

STUDIES IN THE LIVES OF GIDEON & SAMSON

STUDY NUMBER EIGHT - Judges 16:1-31

TEXT:

- v. 1 Now Samson went to Gaza and saw a harlot there, and went in to her.
- v. 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."
- v. 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.
- v. 4 After this it came about that he loved a woman in the vally of Sorek, whose name was Delilah.
- v. 5 And 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."
- v. 6 So Delilah said to Samson, "Please tell me where your great strength is and how you may be bound to afflict you."
- v. 7 And Samson said to her, "If they bind me with seven fresh cords that have not been dried, then I shall become weak and be like any other man."
- v. 8 Then the lords of the Philistines brought up to her seven fresh cords that had not beendried, and she bound him with them.
- v. 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.
- v.10 Then Delilah said to Samson, "Behold, you have deceived me and told me lies; now please tell me, how you may be bound."
- v.11 And he said to her, "If they bind me tightly with new ropes which have not been used, then I shall become weak and be like any other man."
- v.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.
- v.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 shall become weak and be like any other man."
- v.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.
- v.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."

- v. 16 And it came about when she pressed him daily with her words and urged him, that his soul was annoyed to death.
- v. 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 shall become weak and be like any other man."
- v. 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.
- v. 19 And 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.
- v. 20 And 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.
- v. 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.
- v. 22 However, the hair of his head began to grow again after it was shaved off.
- v. 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."
- v. 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."
- v. 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.
- v. 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."
- v. 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.
- v. 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."
- v. 29 And 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.
- v. 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.
- v. 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.

Scripture Reading for Today: 2 Corinthians 5:11-21

ZEALOUS FOR THE LORD

I am become a stranger unto my brethren. . . . For the zeal
of Thine house hath eaten me up. Psalm 69:8,9

RECENTLY I read a fable about a dog who loved to chase other animals. He bragged about his great running skill and said he could catch anything. Well, it wasn't long until his boastful claims were put to the test by a certain rabbit. With ease the little creature outran his barking pursuer. The other animals, watching with glee, began to laugh. The dog excused himself, however, by saying, "You forget, I was only running for fun. He was running for his life!"

That does make a difference! Motivation is the most important factor in everything we do. In fact, it determines the way believers serve the Lord. Some do so because it's the thing to do, or because they want recognition. Then there are others who serve with urgency and zeal. Recognizing the terrible plight of people lost in sin, and deeply grateful for God's saving grace in their own lives, they give their best by going all out for the Lord.

The apostle Paul was this kind of person. He wrote in 2 Corinthians 5:11, "Knowing, therefore, the terror of the Lord, we persuade men." In verse 14 he said, "For the love of Christ constraineth us." In verse 20 he added, "... we beg you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God." And in 1 Corinthians 9:26,27 he declared, "I, therefore, so run, not as uncertainly; ... lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway." Paul's service was intense. It was no game. He meant business. There was much at stake. May the same motivation characterize our labors for Christ. Let's be zealous for the Lord!

—R.W.D.

Rise up, O men of God!
Have done with lesser things;
Give heart and soul and mind and strength
To serve the King of kings.

—Merrill

**THOT: Without a burning heart, you are not likely to do much
shining for Jesus!**

—Fuller

Sunday—February 25

INTRODUCTION:

John Hunter points out that "some time ago I was in a small country village in Scotland. I happened to pass by the place where animals were slaughtered for meat. I saw a small corral, in which were a dozen hogs. I saw the man coming to kill these animals and I wondered what on earth he would do. How could he capture them? For there were 12 and they were all loose. But it was all so easy. He carried a bucket in which were some handfuls of tasty food nuts, such as hogs enjoy. First he threw a few of these nuts into the corral, and their were squeals of delight from the victims. Then he opened the gate and walked away, dropping a nut every so often. How those hogs enjoyed it! They scampered along behind him, heedless of where he was leading them. He used no whip or compelling force. They followed him of their own free will. I watched them disappear through an open door, which was closed behind them. They had danced their way to their death. **

"So it was with Samson. Delilah simply rattled the bucket, and he followed to his death. Of his four Nazirite vows, only one remained unbroken, no razor had ever shaved his hair."

We have witnessed the life of Samson as he has been born into a wonderful home with godly parents. And in that home having every privilege. During his first 18 or 19 years, he is blessed of the Lord because he is faithful in keeping the vows to which they were committed.

Then we see the undisciplined side of Samson come to the surface and see sex actually defile and ruin this man filled with such fantastic potential.

Began using Power + Privilege For Personal Adv.

We come now to the final chapter in this man's life.

Undisciplined; defiant spirit cannot handle authority.

v. 1 Now Samson went to Gaza and saw a harlot there, and went in to her.

You can see the gradual deterioration in Samson's moral armor, in that on the first occasion he recognized the responsibility for marriage to enjoy the physical desires. And so he went to his parents to seek permission to have the Philistine woman of Timnah as his wife. And now we see him throwing away any sense of responsibility or relationship by the fact that he goes into a woman only for the gratification of his physical needs. Paying for the pleasure in more ways than one!!

Proverbs 4:23-27 "Watch over your heart with all diligence, for from it flow the springs of life. Put away from you a deceitful mouth, and put devious lips far from you. Let your eyes look directly ahead and let your gaze be fixed straight in front of you. Watch the path of your feet, and all your ways will be established. Do not turn to the right nor to the left. Turn your foot from evil."

Saw a harlot = eyeballs in the wrong place --
when you are ruled by your eyes it is so easy to make a decision. if it looks good enjoy it.

Focus ing
on his desires
rather than
God's --

Tried to come
back to her
in last story

Charles R. Swindoll, "In Defense of Monogomy" - from Joyce Landorf's book called Tough and Tender:

A man I will call George used to work at my husband's bank. George had recently been divorced and was now establishing himself as the most eligible bachelor about town. Each day the bank tellers excitedly gossiped about his latest word, and the male officers crowded about him at lunch to hear about his most recent sexual escapade. Months went by and George seemed to be living a hysterically marvelous, enviable life. He had taken up residence in a swinging singles apartment at the beach and boasted about having sex every night and twice on Sundays with glorious gorgeous girls! As one married banker marveled, George really has it made!

Phase 2:

One afternoon George came up to my husband's desk and haltingly said, "Uhh, Dick, could I talk to you about something?" Then as nearly as Dick can remember, this is what George related. "You know, Dick. I've really got it made. I'm free from the attachments and hassles of marriage. I've got this great pad at the beach. I go to bed with one gal after another. I come and go as I please. I do my own thing. But something's really bothering me. I can't figure it out. Every morning as I get dressed for work I look into the mirror and I think, What was last night's little game all about anyway? Sure, the girl was good looking. She was good in bed. She left this morning without bugging me, but is that all there is to life? I asked myself. If this lifestyle is what every guy thinks he wants, why am I so depressed? Why do I feel a cold nothingness all the time?" He stopped and leaned closer to Dick and quietly continued, "I know the guys here think it would be fantastic to have this kind of liberated freedom, but honestly, Dick, honest to God, I hate this life." And then wistfully he added, "You know what I would really like? I would really like to go home tonight, smell supper cooking, hug my wife hello, spend the evening telling her and showing her how much I love her. I would like to go to bed with her and not have to prove my virility, not have to sexually perform above the call of duty, but just give her love, my life, and go to sleep knowing she'd be there in the morning."

Askalon
Gath
Ekron
Gaza
Timnah

-4-

Gaza is another city of the Philistines. It is about 30 miles from Zorah, his home town.

v. 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."

The news circulated around the city about Samson's arrival in the city of Gaza. And so quite a number of the men of the city surrounded the place and were waiting all night for him; and were planning on waiting until in the morning when he got ready to leave, and then they would take his life.

v. 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.

Samson got up and slipped away from the men who obviously were dozing at midnight, and went to the city gate and took hold of the doors of the city gate, and the two posts and pulled them up. Then he put them on his shoulders and carried them up to the top of the mountain which is opposite Hebron.

Samson, on his way out of the city, grabbed the gate and the posts and pulled them up and places them upon his shoulders and carries them on up to the top of the mountain which faced toward the city of Hebron.

v. 4 After this it came about that he loved a woman in the valley of Sorek, whose name was Delilah.

After the experience in Gaza, he then fell in love with another Philistine beauty in the vally of Sorek.

Samson did not know if she was adept or amateurish as a cook. He did not know if she could keep her house and her body in order and attractive. He did not know if she were lazy or industrious. Dilatory or diligent in her duty. He did not know if she was musical and modest, or mean and clamorous. Virtuous or vindictive and vile. He did not if the law of kindness was in her tongue, or if her tongue was set on fire of hell. But she was pleasing to his eyes in outward appearance. But he, who in the choice of a wife, is guided only by his eye and governed only by his fancy must afterwards blame nobody but himself if he finds a Philistine in his arms becoming as a bunch of thorns in his side or as a serpent in his bosom.

v. 5 And 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."

All started
in Timnah

Timnah
Gaza
Sorek

Girl in every
Port " - -

Activities of Samson -5- Are Noted by the Leaders !!

How similar this is to the situation with the woman at Timnah, when the men needed to know the riddle, they asked her to entice him.

The only difference between the situation in Timnah and this situation is that the Philistine leaders are going to give her a monetary reward if she can find out his secret. Whereas in the other, the woman at Timnah was threatened with the burning down of her home and family.

* * * The princes of the Philistines knew already where Samson's weakness lay, though not his strength. Therefore, they would entice his harlot with gifts to entice him.

v. 6 So Delilah said to Samson, "Please tell me where your great strength is and how you may be bound to afflict you."

Frontal Approach

Delilah is motivated greatly by the monetary reward for her efforts, and so she immediately makes a request of Samson; and that is, "Tell me where your great strength is and how you may be bound to afflict you."

v. 7 And Samson said to her, "If they bind me with seven fresh cords that have not been dried, then I shall become weak and be like any other man."

Playing Around when it is time to leave !!

Samson, in his own little way of deceit, tells her that it is going to be by using fresh cords that have not been dried, and when he is bound with them he will be weak like any other man.

v. 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.

She reports to the lords of the Philistines what Samson has said, and so they make provision of the seven cords. And when she has opportunity, she binds him with them.

v. 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.

AS soon as Samson hears the words from Delilah that the Philistines are upon you, the cords which bound him were snapped, and he stands free to exercise his strength against the enemy. The last words in verse 9 say, "So his strength was not discovered."

v. 10 Then Delilah said to Samson, "Behold, you have deceived me and told me lies; now please tell me, how you may be bound."

Look who's Talking!! Delilah now makes an accusation of Samson. First, you have deceived me and you have lied to me; now her request, please tell me how you may be bound.

Delilah is guilty of that which she is saying because she is deceiving Samson and wanting to bring about his demise under the pretense of love.

v.11 And he said to her, "If they bind me tightly with new ropes which have not been used, then I shall become weak and be like any other man."

Still Messing Around. Come on Man you are going to get Hurt!!

Samson, once again, uses deceit by fogging the issue. It is no longer the seven fresh cords, but now it is with new ropes which have not been used that are going to do it.

v.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.

In this second encounter with the Philistines, Samson once again is victorious. The ropes are snapped from his arms like a thread.

v.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 shall become weak and be like any other man."

Hide the thimble: Getting Warmer! Move out Man!!

Delilah is getting a little bit upset now with Samson because of his deceit and lies to this point. Samson is beginning to yield because now he is making references to his hair.

v.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.

Delilah did some hair braiding while he slept, and then she said, "The Philistines are upon you-, Samson" for the third time. When he awoke from his sleep, he pulled out the pin of the loom and the web.

v.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."

Now she is really trying to get to his heart. She asks the question: "How can you say 'I love you' when your heart is not with me?"

This is a great verse on marriage communication, for it is sometimes easy for a man to speak the words 'I love you' only referring to the physical, when the heart is not in it.

✱✱

Questioning his love
Wow!!

Making it personal

"I Love Me + want to use you to satisfy my desires..."

Her accusation follows: "You have deceived me these three times and have not told me where your great strength is."

daily
Genesis 39:

v.16 And it came about when she pressed him daily with her words and urged him, that his soul was annoyed to death. Joseph did not consent to be with her or to lie by her. She did not give up seeking this secret and she continued to press him on a daily basis with her words, and urged him that his soul was annoyed to death. Didn't cry but probably a lot of whining !!

Marriage
Harlot
Living

Evidently, he had deteriorated from the desire for marriage with the woman in Timnah to the harlot in Gaza; and now he is simply living with Delilah, although they are not married.

One is reminded of chapter 13:17 when the woman at Timnah wept before him seven days while their feast lasted. And it came about on the seventh day that he told her because she pressed him so hard.

Bugged &
Begged
until He
Burped

She pressed him daily with her words and urged him by her pleas, I am sure, to the point that his soul was annoyed to death. Burping A Baby

v.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 shall become weak and be like any other man."

So he opens up his heart completely and told her everything. And in telling her this, he is revealing the secret of his strength.

Alas, how are the mighty fallen! What an effecting exhibition of the weakness of human nature even in its best estate. Well could Samson now adopt the language of Solomon, "I find more bitter than death the woman whose heart is snares and nets, and her hands are bands. Whoso pleaseth God shall escape from her, but the sinner shall be taken by her." All started in Timnah !!

Wearied out by the ceaseless upbraidings of his vile companion and enslaved by the violence of his passion, the fatal secret is at length extorted from him. And the mighty Nazirite remains scarcely a common man. So perfectly captivated and intoxicated had he become, notwithstanding repeated warnings by the vehemence of his affection; that like the silly dove without heart, he rushed upon his ruin. Had he not been completely infatuated he would have seen before that no alternative remained to him but to break away at once, and at all hazards, from the enchantress; and leave the field where it was so evident that he could not hold his ground. But no chains are stronger than those woven by illicit love. And with him who becomes their prisoner, reputation, life, usefulness; yea, even God's glory and the salvation of the soul, are put to peril in obedience to its unhallowed dictates.

tell by
the tone
of his voice
& sigh of
relief He
has told
her every-
thing!!

Just like
Timnah!!
Betrayed

v.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.

He told Delilah how he could be humbled and ruined, and notice her reaction. "And when Delilah saw that he had told her all in his heart,"-- there is that key phrase once more, "she sent and called for the lords of the Philistines, saying, 'Come up this once, for he has shown me all his heart.'"

In Luke 12:34 the Lord Jesus said, "For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also." Until that fateful night, Samson's heart had some link with the Lord. But he took that awful step and all his heart became the possession of this evil woman.

Then the lords of the Philistines come up to her, knowing that the end is now in view, they brought the money that they had promised in their hands.

v.19 And 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.

Having now violated the conditions of his Nazirite vow, on which it depended, he that sleeps in sin, must look to wake in loss and weakness.

Dallying with temptation is a perilous venture because the flesh lusts and fights against the soul. Yet men flatter themselves that they can toy with the temptress and not be entrapped. Wine and licentiousness take away the understanding. When we, like Samson, lay down our head to sleep in the lap of temptation, our spiritual enemies are never more wide awake. The sounder we sleep, the greater our danger.

It was truly said: Samson, when strong and brave, strangled the lion. But he could not strangle his own lust. He burst the fetters of his foes, but not the cords of his own passions. He burned up the crops of others, and lost the fruit of his own virtues. When burning with the flame enkindled by a single woman, like a moth fluttering about a candle flame, though already scorched by it, Samson, unwarned by his narrow escape from one danger, which he incurred by lust, rushes into another.

Herein may be seen the temptor's prowess, Samson's security and Jehovah's super abounding grace. He, who as a Nazirite, ought to have been purer than snow, and whiter than milk, blackens himself with harlotry.

The awful consequences of what has taken place is seen in the last phrase of verse 19: "Then she began to afflict him, and his strength left him."

v.20 And 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.

For this fourth time, she repeats what she said on the prior occasions: "The Philistines are upon you." And he, likewise, assumed when he awoke from his sleep, that he could go out at other times and shake himself free. But this time he did not know that the Lord had departed from him.

You see, we have had the tragic breaking of the fourth part of the Nazirite vow, and now God's longsuffering and grace has been turned over to His justice and judgment.

The peak of agony in this story comes when his head has been shaved and he was roused to defend himself, 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. His previous boast had been: Sin, and you can get away with it. But this time, he shook himself and nothing happened. No majestic strength came surging through his body. Those awful words were true, "And he knew not that the Lord was departed from him."

v.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.

The first thing the Philistines do is gouge out his eyes so that he cannot see. And then, they go back to Gaza; and there they bind him with bronze chains, and he is a grinder in the prison.

Robert G. Lee says it well: "How true was he who summed all this tragedy up by saying: 'Sin blinds, sin binds, and sin grinds.' The laps of Delilah are numerous today. Laps of worldly pleasure, laps of love of ease, laps of doubts. The world our external enemy, and the flesh our internal enemy, and Satan our infernal enemy are still in possession of numerous fatal opiates. And those opiates act much in the same way as Delilah, using her feminine and fleshly charms, acted upon Samson to the degradation of his whole life and to the taking away from him of his valuable eyes.

Thus was the lust of the eye in looking after and gazing upon strange women punished. The offending organ that he had refused to pluck out was in effect plucked out for him in the righteous providence of God. Let us not, however, lose sight of the solemn lesson which his misery teaches us. What a warning to those who yield their members as instruments of iniquity. They will find their bondage bitter and unbearable when they are finally bound with the chains which their sins have forged for them.

"Thought He was invulnerable everything under control!"

External
Internal
Infernal

Took His eyes.

Chastening hand of

God is upon the offending member.

Got Him into All this trouble...

The chastisement was severe, but it was the very one suited to bring Samson's sin to his remembrance. His eyes had been the avenue through which lust had entered his soul. His eyes, therefore, are given over to destruction. Philistine women had been the object of his lust, and Philistine men are made the executioners of divine chastisement upon him. But it is infinitely better to lose the eyes and save the soul, than keep them and lose body and soul in hell.

Now when the sight of the body was blinded by his foes, he had enforced leisure to remember how his soul had been blinded by his own lust.

Gaza was the scene of his sin. And Gaza is made the scene of his punishment. He became a captive to the Philistines in the very place where he had yielded himself a captive to lust; where he had been a terror, there he is a laughingstock. Where he had displayed such amazing might, there he appears in abject weakness, a slave. In doing the grinding work of a slave, even as he had been the slave of his passions, surely the way of transgressors is hard.

It is better for Samson to be blind in prison than to abuse his eyes in Sorek. Yea, I may safely say, He was more blind when he saw licentiously than now that he sees not. He was a greater slave when he served his affections than now in grinding for the Philistines. The loss of his eyes shows him his sin. Neither could he see how ill he had done till he saw not.

v.22 However, the hair of his head began to grow again after it was shaved off.

When you read a statement like this in the Scripture, you become expectant that God is still going to do something. It also seems to give us an indication that Samson is beginning to soften and to accept some of the reproach, seriously bringing him to the point of personal and repentance and acknowledgment of his sin.

v.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."

The Philistines are gathering a large crowd to offer a sacrifice to their god Dagon, and also to rejoice over the victory which is theirs. They are attributing the fact that their god has given Samson, their enemy, into their hand.

v.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."

Not look on
Any more
women...

Last chapter
their rejoicing
is premature

What a tragedy to provide these people with the opportunity of being able to attribute to their god a victory over the forces of God by Samson's own unwillingness to be in a position for God to use him to bring about victory for the forces of Israel.

v.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.

After the feasting and the drinking, they are in high spirits over this victory; and now they want to call out Samson as a spectacle so that they can be amused by his blindness, and also his weakness. They brought him from the prison and he did entertain them in his helplessness. Then they made him stand between the pillars so that they could see him as a constant reminder of why they are celebrating like they are.

v.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."

Samson, who is being led by a little boy of the Philistines, makes a request of him; and that is, to let him feel the pillars on which the house rests, that I may lean against them.

v.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.

v.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."

Samson, realizing I believe, his failure and the fact that he has been so careless with his life now calls upon the Lord. This is the first time in the record that we see him doing this. O that he would have learned a long time ago the source of his strength, and would have learned to be dependent upon the Lord before it was too late. But now he is praying and Psalm 50:15 says, "Call upon me in the day of trouble and I will deliver thee and thou shall glorify me." His prayer is, "Oh 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."

v.29 And 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.

After Samson prays, he grabs hold of the two middle pillars on which the house is resting. And he braced himself against them, the one with his right hand and the other with his left.

As Samson's arms stretched to the two pillars supporting the house of Dagon, so Jesus' arms stretched out upon the cross, shook and cast down to its basis the kingdom of darkness, of which the earthquake, the rent rocks, and open graves were the sign. Through death Jesus destroyed him that had the power of death, so he obtains our deliverance from the enemy. As Samson voluntarily gave his life for Israel's deliverance, so Jesus freely gave His life, a ransom for us.

v.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.

Samson cries aloud, "Let me die with the Philistines!" And then, all of his might strengthened by the Lord in answer to his prayer, the house fell on the lords and all the people who were with it. And we get the final statement: "So the dead whom he killed at his death were more than those whom he killed in his life."

It was then that Samson cried to the Lord--but notice there is no sign of repentance, no word of regret, only a burning passion for revenge. His death was in keeping with his life-style, always his own will, always his own way. It is interesting to realize that the lords who paid for his capture perished with him. Delilah was sure to have been there because she was the great heroine. She also would perish in this final massacre. The building which collapsed was a temple of Dagon, so at the end, the Lord used Samson to execute judgment and destruction on the place, the priest, and the people.

Thus dies the mighty Samson, triumphant in his fall, and more terrible to the Philistines in his death than even during his life. Who can in this but be reminded of that adorable Savior who triumphed over principalities and powers upon the cross, and by death overcame him that had the power of death, and delivered those who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.

v.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.

It is his brothers and his father's household that come down from Zorah to Gaza, and there they take him and bring him up and bury him between Zorah and Eshtaol.

There is another note of tragedy here in this 31st verse, and that is, we see the fact that his father has died. What a tragedy for this godly man to have died with the awareness upon his heart, the burden and concern for a wayward son who had not been faithful to follow what the Lord had

Lived too long in sin And thought to live

"I did it my way"

'Did Move to liberate Israel in His death than in His Life--"

Turned the Light The Party Over

designed for blessing in his life. It is true, those words of Jacob in Genesis 42:38, "My son shall not go down with you, for his brother is dead and he alone is left. If harm should befall him on the journey you are taking, then you- will bring my gray hair down to sheol in sorrow."

CONCLUSION:

We now come to the final chapter in the life of Samson, and there are a number of lessons that we can learn from this particular study.

Timnah
LESSON #1: Moral deterioration is a process of time. We see this in his relationship with the harlot at Gaza and his relationship with Delilah.

LESSON #2: Samson is defeated because he did not learn his lesson at Timnah.

LESSON #3: The only way to victory in moral temptation is to flee it.

LESSON #4: Sin blinds, sin binds, and sin grinds.

LESSON #5: How faithful the Lord is to answer his final prayer.

LESSON #6: A man walking out of fellowship with God becomes a laughing-stock to the world.

Mike Hubbard
LESSON #7: Samson, like the Lord Jesus, destroyed the enemies in his death. For Samson it was the Philistines; and for the Lord Jesus, it was all the forces of evil and Satan's kingdom.

Lesson #8 Playing with temptation will destroy you.
Meet it like Jesus with the word. 1 Cor. 10:13

How close to last opportunity — Now!!