

Judges Chapter 16 Commentary

1 ¶ "Then went Samson to Gaza, and saw there an harlot, and went in unto her. **2** And it was told the Gazites, saying, Samson is come hither. And they compassed him in, and laid wait for him all night in the gate of the city, and were quiet all the night, saying, In the morning, when it is day, we shall kill him. **3** And Samson lay till midnight, and arose at midnight, and took the doors of the gate of the city, and the two posts, and went away with them, bar and all, and put them upon his shoulders, and carried them up to the top of an hill that is before Hebron."

Again, we see, the lust of the flesh leading Samson with self-restraint. I would iterate here; Samson by nature is living a very unclean life. He has not kept the moral laws of God. However, God will, in the end, judge Samson for his infidelity. Remember, God can use any person he wishes to accomplish his purposes. We have seen, from our previous studies, that God has often moved godless nations to bring his judicial wrath to pass on other ungodly nations, and upon Israel, when judicial rebuke was necessary. Saying this, we remember; God has nothing but sinners to work with here on earth. The only sinless one, Christ Jesus, has already come and returned to heaven.

We shall see Samson suffer the consequences of his sinful life in the following chapters. We are not to take the example of Samson, as making it okay to live like the devil. When we are born-again, we are to put on Christ and live the Christian life to the full, not a life of continuous willful sin.

His first wife being dead, he lusts for this harlot in Gaza. The Gazites, knowing that Samson was there, lay a trap to kill Samson. God moves Samson to get up at midnight, which foils the plans of the Gazites, and he takes the posts and gates of the city, and he carries them to a hilltop. Thus, by God's providence, Samson is once again delivered from murder by the hands of the Philistines.

4 ¶ "And it came to pass afterward, that he loved a woman in the valley of Sorek, whose name was Delilah. **5** And the lords of the Philistines came up unto her, and said unto her, Entice him, and see wherein his great strength lieth, and by what means we may prevail against him, that we may bind him to afflict him: and we will give thee every one of us eleven hundred pieces of silver."

Scripture does not tell us that Samson and Delilah are married. Thus, we see; Samson and Delilah are shacking up, which is the "**in thing**" in today's world. The devil has so permeated the minds of people, that they think nothing of just living in the manner of a marriage, without the marriage ever taking place. There is no doubt that all sexual relations, outside of the true marriage relationship, are an abomination to God. We are not to willfully live in such a relationship if you are a child of God.

The custom, of this day and age, was when people married, the man took the woman to live at his house. We understand, from the context of the scripture here, Samson is living in Delilah's house, in the midst of the Philistines.

The Philistines bribe Delilah to find the source of Samson's miraculous strength. By her acceptance of this bribery, we understand, Delilah did not truly love Samson. If she really loved him, she would have refused this bribe. Again, we see the testimony of scripture being fulfilled, seen in: **1Ti 6:10 "For the love of money is the root of all evil."**

6 "And Delilah said to Samson, Tell me, I pray thee, wherein thy great strength lieth, and wherewith thou mightest be bound to afflict thee. **7** And Samson said unto her, If they bind me with seven green withs that were never dried, then shall I be weak, and be as another man. **8** Then the lords of the Philistines brought up to her seven green withs which had not been dried, and she bound him with them. **9** Now there were men lying in wait, abiding with her in the chamber. And she said unto him, The Philistines be upon thee, Samson.

And he brake the withs, as a thread of tow is broken when it toucheth the fire. So his strength was not known."

Delilah asks Samson, in keeping with her contract with the Philistines, wherein his great strength lieth, and he tells her a lie. She runs a test and finds that it is a lie.

10 "And Delilah said unto Samson, Behold, thou hast mocked me, and told me lies: now tell me, I pray thee, wherewith thou mightest be bound. 11 And he said unto her, If they bind me fast with new ropes that never were occupied, then shall I be weak, and be as another man. 12 Delilah therefore took new ropes, and bound him therewith, and said unto him, The Philistines be upon thee, Samson. And there were liers in wait abiding in the chamber. And he brake them from off his arms like a thread."

Delilah again asks Samson of his great strength secret, and again Samson lies to her. She runs another test and finds that it is a lie, also.

13 "And Delilah said unto Samson, Hitherto thou hast mocked me, and told me lies: tell me wherewith thou mightest be bound. And he said unto her, If thou weavest the seven locks of my head with the web. 14 And she fastened it with the pin, and said unto him, The Philistines be upon thee, Samson. And he awaked out of his sleep, and went away with the pin of the beam, and with the web."

She runs another test and finds that it is a lie, also.

15 And she said unto him, How canst thou say, I love thee, when thine heart is not with me? thou hast mocked me these three times, and hast not told me wherein thy great strength lieth. 16 And it came to pass, when she pressed him daily with her words, and urged him, so that his soul was vexed unto death; 17 That he told her all his heart, and said unto her, There hath not come a razor upon mine head; for I have been a Nazarite unto God from my mother's womb: if I be shaven, then my strength will go from me, and I shall become weak, and be like any other man."

Delilah now sorely presses Samson for the truth. She heckles him so badly that he finally gives in and tells her the truth. Now, we shall see Samson begin to pay for his life of ungodliness.

18 ¶ "And when Delilah saw that he had told her all his heart, she sent and called for the lords of the Philistines, saying, Come up this once, for he hath shewed me all his heart. Then the lords of the Philistines came up unto her, and brought money in their hand. 19 And she made him sleep upon her knees; and she called for a man, and she caused him to shave off the seven locks of his head; and she began to afflict him, and his strength went from him. 20 And she said, The Philistines be upon thee, Samson. And he awoke out of his sleep, and said, I will go out as at other times before, and shake myself. And he wist not that the LORD was departed from him."

Samson has told the truth and Delilah realizes it. She summons the Philistines and is paid. The transaction is complete, the bribe has been paid. Now we see the charms of the wiles of the devil at work. She causes Samson to sleep, and while he sleeps, they cut off his hair, and his miraculous strength departs as God departs from Samson. Sadly, Samson does not even know that the Lord was departed from him.

There is a great lesson here for us today. Satan is very busy in this world, spinning his webs of lies and painting them, with such desires of the flesh and sin nature, that they are very appealing. When we are wearied from battling them, we are at our weakest moment. If not careful, we will fall asleep under the soothing voice of sin, and lust, and worldly pleasures. When this happens, Satan comes in and takes away the joy of the Lord's salvation in our lives.

When that happens, we are like Samson, we do not even realize that our joy, of the salvation of God, has been removed from us. We stand in need of God, through the Holy Spirit power, calling us to remembrance, (awakening us from our sleep) so that we may be brought to repentance, and we may turn to God with our whole heart once again. Oh God, have mercy upon us and protect and keep us in the joy of thy salvation.

21 "But the Philistines took him, and put out his eyes, and brought him down to Gaza, and bound him with fetters of brass; and he did grind in the prison house."

The Lord having departed from him, his miraculous strength is gone, and Samson is taken prisoner of the Philistines. They put out his eyes and make him grind.

Remember, we told you; you cannot live a life of willful sin and not have to bear the consequence of those sins? Now, we see; Samson is paying the price for living an ungodly life. He is blinded, and he is made to labor under the Philistine's rule. Reminding us of the scripture in: ***Nu 32:23 "But if ye will not do so, behold, ye have sinned against the LORD: and be sure your sin will find you out."*** Moses is here telling Israel, when you come to possession of the land of promise, and when you forget God and turn away from him, your sins will be known of God, and God will bring judicial wrath down upon you. The same is true in our lives today.

22 ¶ "Howbeit the hair of his head began to grow again after he was shaven. 23 Then the lords of the Philistines gathered them together for to offer a great sacrifice unto Dagon their god, and to rejoice: for they said, Our god hath delivered Samson our enemy into our hand. 24 And when the people saw him, they praised their god: for they said, Our god hath delivered into our hands our enemy, and the destroyer of our country, which slew many of us. 25 And it came to pass, when their hearts were merry, that they said, Call for Samson, that he may make us sport. And they called for Samson out of the prison house; and he made them sport: and they set him between the pillars. 26 And Samson said unto the lad that held him by the hand, Suffer me that I may feel the pillars whereupon the house standeth, that I may lean upon them. 27 Now the house was full of men and women; and all the lords of the Philistines were there; and there were upon the roof about three thousand men and women, that beheld while Samson made sport."

"*Howbeit the hair of his head began to grow again after he was shaven.*" The principle set forth by Samson's hair growing back, indicating that God is returning to him, is a picture of the surety of our eternal salvation. We may fall in sin, and lose the joy of God's salvation in this life, but we have not changed the fact; Jesus Christ has procured our eternal salvation, which can never be lost or undone.

However, Samson's hair is beginning to grow back, which indicates that God has not totally deserted him. As he turns in repentance to God; his great strength will return to him, because he is still God's chosen Judge. Currently, Samson is the laughingstock of the Philistines; but he will have the last laugh, when God answers his prayers.

Samson is brought forth to "***make sport***" before the Philistines and their gods. This humiliation is part of the price he must pay for his ungodly life. Our apostasy, from Christian living, will bring us to be the laughingstock of the unregenerate people in the world. Satan and his minions will throw a great party, when they see us in the state of apostasy.

However, like Samson, when we are sufficiently humiliated by our sins, we can turn to God in repentance. Our joy in God's salvation will once again begin to shine forth the glory of God. The closer back we get to living the Christian life, the stronger will be the joy we feel.

28 "And Samson called unto the LORD, and said, O Lord GOD, remember me, I pray thee, and strengthen me, I pray thee, only this once, O God, that I may be at once avenged of the Philistines for my two eyes. 29 And Samson took hold of the two middle pillars upon which the house stood, and on which it was borne up, of the one with his right hand, and of the other with his left. 30 And Samson said, Let me die with the Philistines.

And he bowed himself with all his might; and the house fell upon the lords, and upon all the people that were therein. So the dead which he slew at his death were more than they which he slew in his life. 31 Then his brethren and all the house of his father came down, and took him, and brought him up, and buried him between Zorah and Eshtaol in the buryingplace of Manoah his father. And he judged Israel twenty years."

Samson's humiliation is so great, he does not ask God to restore his sight, or even to live on in life. He does ask God to avenge him of the loss of his eyes, which seems to be another selfish thing to do, when he should be praying that God be glorified in his death.

Samson had slain many Philistines in his life. Yet in his death, he killed more than he killed in the rest of his life.

Samson's family come and get his body, out of the rubble of the collapsed temple. They take his body to his father's burying place and bury him there.

In summation, we look at what we have learned from the life of Samson: We learn that God had a plan for Samson's life, which started before Samson was born naturally. If you have been born-again, God has a plan for your life, also, which started before the world began, as seen in: **2Ti 1:9 "Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began,"** and in: **Tit 1:2 "In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began;"**

We learn that God does not call us to live sinful and disobedient lives, seen in: **Ro 12:1 "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service."**

One of the things God planned for Samson was to be a Judge in Israel. Thus we learn that God will accomplish through us what he has planned. For Samson, he was used to contend for Israel by killing many Philistines. By living a faithful life to God, we will also slay many Philistines, temptations in our lives.

We have learned; God does use those who do not follow his commands, when he chooses to do so, to fulfill his own will and purpose. Thus, we learn; we are not to live ungodly lives by choice, or God will bring judicial judgment, upon those he calls to be his people, who do not live for God. We understand that this will be brought to fruition here in time on earth. Our eternal condemnation has already been justified before God by Christ.

In application to our own lives as Christians, God's will shall be accomplished, despite our choosing to live ungodly lives. Wherefore, let us live as we are commanded in: **Mt 5:16 "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven."**

We are reminded of another scripture, which sets forth the same principle set forth in Samson's life, in: **1Co 5:1-5; 1 ¶ "It is reported commonly that there is fornication among you, and such fornication as is not so much as named among the Gentiles, that one should have his father's wife. 2 And ye are puffed up, and have not rather mourned, that he that hath done this deed might be taken away from among you. 3 For I verily, as absent in body, but present in spirit, have judged already, as though I were present, concerning him that hath so done this deed, 4 In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, when ye are gathered together, and my spirit, with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ, 5 To deliver such an one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus."** In this text, Paul is charging the church to deal with those who are living ungodly lives and proclaiming to be members of the church. We understand; God destroyed the natural life of Samson for his ungodliness; yet, Samson was a God called man, who we believe is in heaven. Here he tells us to remove the ungodly ones from church fellowship, to sanctify the church and keep it clean. We also understand; God may take our natural lives away from us if we turn from him.

Samson was a God called sinner, like we all are. May God help us to set a godly example in our lives as Christians. May we live lives that will bring glory and honor to God's holy name. Let us remember; when we have accomplished all that God has planned for us to do, he will take us home to be with him, forever, Hallelujah! Praise ye the Lord!