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SAMSON'S WOMEN

Judges 16

INTRODUCTION:

I thank God for many good women. Many women who love Christ. And many women who live Godly lives. As we look at one of the saddest shipwrecks in all of history, we study Samson and his women. We discover that the book of Hebrews however enrolls him as one of the heroes of faith. That means that he was God's man. Because when God has a job to do, he always looks for a man - and he took Samson from a family that was Godly. His mother and father were very religious and righteous people.

And from the Scriptures we read that Samson was a Nazarite from the womb. To take the vow of the Nazarite meant to separate one's self unto the Lord. The sign of this was that the individual partook of no wine or strong drink whatsoever. And that he let his hair grow in seven locks which were braided back of his head. And that he observed the laws concerning the defilement of the body.

Note that one, thus sanctified, and separated unto the Lord was to touch no liquor. Some of the great Generals of history such as Caesar, Frederick the Great, Cromwell, and Napoleon - were men given to temperance. They knew that liquor and a clear mind do not go together. And if a man is to be wholly unto the Lord, he must abstain from the use of liquor.

Not only was Samson a Nazarite and abstained, but also his parents were commanded to abstain.

The only adequate principle toward liquor is a total abstinence. John the Baptist was also a man of the Nazarite vow from his birth, and this was a symbol of

the consecration of an individual unto the Lord.

(Samson's power) was dependent entirely on his obedience and his separation. The Lord had chosen him for a purpose. To (judge) Israel and to take them out of the slavery of the Philistines. His parents were Godly people. And at least the spirit of God was upon him. And it enabled him to do great exploits. Samson had learned that it was not by might nor by power - but by the spirit of the Lord. Zech. 4:6.

Now the point of Samson's (weakness) was women. Like (Solomon) he loved many strange women and they became a snare unto him. I Kings 11:1.

I. THE WOMAN AT TIMNATH.

On one of his visits, to Timnath, he saw a beautiful woman. He loved her - now he leaped across the boundary of race, creed, and country. And he wanted to make a strange union with this woman. He told his parents to get that woman for him. For Samson said, (she pleases me well.)

Now (you) remember, my sermon on that - the (riddle) in which going down to Timnath on one occasion he met a (lion). He was alone and one of his riddles came out of that incident. Out of the eater came forth meat and out of the strong came forth sweetness. And of course the men, the Philistine men worried his wife at Timnath until she expected the riddle from Samson after weeping seven days. And following that episode, he slew 30 men at (Askelon) - took their shirts and their garments. And of course this invoked the wrath of the Philistines upon his wife. And when he came back to visit his wife, she had been given to another.

And then we have the experience of Samson and his 300 foxes. He tied their tails

together with firebrands, and let them loose in the standing corn and wheat. And they burned about 25-30 miles of standing corn and shocks of wheat, and the vineyards.

Then we have Samson uses the jaw bone of an ass and slaying a thousand men at once.

II. THE WOMAN AT GAZA

He was not very successful with the farm girl at Timmath. That went sour. And now the Bible in V. 1 tells us that he went to Gaza and saw there a harlot. Now Gaza was the capitol of the Philistines. A strong fortified city. Powerful in every way. And the Scripture is so faithful - because this is a breach of God's holy commandment.

And there was really no excuse for Samson being warned here. He met this harlot - a female innkeeper who kept a general lodging place or house. First, she had this lodging house to accommodate strangers.

Now the first woman at Timmath - that he had fallen in love with and intended to marry her - against all the protests and the warnings of the ill advised alliance with the woman, just because he said, I like her. And of course, in the end he was betrayed by that woman. Now as we come to woman number two at Gaza, there is an (old proverb) ¹¹ that says we live and we learn. ¹¹

But some men never learn. And Samson next girl friend or woman friend was a much worse woman than the first one.

Because this time it was a harlot. And the Philistines were told of his visit.

She was first of all a woman that provided accommodations for strangers. And second of all, the truth is as the keeper of the inn, she acted in two characters. She provided accommodations and she also served as a harlot for the guest.

1 - Something else you keep in mind, Samson did not come to Gaza to see this person. He did not know her until he entered the city. And seeing her, he was attracted to her.

It seems that impulsive and according to temperament, he readily fell before temptation.

2 - Another thing, Samson did not go to Gaza compelled of the spirit of God. That was not the purpose of his trip. It seems that it was for self-indulgence.

3 - Samson did not have any business at Gaza. If he went here looking for a harlot, we do not know. But we think that he went to observe the conditions of the Philistines. That he might get a better advantage of them since he was judged.

So he fell into this snare. His sin began in his eye. The Bible says he went in unto her.

V. 2 - Samson was in danger. The magistrates of the city heard about this, and this being an inn or public house - the gates of the city were shut. And perhaps the guards had gone to sleep. Now they thought that they had him in a prison. And that the next morning after he had indulged in his sensual appetites of uncleanness and fleshly lust, that they would capture him.

Conscience must have warned Samson about about midnight as he, as the Scripture says he (stayed in bed) with this harlot until midnight. And he rose up this time to save his life. And his escape was made by taking the gates of Gaza, and setting them

Holloman
Mrs. [unclear]
on top of a high hill near the city.

It is said that Hell is paved with good intentions. It will be well for us to remember that Samson perhaps came here with good intentions. But whether it is paved with good or bad intentions, bad deeds and bad associations will soon put one in Hell.

When it was day, they said we should get him, and kill him.

Samson narrowly escaped the Philistines at Gaza. And that should have taught him some wisdom.

Now it is also well to point out here that this is a type of Christ victory over death and the grave. He not only rolled away the stone from the door, he came forth himself and carried away the gates, the grave, the bar, and all. And so Samson took the gate posts, the gates, the bar, and all - to a high hill and removed them from the city.

III. SOREK

A resort area - this was woman number three.

Her name was Delilah. And she is one of the several temptresses, who appear in the Bible. Another notable one is Potiphars' wife who tempted Joseph. Another is Jezebel who stirred up Ahab.

Now Delilah had the real influence over men, for the power of evil. And the

Bible here is the book that holds the mirror up to life. And gives us the story of this woman and it is not very beautiful.

V. (4) This third woman that he became involved in had a garden and a home where she entertained her callers. It was in the beautiful valley of Sorek. Perhaps there were some olive trees.

Now there are so many broken homes due to women like Delilah, such as this. In our cities in America, there are many of them. And of course divorces occur out of every four marriages.

One wonders what a man expects to have when he exchanges a wife and a home for a woman such as Delilah. A careful look at Samson ought to be a strong warning to any who are beset by such sin.

Samson's fall had begun with lust. First the lust of the eye, then the lust of the flesh, and finally he abandon his Nazarite vow. As he had experience with the woman at Timnath, with the harlot at Gaza, the fact that he went on to the third such woman is a sad commentary on the weakness of the man. Thus we behold him as one in a high position - elevated in the glories of his time. And yet, the most disgraceful fall because he sinned against the Spirit of God.

Now Delilah lived in this little home with the vineyard, the olive trees, and she was supported by money of the illicit love. It was inhabited by a famous but beautiful woman, named Delilah. Some think that Samson married this woman. But the Scripture does not give us such an implication. She was merely a woman of Samson's choice of the hour, of his weakness. She must have been physically beautiful. But she mis-used her feminine beauty, to a disgrace. She used her feminine charm not as a gift of God, not as an appeal to the love of God - but she was brilliant and entertaining. And men were infatuated by not only her beauty. But Samson, returned to visit her often.

Samson should have known better. You simply cannot mix Christianity and Godliness, but it is impossible to tell younger people and even older people this. It is hard to tell them that there will be tears, heartaches, and disappointments. The Scripture plainly says, "be not unequally yoked together with unbelievers." What concord hath Christ with Belshazzar 2Cor. 6:14-15. Samson was not choosing a helpmate as a holy man of God. It is a pity that he did not get married into one of the families of Israel. And thereby remove such a temptation that he had. He was probably a fairly young man - scarcely up in his middle life. And the sin and the folly which brought him to an untimely end. Samson accepted the warning not of lusting after this woman. And it became a snare. Solomon seems to have referred to this story of Samson. When in his caution against uncleanness, he gives this account of a woman. Proverbs 7:26. "That she hath cast down many wounded, ye many strong men have been slain by her."

Proverbs 6:26, that the adulteress shall hunt for the precious life.

This bad woman that brought Samson to ruin, did so by flattery, falsehoods, and by pretending to be kind.

Samson seemed to have affection and love for her - V. 4. This indicates that he courted her. It was a sinful affection that he had for her. But he lived in uncleanness with her.

Now this woman was first of all selfish. She was very covetous for money. She was ambitious to use Samson for her own material gain. Being proud of her ability as a love maker, she glorified in the fact that she was going to conquer an Israelite judge.

She was false to the core. She was acting in behalf of her own country. In order to deliver it from a great enemy.

And she used her (love for ulterior motives) and purposes. From the love of Samson that he cared for her - that she responded was not true. (It was a put up love). And Samson's fall and ruin begins in his first visit.

The Bible says, ¹¹ there is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof is death. ¹¹ Proverbs 14:12.

V. (5) - The (interest) of the Philistine Lords. They told her that if she would humble him, they would afflict him. And you will entice him to know where his (great strength lay). And by whatever means, you use, that we might bind him.

Now this is the (second time that Samson is being tricked). You remember that his first account with the (first) woman, he said (if you have not plowed with my heffer, you would not have found out the riddle). Now (the Philistines again come and engage Delilah), and they say we want you to get the secret from him.

They promise her (1100 pieces of silver). Someone has estimated this as \$25,000. So as they went to her house and offered her this bribe, if she could get Samson's secret of his strength. It was the money that did the business with Delilah. So if they should give her 1100 pieces of silver, 5500 in all - that which she had been hired to betray one she pretended to love. So horrid and wicked is the love of money, and is the root of it.

Our blessed (Saviour) was thus betrayed by one whom he called friend. And with a kiss too. For filthy lucre.

It is no marvel that this unchasted woman was unjust and had no honesty.

V. (6) - (She went to work on him), and he put her off. There is no reason to think that these four teasings of Samson followed in succession - that is, on the same day

or on the same visit. It was very likely that there were four successive visits and Samson paid to Delilah. And each time she beset him with her beauty and her gile.

So the first time, she said, I pray thee wherein is thy great strength.

V. (7) - And Samson said unto her, if they bind me with seven green withes that were never dried, then shall I be weak, and be as another man.

She probably said in good humor and laughing - Samson I have often admired your wonderful strength. I have often thought about your fame that has passed through this part of the world. There is not a man among the Philistines that can match you in any way. I will never mention it to anyone, and so with her soft voice - he said you just bind me with these raw bow strings - and I will be made as weak as anyone else. So the next visit, she did this. And of course, Samson snapped these like they were cotton string.

V. (10-11) - She plead with him again - and so he told her to use new ropes. Brand new ropes and tie him. And the Philistines waited. But that was not his secret.

V. (13) - He told her on another visit to weave his hair in her loom. Pin his hair to the wall. She did. But that did not prove to be the answer. That was not his strength. But she was coming nearer all the time. Samson had won three victories over the Philistines here. He says, I'll take another chance. I'll go down and visit Delilah and I'll deceive her again. But this was just once too often. Because this was the time that she was to extract from him the feeling of his heart - V. (17). She was wicked and restless. And she finally discovered that he had told her all his heart. He had opened his heart to her.

V. (18) - She first made sure of her money. She had the lords to bring her and

have that in hand first.

V. 19 - She puts him to sleep upon her knee. As you read this verse - you feel like telling Samson to look out of that window and see the blue sky. Look out and see the sun and the Heavens. Look out upon the vineyards. You will not be able to see these for every long because this will be your last sleep. You will awaken blinded.

While he slept, Delilah sheared off his golden hair. The Philistines came rushing in as Delilah shouted, the Philistines be upon thee. Samson stirred himself but he was easily conquered. Satan ruins men by rocking them to sleep. And robs them of their strength. Because when a man sleeps - his spiritual enemies do not sleep.

V. 20 - A sad verse - he wist not that the Lord had departed from him. He did not consider that this was the reason of the change. Many people have lost the favorable presence of God and are not aware of it. There are many who have back-slidden because they have provoked God. And their gifts have withered. God has departed from them. When God has departed, we cannot do as at other times.

Samson shook himself as though he could defend himself. He did not know that through sin he had lost the blessing of God. Now Satan knows exactly where your besetting sin lies. And where is the weakest point. This is one of the saddest verses in the Bible. Paul said, I keep under my body and bring it into subjection less by any means when I have preached to others - I myself should be a cast-away. I. Cor. 9:27. What Paul meant was that God would put him on a shelf. And that his service would not be effective. Hence, he did not want to grieve the Spirit of God, in any way, and lose the victory.

Samson did not lose this strength all in one day. No, it was a steadily ebbing

of the tide away from him. Now this is the way that men lose their moral and spiritual strength. For example, here is a great tree standing yonder in the field. Its leaves are green. Its trunk appears to be sound and strong. And then we have a great wind to blow and the tree goes down. And there is a lonely place against the sky. When the tree has fallen, you go and examine it - and the heart of it is rotten. It has just been waiting for the sufficient, strong wind, to bring it down to ruin. So a man sinks gradually to ruin. And when the crisis and the temptation come, the real cry, the Philistines be upon thee - then that man goes down.

It was an unconscious thing in the spiritual realm here with Samson. He was - you can't help but pity him for he was a fool. (He wist not.) But he ought to have known that his evil living would lead to this loss.

Men today should know as they feel grief - the Scottish poet Burns wrote one time about life. "What might have been." There are great possibilities for Samson. Many of these were never fully realized. Very solemn and awful thing it is to hinder God's purpose.

Now God did not forsake him immediately. He bore along with him - for a long time. And he ruled for 20 years.

Now the phrase departed from him - had to do with the service that he had rendered. Not his salvation. He had played fast with loose sin - and now this had departed. It meant that he was powerless, in service for God. So far as his power was concerned, and yet he was unconscious of it.

Satan - Sampson's strength was due to the presence of Jehovah. It was not really tied up in his uncut hair. But in that Jehovah was with him only so long as

he kept his Nazarite vow. And God allows his strength to be destroyed.

This is a bitter experience to learn - how that without God's presence he was nothing at all.

It was the only shield that Samson had in his defense was his consecration to God. His hair was only the sign and the token.

Now, do not let this thought pass out of your mind. That he parted with his hair - the secret of his strength. And the enemy of the soul to overcome him. That is when he lived as if in the presence of God. And you can test daily your consecration to God. Samson went down when he let go of God.

Now Joseph was tempted of a wicked woman but he won the victory and he is an example to every young man and young woman. Not to forgive his obligations to God. He said, how can I do this wickedness and (sin against God.)

I need at this point to say that (if) there is a time to be silent - there is also a time to speak. Perhaps teachers and preachers have been too long tongue-tied by a policy of silence on this matter. That we have not warned young men and women concerning the evils which come through imagination which will soil their hands, sap their character, as Ezekiel said - son of man hath thou seen what the ancients of the house of Israel do in the dark.

Now to be forewarned is to be forearmed. We need to repulse the carnal sin of licentiousness. Jesus said, out of the heart proceeds evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false-witness, blasphemes - these are the things that defile man. This thought that brings pollution and pollutes his life. You think of the things today that defile. The pictures, the tainted suggestive books, that are thrust upon young people today. Shops in our cities, they announce that

they have pictures inside that are not openly displayed. Books with stories that are indecent to read.

But to reduce your morals to the level of the beast, if men must, have their fling - another must, will be insisted on coming to play. They must, reap as they have sown.

The book of Job said his bones are full of iniquity of his youth which shall lie down with him in the grave. And Samson who practiced fornication and others who think adultery is common-place and acceptable, there are few people today who speak out against this immorality. People must make a decision about their own sexual behavior.

Billy Graham in his book on the Jesus Generation, tells about the student who wrote a letter. I get home every two or three months. But when I do, my girl friend insists that I have relations with her. She says her sorority requires it. I am no prude and I hope to be married someday. But I feel that this sex bit is unhealthy for every relationship.

The movies, the magazines alude - the cheap sex movie makers, the theatre owners, the publishers - they talk about sex and accept public nudity and streaking. They call this a (sex revolution). The true means of this is (sex polution). Now the fact that everybody is doing it. I think there is only a majority doing it. And people who say what I do in my sex life is my private business. No-one else has a right to criticize me. I read a story the other day of a minister who tells to young people wherever he goes about his own father. He said that when he was a lad growing his father tried to teach him about the hazzards of immorality. Finally he said his father gave him a hammer and some nails. And after each offense of lying and cheating, and every time he did something wrong - the boy said that his father made him drive a nail into the door of his room. When the boy apologized, the nail could

be pulled out. Very soon, the youth noted that even though he withdrew the nail, the hole remained. And that is what happens to your character the minister declared. You can try to right every wrong - but each offense leaves a scar.

Now Gal. 5:19 says the works of the flesh are manifest which are these - adultery, fornication, uncleanness and lasciviousness. The matter of sensuality in the life of Samson should be a lesson to all of us.

In this day of concupiscence, Col. 3:5, admonishes us mortify therefore uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence - that is abnormal sex desires and appetites - evil imaginations.

Samson reached the position where he was depraved - that he no longer blushed. He could go from one woman to another. Not distinguishing that there was good and evil. And so in Romans 1:28, God says that he gave them over to a reprobate mind to do those things that were not convenient.

When he took part in fornication and sexual intercourse which goes on between an unmarried man and an unmarried woman, that is pre-marital sex relations. The Bible in I Cor. 6:18 says flea fornication. He that that committeth fornication sinneth against his own body. Know ye not that the unrighteous shall inherit the kingdom of God. Be not deceived, fornicaters shall not inherit the kingdom of God. I. Cor. 6:9.

Now purity and chastity is a particular Christian virtue. Now immorality is the norm in a pagan world. Paul urges young Timothy to keep himself pure. It is God's will that you should keep pure in person.

Sex outside of marriage is sin. But sin is a word that we may rarely hear today. But I want to remind you that this is wrong. And flea youthful lusts.

2 Tim. 2:22.

V. 21 - Sin proves a hard taskmaster.

First, they put out his eyes. They blinded him. This was a most cruel and ancient custom. There are many instances in Scripture and in History. 2 Kings 25:7, Numbers 16:14 where they deprived the person of all power to do harm. Some nations put out the eyes of all their slaves. In many countries, rivals to the throne had their eyes put out. In Persia it is not uncommon for the king to punish a rebellious district. By exacting so many pounds of eyes. The executioners go and scoop out the eyes, of those they met, until they had the weight required. Sometimes the eyes were pulled or cut out. Sometimes a red hot iron was drawn before them. Sometimes the pupils were pierced or destroyed. And there were times when they would take the whole eye out with the point of a dagger, and carry it to the king in a basin.

In some cases when unskilled hands were employed, the victim died.

Second, they bound him with bronze chains, or brass - on both hands and both feet, were these fetters. In ordinary cases leather was used, but in the case of Samson they used brass.

Third, they have him grinding grain in the prison. The millstones were worked by the hands. They employed him in the work of a slave.

The devil's crowd rejoiced. God was dishonored.

Samson had exchanged the glories of being a judge.

The glories of serving God. The glories of being a Nazarite. These were some of the results of what he lost. Samson could no longer see the things that needed to be done in God's kingdom. He was blind. His hands were in bands. He was in the chain gang.

V. 22 - The Bible states that the hair of his head began to grow again. The Lords of the Philistines - V. 23 at this point set up a big festival

(Dagon) their God, the fish God - shaped like a fish and like a man. And it was a famed temple. It was symbolic of power that they had. All of the contests between God and Dagon reasserted now that Samson had been captured because of this God. So here in the temple of the God, Dagon, blind Samson and these half drunken Lords and their ladies bring in Samson. And they said, let us make sport. And make merry.

V. 25 - So they brought him out of the dungeon - here is the huge figure of a man. His hair has grown again. And there is sadness though because he is sightless. They begin to make sport of him. And perhaps there in the balcony is the face of a woman, looking down. A beautiful woman - Delilah. She looks on upon her companion and probably she shouts down some mockery.

V. 27 - About 3,000 men plus a lot of women and children that were here in this feast, and all of the (five Philistine Lords) were there who had bribed Delilah. And had paid the money for Samson. They were in on this feast.

How this power was replenished. It had cost him everything. V. 25. He was standing between the two pillars, and Samson began to offer some prayer. V. 28 - and V. 30. He prayed earnestly unto God.

Here's a (good sermon) for the (back sliders) tonight. That spiritual power is given for the good of others. And the deliverance of others. And this man through sin had lost that spirit and that power. And had lost his spiritual sight. Grinding in the mill in sin. Following after these women - had been appointed a deliverer of Israel. But now he is powerless. He cannot help any body. He cannot help the gray haired woman, the grandmother, or those of old age. He cannot hear the cry of a soul as a judge. Samson had been appointed of God to deliver. To come and help these people. And as you reflect upon these things, you think about how great a back slider he was.

And that is the (problem) today. Sometimes you just about have to kill a back slider to get him to come back to God. They get so far off and they grow so indifferent that you have to kill them to bring them back to God.

But wait - Samson's hair has grown again and something important is about to take place.

Samson has repented.

Samson has come back to God and he asks this boy to conduct him so that he could get ahold of these two pillars.

And he is praying, oh Lord God, remember me. I pray thee, strengthen me, I pray thee only once oh God.

And we know how much his life had been inconsistent. And probably there are some of you living the same way. He wanted to feel the hand of the Lord again upon him. Remember me? He was not thinking of Delilah - or the women he had gone with, or the harlot that he had slept with. He was thinking about God.

Strengthen me. He had prayed remember me. Second, strengthen me. Not of his own physical strength was he thinking about - but he was thinking about the power of God. Just once, he wanted this just one more time to feel the presence of the power of God in his life.

Fourth he said he wanted to deal with his enemies. Before he had sided with them and now he wants to get on the Lord's side in the closing hours of his life.

A willing sacrifice - he is no longer thinking about himself. But he is thinking about God's business. Rom. 12:1-2. I beseech you therefore brethren that you present yourself a living sacrifice.

Samson was ready, glad to die, if he could strike one last blow for God.

As Samson bows himself, and bends in the power of the spirit, he pulls down that tremendous building. As the crash of the temple, Dagon was buried, the Philistines were dead. And there to one side is another face. I think you recognize it in the dust - it is Delilah. Now she had her wish - she had learned the secret of Samson's strength. But now she has learned the dreadful judgement and retribution. She has also learned the strength of repentance and faith in God, and it was the thing needed.

Oh Lord, God, remember me. Samson's relatives come and claim his body from the ruins. And buried him in a burial ground back home.

I wonder tonight how many people would pray, God, remember me, and strengthen me only this once. That may be your need. It may be your desperate need. This may be your hour. You have forgotten God. You have broken his commandments. You have sinned against him. Now you may not have been out with harlots or had the women that Samson had - but you have signed against God. But God is merciful.

He would in no wise cast out that man that comes to him. Call on him now. Pray as Samson did - Oh Lord, God, remember me - I pray thee. And strengthen me, I pray thee this once. I thank God that only this once it was a heart-felt prayer for forgiveness. It was one that was courageous. It was a decision that was right. And it was one that brought happiness for life.

Dr. Masston said his mother put a wash out on the line and it looked white. They forgot about it and left it out over night. He said he slept in the left of the home and the next morning it had snowed. He looked out and the barn was covered. The cedar trees were bending over with snow. And he says the wash did not look so white. What had happened.

If you put your life up beside Christ, you will see the difference.

White is perfect. Christ is perfect.

Now Samson had some stains upon his life and he had to call on God to cleanse him. He knew that Nazarite vow.