

# Judges 16 - Samson and the Gates of Gaza; Samson Meets Delilah; Capture, Imprisonment & Death of Samson

II. Failure in rescue of Israel through the seven cycles (Judges 3:7—16:31)

(13) Samson defeats the Philistines (Judges 13:1—16:31)

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(iv) Samson shows his strength at Gaza (16:1-3)

(v) Samson and Delilah (16:4-22)

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## Judges 16

(d) Samson's conflict with the Philistines (Judges 14:1—16:31)

(iv) Samson shows his strength at Gaza (16:1-3)

1 Now Samson went to Gaza and saw a prostitute there, and had relations with her.

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

1 Sometime later, Samson went to Gaza, saw a prostitute there, and went in to have sex with her.

1 Then went Samson to Gaza, and saw there an harlot, and went in unto her.

- Gaza was an important seaport town located about 15 miles SW of Askelon, deep in Philistine territory, and about 30 miles from Samson's hometown of Zorah (Cf. 1 Cor 10:12; Prov 5:1-14; 7:6-23)

- Sleeping with a prostitute was another violation of his Nazirite Vow

2 *When it was reported* 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's wait* until the morning light, then we will kill him."

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."

2 When the Gazites were informed, "Samson has come here!" they surrounded him, intending to lay in wait for him at the city gate throughout the entire night. They kept quiet

all night, telling each other, "At first light, let's kill him!"

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.

- The Philistines closed or blocked off all other exits from the town, and watched at the city gate so that Samson could not leave without being seen

3 Now Samson lay *asleep* until midnight, and at midnight he got up and took hold of the doors of the city gate and the two doorposts, 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.

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.

3 Meanwhile, Samson had sex until midnight, then at midnight he got up, grabbed the doors, the two door posts, and the bars of the city gate, and uprooted them. He put them on his shoulders and carried them to the top of the mountain opposite Hebron.

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.

- After his escapade with the prostitute, in the middle of the night, Samson grabbed the entire city gate structure and carried them 40 miles, all uphill, from sea level to an altitude of 2,500ft

— If this gate was typical of those during this period, it would've been an elaborate structure at least two stories high, with guard rooms flanking a tunnel-like opening

- The city gate was not only a protection for the city, but also the place where the officials met to transact business (Deut 25:7; Ruth 4:1-2)

— To "possess the gate of his enemies" was a metaphor meaning "to defeat your enemies" (Gen 22:17; 24:60)

#### (v) Samson and Delilah (16:4-22)

4 After this it came about that he was in love with a woman in the Valley of Sorek, whose name was Delilah.

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

4 After this incident, he loved a woman in Sorek Valley whose name was Delilah.

4 And it came to pass afterward, that he loved a woman in the valley of Sorek, whose name was Delilah.

- The Valley of Sorek lay between Zorah and Timnah on the border of Judah and Philistia. The city of Beth-shemesh was located there. Samson's hometown of Zoreh "looks down" on this valley.
- Whenever Samson went into enemy territory, he "went down" both geographically and spiritually (14:1,5,7,10)
- Though Delilah was probably a Philistine, she had a Semitic name meaning "devotee," so she may have been a temple prostitute
- Or her name (perhaps meaning "loose hair" or "small, slight") is a pun on the Hebrew word for "night" (*laylah*) while Samson's is related to "sun" (*shemesh*).

5 So the **governors** of the Philistines came up to her and said to her, "Entice him, and see where his great strength *lies* and how we can overpower him so that we may bind him to humble him. Then we will each give you 1,100 *pieces* of silver."

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."

5 The Philistine officials approached her and told her, "Entice him to discover where his great strength is, and how we can overpower him. We intend to tie him up and torture him. We'll each pay you 1,100 silver coins."

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.

- "...governors" - *seren*, the term used for the five Philistine kings

— This was a conspiracy of the highest level of the Philistine government. They wanted to know the source and means of his great strength; they assumed it was in some magical cause.

— Samson is never described as a physical giant or an unusually big, muscular man, though he is often pictured this way in paintings and on the screen. But in the Bible he is never described that way, which makes his great strength even more remarkable.

- 1,100 pieces of silver was quite a large sum: by comparison, Micah offered to pay his household priest ten pieces of silver a year, plus room and board (17:10); so Delilah was being rewarded most generously for her work

— If each of the princes of the five Philistine cities was in on the plan, as they probably were, Delilah would have received 5,500 pieces of silver. This shows how important it was to the Philistine leaders that Samson be captured.

6 So Delilah said to Samson, "Please tell me where your great strength *lies*, and how you can be bound to humble you."

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

6 So Delilah asked Samson, "Please tell me the secret to your great strength and how you may be tied up and tortured."

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.

- Delilah used a direct approach with Samson...

— Samson may have been suspicious of her motives, but he also had great self-assurance, and therefore he assumed he could amuse himself at her expense

— In the end, he tried to do so once too often. With each attempt, Samson's answer was not always truthful, but carried a small hint of what the truth was.

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

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."

7 Samson replied, "If I'm tied up with seven green cords that have never been dried out, then I'll become weak and just like any other human being."

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.

- "...fresh" - new, moist. Vine tendrils, pliant twigs, or twists made of crude vegetable stalks.

- These were seven tendons from an animal freshly slaughtered and therefore would not yet have dried up. In this condition, they would be tough and more firmly tied into knots.

— This is the first step toward Samson's fall, since the fact that the withes were fresh and not dried sinews means he is again trivializing his Nazirite Vow

— Like the fresh jawbone, this would still be considered part of a corpse, and his contact with it would render him unclean

— Furthermore, the number seven is significant, because his hair was tied in seven locks, and this was one small step in revealing the truth

8 Then the governors of the Philistines brought up to her seven fresh *animal* tendons that had not been dried, and she bound him with them.

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.

8 Then the Philistine leaders brought her seven green cords that had never been dried, and she tied him up with them.

**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 she had *men* prepared for an ambush in an inner room. And she said to him, "The Philistines are upon you, Samson!" But he tore the tendons to pieces just like a thread of flax is torn apart when it comes too close to fire. So his strength was not discovered.

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.

9 Meanwhile, some kidnappers were hiding inside an inner room, waiting for her signal. So she told him, "The Philistines are attacking you!" But he snapped the cords as one might break a burned candle wick. So his secret remained undiscovered.

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 had spies lying in wait, to see if the cords would hold Samson

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

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

**10** Some time later, Delilah told Samson, "Look here! You've been mocking me and lying to me. Now please tell me how you can be tied up."

**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 Then 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."

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."

11 He told her, "If I'm tied up securely with new ropes that have never been used, then I'll become weak and just like any other human being."

**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 So Delilah took new ropes and bound him with them and said to him, "The Philistines are upon you, Samson!" For the *men* in the ambush *were* waiting in the inner room. But he tore the ropes from his arms like thread.

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.

12 So Delilah grabbed some new ropes and tied him up. Then she told him, "The Philistines are attacking you, Samson!" because some kidnappers were hiding inside an inner room. But he snapped the ropes from his arms like thread.

**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.

- The men were still lying in wait, waiting to see if the ploy worked

**13** Then Delilah said to Samson, "Up to now you have toyed with 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 the pin, then I will be weak like any *other* man."

**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."

**13** Later on, Delilah told Samson, "You're still mocking me and telling me lies! Tell me how to tie you up!"

He answered her, "If you weave the seven locks on my head into a loom and fasten it with a peg, then I will become weak and just like any other human being."

**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 So while he slept, Delilah wove the seven locks of his hair with 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.

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.

14 So Delilah took the seven locks on his head and wove them into the loom while he slept. She fastened his hair with a peg and then told him, "The Philistines are attacking you, Samson!" But he woke up from his nap and pulled the pin from the loom and the weaving.

**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.

- Here, there was no mention of anyone hiding, so they apparently had left

15 Then she said to him, "How can you say, 'I love you,' when your heart is not with me? You have toyed with me these three times and have not told me where your great strength is."

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."

15 Some time later, she asked him, "How can you keep saying 'I love you!' when your heart isn't with me? These three times you've lied to me and haven't told me where your great strength lies."

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 about, when she **pressed** him daily with her words and urged him, that his soul was annoyed to death.

16 It came about when she pressed him daily with her words and urged him, that his soul was annoyed to death.

16 She nagged him every day with this speech, pestering him until he was annoyed nearly to death.

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;

- "...pressed" - *alatz*, urged; to press, plague, torment

— She put him under tremendous emotional pressure on a daily basis, so much so that he was emotionally exhausted

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."

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."

17 So he finally disclosed everything. He told her, "A razor has never touched my head, because I've been a Nazirite for God before I was born. If I am shaved, then my strength will abandon me and I will become weak like every human being."

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 Nazirite 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.

- Samson finally broke down and revealed the secret of his strength to Delilah...

- The fact that Samson would lose his strength if his hair was cut off was not because his strength was in his hair, but because cutting it would visibly manifest disobedience to the Lord

— Samson's disobedience began earlier by him eating the honey from the body of the lion, and that culminated in revealing the truth to Delilah, whom, by now, he had no good reason to trust

— His hair was the most visible, continuous, and unbreakable symbol of the Nazirite Vow. He broke his Nazirite Vow several times before, but these were actions that came and went. However, with his visible hair cut off, all remnants of his separation for God disappeared, and he was now fully separated from God.

— Samson's strength came from the Spirit of God, not from his long hair. His long hair was only a symbol of his connection to the source.

**18** When Delilah saw that he had told her all *that was in* his heart, she sent *word* and called the governors of the Philistines, saying, "Come up once more, for he has told me all *that is in* his heart." Then the governors of the Philistines came up to her and brought up the money in their hands.

**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.

**18** When Delilah realized that he had disclosed everything to her, she sent for the Philistine officials and told them, "Hurry up and come here at once, because he has told me everything." So the Philistine officials went to her and brought their money with them.

**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.

- Being his lover, she recognized the difference between how he said things before and how he said things now

19 And she made him sleep on her knees, and called for a man and had him shave off the seven locks of his head. Then **she began to humble him**, and his strength left him.

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.

19 So she enticed him to fall asleep on her lap, called for a man to shave off his seven locks of hair from his head, and so began to humiliate him. Then his strength abandoned him.

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.

- The betrayal...

- "...she began to humble him" - a test; she did something to him physically that would test his strength before springing the final trap

— It was somehow obvious that he was not as strong as he was before

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.

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.

20 When she cried out, "The Philistines are attacking you, Samson!" he woke from his sleep and told himself, "I'll go out like I did at other times like this and shake myself free." But he didn't know that the LORD had abandoned 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.

- The Nazirite vow reads literally: "...because the consecration (*nezer*) of his God is upon his head" (Num 6:7)

— The basic meaning of the word *nezer* is "separation" or "consecration"; but it is also used of a royal crown (2 Sam 1:10; Zech 9:16; Ps 89:39). Samson's long hair was his "royal crown" and he lost it because of his sin.

- With God's departure, Samson's strength departed

— God remained with him as long as he maintained the visible symbol of his Nazirite Vow; all the other times that he broke the vow, God was still with him. But, as soon as he broke away from this symbol, sacrificing his hair—the visible symbol of his Nazirite Vow, which he kept in honor of the Lord—then God departed from him, and with God's departure went his strength.

— The strength of Samson did not reside in his hair, as hair, but in the fact that the Lord was with him. God was with him as long as he maintained his condition, at least outwardly, as a Nazirite.

- The Holy Spirit left King Saul because of his sins (1 Sam 16:14) and he also lost his crown (2 Sam 1:10)

— ***Sin makes slaves out of kings; grace makes kings out of sinners***

— Since Samson didn't discipline his body, he lost both his crown and his prize (1 Cor 9:24-27)

21 Then the Philistines seized him and **gougedout** his eyes; and they brought him down to Gaza and restrained him with bronze chains, and he became a **grinder in the prison**.

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.

21 Then the Philistines grabbed him, gouged out his eyes, brought him down to Gaza, tied him up in bronze chains, and made him grind grain in their prison.

**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.

- "...gouged out" - literally, "they bored out his eyes"

— His eyes had gotten him into trouble (14:1-2; 16:1)

- Samson is one of three men in Scripture who are especially identified with the darkness:

— King Saul, who went out in the darkness to get last-minute help from a witch (1 Sam 28)

— Judas, who "went immediately out: and it was night" (John 13:30)

— Saul lived for the world, Samson yielded to the flesh, and Judas gave himself to the devil (John 13:2,27); and all three ended up taking their own lives

- They brought Samson to Gaza, deep inside Philistine territory so he could not easily be rescued

- "...grinder in the prison" - this was work that did not require strength; it was further humiliation for Samson because he was forced to do the kind of work normally reserved for women (Ex 11:5; Is 47:2)

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

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

22 But the hair on his head began to grow again after it had been shaved off.

22 Howbeit the hair of his head began to grow again after he was shaven.

- Obviously, hair grows back, but by stating the obvious, this verse implies that Samson was re-examining his relationship with God and his Nazirite Vow

(vi) Samson suicide at Dagon's feast (16:23-31a)

**23** Now the governors of the Philistines assembled to offer a great sacrifice to Dagon their god, and to celebrate, for they said,

"Our god has handed Samson our enemy over to us."

**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."

**23** Some time later, the Philistine officials got together to present a magnificent sacrifice to their god Dagon, and to throw a party, because they were claiming, "Our god has given Samson into our control!"

**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.

- The Philistines did not understand that it was Israel's and Samson's own God who delivered Samson to the Philistines

24 When the people saw him, they praised their god, for they said,  
"Our god has handed our enemy over to us,  
Even the destroyer of our country,  
Who has killed many of us."

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."

24 When the people saw Samson, they praised their god, claiming:  
Our god has given our enemy into our control;  
the one who was destroying our land,  
and who has killed many of us.

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 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**.

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.

25 Because they all got good and drunk, they ordered, "Go get Samson, so he can entertain us." So they called for Samson from the prison, and he entertained them while they made him stand between the pillars.

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.

- In the KJV, two different words are translated "make sport" (translated as "entertain" and "perform" in the NIV)

— The first means to celebrate, frolic, joke, and entertain; and the second means to perform, make sport, and laugh. They wanted to subject him to laughter and jeering.

- Both Hebrew words carry the idea of entertaining people by making them laugh. The champion is now a comedian.
- "...between the pillars" - these were two middle pillars that supported at least the main hall
- The main hall was where the more prominent members of Philistine society were gathered

### **Consequences for Samson's Violation of the Nazirite Vow**

- (1) He did not know that his strength had gone and was ignorant of his spiritual powerlessness
  - (2) He was taken captive
  - (3) He lost his eyesight
  - (4) He was enslaved
  - (5) He became a scandal and a means of glorifying a pagan god in the place of the God of Israel
  - (6) He became the object of Philistine ridicule and was viewed as a clown
- 26 Then Samson said to the boy who was holding his hand, "Let me feel the pillars on which the house rests, so that I may lean against them."
- 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."
- 26 Then Samson told the young man who had been leading him around by the hand, "Let me touch and feel the pillars on which this building rests, and I'll support myself against them."
- 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.
- Being blind, he asked the lad who guided him to lean him against the pillars
- 27 Now the house was full of men and women, and all the governors of the Philistines were there. And about three thousand men and women were on the roof looking on while Samson was entertaining *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*.
- 27 Now the building was full of men, women, and all the Philistine officials, with about 3,000 men and women on the roof watching Samson while he was entertaining 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.

- All five Philistine kings were present, along with the more important members of Philistine society

**28** Then Samson called to the LORD and said, "Lord GOD, please remember me and please strengthen me just this time, O God, that I may at once take vengeance on the Philistines for my two eyes."

**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."

**28** Then Samson cried out to the LORD, "Lord GOD, please remember me. And please strengthen me this one time, God, so that I can repay the Philistines right now for my two eyes."

**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.

- In this prayer, Samson used three names of God: *Adonai*, *Yahweh*, and *Elohim*

29 Then 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.

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.

29 Then Samson grabbed the two middle pillars upon which the house rested and braced himself against them with one pillar in his right hand and the other in his left.

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 pushed outwards powerfully, so that the house fell on the governors and all the people who were in it. And the dead whom he killed at his death were **more than those whom he killed during his lifetime**.

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.

30 Then Samson said, "Let me die with the Philistines!" He strained with all his strength until the building collapsed on the officials and every person in it. As a result, the dead whom he killed at his death were more than those whom he killed during his lifetime.

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.

- The man who was set apart by God and for God would now die with the uncircumcised Philistines

- "...more than those whom he killed during his lifetime" - by combining 14:19; 15:8,15, Samson killed at least 1,100 Philistines

— Here, he may have killed as many as 3,000, including all five Philistine kings

#### (D) Silence (16:31b)

31 Then his brothers and all his father's household came down and took him, and brought him up and buried him between Zorah and Eshtaol in the tomb of his father Manoah. So he had judged Israel for twenty years.

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.

31 Afterwards, his brothers and his father's household servants came down, took him, brought him back, and buried him in his father Manoah's tomb between Zorah and Eshtaol. He had governed Israel for 20 years.

**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.

### **Conclusion**

Samson was not ignorant of his calling. He had known all along that he was a Nazirite and that the secret of his strength lay in his special relationship with God (his hair was merely a sign of this). But he had never been able fully to come to terms with his separateness. He had always secretly wanted to be as other men and to enjoy the pleasures that they enjoyed—a temptation that is surely common to Christians today. He was, however, venerated in the "Hall of Faith" in Heb 11:32.

Prov 25:28: Whoever has no rule over his own spirit is like a city broken down, without walls.

Prov 16:32: He who is slow to anger is better than the mighty, and he who rules his spirit than he who takes a city.

### **Paradoxical Samson**

(1) He could defeat the strongest of men, but was defeated by the weakest of women.

(2) He could ask God for a miracle on behalf of his eyes; but on the other hand, it was following his eyes that got him into trouble.

(3) He would avoid going through the vineyard, but took honey out of the body of a lion.

(4) He prayed not to fall into the hands of the uncircumcised Philistines, yet had relations with at least three Philistine women.

(5) He called himself God's servant, but ignored his parents' plea not to marry a Philistine.

(6) God performed mighty miracles through him, yet allowed him to be captured, blinded, jailed, and humiliated.