

"A Woman At Her Worst" - JUDGES 16:6-22
Wednesday 8/8/18 – Jeff Lyle

I. Delilah Used Manipulation To Get What She Wanted (6-9)

A. Delilah moved in deception (6) – “So Delilah said to Samson, “Please tell me where your great strength lies, and how you might be bound, that one could subdue you.”

Delilah’s pillow-talk seemed innocent enough, but she was an enemy in his bed. Not for the first time, Samson finds that the enemy is going hard after the secret to his anointing. God had used Samson to accomplish His purposes for many years, in spite of Samson’s lack of consecration. While Samson’s character was clearly lacking, God had chosen him as a vessel to bring defeat to the Philistines. Now Samson was committing the grave mistake of leaving his anointing unguarded. He was flirting with destruction and that flirtation would soon lead to his final compromise.

B. Samson initially outplayed her (7-9) – “Samson said to her, “If they bind me with seven fresh bowstrings that have not been dried, then I shall become weak and be like any other man.” 8 Then the lords of the Philistines brought up to her seven fresh bowstrings that had not been dried, and she bound him with them. 9 Now she had men lying in ambush in an inner chamber. And she said to him, “The Philistines are upon you, Samson!” But he snapped the bowstrings, as a thread of flax snaps when it touches the fire. So, the secret of his strength was not known.”

Once again, Samson turns to fun and games. He was prone to play around with precious things like his calling and his usefulness to God. Ignorant of how the enemy had coordinated with Delilah, Samson did not sense the degree of danger he was entering. He was beginning to cast the pearls of God’s secret to the swine of Delilah’s manipulative tactics. Samson should have shut down the questioning from Delilah the moment she broached the topic of his strength. He had learned little to nothing about his vulnerability with women. He was inching closer towards his demise.

C. Delilah played the victim (10-13a) – “Then Delilah said to Samson, “Behold, you have mocked me and told me lies. Please tell me how you might be bound.” 11 And he said to her, “If they bind me with new ropes that have not been used, then I shall become weak and be like any other man.” 12 So Delilah took new ropes and bound him with them and said to him, “The Philistines are upon you, Samson!” And the men lying in ambush were in an inner chamber.

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But he snapped the ropes off his arms like a thread. 13 Then Delilah said to Samson, "Until now you have mocked me and told me lies. Tell me how you might be bound."

Delilah was, if nothing else, very persistent. She was confident that Israel's strongman was no match for her feminine charms. She had already captured Samson's eyes with her looks, now she was chipping away at his will with her seductive manipulations. Women have been granted some unique gifting from God. Men typically love to be the hero, the one in control, the person who comes in and provides what nobody else can provide. Delilah was playing with Samson's heart, manipulating the situation in order to portray herself as the weakened one who stood in need. She preyed upon his pity and made herself out to be a victim of Samson's secrecy. When she found that he was resisting her at a higher level than she expected, she went for a final shot and strengthened her requests that he stop lying to her. She seemed to make one final push when she demanded that he reveal to her the secret of his strength. Women who do not operate under the control of the Holy Spirit will often take their God-given influence with men and turn it into carnal manipulation of men. Crafty women know that most men will fall to their tactics if they simply use the right amount of charm and cleverly push the man's buttons.

II. Samson Was Blind To Her Deception (13b-17)

A. She was getting closer to her goal (13b-14) – "And he said to her, "If you weave the seven locks of my head with the web and fasten it tight with the pin, then I shall become weak and be like any other man." 14 So while he slept, Delilah took the seven locks of his head and wove them into the web. And she made them tight with the pin and said to him, "The Philistines are upon you, Samson!" But he awoke from his sleep and pulled away the pin, the loom, and the web."

Do you notice the progress that Delilah is making? It is subtle, but Samson has now been broken down enough to where he has allowed Delilah into the particular realm of his true anointing. Up to this point, he had only talked to her about his hands. Now, for the first time, he mentions his hair. Though he still does not reveal the true secret, his incremental revealing of the source of his supernatural strength is nearly complete. Delilah has been

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persistent, persuasive and she is about to deal the death blow to Samson, so she can collect her prize to the Philistines.

B. She wearied him with her emotions & nagging (15) – “And 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 you have not told me where your great strength lies.” 16 And when she pressed him hard with her words day after day, and urged him, his soul was vexed to death.””

Here it is – the moment of Delilah’s greatest push. She brings out the nuclear bomb that any and all manipulative women know how to use to get exactly what they want. What is this weapon? GUILT. Delilah questions his love for her. She accuses him of falling short of his relational commitments. How ironic it is that she questions Samson’s love while she is in the act of betraying him! We see how dull that Samson had become in that his radar did not go off when she continued to hound him for days. Should he not have clearly seen that she had ulterior motives? He was blinded by his desire for her. He did not wish to lose her. He waited for her to give up on her demands. But Delilah was driven by a lust for all the financial reward that she had been promised. This woman was bound and determined that her will was stronger than Samson’s will. She was right. Her carnal persistence paid off. Her nagging won the day. Word by word, she wore down Samson’s ability to resist.

C. She defeated him through patient maneuvering (17) – “And he told her all his heart, and said to her, “A razor has never come upon my head, for I have been a Nazirite to God from my mother’s womb. If my head is shaved, then my strength will leave me, and I shall become weak and be like any other man.””

And there you have it. Samson lost the battle. He revealed the secret of his supernatural, God-given, grace-gifted strength. He told her about his Nazirite calling. He recounted the heavenly destiny on his life. He told her the only way that he could be beaten was for his hair to be shaved from his head. Samson, who could slay a thousand Philistine soldiers, was no match for the persistent manipulation and nagging of a woman. This moment of collapse would seal his doom. Notice the phrase he used: “I shall become weak like any other man”. Christian men should shudder to ever say that about themselves. We are called to walk in destiny. We are empowered not to succumb to the physical desires for sex. We are

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expected to guard our own anointing and not to play games with those things entrusted to us by God. When we despise the riches of the Gospel, when we dismiss the value of God's investment in our lives, when we turn to the common lusts and activities of unredeemed men...we become just like them. We squander away the very best that God has for us.

III. The Enemy's Committed Scheme Prevailed (18-22)

A. Samson lost his power one surrender after another (18) – “When Delilah saw that he had told her all his heart, she sent and called the lords of the Philistines, saying, “Come up again, for he has told me all his heart.” Then the lords of the Philistines came up to her and brought the money in their hands.”

Delilah does not waste any time in collecting her paycheck. She had won the battle and extracted exactly what she needed from her man. Let no man fail to recognize that one of the enemy's favorite tactics is to chip away at a believer's character via the wiles of a woman. How many times do we need to witness the pattern of Christian men losing everything because they did not guard themselves against the ways of carnal women? Christian women will not behave like Delilah. Christian men will not fall to women like Delilah. Women live as God's daughters- virtuous, influential and edifying – when they walk in the Spirit. Men live as God's sons – vigilant, righteous and wise – when they walk in the Spirit. Here we see a woman at her worst and man becoming a casualty of war. Let us all learn in humbled silence.

B. Delilah cooperated each step of the way (19-20a) – “She made him sleep on her knees. And she called 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!”

Now, all that is needed is an opportunity for Delilah to finish the mission. She lulls Samson into a physical state of sleep which matched his clear spiritual state of slumber. Then, we see a side of Delilah that had been hidden up to this point. Her true colors are seen when, after Samson's head had been shaved, the bible details that she began to torment him. The Hebrew language does not reveal the precise details, but the original language is harsh. It

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involves a piercing or wounding with the purpose of humiliating Samson. How this took place is not specified. What is clear is that Delilah aggressively put Samson to an open shame in her final act of betrayal against him.

D. God withdrew His power while Samson slumbered (20b) – “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 left him.”

Samson was awake, but it was far too late. He did not know that the Philistines were about to capture him. He did not know that his head had been shaven. He did not know that the love of his life was his greatest enemy. He did not know that Delilah had sold him out for silver. He did not know that his strength was gone. Worse than anything, Samson did not know that the Lord had left him without his great anointing. For the first time, God refused to remove the consequences of Samson’s flagrant disregard for his own calling. Samson had no idea how far he had fallen. He was soon to find out.

E. The enemy brought humiliation in successive strokes (21) – “And the Philistines seized him and gouged out his eyes and brought him down to Gaza and bound him with bronze shackles. And he ground at the mill in the prison.”

This gruesome description teaches us much. Having had eyes to see, Samson refused to see the riches of God’s destiny over his life. He refused to see how many chances God had given him. He refused to see the constant dangers in which he placed himself. He refused to see that the lust of his eyes was his besetting sin. Samson had eyes, but he never saw what God wanted him to see. So, God allowed the enemy to gouge out those eyes that had never really helped Samson accomplish anything spiritual.

F. God gave grace one follicle at a time (22) – “But the hair of his head began to grow again after it had been shaved.”

Grace. Grace. Grace. GRACE! Can you believe this? Though Samson had become a trophy for the enemies of God, God had still not abandoned His own plan to destroy the Philistines. While Samson was living in humiliation, slavery and defeat, God began to reinitiate His purpose for Samson, one follicle at a time. There would, indeed, be one last grace for Samson.

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