

Judges 15-16 – “The Rise and Fall of Samson part 2”

We continue our study in the life of Samson tonight. He’s the last of the judges mentioned in the book of Judges. As we saw last time, he’s an interesting study in contrasts. He had the power to subdue the Philistines, but he didn’t have the power to subdue the flesh. He was a judge that showed great strength physically yet showed great weakness spiritually. And we’ll see more of these things as we continue in the sad sordid saga of Samson.

15:1-3 - *After a while, in the time of wheat harvest, it happened that Samson visited his wife with a young goat. And he said, “Let me go in to my wife, into her room.” But her father would not permit him to go in. ² Her father said, “I really thought that you thoroughly hated her; therefore I gave her to your companion. Is not her younger sister better than she? Please, take her instead.” ³ And Samson said to them, “This time I shall be blameless regarding the Philistines if I harm them!”*

In the last chapter we saw that Samson chose a woman among the Philistines to marry. This was all based on serving his own pleasure. She appealed to his flesh (Judges 14:3). But then at the wedding feast he poses a riddle. His new bride, under threats of the Philistines, badgers Samson for the answer. When she finally gets it she shares with the Philistines which angers Samson when they give it.

When he fulfilled his end of the deal, Samson went back to his father’s house leaving his wife by herself. Thinking Samson was altogether done with her, she was then given to his best man.

But now in Chapter 15 we read that Samson returns to get his bride.

There are some key words here: ***after a while*** and ***in the time of wheat harvest***.

- In other words, Samson has been gone from his wife for several months. The time of wheat harvest would have been May or June. If the wedding took place around the time of the grape harvest (in the fall), then he’s been away for anywhere from 6-8 months.
- Samson has come around. He’s realizing how much he misses her. And so he comes ready to win her back and consummate the marriage.
- He comes ready with gift in hand. Better than a bouquet of roses or a box of Lindt chocolate, he brings a ***young goat***. Every woman’s wish!

- His desire is to come into her room and consummate the marriage, fulfilling their marital vows.

Samson's father-in-law is in disbelief at Samson's return and request. Samson left in such a huff he thought it would be the last time they'd see Samson. So convinced was he that he gave his daughter to another.

And seeing his folly in this, the father tries appealing to Samson by offering the younger sister. He even adds that she's better than the one Samson married. To which the older sister said, *"Thanks for nothing Pops!"*

Well, Samson is pretty irate with all this. He's a man of passion, but he's a man whose passions get the better of him. It's an unbridled passion which will easily get you into trouble if left unchecked.

So Samson is already looking at how he's going to get even with these guys. He even feels justified in this. He says, ***this time I shall be blameless***... (15:3). That statement shows that he didn't feel justified in his previous treatment of the Philistines (14:19). But now he's about to unleash the beast against them for taking his wife from him.

15:4-5 - Then Samson went and caught three hundred foxes; and he took torches, turned the foxes tail to tail, and put a torch between each pair of tails. ⁵ When he had set the torches on fire, he let the foxes go into the standing grain of the Philistines, and burned up both the shocks and the standing grain, as well as the vineyards and olive groves.

Samson came up with a very interesting and strategic way to get back at the Philistines.

Catching 300 of anything is quite a feat. Catching 300 foxes would be extremely difficult. The Hebrew word used here could also refer to jackals, which many believe is what is meant here.

- Foxes are solitary animals, whereas jackals run in packs and would be much easier to catch.

So he catches these guys and ties their tails together in pairs. He ties a torch between each pair of tails and now he has 150 mobile torches taking out the Philistines livelihood.

Remember we read that it was the time of wheat harvest. Some grain was picked and harvested (the shocks), some was still standing, and it would have been

ready to ignite quickly. Again, this would have devastated their economy. Plus the ***vineyards and olive groves*** were decimated.

- What's interesting is the Philistine god, Dagon, was known to be the god of grain among other things.
- This was a huge embarrassment to the god they worshipped.

15:6 - *Then the Philistines said, "Who has done this?" And they answered, "Samson, the son-in-law of the Timnite, because he has taken his wife and given her to his companion." So the Philistines came up and burned her and her father with fire.*

We see here the brutality and damage that comes from sin. Samson may have felt justified in doing what he did to the Philistines, but it didn't mean he had to do it. He's been a man driven by the flesh, driven by pride, acting out of self-interest, and the fallout has been tragic. Nothing is getting better.

And here we see how bad it got. The Philistines took his wife and father-in-law and burned them both.

- That was the very threat laid against her in 14:15, in which she tried to avoid by betraying Samson.

All of this is just creating more fire for Samson to further act against the Philistines...

15:7-8 - *Samson said to them, "Since you would do a thing like this, I will surely take revenge on you, and after that I will cease." ⁸ So he attacked them hip and thigh with a great slaughter; then he went down and dwelt in the cleft of the rock of Etam.*

Samson evidently loved this woman he married. He seeks to avenge her death after which he says he will then cease.

- Naively Samson thought one more attack and defeat will probably end it. But all it did was fuel the fire for retaliation after retaliation.
- We often stir up more strife when we think we can bring an end to something through force.
- This is why the Bible is so clear on this sort of action:
 - **1 Peter 3:9**, *"not returning evil for evil or reviling for reviling, but on the contrary blessing, knowing that you were called to this, that you may inherit a blessing."*
 - **Proverbs 10:12**, *"Hatred stirs up strife, But love covers all sins."*

- **Romans 12:19**, *"Beloved, do not avenge yourselves, but rather give place to wrath; for it is written, "Vengeance is Mine, I will repay," says the Lord."*

And so Samson went after them quite hard. To say **he attacked them hip and thigh** doesn't mean he went after their hip and thigh. That's certainly how I would have fought 😊.

- This term hip and thigh is an expression to say that he attacked them with great fervor and might. He went ballistic on them.
- In other words, He did not give place to wrath.

After this attack Samson went and dwelt in the cleft of the rock of Etam.

15:9-11 - *Now the Philistines went up, encamped in Judah, and deployed themselves against Lehi. ¹⁰ And the men of Judah said, "Why have you come up against us?" So they answered, "We have come up to arrest Samson, to do to him as he has done to us." ¹¹ Then three thousand men of Judah went down to the cleft of the rock of Etam, and said to Samson, "Do you not know that the Philistines rule over us? What is this you have done to us?" And he said to them, "As they did to me, so I have done to them."*

The Philistines are moving in to Judah's territory with one purpose in mind, they want Samson. So 3000 Judahites go to Samson and question him. And they come with a sad statement, **do you not know that the Philistines rule over us?**

This is not the way it's supposed to be. It's as though they've rolled over and accepted their fate. They're not putting up any resistance against their enemy.

Samson's reply to them is that he's simply doing to the Philistines what they did to him. Yet the Philistines are saying they're just doing to him as he has done to them. They're arguing over who started it. You see the endless cycle you get into when being driven by vengeance. It just breeds more violence.

15:12-13 - *But they said to him, "We have come down to arrest you, that we may deliver you into the hand of the Philistines." Then Samson said to them, "Swear to me that you will not kill me yourselves." ¹³ So they spoke to him, saying, "No, but we will tie you securely and deliver you into their hand; but we will surely not kill you." And they bound him with two new ropes and brought him up from the rock.*

Sadly the Judahites have become a shell of the tribe they once were militarily and confidently. Now they're bowing to their enemy the Philistines. Instead of seeing the might Samson can provide in defeating them, the Judahites are now siding with their enemy in capturing Samson and delivering him to them. Ironically, they are delivering the one who is to be their deliverer!

The Judahites have become complacent in their spiritual walk and are compromising freedom for slavery.

- "It is a sad fact of Christian experience that if you are a Christian committed to growing and maturing in Jesus Christ, you will often be hindered the most by other Christians who have become accustomed and accommodated to an anemic, wishy-washy spiritual life." (Inrig, as quoted from Constable)

It's been said that the Church is the only place that shoots their own wounded. Meaning we often fail to show grace to one another and end up opposing each other rather than our common enemy. Those from Judah certainly were failing to see the strength that comes from standing together in support of each other. They would rather support their enemy than support God's deliverer.

- How often do we assist the enemy by opposing each other needlessly?
- "It is suspicious that Judah could not rally an army to challenge the Philistines, but they certainly did rally an army to extradite one man—one of their own!"¹

Samson was willing to go along with their plan of delivering him to the Philistines as long as they didn't kill him. Perhaps he's being led of the Lord here because it's a ridiculous plan. The Judahites have to know full well that by delivering him to the Philistines bound securely means they will surely kill him.

But the Lord is indeed in all this because this will be the means to carry out his work (just like we saw in 14:4).

15:14-15 - *When he came to Lehi, the Philistines came shouting against him. Then the Spirit of the Lord came mightily upon him; and the ropes that were on his arms became like flax that is burned with fire, and his bonds broke loose from his hands.¹⁵ He found a fresh jawbone of a donkey, reached out his hand and took it, and killed a thousand men with it.*

Here we see again the key to Samsons strength – it's the Spirit of the Lord.

¹ Philips, W. G. (2004). *Judges, Ruth* (M. Anders, Ed.; Vol. 5, p. 238). Holman Reference.

Samson surrendered himself, and it's then that the Spirit of the Lord came mightily upon him.

- It's the same for us. The more we are surrendered to the Lord, the more we'll experience His strength and might upon us. We're getting ourselves out of the way that the Lord may have His way.

There's nothing within Samson that he should be confident in himself.

So too, there is nothing to boast in of ourselves. We can do nothing apart from Christ. How we need to remember that He is our strength. Sin is not mastered by trying harder or seeking reforms. It's overcome by the Spirit filling you and strengthening you.

As the Philistines come against him with advanced weaponry, Samson grabs the jawbone of a dead donkey. And with this he slayed 1000 Philistines.

- If this was all of them it makes it even more pathetic that 3000 Judahites would not stand up to them.

The lesson is a good one, God will do great things with whatever you have when you surrender it to the Lord. We never have to say, if I only had this, then I could be greatly used. God is not looking for your might, He's looking to show Himself mighty through you.

- We saw it with Shamgar and his ox goad (Judges 3:31). David and his sling. The young lad with his small lunch fed thousands. What's in your hand? Give it to God and see what He can do with it.
- **1 Corinthians 1:27**, *"But God has chosen the foolish things of the world to put to shame the wise, and God has chosen the weak things of the world to put to shame the things which are mighty;"*

15:16-17 - Then Samson said: "With the jawbone of a donkey, Heaps upon heaps, With the jawbone of a donkey I have slain a thousand men!"¹⁷ And so it was, when he had finished speaking, that he threw the jawbone from his hand, and called that place Ramath Lehi.

Samson makes another poem here. He loved riddles and poetry.

“There is a play on words in verse 16, as if to say, “With the jawbone of an ass I have ass-ass-inated them,” or “With the jawbone of an ass I have piled them in a mass!” (Moffatt).”²

The words **donkey** and **heap** in Hebrew are essentially the same – *hamor*.

Ramath Lehi means Jawbone hill. Sadly Samson is attributing this great victory to himself. ***I have slain a thousand men!*** Well, it seems like a good time for a little slice of humility.

15:18-20 - *Then he became very thirsty; so he cried out to the Lord and said, “You have given this great deliverance by the hand of Your servant; and now shall I die of thirst and fall into the hand of the uncircumcised?”*¹⁹ ***So God split the hollow place that is in Lehi, and water came out, and he drank; and his spirit returned, and he revived. Therefore he called its name En Hakkore, which is in Lehi to this day.***²⁰ ***And he judged Israel twenty years in the days of the Philistines.”***

In a moment of desperation Samson cries out to the Lord. And it’s the first time we see him doing so. It’s sad that some people have to reach a place of desperation before seeking God. It’s to be the way in which we live. Daily we are to be dependent on Him.

- En Hakkore means *spring of the caller*. May we be calling out to the Lord for He is our help.
- **Psalm 145:18**, *"The Lord is near to all who call upon Him, To all who call upon Him in truth."*

Samson is now saying the right things – ***You have given this great deliverance***... But he’s saying it to question God.

Nevertheless, God in His grace provides water for Samson to be nourished.

So God used Samson to judge (be a deliverer) for Israel for the next 20 years. You may be questioning, why? Why Samson? He’s such a complicated guy prone to compromise and yielding to the flesh. Yet God in His grace chose to work through a man flawed as he was. It gives me hope and comfort though to know that God isn’t holding out for perfection, He’s willing to use whoever and whenever.

² MacDonald, W. (1995). *Believer’s Bible Commentary: Old and New Testaments* (A. Farstad, Ed.; p. 280). Thomas Nelson.

- It's definitely no excuse to compromise with sin or to think we can just do what we want without consequences. But God is faithful and accomplishes what He desires through unconventional means.

What's interesting is we just read that Samson judged Israel for 20 years. There's no mention, as we saw previously, that the land had rest. It may have been a very tumultuous 2 decades with the constant fear and threat of the Philistines.

16:1-2 - *Now Samson went to Gaza and saw a harlot there, and went in to her. ² When the Gazites were told, "Samson has come here!" they surrounded the place and lay in wait for him all night at the gate of the city. They were quiet all night, saying, "In the morning, when it is daylight, we will kill him."*

Here's Samson being Samson again. He goes to Gaza. It's a chief city among the Philistines. He's going right into enemy territory. There are some places we just have no business being. We're only bringing unnecessary trouble on ourselves by entering into the enemy's ground.

- He's public enemy #1. What is he thinking? It seems he's only looking to gratify the desires of the flesh. When that is what's driving us, we'll never make wise decisions.

Once there, Samson sees a harlot, a prostitute, and enters into a relationship with her. Once again, so much of his life was being driven by the flesh.

When the Philistines catch wind that Samson is there they plot to capture him in the morning when he tries leaving the city.

16:3 - *And Samson lay low till midnight; then he arose at midnight, took hold of the doors of the gate of the city and the two gateposts, pulled them up, bar and all, put them on his shoulders, and carried them to the top of the hill that faces Hebron.*

Samson heads out at midnight and no locked doors or gates are going to stop him. He just rips these gates out of the ground, graciously being empowered by the Spirit again, and he takes them up to the top of the hill.

God is amazingly still working through Samson to carry out His purposes.

16:4 - *Afterward it happened that he loved a woman in the Valley of Sorek, whose name was Delilah.*

Here now we're introduced to a very famous woman in Scripture. There's not a lot written about her but her story stands out for the kind of woman she was and the kind of man Samson was. These two were made for each other.

Though we don't read specifically that Delilah was a Philistine, it's widely believed that she was. She seems to have an open audience with the lords of the Philistines as we read in the next verse.

But Samson falls in love with her in the **Valley of Sorek**. Sorek means *choice vines*. So he's in the valley of choice vines where once again Samson should not be! And he's once again enticed by the flesh and falls for a woman he should be staying away from.

- Let alone the many ways he's been breaking his Nazirite vow, he's just not living remotely close to how an Israelite should be setting himself apart for the Lord.

But as Samson continues to be driven by the lusts of the flesh, he's losing any good judgment (not that he ever really had it to begin with).

- This is the problem with the person led by the flesh. Decisions are made that are not wise, and the consequences of those actions are often ignored. We see this more through this chapter.

Delilah's name means delicate or feeble. It's a fitting reminder of Samson's life and the nation of Israel as a whole. Because they've walked away from obediently following God, they've been left in a feeble state. Such is the case when we choose our desires over God's.

16:5 - *And the lords of the Philistines came up to her and said to her, "Entice him, and find out where his great strength lies, and by what means we may overpower him, that we may bind him to afflict him; and every one of us will give you eleven hundred pieces of silver."*

Delilah was more interested in silver than Samson. She wanted riches rather than a relationship.

- 1100 pieces of silver is 1100 shekels. There is a huge discrepancy over what people believe this amount to today. But in Judges 17:10, 10 shekels of silver seemed enough to provide an annual income. Since Delilah received this from each of the lords (probably rulers over the 5 chief cities of Philistia), this would be 5500 shekels and a very significant amount.

You know the song, can't buy me love, but apparently Delilah can buy herself out of love. This is a significant amount, but is it really worth the trouble of sabotaging your husband?

Now remember, these Philistines are wanting to find out the secret of his strength. In other words, it wasn't obvious. This is why I believe Samson was just an average looking guy. He didn't look like the Rock, he probably looked more like me. His strength was in the Lord and through the Spirit of the Lord.

16:6 - *So Delilah said to Samson, "Please tell me where your great strength lies, and with what you may be bound to afflict you."*

This is so ridiculous. She repeats exactly what the Philistines are wondering. Maybe it would be wise to leave out the wanting to afflict you part?? Sounds a little suspicious.

But it's even funnier that Samson doesn't question her on this. He's not stopping this conversation and asking, 'Umm, why do you want to afflict me??' That's where I'd be going with this.

But Samson instead deceives her and tells her a lie. Again, they were made for each other.

16:7-9 - *And Samson said to her, "If they bind me with seven fresh bowstrings, not yet dried, then I shall become weak, and be like any other man." 8 So the lords of the Philistines brought up to her seven fresh bowstrings, not yet dried, and she bound him with them. 9 Now men were lying in wait, staying with her in the room. And she said to him, "The Philistines are upon you, Samson!" But he broke the bowstrings as a strand of yarn breaks when it touches fire. So the secret of his strength was not known.*

This was no problem for Samson to break free from. His strength is still a mystery to everyone.

16:10-11 - *Then Delilah said to Samson, "Look, you have mocked me and told me lies. Now, please tell me what you may be bound with." 11 So he said to her, "If they bind me securely with new ropes that have never been used, then I shall become weak, and be like any other man."*

Samson has already tested this out when the Judahites bound him. He saw the new ropes fall off him like they were flax burned with fire (15:14). This is another blatant lie. The deception is going both ways.

16:12-14 - *Therefore Delilah took new ropes and bound him with them, and said to him, “The Philistines are upon you, Samson!” And men were lying in wait, staying in the room. But he broke them off his arms like a thread. ¹³ Delilah said to Samson, “Until now you have mocked me and told me lies. Tell me what you may be bound with.” And he said to her, “If you weave the seven locks of my head into the web of the loom” — ¹⁴ So she wove it tightly with the batten of the loom, and said to him, “The Philistines are upon you, Samson!” But he awoke from his sleep, and pulled out the batten and the web from the loom.*

Notice how Samson is getting closer to the secret of his strength. His hair is the last thing upholding this Nazirite vow of being separated unto the Lord.

16:15-17 - *Then she said to him, “How can you say, ‘I love you,’ when your heart is not with me? You have mocked me these three times, and have not told me where your great strength lies.” ¹⁶ And it came to pass, when she pestered him daily with her words and pressed him, so that his soul was vexed to death, ¹⁷ that he told her all his heart, and said to her, “No razor has ever come upon my head, for I have been a Nazirite to God from my mother’s womb. If I am shaven, then my strength will leave me, and I shall become weak, and be like any other man.”*

Delilah now breaks out the heavy artillery. ‘How can you say you love me?? You’ve clearly been lying to me. You don’t care about me!’

The manipulation machine is in high gear. And she didn’t let up.

She ***pestered him daily... so that his soul was vexed to death.***

Samson was fighting a losing battle. Not because she was so strong, but because he was so weak. Really quite ironic. A man known for such strength yet couldn’t hold up against a nagging wife.

- To be vexed to death meant he had lost all patience. He was sick to death of it all.

The crazy thing is why is Samson still entertaining this all? He’s had the Philistines come against him 3 times now. Clearly he has seen that Delilah is

trying to sabotage him. Does he think this is all a game? He loved his riddles. Little does he realize the game he's playing is Russian roulette.

Was Samson just a little too overconfident in his own strength and believed nothing could take him down? It seems to be that way.

Regardless of how we view all this, it's evident that Samson's passions and sin has erased all common sense.

- This is the inevitable outcome to those who allow the flesh to get out of control.

Samson finally confesses. He puts it all on the chopping block. His hair has been the last remaining unbroken vow of his Nazirite vow.

But keep in mind, his hair is not the secret to his strength. There's no magic in his hair; this is not Rapunzel. His hair is a symbol of his vow of consecration to the Lord. To cut his hair means he's breaking his vow of consecration. This is where our strength lies. It's in being set apart for the Lord and kept from the pollution of the world.

- Samson seems to be deceived to think that even if his hair is cut, he'll still have strength within himself. He's going to be in for a rude awakening.

16:18 - *When Delilah saw that he had told her all his heart, she sent and called for the lords of the Philistines, saying, "Come up once more, for he has told me all his heart." So the lords of the Philistines came up to her and brought the money in their hand.*

And this time Delilah seems to know that he's telling the truth. So she gets the Philistines, who at this point I'm sure are thinking, *No, not again!* Fool me once, shame on you, fool me twice shame on me, fool me three times, well, we'll be back for a fourth.

16:19-20 - *Then she lulled him to sleep on her knees, and called for a man and had him shave off the seven locks of his head. Then she began to torment him, and his strength left him. ²⁰ And she said, "The Philistines are upon you, Samson!" So he awoke from his sleep, and said, "I will go out as before, at other times, and shake myself free!" But he did not know that the Lord had departed from him.*

Delilah finished the deed and ***began to torment him***. In the Hebrew it speaks of humiliation. Not that she was humiliating him, but that Samson was being humbled. His strength was leaving him at this point.

1 Corinthians 10:12, *"Therefore let him who thinks he stands take heed lest he fall."*

What a sad thing to be said: ***He did not know that the Lord had departed from him.***

- God is so patient with us. He's a God of grace but He can't tolerate the steady decline of morality forever. Eventually He reaches a point where He says enough is enough. It's time for chastening rather than grace. But even His chastening is really a playing out of His grace as He seeks to draw us back to Him through it.

For Samson, there will be some chastening followed by more grace.

16:21 - *Then the Philistines took him and put out his eyes, and brought him down to Gaza. They bound him with bronze fetters, and he became a grinder in the prison.*

It's a tragic outcome for Samson. For so long he's been serving up whatever his flesh desires. But sin's only end is destruction. We can never think that we're going to come out unscathed when we follow the flesh.

This scene is a very fitting picture of sin and a life that's ruled by the passions of the flesh.

1. It will blind you from seeing what is right.
2. It will bring judgment (of which bronze is a picture of).
3. It will leave you grinding in circles. Sin is a terrible master.
 - Sin will take you further than you want to go, keep you longer than you want to stay, and cost you more than you want to pay.

But check this out. God is still not done with Samson yet. Amazing!

16:22-31 - *However, the hair of his head began to grow again after it had been shaven. ²³ Now the lords of the Philistines gathered together to offer a great sacrifice to Dagon their god, and to rejoice. And they said: "Our god has delivered into our hands Samson our enemy!" ²⁴ When the people saw him, they praised their god; for they said: "Our god has delivered into our hands our enemy, The destroyer of our land, And the one who multiplied our dead." ²⁵ So it happened, when their hearts were merry, that they said, "Call for Samson, that he may perform for us." So they called for Samson from the prison, and he performed for them. And they stationed him between the pillars. ²⁶ Then Samson said to the lad who held him by the*

hand, “Let me feel the pillars which support the temple, so that I can lean on them.”²⁷ Now the temple was full of men and women. All the lords of the Philistines were there—about three thousand men and women on the roof watching while Samson performed.²⁸ Then Samson called to the Lord, saying, “O Lord God, remember me, I pray! Strengthen me, I pray, just this once, O God, that I may with one blow take vengeance on the Philistines for my two eyes!”²⁹ And Samson took hold of the two middle pillars which supported the temple, and he braced himself against them, one on his right and the other on his left.³⁰ Then Samson said, “Let me die with the Philistines!” And he pushed with all his might, and the temple fell on the lords and all the people who were in it. So the dead that he killed at his death were more than he had killed in his life.³¹ And 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. He had judged Israel twenty years.

The last words spoken by many people have been memorialized. Some of the lesser known last words:

“I’ll hold it and you light the fuse.”

“No really, these are the good kind of mushrooms.”

“The last words of many prominent Christians were written down for history. At his death John Wesley said, “The best of all is, God is with us!” Catherine Booth, the wife of the general of the Salvation Army, said, “The waters are rising, but so am I. I am not going under, but over. Do not be concerned about dying; go on living well, the dying will be right.

Over the centuries, for many martyrs their sweetest times with their Lord were just before their deaths, even when all others had forsaken them because the Lord was still with them.

By contrast, these are Samson’s famous last words: “O Lord GOD, remember me, I pray! Strengthen me, I pray, just this once, O God, that I may with one blow take vengeance on the Philistines for my two eyes!... Let me die with the Philistines!” (Judg. 16:28, 30). These words do not exactly express the most noble sentiment one may hear, as “famous last words” go. But then, Samson himself was not all that impressive.”³

³ Philips, W. G. (2004). *Judges, Ruth* (M. Anders, Ed.; Vol. 5, pp. 247–248). Holman Reference.

Nevertheless, Samson, who was never seen to be one to worship the Lord, or offer sacrifice to the Lord, in the last moment of his life lays down his life to fulfill what God had called him to do.

Samson lived a life that should be a good lesson to us. His was a life of wasted potential. He could have been one of the greatest of the Old Testament heroes but he squandered so much away to satisfy his own desires. Yet God chose to use him in a mighty way in the last moments of his life. Why? Because God is a God of second chances, third chances, infinite chances.

- I'm thankful that God doesn't write me off when I blow it.
- In fact, according to the Nazirite vow, if one was defiled, they could shave their head, bring a sacrifice to the Lord, and be reconsecrated. They could have a fresh start. **Numbers 6:12**, *"He shall consecrate to the Lord the days of his separation, and bring a male lamb in its first year as a trespass offering; but the former days shall be lost, because his separation was defiled."*
- It's the same for us. When we come to the Lord in repentance, we have a fresh start. The former days are lost, our failures are forgotten.
- Samson is recorded in the Hall of Faith as a man who did great things for God (Hebrews 11:32-34).
- This is the case when we see things on the other side of the cross. Amen to that!

Lessons Learned from Samson

1. Be concerned for honoring the Lord in your life.
2. Compromise in little things leads to a big fall.
3. If you don't die to the desires of your flesh, you will die from the desires of your flesh.