

Church of God Sunday School

THE FALL OF SAMSON AND HIS FINAL VICTORY

Judges 16:4-31

The Philistines were ruling over the Israelites, because the Israelites had done evil again. God chose Samson to be the one to judge Israel then, and during those years, Samson accomplished many great things in the mighty strength that was given to him by the power of the Holy Spirit.

Samson went to the Philistine city of Gaza and carried away the gate to their city. After that he went to the valley of Sorek and met a woman named Delilah. She was not of Samson's people, the Israelites; she did not honor the God of Heaven. Nevertheless, he continued to see her, and he fell in love with her.

When the Philistine rulers knew that Samson was in love with Delilah, they came to her and said, "Entice him, and see wherein his great strength lieth [find out what makes him so strong] . . . that we may bind him to afflict him: and we will give thee every one of us eleven hundred pieces of silver." The promise of that much money sounded good to Delilah. She said she would do it.

When Delilah saw Samson, she said to him, "Tell me, I pray thee, wherein thy great strength lieth, and wherewith thou mightest be bound to afflict thee." In other words, "Samson, tell me, what makes you so strong, and by what means you can lose your great strength?"

Samson's self confidence began to assert itself. He was sure that she would not find out, so he began to tease her. He said, "If they bind me with seven green withs [bowstrings or green vines that have not been dried; they are very strong] that were never dried, then shall I be weak, and be as another man."

Unknown to Samson, Delilah told the Philistine lords, and they brought her seven green withs. She bound up Samson while he slept. The Philistines were hiding somewhere and waiting. When Delilah called out, "The Philistines be upon thee," Samson woke up, break-

ing the withs as easily as if they had been burned away. So his secret was not known.

Delilah was upset! Samson had lied to her! She said to him, "Behold, thou hast mocked me, and told me lies: now tell me, I pray thee, wherewith thou mightest be bound."

Samson looked at Delilah. He thought he would tease her some more. He said, "If they bind me fast with new ropes that never were occupied, then shall I be weak, and be as another man."

So Delilah obtained new ropes and tied Samson up, as tight as she could. Once more she called, "The Philistines be upon thee, Samson." Samson immediately broke the ropes on his arms, as if they were a thread! So, the secret of his strength was still not revealed.

Delilah said to Samson, "Hitherto thou hast mocked me, and told me lies: tell me wherewith thou mightest be bound." She wanted him to quit playing games.

This time, he came very close to telling her the truth. He should have been thinking of how careless he was becoming. Instead, he said, "If thou weavest the seven locks of my head with the web [or loom]." Delilah thought surely he had told her the truth then.

Once again, Samson fell asleep. Delilah took up his long hair and wove the long locks on a loom and fastened them to the weaving frame with a pin of a beam. When she was done, Delilah called out as before, "The Philistines be upon thee, Samson." Samson jumped up, ready to take on the enemy—and he walked away with the pin of the beam and the web!

Delilah was getting desperate! Samson had still dared to lie to her. She cared nothing for Samson. She wanted only to see his downfall and receive the money she had been promised. She pressed Samson more and more, day by day, to tell her the secret of his strength.



Samson became "vexed unto death" from Delilah's continuous questions about the secret of his strength. Still, he did not see that he was being careless. He even began to weaken in his resolve to keep his secret.

Finally, he broke down and told her all the truth about himself. He had been under the Nazarite vow from his birth, and his hair had never been cut. That was part of the vow to God. If his hair were cut, he would lose the great strength God gave him! (Samson was not thinking of the consequences of telling Delilah this or he would not have revealed the truth. Had he forgotten how Delilah had tested him?)

Delilah was delighted! Samson had, at last, told her the true secret of his strength. She called for the Philistines to come one more time. They came, bringing the money they had promised her.

When Delilah saw Samson again, she made him feel very welcome and comfortable. And once again, it was not long until he was fast asleep, this time with his head on her lap! Samson was sleeping so soundly that he did not hear when Delilah called for a man to come and shave off his hair.

When the man had finished shaving Samson's head, Delilah called out, "The Philistines be upon thee, Samson." Samson awoke, thinking he would be super strong, as at other times. He did not know that God had left him and that he had lost his God-given strength. He was surely surprised!

The Philistines were all around Samson. He could do nothing to save himself! Quickly, they captured him and put out his eyes, making him blind! He was taken down to Gaza, where he was bound up with brass chains. He was put in the Philistines' prison, and they made him grind their grain.

No doubt, while Samson was in prison, he had time to think of all that had happened to him. He probably thought how foolish and unwise he had been to turn to the Philistine women, instead of going to the women of his own nation. He, no doubt, thought of how his strong-will and self-confident attitude had taken him away from the special work God had meant for him to do.

As Samson spent the time in prison, his hair began to grow again; no one cut it off. The Philistines seemed to have forgotten what the secret to Samson's strength had been. Maybe they thought that, as long as he was blind, he could hurt no one. Whatever the reason, Samson's hair was not cut.

The capture of Samson was something for the Philistine lords to celebrate, so they declared a special day to offer sacrifices to their god, Dagon.

On that day, many thousands of Philistines came to the celebration. All the lords of the Philistines were there.

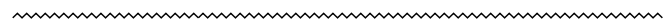
There were many, many people inside the great temple of Dagon. Also, up on the roof there were three thousand people, watching what went on below! The people offered praise and glory to their god with the sacrifices. They were rejoicing greatly, and much revelry went on in their worship of the idol.

At last, the people wanted Samson to be brought out so that they could laugh at him and make fun of him. Samson was led out to the crowd by a young boy—and that alone was enough to humiliate him. He stood between the pillars of the temple.

Samson said to the boy, "Suffer me that I may feel the pillars whereupon the house standeth, that I may lean upon them."

Samson leaned up against the two middle pillars that supported the huge temple; then he prayed to God, "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."

Samson may have felt that he was no longer worthy of life, yet God did honor his prayer and give him great strength again. Samson took hold of the two pillars, the one with his right hand and the other with his left hand. He prayed to God again, "Let me die with the Philistines." Then Samson "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." When Samson's brothers and all his father's house heard of his death, they came down to get his body. They took him back and buried him where his father's burying place was.



MEMORY VERSE:

"Thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."

— 1 Corinthians 15:57



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SAMSON SOUGHT REVENGE FOR THESE:



EYES



While the Philistines were celebrating their victory over Samson, something happened.

Follow the line from each letter to its box. Each path may cross others, but those are not turns. Then, write the letter in its box and read what happened.

M	G	S	N	R	I	
H	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	A
G	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	A
N	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	S
I	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	W
A	O	E	A	S	R	

Samson prayed to God for strength once more. How does this story end?



Samson Loses His Hair