



Potomac Hills

Presbyterian Church, PCA



By Grace Alone ~ Through Faith Alone ~ In Christ Alone

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Judges 16:4-31

September 27, 2020
English Standard Version

Samson and His Weakness

The 4th Sermon in a topical series entitled,

Misused Stories of the Bible

1. Introduction – *The Hunger Behind It All*¹

2. Samson and Delilah: *Rejected Calling*

Judges 16:4-21:

⁴After this he loved a woman in the Valley of Sorek, whose name was Delilah. ⁵And the lords of the Philistines came up to her and said to her, “Seduce him, and see where his great strength lies, and by what means we may overpower him, that we may bind him to humble him. And we will each give you 1,100 pieces of silver.” ⁶So Delilah said to Samson, “Please tell me where your great strength lies, and how you might be bound, that one could subdue you.”

⁷Samson 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.

¹ The background and exposition of this text is adapted from the commentaries Judges for You by Timothy Keller, pp. 151-165; Judges and Ruth: God in Chaos by Barry G. Webb, pp. 201-215 and from the sermons The Strength of Samson given by Dr. Tim Keller at Redeemer Presbyterian Church, New York, NY, on October 12, 1997 and Samson, Delilah, and Dagon by Dr. Cory Brock at First Presbyterian Church, Jackson, MS, on July 12, 2020.

¹⁰ 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. 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.” 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.

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. 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.”

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. ¹⁹ 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!” 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. 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.

Judges 15:11b – *And Samson said, “As they did to me, so have I done to them.”*

3. Samson and Delilah: *The Threat of Assimilation*

Judges 15:11a – *Then 3,000 men of Judah went down to the cleft of the rock of Etam, and said to Samson, “Do you not know that the Philistines are rulers over us? What then is this that you have done to us?”*

Judges 16:23-31:

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.”* 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.”* ²⁵ *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 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.”* 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.*

²⁸ *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.”* ²⁹ *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.* 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 who were in it. So the dead whom he killed at his death were more than those whom he had killed during his life.* ³¹ *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.*

4. God’s faithful grace to sinners

Judges 16:22 – *But the hair of his head began to grow again after it had been shaved.*

5. Conclusion: What are we to do?

1 Thessalonians 5:23 – *“Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you completely, and may your whole spirit and soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. He who calls you is faithful; He will surely do it.”*