

**"One Last Grace For Samson" - JUDGES 16:21-31**  
**Wednesday 8/15/18 – Jeff Lyle**

---

We have wondered throughout the entire story of Samson how in the world he ended up in the New Testament's Hebrews "Hall of Faith". How did a man who struggled so immensely with his flesh get mentioned in one of the only places in scripture where human beings are exalted as examples of what it means to trust God? This message reveals the answer to this question. From the ashes of his humiliation, Samson commits one final act to the glory of God and, in so doing, fulfills the prophetic destiny assigned to his life. God never gave up on His servant. Well done, Samson. Well done.

**I. The Harsh Reality That Found Samson (21-22)**

**A. He lost his power (21a) – “And the Philistines seized him...”**

Samson, after treating the secret of his great strength with casual guarding, experienced betrayal from Delilah who sold him into the hands of his enemies. For the first time in his story, Samson is now under the full and dominating control of the enemy.

**B. He lost his vision (21b) – “...and gouged out his eyes...”**

Those eyes had brought so much trouble to God's servant. The testimony of Samson from the beginning was that he was driven so often by the lust of his eyes. He seemed to frequently become the captive to whatever held his focus. On no fewer than three occasions, this lust of the eyes had drawn him to forbidden women. The last woman he saw and desired became the very agent through whom the Philistines took him captive. It is noteworthy that God allowed his eyes to be removed. We might wonder if Jesus thought of Samson when he declared in Matthew 5:29, "If your right eye causes you to stumble, gouge it out and throw it away. It is better for you to lose one part of your body than for your whole body to be thrown into hell."

**C. He lost his freedom (21c) – “...and brought him down to Gaza and bound him with bronze shackles.”**

The hero that could not be tamed by anyone when he was operating in the power of the Holy Spirit now finds himself reaping the consequences of his reckless ways. When the Lord departed from Samson, he became like any other man, and became a prisoner of those whom he had formerly dominated. We should

**"One Last Grace For Samson" - JUDGES 16:21-31**  
**Wednesday 8/15/18 – Jeff Lyle**

---

remember that yesterday's anointing does not guarantee an anointing for today. Do not grieve the Spirit lest you eventually quench Him.

**D. He lost his purpose (21d) – “And he ground at the mill in the prison.”**

Painfully, we see the forfeiture of Samson's purpose in these words. He not only lost his eyes and his freedom, he had his purpose removed from him because he proved unfit to continue in it. Few things crush a man's heart than to recognize that his God-given assignments are cut off from him due to his failure to regard them as gifts. Samson was now performing the most common work of the lowest slave in the Philistine culture. No longer a warrior. No longer a hero to be feared by the enemy. Samson was crushing grain in a prison.

**E. He retained his sonship (22) – “But the hair of his head began to grow again after it had been shaved.”**

Here is the second mention of God's grace coming up slowly in Samson's life. We need to pause and be astounded at the magnitude of the mercy of God. Samson deserved what he was currently reaping. He had shown nearly nothing but contempt for his God's plans for his life. At his worst possible season in life, the verse above lets us know that there was one last grace for Samson. With the budding follicles on his head, Samson was receiving another chance from his merciful God. Very soon, he would commit his most heroic act for the glory of Yahweh.

**II. The Hollow Victory That Deceived the Philistines (23-25a)**

**A. They had their moment (23) – “Now the lords of the Philistines gathered to offer a great sacrifice to Dagon their god and to rejoice, and they said, “Our god has given Samson our enemy into our hand.”**

The celebration of God's enemies is always temporary. They were more blind than Samson. They were spiritually blind, living in a demonic darkness that made them think they had won. They would soon die in their sin.

**"One Last Grace For Samson" - JUDGES 16:21-31**  
**Wednesday 8/15/18 – Jeff Lyle**

---

**B. They had their narrative (24) – “And when the people saw him, they praised their god. For they said, “Our god has given our enemy into our hand, the ravager of our country, who has killed many of us.””**

Many Christians fail to see that their disobedience and disregard for the ways of God actually serve to embolden the enemies of the Lord to live with greater confidence in whatever it is that they are trusting in. The Christian loses power, joy, vibrancy and anointing when he or she walks in intermittent disobedience or flippancy concerning the commandments of God. When we lost power, we lose battles. When Christians lose battle after battle that they should have won, the enemies of God are not convicted in their hearts concerning their need for Christ. They see no power. They see no glory. There is no credible witness from the life of a believer living in bondage. When the glory of God is diminished before the eyes of our culture, they become more and more convinced that the God of the Christian is not worthy of their consideration. So much rests on our consecration, commitments and obedience to the One who loves us.

**C. They had their man (25a) – “And when their hearts were merry, they said, “Call Samson, that he may entertain us.” So they called Samson out of the prison, and he entertained them...”**

They once feared Samson. Now he is nothing more than a joke and a trophy of the Philistine’s conquest. The world system loves to behold fallen followers of Christ. They take delight when we fail to continue in the same paths that we began in faith. We must determine to finish well.

**III. The Hallowed Halls Which Samson Entered (25b-31 + Hebrews 11:32)**

**A. Without eyes, Samson began to see (25b-26) - “...They made him stand between the pillars. 26 And Samson said to the young man who held him by the hand, “Let me feel the pillars on which the house rests, that I may lean against them.””**

The enemies of God cannot discern the secret victories that He is establishing. The Philistines had won the moment, but their evil

**"One Last Grace For Samson" - JUDGES 16:21-31**  
**Wednesday 8/15/18 – Jeff Lyle**

---

celebration in their pagan temple was about to end. Their house of false worship was soon to become their collective tomb. Samson, broken, battered and without hope of escape, was seemingly operating in cooperation with God again. Samson asks for a position that he would utilize to work one final act for the glory of his God.

**B. Having eyes, the Philistines were blind to what was coming (27) – “Now the house was full of men and women. All the lords of the Philistines were there, and on the roof there were about 3,000 men and women, who looked on while Samson entertained.”**

This lavish and massive party was about to become the scene of mass burial. Let us remember that, when it appears on the surface that the opponents of God and our own enemies have the upper hand, their time is short. God will not leave any unfinished business. The ultimate buzzkill is about to land upon the Philistines.

**C. Being chained, Samson began to get free (28-29) – “Then Samson called to the Lord and said, “O Lord God, please remember me and please strengthen me only this once, O God, that I may be avenged on the Philistines for my two eyes.”<sup>29</sup> And Samson grasped the two middle pillars on which the house rested, and he leaned his weight against them, his right hand on the one and his left hand on the other.”**

The last time (and the only other time) we see Samson praying was when he was dying of thirst after slaying 1,000 Philistines. When Samson felt strong, he did not pray. When he could not deny his weakness, he would lift up his voice to God. It is a false Christianity that seeks to train us to be strong in ourselves. Scripture calls us to acknowledge our own weaknesses and insufficiency apart from the Holy Spirit. We are nothing on our own. From this place of humility, we confess our dependence upon God daily. In our weakness, His strength is perfected. Each time Samson is seen to own his weakness, he finds himself praying to God and receiving strength for the hour. With his last words, Samson petitions the Lord to meet him in his hour of humiliation and weakness. God would not deny His servant this humble request.

**D. Having lived selfishly, Samson died selflessly (30) – “And Samson said, “Let me die with the Philistines.” Then he bowed with all his strength, and the house fell upon the lords and upon all the people”**

**"One Last Grace For Samson" - JUDGES 16:21-31**  
**Wednesday 8/15/18 – Jeff Lyle**

---

**who were in it. So the dead whom he killed at his death were more than those whom he had killed during his life."**

Many times, we have wondered how Samson's name could possibly be included among all the others in Hebrews chapter 11. How did Samson become an example of what it means to live by faith? It is because he died by faith. With his last effort, after a lifetime of acting in selfish independence of God, Samson commits to make the ultimate sacrifice. For the glory of his God, Samson pulls down the temple of Dagon on top of the enemies of God. This was his greatest victory. He not only killed a massive amount of God's enemies, he also destroyed the place of their demonic worship. He ruined their altars. He cut off their sacrifices. Every Philistine would know that their god could not even protect himself or them in his own house. Dagon was dead, Yahweh was alive. Samson proved in the end that the word of the Lord will come to pass. With this final act of sacrificial faith, he brought the heaviest blow to the Philistines and began the work which King David would ultimately finish. God laughed at his enemies again as He brought Samson home to glory.

**E. Having squandered much, Samson received much grace (31 & Hebrews 11:32) – "Then his brothers and all his family came down and took him and brought him up and buried him between Zorah and Eshtaol in the tomb of Manoah his father. He had judged Israel twenty years...{Heb. 11:32} And what more shall I say? For time would fail me to tell of Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah, of David and Samuel and the prophets." **Look at those with whom Samson is mentioned****

May we all take courage that God does not define His children by all their weaknesses, sins and failures. The summary statement about Samson is that he was a man of faith. This motivates all of us to finish stronger than we began. For all those who have stumbled, God offers this present moment to become re-engaged in His grace, power and purposes. He has not given up on any of us. The story of Samson teaches us this in undeniable detail.