

Timeline of Truth: Samson, the Selfish Judge – The Downfall of Samson (Judges 16:1-31)

<p>¹ Now Samson went to Gaza and saw a harlot there, and went in to her.</p> <p>² <i>When the Gazites were told, "Samson has come here!" they surrounded the place and lay in wait for him all night at the gate of the city. They were quiet all night, saying, "In the morning, when it is daylight, we will kill him."</i></p> <p>³ And Samson lay <i>low</i> till midnight; then he arose at midnight, took hold of the doors of the gate of the city and the two gateposts, pulled them up, bar and all, put <i>them</i> on his shoulders, and carried them to the top of the hill that faces Hebron.</p>	<p>1. Samson Lives by His Sinful Desires</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. <i>Samson again yields to his senses</i> b. <i>Samson again goes to a place he does not belong</i> c. <i>Samson's enemies are seeking to kill him</i> d. <i>Samson waits until midnight</i> e. <i>Samson pulls up the two heavy gateposts</i> f. <i>Samson shoulders the two gateposts</i> g. <i>Samson carries the gateposts to an opposite hill</i>
<p>⁴ Afterward it happened that he loved a woman in the Valley of Sorek, whose name was Delilah. [Semitic name; foreign place]</p>	<p>2. Samson Is Entrapped by His Sinful Desires</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. <i>Samson followed his heart, not God's commands</i> b. <i>Samson once again loves a foreign woman</i>
<p>⁵ And the lords of the Philistines came up to her and said to her, "Entice him, and find out where his great strength <i>lies</i>, and by what <i>means</i> we may overpower him, that we may bind him to afflict him; and every one of us will give you eleven hundred <i>pieces</i> of silver."</p>	<p>3. Samson's Enemies Leverage His Sinful Desires</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. <i>The Philistine lords approach Delilah</i> b. <i>The Philistine lords present a plan to Delilah</i> c. <i>The Philistine lords promise to pay Delilah well</i>
<p>⁶ So Delilah said to Samson, "Please tell me where your great strength <i>lies</i>, and with what you may be bound to afflict you."</p> <p>⁷ And Samson said to her, "If they bind me with seven fresh bowstrings, not yet dried, then I shall become weak, and be like any <i>other</i> man."</p> <p>⁸ So the lords of the Philistines brought up to her seven fresh bowstrings, not yet dried, and she bound him with them.</p> <p>⁹ Now <i>men</i> were lying in wait, staying with her in the room. And she said to him, "The Philistines <i>are</i> upon you, Samson!" But he broke the bowstrings as a strand of yarn breaks when it touches fire. So the secret of his strength was not known.</p>	<p>4. Delilah Begins Her Enticement – Attempt #1</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. <i>Delilah directly asks Samson about his strength</i> b. <i>Samson lies to her – seven fresh bowstrings</i> c. <i>Delilah carries out Samson's answer – binds him</i> d. <i>Enemies were lying in wait – in her room!</i> e. <i>Delilah announces the presence of the Philistines</i> f. <i>Samson easily breaks free</i> g. <i>Samson stays! (1 Cor 6:18; 10:14; 1 Tim 6:11; 2:22)</i>
<p>¹⁰ Then Delilah said to Samson, "Look, you have mocked me and told me lies. Now, please tell me what you may be bound with."</p> <p>¹¹ So he said to her, "If they bind me securely with new ropes that have never been used, then I shall become weak, and be like any <i>other</i> man."</p> <p>¹² Therefore Delilah took new ropes and bound him with them, and said to him, "The Philistines <i>are</i> upon you, Samson!" And <i>men</i> were lying in wait, staying in the room. But he broke them off his arms like a thread.</p>	<p>5. Delilah Continues Her Enticement – Attempt #2</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. <i>Delilah scolds Samson</i> b. <i>Delilah asks Samson about his strength again</i> c. <i>Samson lies to Delilah again – new ropes</i> d. <i>Delilah carries out Samson's answer – binds him</i> e. <i>Delilah announces the presence of the Philistines</i> f. <i>Enemies were again lying in wait – in her room!</i> g. <i>Samson easily breaks the ropes</i>
<p>¹³ Delilah said to Samson, "Until now you have mocked me and told me lies. Tell me what you may be bound with." And he said to her, "If you weave the seven locks of my head into the web of the loom"--</p> <p>¹⁴ So she wove <i>it</i> tightly with the batten of the loom, and said to him, "The Philistines <i>are</i> upon you, Samson!" But he awoke from his sleep, and pulled out the batten and the web from the loom.</p>	<p>6. Delilah Continues Her Enticement – Attempt #3</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. <i>Delilah scolds Samson again</i> b. <i>Samson lies again, but includes "hair" in his lie</i> c. <i>Delilah carries out Samson's answer – weaves hair</i> d. <i>Delilah announces the presence of the Philistines</i> e. <i>Were the Philistines there?</i> f. <i>Samson easily breaks free</i>
<p>¹⁵ Then she said to him, "How can you say, 'I love you,' when your heart <i>is</i> not with me? You have mocked me these three times, and have not told me where your great strength <i>lies</i>."</p> <p>¹⁶ And it came to pass, when she pestered him daily with her words and pressed him, so that his soul was vexed to death,</p>	<p>7. Delilah Concludes Her Enticement – Attempt #4</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. <i>Delilah scolds Samson again</i> b. <i>Delilah pestered Samson continually, over time</i> c. <i>Samson is frustrated and wore down</i>

<p>¹⁷ that he told her all his heart, and said to her, "No razor has ever come upon my head, for I <i>have been</i> a Nazirite to God from my mother's womb. If I am shaven, then my strength will leave me, and I shall become weak, and be like any <i>other</i> man."</p>	<p>d. <i>Samson tells Delilah the source of his strength</i></p>
<p>¹⁸ When Delilah saw that he had told her all his heart, she sent and called for the lords of the Philistines, saying, "Come up once more, for he has told me all his heart." So the lords of the Philistines came up to her and brought the money in their hand.</p> <p>¹⁹ Then she lulled him to sleep on her knees, and called for a man and had him shave off the seven locks of his head. Then she began to torment him, and his strength left him.</p> <p>²⁰ And she said, "The Philistines <i>are</i> upon you, Samson!" So he awoke from his sleep, and said, "I will go out as before, at other times, and shake myself free!" But he did not know that the LORD had departed from him.</p> <p>²¹ Then the Philistines took him and put out his eyes, and brought him down to Gaza. They bound him with bronze fetters, and he became a grinder in the prison.</p>	<p>8. Samson Is Defeated Through His Sinful Relationship</p> <p>a. <i>Delilah sees that Samson is telling her the truth</i></p> <p>b. <i>Delilah immediately summons the Philistines</i></p> <p>c. <i>The Philistines come with their money</i></p> <p>d. <i>Delilah puts Samson to sleep</i></p> <p>e. <i>Samson would know what Delilah would do!</i></p> <p>f. <i>Delilah shaves off Samson's locks</i></p> <p>g. <i>Delilah torments Samson</i></p> <p>h. <i>Samson's strength leaves him</i></p> <p>i. <i>Delilah announces the presence of the Philistines</i></p> <p>j. <i>Samson thinks he can still escape, but he cannot</i></p> <p>k. <i>The Philistines capture, disable, and enslave Samson</i></p>
<p>²² However, the hair of his head began to grow again after it had been shaven.</p> <p>²³ Now the lords of the Philistines gathered together to offer a great sacrifice to Dagon their god, and to rejoice. And they said: "Our god has delivered into our hands Samson our enemy!"</p> <p>²⁴ When the people saw him, they praised their god; for they said: "Our god has delivered into our hands our enemy, The destroyer of our land, And the one who multiplied our dead."</p> <p>²⁵ So it happened, when their hearts were merry, that they said, "Call for Samson, that he may perform for us." So they called for Samson from the prison, and he performed for them. And they stationed him between the pillars.</p>	<p>9. The Philistines Throw a Religious Celebration</p> <p>a. <i>What is the value of his hair growing back?</i></p> <p>b. <i>Samson's failure and defeat allowed his enemies to glorify their god. Sin reinforces false religions & views.</i></p> <p>c. <i>The Philistines throw a religious celebration</i></p> <p>d. <i>The Philistines call for Samson to entertain them</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Immorality breeds further weakness • Temptation usually is very appealing • Wrong company / influence aids temptation's effectiveness (1 Cor 15:33 "bad company corrupts good morals")
<p>²⁶ Then Samson said to the lad who held him by the hand, "Let me feel the pillars which support the temple, so that I can lean on them."</p> <p>²⁷ Now the temple was full of men and women. All the lords of the Philistines <i>were</i> there-- about three thousand men and women on the roof watching while Samson performed.</p> <p>²⁸ Then Samson called to the LORD, saying, "O Lord GOD, remember me, I pray! Strengthen me, I pray, just this once, O God, that I may with one <i>blow</i> take vengeance on the Philistines for my two eyes!"</p> <p>²⁹ And Samson took hold of the two middle pillars which supported the temple, and he braced himself against them, one on his right and the other on his left.</p> <p>³⁰ Then Samson said, "Let me die with the Philistines!" And he pushed with <i>all his</i> might, and the temple fell on the lords and all the people who <i>were</i> in it. So the dead that he killed at his death were more than he had killed in his life.</p>	<p>10. Samson Dies Exacting Revenge – for Samson</p> <p>a. <i>Samson positions himself in the temple</i></p> <p>b. <i>The temple was full of men and women – including all the lords - about 3,000 people!</i></p> <p>c. <i>All were watching Samson "perform"</i></p> <p>d. <i>Samson prays for one final moment of strength</i></p> <p>e. <i>Samson prays to be able to avenge his eyes</i></p> <p>f. <i>Samson postures himself against the two pillars</i></p> <p>g. <i>Samson cries out</i></p> <p>h. <i>Samson pushes with all his might</i></p> <p>i. <i>The temple collapses and kills everyone there, including Samson</i></p> <p>j. <i>Samson killed more that day than the rest of his life</i></p>
<p>³¹ And his brothers and all his father's household came down and took him, and brought <i>him</i> up and buried him between Zorah and Eshtaol in the tomb of his father Manoah. He had judged Israel twenty years.</p>	<p>11. Samson's Family Retrieves Samson's Body and Buries It</p>

1. ***Sin will patiently let you play until you are trapped and will pester you and wear you down.***
2. ***Temptation will always let you think you can win in the end, but sin will lure you, entrap you, and destroy you.***
3. ***Temptation reasons with lies (Delilah didn't love Samson but argued about his love for her). Choose to stay away!***
4. ***Sin will always have hurtful consequences and will never result in the helpful impact that an obedient life brings.***
5. ***Walk responsively to the light of God's Word, which includes understanding our capacity & proneness to sin (1 John 1:5-2:2).***