to drink wine or strong drink, or to eat anything unclean, for you shall conceive and bear a son. No razor is to come on his head, for the boy shall be a nazirite to God from birth. It is he who shall begin to deliver Israel from the hand of the Philistines.' Then the woman came and told her husband, 'A man of God came to me, and his appearance was like that of an angel of God, most awe-inspiring; I did not ask him where he came from, and he did not tell me his name; but he said to me, "You shall conceive and bear a son.

So then drink no wine or strong drink, and eat nothing unclean for the boy shall be a nazirite to God from birth to the day of his death." '



Du hirschaft als Kinnuue e
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Unknown, about 1400 - 1410,
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Conversation between the Angel and the Woman

Conversation between the Woman and Manoah

'Although you are barren, having borne no children

you shall conceive and bear a son

Now be careful not to drink wine or strong drink, or to eat anything unclean,

for you shall conceive and bear a son. No razor is to come on his head

for the boy shall be a nazirite to God from birth

It is he who shall begin to deliver Israel from the hand of the Philistines

"You shall conceive and bear a son.

So then drink no wine or strong drink, and eat nothing unclean,

for the boy shall be a nazirite to God from birth

the day of his death

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Judges 13:24

The woman bore a son, and named him Samson. The boy grew, and the Lord blessed him. The spirit of the Lord began to stir him in Mahaneh-dan, **between Zorah and Eshtaol.**

Judges 14:5-9

Then Samson went down with his father and mother to Timnah. When he came to the vineyards of Timnah, suddenly a young lion roared at him. The spirit of the Lord rushed on him, and he tore the lion apart with his bare hands as one might tear apart a kid. But he did not tell his father or his mother what he had done. Then he went down and talked with the woman, and she pleased Samson.



Unknown, about 1400 - 1410
The J. Paul Getty Museum, Los Angeles

Judges 14:5-9

After a while he returned to marry her, and he turned aside to see the carcass of the lion, and there was a swarm of bees in the body of the lion, and honey. He scraped it out into his hands, and went on, eating as he went. When he came to his father and mother, he gave some to them, and they ate it. But he did not tell them that he had taken the honey from the carcass of the lion



תניך מורגן



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Judges 14:12-14

Samson said to them, 'Let me now put a riddle to you. If you can explain it to me within the seven days of the feast, and find it out, then I will give you thirty linen garments and thirty festal garments. But if you cannot explain it to me, then you shall give me thirty linen garments and thirty festal garments.' So they said to him, 'Ask your riddle; let us hear it.' He said to them, 'Out of the eater came something to eat. Out of the strong came something sweet.' But for three days they could not explain the riddle.

"חתונת שמשון", רמברנדט, 1638



Unknown, about 1400 - 1410. The J. Paul Getty Museum, Los Angeles



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Unknown, about 1400 - 1410. The J. Paul Getty Museum, Los Angeles

The men of the town said to him on the seventh day before the sun went down, 'What is sweeter than honey? What is stronger than a lion?' And he said to them, 'If you had not ploughed with my heifer, you would not have found out my riddle.'... Samson said to them, 'This time, when I do mischief to the Philistines, I will be without blame.' So Samson went and caught three hundred foxes, and took some torches; and he turned the foxes tail to tail, and put a torch between each pair of tails. When he had set fire to the torches, he let the foxes go into the standing grain of the Philistines, and burned up the shocks and the standing grain, as well as the vineyards and olive groves.



תנ"ך מורגן

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Judges 15:16-19

And Samson said, 'With the jawbone of a donkey, heaps upon heaps, with the jawbone of a donkey I have slain a thousand men.' When he had finished speaking, he threw away the jawbone; and that place was called Ramath-lehi.



Unknown, about 1400 – 1410.
The J. Paul Getty Museum, Los Angeles

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Judges 15:16-19

By then he was very thirsty, and he called on the Lord, saying, 'You have granted this great victory by the hand of your servant. Am I now to die of thirst, and fall into the hands of the uncircumcised?' So God split open the hollow place that is at Lehi, and water came from it. When he drank, his spirit returned, and he revived. Therefore it was named En-hakkore, which is at Lehi to this day.



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Judges 16:1-3

Once Samson went to Gaza, where he saw a prostitute and went in to her. The Gazites were told, 'Samson has come here.' So they encircled the place and lay in wait for him all night at the city gate. They kept quiet all night, thinking, 'Let us wait until the light of the morning; then we will kill him.' But Samson lay only until midnight. Then at midnight he rose up, took hold of the doors of the city gate and the two posts, pulled them up, bar and all, put them on his shoulders, and carried them to the top of the hill that is in front of Hebron.



תניך מורגן



Unknown, about 1400-1410. The J. Paul Getty Museum, Los Angeles



שמשון מנתק את שערי עזה (שמאל) ונושאם עד להר חברון (ימין), ויטרא' מהמאה ה-12, המוזיאון הלאומי של וירטמברג, שטוטגרט

Judges 16:4-6

After this he fell in love with a woman in the valley of Sorek, whose name was Delilah. The lords of the Philistines came to her and said to her, 'Coax him, and find out what makes his strength so great, and how we may overpower him, so that we may bind him in order to subdue him; and we will each give you eleven hundred pieces of silver.' So Delilah said to Samson, 'Please tell me what makes your strength so great, and how you could be bound, so that one could subdue you.'



Rudolf von Ems, Copyright Hochschule Fulda.



Judges 16:7-9

Samson said to her, 'If they bind me with seven fresh bowstrings that are not dried out, then I shall become weak, and be like anyone else.' Then the lords of the Philistines brought her seven fresh bowstrings that had not dried out, and she bound him with them. While men were lying in wait in an inner chamber, she said to him, 'The Philistines are upon you, Samson!' But he snapped the bowstrings, as a strand of fibre snaps when it touches the fire. So the secret of his strength was not known.



Unknown, about 1400 – 1410. The J. Paul Getty Museum, Los Angeles

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רב האמן של בוסיקו, 1400-1425

Judges 16:10-12

Then Delilah said to Samson, 'You have mocked me and told me lies; please tell me how you could be bound.' He said to her, 'If they bind me with new ropes that have not been used, then I shall become weak, and be like anyone else.' So Delilah took new ropes and bound him with them, and said to him, 'The Philistines are upon you, Samson!' (The men lying in wait were in an inner chamber.) But he snapped the ropes off his arms like a thread.



הנייד מורגו

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Judges 16:13-14

Then Delilah said to Samson, 'Until now you have mocked me and told me lies; tell me how you could be bound.' He said to her, 'If you weave the seven locks of my head with the web and make it tight with the pin, then I shall become weak, and be like anyone else.' So while he slept, Delilah took the seven locks of his head and wove them into the web, and made them tight with the pin.

Then she said to him, 'The Philistines are upon you, Samson!' But he awoke from his sleep, and pulled away the pin, the loom, and the web.



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Master ES (German, active ca. 1450-67)

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Judges 16:15-21

Then she said to him, 'How can you say, "I love you", when your heart is not with me? You have mocked me three times now and have not told me what makes your strength so great.' Finally, after she had nagged him with her words day after day, and pestered him, he was tired to death. So he told her his whole secret, and said to her, 'A razor has never come upon my head; for I have been a nazirite to God from my mother's womb. If my head were shaved, then my strength would leave me; I would become weak, and be like anyone else.'



Rudolf von Ems, Copyright Hochschule Fulda.

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Judges 16:15–21

When Delilah realized that he had told her his whole secret, she sent and called the lords of the Philistines, saying, 'This time come up, for he has told his whole secret to me.' Then the lords of the Philistines came up to her, and brought the money in their hands. She let him fall asleep on her lap; and she called a man, and had him shave off the seven locks of his head. He began to weaken, and his strength left him. Then she said, 'The Philistines are upon you, Samson!' When he awoke from his sleep, he thought, 'I will go out as at other times, and shake myself free.' But he did not know that the Lord had left him. So the Philistines seized him and gouged out his eyes. They brought him down to Gaza and bound him with bronze shackles; and he ground at the mill in the prison.



Unknown, about 1400 - 1410,
The J. Paul Getty Museum, Los Angeles

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Unknown, about 1400 - 1410,
The J. Paul Getty Museum,
Los Angeles



פסל המוצב בכביש החוף באשדוד לזכר גיבורי השואה ומלחמות ישראל

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And here it may be noted that Samson's whole life story is an endless braid of knots and ropes: foxes tied together, new ropes with which he is bound by the men of Judah, damp bowstrings and locks of hair woven into a loom, and time after time we see Samson's passion to tie and be tied, and also to be ensnared, and we may read this serpentine jumble of ropes – this tangled web – and wonder, how many ropes does a man need to replace one umbilical cord that was never properly spun?

David Grossman, *Lion's Honey*, p. 120 (Stuart Schoffman trans.)



Unknown, about 1400 - 1410.
The J. Paul Getty Museum, Los Angeles



תניך מורגן