

Samson: Part III — He Did More In His Death...

1. If you allowed your flesh to rule, what area of sin (weakness) would you repeatedly return to?

Twenty years of judging...and then Samson fell back onto the path that God had tried to steer him from earlier in his life. Years of not struggling with our flesh is no guarantee of continued victory over our flesh. How far down that path would Samson go this time before he remembered the Lord and God's mission for his life?

Stop and Pray - Lord, show me where I need to die to myself to be all that You want me to be. Help me to understand Samson as he moved between sin and obedience.

Read Judges 16:1-3 – The Prostitute at Gaza. Mark your text as instructed.

2. Note Samson's steps into sin in Judges 16:1 and comment on what he should have done instead. *Note:* Gaza is a Philistine town.

- a. What he did

What he should have done instead

- b. Why is it God's will that you abstain from sexual immorality? See I Corinthians 6:13, 19-20 and I Thessalonians 4:3-5.

3. Samson's choice:

- a. What happened in Judges 16:2 during Samson's fleshly indulgence with the prostitute in Gaza?

- b. What did Samson do in Judges 16:3 that set the stage for the remainder of the Samson story?

Read Judges 16:4-22 – Samson and Delilah. Mark your text as instructed.

“After this he fell in love with a woman in the valley of Sorek whose name was Delilah.”

4. a. Determine what type of love Samson and Delilah had for each other. Support your answer with evidence from the rest of the Samson and Delilah story.

b. In what ways did this type of love affect Samson’s judgment with Delilah?

5. Let’s examine Samson’s strength. Support your answers.

a. Where did Samson get his strength?

b. Why do you think Samson’s strength left him at the point it did?

c. Where do we get our strength to accomplish God’s will? See Zechariah 4:6 and Philippians 4:13.

d. How is the source of our strength similar or different from Samson’s?

6. Why do you think “...he did not know the Lord had left him” (Judges 16:20)?

7. What is significant about where Samson was taken upon his capture? What lessons can we learn from this turn of events?
8. After the Lord left Samson, he was blinded, bound and put to work endlessly pushing a great mill stone around and around in the prison. When sin is given free reign in our inner lives, we have a similar experience. How do the following verses explain each stage of a sinner's experience?

Blind - Titus 3:3

Bind - Romans 6:16

Grind - Psalm 7:14-16

9. How could God use each consequence listed to draw Samson back to Himself and produce Samson's actions in Judges 16:23-31?
Blind (Matthew 5:27-29 is helpful.) -

Bind -

Grind -

His hair began to grow back -

10. The next time you come across someone deep in sin, what will you remember about their mental state based on the verses in question 8 and Samson's story?

Read Judges 16:23-31– Samson at the Temple. Mark your text as instructed.

11. What event was Samson brought to that should have stirred up his zeal for God? Why should it have moved him?

12. Based on all we have studied about revenge and who is to avenge the wrongs done to us, evaluate Samson’s prayer in 16:28. Do you think he was right or wrong in how he handled the situation? Explain your answer.

13. Do you think Samson’s motive for destroying the temple was God-centered or self-centered? Why?

14. Samson is listed in the Hebrews 11:32-34 faith “Hall of Fame.” Where do you see Samson exercising faith?

15. In Samson’s story there seemed to be four steps that occurred before God used him again.
 - a. Discouragement - Do you feel like you have blown it to the point that God could not use you in the future?

 - b. Repentance - Have you come to the point where you want to repent and leave behind your sin?

 - c. Restoration - Once someone has repented, there is usually a time of restoration (his hair began to grow) before God uses the repentant believer again. Be patient. How is God restoring you and preparing you for future obedience?

d. Obedience - After restoration has taken place, what new attitude about obedience to God's Word and His will should you have?

16. In his death, how did Samson finally begin to deliver Israel from the Philistines just as God had promised he would?

17. Evaluate this final cycle in the book of Judges. Do you think the office of judge was working anymore? Why or why not?

Final Thoughts: Many years of victory over your flesh is no guarantee of continued victory. Our flesh is a gift from God that drives us to Him continually for the self-control that only He can give. Samson's life of unrestricted freedom had only led to trouble and ultimately bondage. The bondage of our sin will enslave us as well until we acknowledge the sin, are willing to die to it, and return to God. When we are willing to die to the will of our flesh and walk in obedience to God once again, then God will step back in and do the saving.

God has given us the freedom to make choices. However, we are never given the freedom to choose our consequences.

Be assured you can never blow it so badly that you cannot return to God and be used once again. The path by which you return may be harsh and long. It may require a season of restoration following your moment of repentance. However, God has promised to finish the good work He has begun in you. He will pursue you and orchestrate your consequences in such a way that His promise will be fulfilled.

Pray - God, keep me clinging to You and do not let me be deceived by my flesh. Please continue to boldly get in my way when I stop living in dependence on You and dare to venture down a path of my own making. Keep me humble so that I will not think more of my fleshly plans than I ought. Help me to quickly return to Your path for me before sin once again enslaves me.

Kyna Ritchie (original 2002; revised 2013)

Lesson 20 — Samson's Death — Judges 16:1-31

Observe your text.

Mark your text when instructed to in this lesson. Put a box around all time words (e.g. then, now, after). Put a circle around all conditional words (e.g. but, therefore, thus, so that).

Underline all references, including pronouns (e.g. they, us, he, we):

- Samson in green
- God in red
- Delilah in purple
- Israel in blue
- idols with black jagged line
- an enemy in black (e.g. Gazaites, Philistines)

Judges 16:1-3 – The Prostitute at Gaza

1 Now Samson went to Gaza and saw a harlot there, and went in to her. 2 When it was told to the Gazites, saying, "Samson has come here," they surrounded the place and lay in wait for him all night at the gate of the city. And they kept silent all night, saying, "Let us wait until the morning light, then we will kill him." 3 Now Samson lay until midnight, and at midnight he arose and took hold of the doors of the city gate and the two posts and pulled them up along with the bars; then he put them on his shoulders and carried them up to the top of the mountain which is opposite Hebron.

Judges 16:4-22 – Samson and Delilah

4 After this it came about that he loved a woman in the valley of Sorek, whose name was Delilah. 5 The lords of the Philistines came up to her and said to her, "Entice him, and see where his great strength lies and how we may overpower him that we may bind him to afflict him. Then we will each give you eleven hundred pieces of silver." 6 So Delilah said to Samson, "Please tell me where your great strength is and how you may be bound to afflict you." 7 Samson said to her, "If they bind me with seven fresh cords that have not been dried, then I will become weak and be like any other man." 8 Then the lords of the Philistines brought up to her seven fresh cords that had not been dried, and she bound him with them. 9 Now she had men lying in wait in an inner room. And she said to him, "The Philistines are upon you, Samson!" But he snapped the cords as a string of tow snaps when it touches fire. So his strength was not discovered. 10 Then Delilah said to Samson, "Behold, you have deceived me and told me lies; now please tell me how you may be bound." 11 He said to her, "If they bind me tightly with new ropes which have not been used, then I will become weak and be like any other man." 12 So Delilah took new ropes and bound him with them and said to him, "The Philistines are upon you, Samson!" For the men were lying in wait in the inner room. But he snapped the ropes from his arms like a thread. 13 Then Delilah said to Samson, "Up to now you have deceived me and told me lies; tell me how

you may be bound." And he said to her, "If you weave the seven locks of my hair with the web and fasten it with a pin, then I will become weak and be like any other man." 14 So while he slept, Delilah took the seven locks of his hair and wove them into the web. And she fastened it with the pin and said to him, "The Philistines are upon you, Samson!" But he awoke from his sleep and pulled out the pin of the loom and the web. 15 Then she said to him, "How can you say, 'I love you,' when your heart is not with me? You have deceived me these three times and have not told me where your great strength is." 16 It came about when she pressed him daily with her words and urged him, that his soul was annoyed to death. 17 So he told her all that was in his heart and said to her, "A razor has never come on my head, for I have been a Nazirite to God from my mother's womb. If I am shaved, then my strength will leave me and I will become weak and be like any other man." 18 When Delilah saw that he had told her all that was in his heart, she sent and called the lords of the Philistines, saying, "Come up once more, for he has told me all that is in his heart." Then the lords of the Philistines came up to her and brought the money in their hands. 19 She made him sleep on her knees, and called for a man and had him shave off the seven locks of his hair. Then she began to afflict him, and his strength left him. 20 She said, "The Philistines are upon you, Samson!" And he awoke from his sleep and said, "I will go out as at other times and shake myself free." But he did not know that the LORD had departed from him. 21 Then the Philistines seized him and gouged out his eyes; and they brought him down to Gaza and bound him with bronze chains, and he was a grinder in the prison. 22 However, the hair of his head began to grow again after it was shaved off.

Judges 16:23-31 – Samson at the Temple

23 Now the lords of the Philistines assembled to offer a great sacrifice to Dagon their god, and to rejoice, for they said, "Our god has given Samson our enemy into our hands." 24 When the people saw him, they praised their god, for they said, "Our god has given our enemy into our hands, Even the destroyer of our country, Who has slain many of us." 25 It so happened when they were in high spirits, that they said, "Call for Samson, that he may amuse us." So they called for Samson from the prison, and he entertained them. And they made him stand between the pillars. 26 Then Samson said to the boy who was holding his hand, "Let me feel the pillars on which the house rests, that I may lean against them." 27 Now the house was full of men and women, and all the lords of the Philistines were there. And about 3,000 men and women were on the roof looking on while Samson was amusing them. 28 Then Samson called to the LORD and

said, "O Lord GOD, please remember me and please strengthen me just this time, O God, that I may at once be avenged of the Philistines for my two eyes." 29 Samson grasped the two middle pillars on which the house rested, and braced himself against them, the one with his right hand and the other with his left. 30 And Samson said, "Let me die with the Philistines!" And he bent with all his might so that the house fell on the lords and all the people who were in it. So the dead whom he killed at his death were more than those whom he killed in his life. 31 Then his brothers and all his father's household came down, took him, brought him up and buried him between Zorah and Eshtaol in the tomb of Manoah his father. Thus he had judged Israel twenty years.

(Judges 16:1-31, NASB95)