

Bible Text New International Version	Who are the people involved and what is the situation?	What traits of God are displayed in this story? What are the traits of the people?	In what ways do you see yourself in this story? How is God inviting you to respond?
<p>Judges 4:1-16</p> <p>Deborah</p> <p>4 Again the Israelites did evil in the eyes of the LORD, now that Ehud was dead. ² So the LORD sold them into the hands of Jabin king of Canaan, who reigned in Hazor. Sisera, the commander of his army, was based in Harosheth Haggoyim. ³ Because he had nine hundred chariots fitted with iron and had cruelly oppressed the Israelites for twenty years, they cried to the LORD for help.</p> <p>4 Now Deborah, a prophet, the wife of Lappidoth, was leading^a Israel at that time. ⁵ She held court under the Palm of Deborah between Ramah and Bethel in the hill country of Ephraim, and the Israelites went up to her to have their disputes decided. ⁶ She sent for Barak son of Abinoam from Kedesh in Naphtali and said to him, “The LORD, the God of Israel, commands you: ‘Go, take with you ten thousand men of Naphtali and Zebulun and lead them up to Mount Tabor. ⁷ I will lead Sisera, the commander of Jabin’s army, with his chariots and his troops to the Kishon River and give him into your hands.’”</p> <p>8 Barak said to her, “If you go with me, I will go; but if you don’t go with me, I won’t go.”</p> <p>9 “Certainly I will go with you,” said Deborah. “But because of the course you are taking, the honor will not be yours, for the LORD will deliver Sisera into the hands of a woman.” So Deborah went with Barak to Kedesh. ¹⁰ There Barak summoned Zebulun and Naphtali, and ten thousand men went up under his command. Deborah also went up with him. <i>(continued)</i></p> <p>a. Judges 4:4 - Traditionally <i>judging</i>.</p>			

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<p>Judges 4:1-16 - continued</p> <p>¹¹ Now Heber the Kenite had left the other Kenites, the descendants of Hobab, Moses' brother-in-law,^b and pitched his tent by the great tree in Zaananim near Kedesh.</p> <p>¹² When they told Sisera that Barak son of Abinoam had gone up to Mount Tabor, ¹³ Sisera summoned from Harosheth Haggoyim to the Kishon River all his men and his nine hundred chariots fitted with iron.</p> <p>¹⁴ Then Deborah said to Barak, "Go! This is the day the LORD has given Sisera into your hands. Has not the LORD gone ahead of you?" So Barak went down Mount Tabor, with ten thousand men following him. ¹⁵ At Barak's advance, the LORD routed Sisera and all his chariots and army by the sword, and Sisera got down from his chariot and fled on foot.</p> <p>¹⁶ Barak pursued the chariots and army as far as Harosheth Haggoyim, and all Sisera's troops fell by the sword; not a man was left.</p> <p>Judges 16:1-31 Samson and Delilah</p> <p>16 One day Samson went to Gaza, where he saw a prostitute. He went in to spend the night with her. ² The people of Gaza were told, "Samson is here!" So they surrounded the place and lay in wait for him all night at the city gate. They made no move during the night, saying, "At dawn we'll kill him." <i>(continued)</i></p> <p>b. Judges 4:11 - Or <i>father-in-law</i></p>			

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<p>Judges 16:1-31 - <i>continued</i></p> <p>³ But Samson lay there only until the middle of the night. Then he got up and took hold of the doors of the city gate, together with the two posts, and tore them loose, bar and all. He lifted them to his shoulders and carried them to the top of the hill that faces Hebron.</p> <p>⁴ Some time later, he fell in love with a woman in the Valley of Sorek whose name was Delilah. ⁵The rulers of the Philistines went to her and said, “See if you can lure him into showing you the secret of his great strength and how we can overpower him so we may tie him up and subdue him. Each one of us will give you eleven hundred shekels^c of silver.”</p> <p>⁶ So Delilah said to Samson, “Tell me the secret of your great strength and how you can be tied up and subdued.”</p> <p>⁷ Samson answered her, “If anyone ties me with seven fresh bowstrings that have not been dried, I’ll become as weak as any other man.”</p> <p>⁸ Then the rulers of the Philistines brought her seven fresh bowstrings that had not been dried, and she tied him with them. ⁹With men hidden in the room, she called to him, “Samson, the Philistines are upon you!” But he snapped the bowstrings as easily as a piece of string snaps when it comes close to a flame. So the secret of his strength was not discovered.</p> <p>¹⁰ Then Delilah said to Samson, “You have made a fool of me; you lied to me. Come now, tell me how you can be tied.” (<i>continued</i>)</p> <p>c. Judges 16:5 - That is, about 28 pounds or about 13 kilograms.</p>			

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<p>Judges 16:1-31 - <i>continued</i></p> <p>¹¹ He said, "If anyone ties me securely with new ropes that have never been used, I'll become as weak as any other man."</p> <p>¹² So Delilah took new ropes and tied him with them. Then, with men hidden in the room, she called to him, "Samson, the Philistines are upon you!" But he snapped the ropes off his arms as if they were threads. ¹³ Delilah then said to Samson, "All this time you have been making a fool of me and lying to me. Tell me how you can be tied."</p> <p>He replied, "If you weave the seven braids of my head into the fabric on the loom and tighten it with the pin, I'll become as weak as any other man." So while he was sleeping, Delilah took the seven braids of his head, wove them into the fabric ¹⁴ and ^d tightened it with the pin.</p> <p>Again she called to him, "Samson, the Philistines are upon you!" He awoke from his sleep and pulled up the pin and the loom, with the fabric.</p> <p>¹⁵ Then she said to him, "How can you say, 'I love you,' when you won't confide in me? This is the third time you have made a fool of me and haven't told me the secret of your great strength." ¹⁶ With such nagging she prodded him day after day until he was sick to death of it.</p> <p>¹⁷ So he told her everything. "No razor has ever been used on my head," he said, "because I have been a Nazirite dedicated to God from my mother's womb. If my head were shaved, my strength would leave me, and I would become as weak as any other man." (<i>continued</i>)</p> <p>d. Judges 16:14 - Some Septuagint manuscripts; Hebrew <i>replied</i>, "I can if you weave the seven braids of my head into the fabric on the loom." ¹⁴ So she</p>			

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<p>Judges 16:1-31 - <i>continued</i></p> <p>¹⁸ When Delilah saw that he had told her everything, she sent word to the rulers of the Philistines, "Come back once more; he has told me everything." So the rulers of the Philistines returned with the silver in their hands. ¹⁹ After putting him to sleep on her lap, she called for someone to shave off the seven braids of his hair, and so began to subdue him.^e And his strength left him.</p> <p>²⁰ Then she called, "Samson, the Philistines are upon you!" He awoke from his sleep and thought, "I'll go out as before and shake myself free." But he did not know that the LORD had left him.</p> <p>The Death of Samson</p> <p>²¹ Then the Philistines seized him, gouged out his eyes and took him down to Gaza. Binding him with bronze shackles, they set him to grinding grain in the prison. ²² But the hair on his head began to grow again after it had been shaved.</p> <p>²³ Now the rulers of the Philistines assembled to offer a great sacrifice to Dagon their god and to celebrate, saying, "Our god has delivered Samson, our enemy, into our hands."</p> <p>²⁴ When the people saw him, they praised their god, saying,</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">"Our god has delivered our enemy into our hands, the one who laid waste our land and multiplied our slain." (<i>continued</i>)</p> <p>e. Judges 16:19 - Hebrew; some Septuagint manuscripts <i>and he began to weaken</i></p>			

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<p>Judges 16:1-31 - <i>continued</i></p> <p>²⁵ While they were in high spirits, they shouted, "Bring out Samson to entertain us." So they called Samson out of the prison, and he performed for them.</p> <p>When they stood him among the pillars,</p> <p>²⁶ Samson said to the servant who held his hand, "Put me where I can feel the pillars that support the temple, so that I may lean against them." ²⁷ Now the temple was crowded with men and women; all the rulers of the Philistines were there, and on the roof were about three thousand men and women watching Samson perform. ²⁸ Then Samson prayed to the LORD, "Sovereign LORD, remember me. Please, God, strengthen me just once more, and let me with one blow get revenge on the Philistines for my two eyes." ²⁹ Then Samson reached toward the two central pillars on which the temple stood. Bracing himself against them, his right hand on the one and his left hand on the other, ³⁰ Samson said, "Let me die with the Philistines!" Then he pushed with all his might, and down came the temple on the rulers and all the people in it. Thus he killed many more when he died than while he lived.</p> <p>³¹ Then his brothers and his father's whole family went down to get him. They brought him back and buried him between Zorah and Eshtaol in the tomb of Manoah his father. He had led ^f Israel twenty years.</p> <p>f. Judges 16:31 - Traditionally <i>judged</i></p>			

Reflections

Delilah was a temptress and a betrayer of Samson. Think of a time when deception or flattery led you down the wrong path. What was the result? Have you ever been the tempter?

Describe a time when you felt “a Delilah” inside that was hindering you from moving forward with God’s plan for your life.

