

and indifference. The people took their privileges and blessings for granted as though they were theirs by natural right.

They soon forgot the giver; they forgot that God had blessed them and they turned to other gods. They were going to be practical, so they turned to idols. How simple it is to let down spiritual defenses and admit that which seemed so innocent and yet becomes a seed of corruption.

The case of Israel's decay and moral decline is the same case as national decline. They were met by the judgements of God, and His very nature is holy and they were unchecked. Now, a judge would bring them back to God. Again, blessings and prosperity would be experienced.

Some of the judges were great for a period of time. Gideon, for example, was listed among the Hebrews of faith in Hebrews 11. Samson is also mentioned and other men and women are mentioned.

God gave Samson credit for judging Israel 20 years as in Judges 13:5 we read. God places the best construction upon the fact.

Now what about the Philistines. Well, they migrated across the Mediterranean by way of Cyprus, and they advanced. They were terrible instruments of judgement.

John Vow

judges 16:20

Introduction:

We all go on committing daily the same old sins without end as though no improvement were possible and there was no promise of deliverance through Christ.

Herman Redpath says, "The conversion of the soul is a miracle of a moment; the manufacture of a saint is a task of a lifetime." We might add that the stuff saints are made out of is costly stuff. As Sam Rutherford remarked about the spiritual victory, "The price will not come down."

It hasn't. The cost of practical holiness has never been lowered. There are few who know the cost of holiness and are willing to pay for it. Where, in our day, the privilege of freedom do we find those who are fully committed to that Christ, the Lord? This is a day in which we kind of peddle

a cheap grace on the religious market. We say that the choicest blessings of the Christian life can come through cut-rate prices. The Christian continues to model himself after the world's standards.

But grace is costly because it cost a man his life. It is costly because it condemns sin; it justifies the sinner. The life of the world and the life of the Christian are brought in conflict the moment we accept grace. The cost of

discipleship is ever the same. It is obedience to Christ in whatever daily vocation we may follow or find. Wherever the Christian may find himself this is so.

The only man who has the right to say he is justified by grace alone is the man who has left all to follow Christ. The price is that kind of price we must pay. I want to draw our story from Samson today who prostituted, desecrated a life that was once consecrated.

A broken vow as Orr says is "a sin of omission; it is also the commission of an affront to God. (It must be confessed as sin before fellowship is completely restored.)" A man becomes an opponent, an enemy, of Christ. It is like in chess—a man reaches a checkmate—a time when neither can move. Before seeking the blessings of God a man must change.

It is not enough that the man meant no offense; it is not enough that no deceit was planned in advance. The sin against God is a serious transgression. Proverbs 13:15: "The way of the transgressor is hard." I do not think that this just simply applies to the sinner but to the true child of God. What could be more illustrative than the Bible story of Samson. His whole life is a terrible lesson of all who (sin against) spiritual privilege and despise the gifts of God. They compromise their consecration to God. This is one of the greatest tragedies.

During the age of the judges, God raised up men as His instruments to lead and guide His people. Following a sad

time in the land, God promised that they would win many victories. There was the enemy—the Philistines—and there

was no leader in Israel. Moses was dead; Joshua had lead them into the land, but he was dead. Without a strong leader to unite the people and direct their ways, the nation was weak. The last sentence in the Book of Judges describes it,

"There was no king in Israel: Every man did that which was right in his own eyes. (Judges 21:25)"

Whenever men do that which is right in their own eyes, tragedy follows. It can happen in the church when the word of God and the leading of the Holy Spirit are neglected, and when the individuals assert themselves. God will not and cannot bless such conditions.

Now, God raised up these churches to direct the affairs of the people that confronted the nation, and God used human individuals. If we have eyes to see it, the course of the nation will be seen to be the course of individual lives as well, as the people united.

Now, the cycle begins with a good state of spiritual health. Then there was material prosperity. God was honored, His will obeyed. But with these blessings came complacency

renouncing it. He never came to that moment when he said, "I do here and now renounce this Nazarite vow. I no longer feel like being bound to this narrow life--this different life."

No, it was a gradual, deceiving way. Here was a little temptation; here was a door and a larger temptation. First Samson took a Philistine wife. Be not yoked together with an unbeliever." Well, he rationalized and justified his action: Now I shall have a natural end with the Philistines.

I shall take advantage of this relationship to learn about what will bring about their downfall." Little did he realize that he compromised his first step and this would bring about his downfall. Quite often these little acts, these little deeds, these little words and little lies that people speak, they rationalize. But how often do you take the position that you will help God?

Samson did not see himself compromised as he feasted among the Philistines, associated with them on a social basis; no longer did he go to battle with them; he no longer fought. But he met a lion and tore it apart with his bare hands, and a few days later, he took out honey. All along the way he was separating himself and he violated another part of the vow at this point because he was instructed not to touch any dead thing. Without hesitation, he had scooped

I.

Like John the Baptist, Samson was born in answered prayer. His birth was announced by the angel; he was dedicated before his birth to serve the Lord God. All of his life had been destined to serve God and to conquer for God. Is this not the purpose of God for everyone of us? Did He not save us and call us out of the world for conquest? Does He not intend that every believer should live a continuous life over the world.

God had said to Manoah and his wife, "The child shall be a Nazarite (Judges 13:7)". Now, this was an all-inclusive consecration of life from birth to death--a separation to the Lord. Especially were there three conditions marking the life of a Nazarite. First, in Chapter 6 of the Book of Numbers, he was to be a total abstainer from wine and strong drink.

Second, during all the days of the vows of separation no razor was to come upon his head. Third, he was not to touch any dead thing or be defiled with that which is a type of spiritual death.

In other words, here is a separation--a certain type of life separated unto a totally different type of life to be separated unto that service of God--that life which is compatible with God.

It is strange in our day that Christian people have no idea of separation as a separation from something—nothing more. If one can say that there are certain things one does not do, this is to them a separated life. It may be only half separation and the least important half. Separation from certain things has value only as it sets one free to be separated unto God and His service. It is a fatal error to ignore either of two possibilities—one may be separated from and not separated unto, or one may be separated unto yet, not think it necessary to be separated from. Either error is tragic.

Samson's vow brought separation from certain things, as we have noted, and enabled him to use every power for the glory of God. It brought him great strength, for when God calls one, He prepares one. Never does He bid a man serve Him in some capacity without equipping him for service. It is true of every child of God.

Samson knew his call. He realized fully that his extraordinary endowments were the gifts of God. He started out well. There was the mixture of humor and of fear. Can't you just hear the laughter when he conceived the idea of tying 300 jackals, attaching fire-brands to their tails, and sending them to the fields of corn?

Or slaying a thousand Philistine warriors with the jaw-bone of an ass? A man unafraid on the battlefield of an army, who could move a huge iron gate that stood at the entrance of Gaza. He was feared as he moved among the countries of the Philistine. In behalf of God in Timnath, Shkelon, Gaza, Hebron are there places where your name should be remembered because of your spiritual power to the glory of God because of your obedience in the face of strong temptations, in the face of a difficult task?

We must ask a very crucial question, "How did such a consecrated man come from such a consecrated life, and to fail so utterly, and to dishonor the name of his God?"

Gradually, no doubt, Samson forgot his vow to God. First there was compromise. His conscience was probably a little disturbed over his early trifling with God's will.

Have you made a vow to God? In moments when the spirit of God found your heart tender and receptive, did you say, "By God's grace from this day henceforth, it shall be thus." What happened? Did the spirit of God let you down? Did God forsake you, or did you find it easy one day just to forget that you ever made such a vow?

Samson renounced his vow of separation without actually

lies in obedience to God and maintained separation unto Him.  
There are a lot of people who have vowed to give God ten per cent of their income. Somewhere along the way they

forget about it and they appear in a cent. But never mind *(Columbus) Was A Baptist - Did a lot of going you, God is still at work in this world. Didnt know there was going to be a lot of going down after going down - didnt know the compromise of spiritual ideas is continued, did all of his going on borrowed money!!* it is not long before the world is in a position to shear us of our lots of spiritual strength.

We lose power with God and with men like Samson. We may be possessed of extraordinary gifts--gifts from God--only to be deceived because of some fatal flaw.

Second, he lost his sight. When one gets away from God he loses his sight. Poor, blind Samson! Blind! This, because he could not now see how to carry on the Christian

war. People say, "Well, you know, I don't see things quite the way I used to." Of course not. The Philistines have put out your eyes. One cannot spend time associating with the Philistines, feasting with them, playing with them in riddles without being taken captive.

You may not see things like you used to see them, but I'll say one thing--we do not see the power of God in your life as we once saw it either.

*man beyond the point of no return - just need it in the third place, there was spiritual bondage. He later - NOT my problem if I dont have my ticket*

out the honey. Then Samson indulged himself in feasting with the Philistines, failing to maintain the vow of abstinence. Now

both his hands and his lips were defiled before the Lord. What a pity! Here is a man striving to serve God, but no longer was there discipline, no longer was there a man directed by God's power.

There was only one symbol that remained and that was the long hair. This was the symbol everyone could see and as far as anyone knew, Samson was still obedient to his vow, but the inner symbols were gone.

Is this not the case in every church in the land? Are there not multitudes of Christians who maintain every outward symbol of consecration and give testimony to their separation yet, before the Lord every inner symbol of separation unto Him is gone? Beyond the visible evidence of being Christians there is no separation but only defeat and compromise.

Did Samson defy God to the last? Did he not sense how close to ruin he was? Did he not hasten to repent and return to his vow before it was too late as if it were already too late? God did not deter him. God knew there could be no repentance and return apart from severe judgement and chastisement.

Samson's weakness was his downfall. Experienced as he may have been, God brought one into his life that was more than a match for him - Deliah. She pretended to love him for the sake of a promised reward, and her motives were to gain his secret and betray him. Three times she tricked him and each time she was closer to the secret. As time moved along, in Judges 16:15 she said unto him, "How canst thou say, I love thee, when thine heart is not with me?"

God might well say to some of us, "How canst thou say, I love thee, when thy heart is not with me?" She pressed as him daily for his secret with these words. Then he told her from his heart that not a razor should come upon his head. (Judges 16:16) Imagine the man whose conscience was so dead that he yielded to this temptation.

Briefly he was taken prisoner, stripped of his strength and his honor. His eyes were plucked out and he was helpless. He was now just a captive prisoner of the Philistines. They degraded him further by making him grind corn in the mill. No man is strong against a foe he secretly admires. Samson was taken captive. What is it of the world that you still secretly admire? Has it already taken your heart captive? Must God let you play the fool; must he let you be taken captive? Here is a man who will idle at the mill with slaves. Here is a picture of a consecrated life now

deseccated, blindness instead of sight, bondage instead of fear. Christians, we should learn a lesson! Learn it now before it is repeated in our own experience! God has put the church in the world, but the church has let the world come into it.

Samson presumed against God. Step by step he left the place of blessing, privilege. In confidence, at Deliah's hands--they were not the first, I am confident, unholy hands that took hold of Samson because the women of Timmath (Judges 14:2). What did he care for the will of God? He wanted what he wanted and he was going to please himself. What did he think of the Nazarite vow? Here was a little compromise; it wouldn't amount to much. Little did he realize that one defeat leads to another; one compromise just sets the stage for another. So Samson took a wife from among the Philistines

The old Puritan used to say, "If you are a child of God and you marry a child of the Devil, you can expect trouble from your father-in-law." Believe me, Samson had trouble with his father-in-law. Samson was robbed of his strength as he slept upon Deliah's knee. Wherever a child of God is asleep upon the knees of compromise, he is robbed of his strength. It is a moment of compromise that the world learns the secret of our strength. Forgotten vows, robbed of our power and blessings of God. The secret of strength

his death than he did during his life. The victory was in terms of a holy life. Mark well this terrifying possibility in the life of any child of God--one can presume upon privileges, compromise holy standards, break solemn vows, forget God, and yet lose his power.

Dear Christian friends, if you have started out upon the road of compromise, turn back while the spirit of God speaks. Remember Paul's words to the Corinthians, "I keep under my body and bring it into subjection less when I have preached to others I should myself be a castaway." (I Corinthians

9:27)

Trace Samson's downfall. There was outward compromise, but I believe there was an inner condition that is described by Proverbs 14:14, "The backslider in his own heart shall be filled with his own ways."

Backsliding of heart consists in taking back ones consecration to God by leaving ones first love, by withdrawing from communion with God. Service for the Lord is no longer joy. If we love God supremely, it is impossible that we should not enjoy His service at every step. Our hearts should grow; we should be liked in Him. Many duties may be neglected yet the conscience will remain silent because it is no longer keen and discerning.

was grinding away with the salves at the world's mills. We may continue to open our Bibles, but we cannot see what we once saw. We try to do something for God, but we are bound. There is no strength or liberty; we've failed. We have compromised and we have been lead a captive.

Now, the Hebrew word Samson means sunshine. Manoah's wife received this little baby in answer to prayer. This child was the sunshine of their home and they names him Samson. They committed him to the Lord that he might not only be sunshine in their home, but to the nation. God had a man here that He might work through, but now how dark the night closed in on him whose name was sunshine. Sinning against light, Samson now walks in darkness with the loss of his eyes and without a holy life.

because he received and other humblings on the occasion of his repentance. It is more than many have done, and perhaps you ought to confess that the humblings which have come to your life. To blame God and further reject his testing.

As Samson's repentance grew, so did his locks of hair. So also did his strength return. Perhaps as he ground at the mill, he turned his heart to God, and with great sobs of confession of his awful sin, "Oh God, thank Thee for enabling these blind eyes to see now. Thank Thee for these fetters."

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. 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



The backslider in heart shall be filled with their own works, and these works are dead. They alone, are not acceptable unto God. Luke 15:16 says that God knows your heart.

The backsliden in heart shall be filled with their own indulgencies, their own passion, their own appetite.

The backsliden in heart shall be filled with their own words. In that condition of heart, a man cannot control his tongue at all times; rather it will prove itself to be an unruly member, as James says, "By his works, the backslider involves himself in many difficulties that he cannot get himself out of, yet each new entanglement adds to his temptation." It will seem as though exaggeration and half-truth were the rule, and truth the exception.

The backslider in heart will be filled with his own feelings and emotions. Yes, he will be dissatisfied with everything and everybody. The backslider is a very trying person to live with. Although he is seldom conscious of it, he is unfair in his dealings with others; he may be just inside legal limits, yet unquestionably unfair nevertheless. He is dogmatic in his assertions. His attitude is always irritating, and he is ever on the defensive. There is prejudice in his heart. He is anxious about himself, his reputation, his business, his family.

Perhaps Samson's story will please you.  
Is the cause of your defeat some broken vow, some his omission. There is no pleasure in life at all. Yet, there is no pleasure in sinning. So he is a double loser.  
condemned for the omission. If he goes to church, the Bible, it condemns him; if he does not read it, he feels his own pending and self condemnation. If he reads his

*Handwritten notes:*  
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S. N. May 29, 83 P.M. (Ch. 5000)  
S. N. May - Sept 6, 64 A.M.

The backslider in heart will be filled with his own hostilities. He lays up grievances, and he is ruffled with almost every personal relationship in life. He allows his temper to flare; he holds his grudges. The common courtesies are neglected; they are not performed with meaning. There are inner hostilities that betray him. He makes rude demands upon other people. A low plane of Christian consecration is always manifested in a low plane of Christian ethical relations

The backslider in heart will be filled with his own temptations and trials. Instead of keeping out of temptations, he runs right into them. He brings upon himself multiplying trials that he never would have were he in fellowship with God. He complains of his trials, yet, constantly multiplies them. God is against him and he is against himself.

Charles Finney says, "He is not walking with, but contrary to God." Hence, the providence of God will constantly cross his path and baffle his schemes, and God will send darkness upon his path."

The backslider in heart will be filled with his own cares and worries. Having turned from consecration and devotion to God back to selfishness, he counts himself and

his possessions as his own.

Finally, the backslider in heart shall be filled with his own bondage and self condemnation. If he reads his Bible, it condemns him; if he does not read it, he feels condemned for the omission. If he goes to church, the services condemn him; if he doesn't go he is condemned by his omission. There is no pleasure in life at all. Yet, there is no pleasure in sinning. So he is a double loser.

Is the cause of your defeat some broken vow, some compromised privilege, some inner letdown in relation to God? Perhaps Samson's story will bless you.

De Madon! Mo Pan god best out on his - toched white!  
Forget, left on his -  
el sleep in soft - not Am - son -  
Barn concul - Cedar turn blending over -  
low shud concul -  
want not both so white - what happened?  
Put your lip up bend chind  
and you will see the difference -  
white - perfect -

Handwritten notes and scribbles at the bottom of the page, including the name "De Madon" and various illegible phrases.