

And he continues to pray through obedience and thanking God for new joy.

In the fifth place, how merciful God takes care of His wandering children. They shall not have an easy time of it.

But have you ever thanked God for that? Have you ever said, "Father, I thank Thee that the consecrated life which I have

desecrated, you have not left."? If you haven't, then you should. The world cries to learn your secret strength, so

it can weaken you and destroy your life and condemn you. You have no compassion now.

In the sixth place, here is the most tragic element—"And he did not know that the Lord had left him (Judges 16:20)"

This is the defeat in countless Christians--the saddest feature, self deception, gradual God withdrawing, the Holy Spirit grieving, and God is no longer in evidence in that

life. Perhaps the condition of Samson reflects something in your own life. If so, and if you realize it, it is not too

late. It may well be that God, in His yearning over you, is seeking to call you back from the road of compromise to

privilege and unbroken vows. It may well be that this is His last appeal to you.

We come to the end of Samson's story in a heathen temple

when the ladies and the lords had gathered to chant their

hymns to their gods (Dagon). Three thousand are walking in the roofless gardens, taking altar smoke, scores of sacrifices

go up. Here are huge pillars supporting the roof and while they worship their gods, someone cries for Samson to make

sport of him. He is guided by a lad, as Samson stumbles in with very few steps. Certainly we know that he is disfigured,

degraded, and they say, "Samson, where is your God? Why doesn't He give you strength? Your Jehovah is no match for

our god." Samson leaned down to the lad and whispers in his ear, "How close are we to the central pillars?" Lead me there.

I want to lean upon them for just a moment." The boy guides him to the pillars. Samson leans his arm on one. "He is

praying, they say, "Look at him. Look at him; he is praying to his God to help him." Yes, Samson is praying. He has been

praying for a long time and he has been returning to God. As he prays he is paying the price of lack of consecration and

what the world sows. He tells God that he has dishonored Him; that he has grieved Him; that he deserves judgement; and that

he deserves to lose every gift that he ever had. He continues as the Scripture tells us, "Oh Lord, remember me I pray Thee"

(Judges 16:8). He prays that God would remember him just one time--only once, just remember me. Samson's strong arm goes

around the pillars; he plants his feet, and with a mighty lung the roar of the roof comes crashing down, and Samson is dead, and also a multitude of Philistines. He slew more at