

THE DEATH OF SAMSON

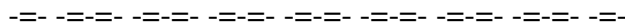


Passages to Study: Judges 16:4-31.
Read with the class: Judges 16:19-30.
Texts for memorization:
Younger: Proverbs 31:1 "The way ... is hard."
Older Galatians 6:7.



OBJECTIVES: To teach that:

- 1. Samson ought to have valued and appreciated the goodness of God shown to him.
2. We should learn from our experiences and not get into the same problem time after time.
3. We ought to choose our friends with care for they influence us for good or evil.
4. A person's actions rather than words show the true condition of the heart.
5. Sooner or later, we reap the consequences of our actions.

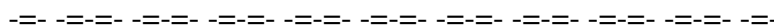


Note: The lesson is divided into four parts, each one showing a stage in the downward path of Samson, always going in an opposite direction to what God had planned for him.

SCENE No. 1. VISUAL AIDS. Figures of Samson with the doors of the city gate on his shoulders, carrying them up the side of a mountain. In an upper corner, a figure of Delilah who catches Samson's attention.

DEVELOPMENT:

- For 20 years, Samson lived in his own land, serving as a judge of his people. (Judges 15:20)
- After this, Samson goes back to visit the land of the Philistines.
- On this occasion, he becomes involved with another Philistine woman, a harlot. (Judges 16:2)
- On this visit to the city of Gaza, Samson destroys the gates of the city when the Philistines try to trap him there.
Sug. Depending on the relationship that the teacher has with the older students, the subject of immorality can be taken up, pointing out that yielding to the temptation leads to the practice becoming a controlling vice in the life. One of Samson's problem was uncontrolled passion.
Cmt. In spite of all the difficulties in the past, Samson has not learned to maintain separation from the Philistines.
Apl. The person who does not learn from former experiences in life will suffer as the same mistakes made before are repeated leading to serious consequences.
- Once again, Samson is the object of the wrath of the Philistines.
- On previous occasions, Samson had proved that he could not trust the Philistines.
- In spite of all this, he falls in love with Delilah, a Philistine woman, and becomes completely dominated by her.
- This weakness of being governed by what his eyes see, makes Samson vulnerable to the Philistines, who take advantage of the renewed opportunity to have him in their power.
Cns. Samson was willing to give up his spiritual power as judge and saviour of his people for the love of a wicked woman.
Apl. Those who yield to the temptations of the flesh pay a high price. Apply the principle of Matthew 16:26, Mark 8:36, and Luke 9:25 to Samson.
- The Philistines offered Delilah a large sum of money if she could discover for them the secret of Samson's power.
- Delilah pretended to love him, but was willing to betray him for gain. Her love of material things was greater than her love for Samson.



THE DEATH OF SAMSON



SCENE No. 2. VISUAL AIDS. In a house with figures of Samson lying asleep on Delilah's lap while a man prepares to cut his hair and some Philistines wait. In a separate corner, figures representing the cords (bowstrings), the new ropes and the weaver's loom.

DEVELOPMENT:

- Delilah begins to ask Samson to reveal to her the secret of his great strength. (Judges 16:6)

Sug. The signs of his Nazarite vow should be reviewed with the students to point out that of them all, Samson has kept only one, his long hair.

- Three times Samson tells a lie, attempting to avoid the woman's questions instead of escaping from the danger he is in while in her presence.

Sug. Mention that he wanted the lies to deceive her, for he kept saying his weakness would be discovered under certain circumstances, which was not the case.

Cns. Scripture is clear about what to do in the face of danger – FLEE. Prc. 1 Timothy 1:6.

- Samson didn't flee, but remained to play as if it were a game of chess.

The three items suggested were:

1. CORDS or **THONGS**, bowstrings made of gut, still humid and strong, used in the bows from which arrows were shot. (Judges 16:7)

2. ROPES were new, never having been weakened by use. (Verse 11)

3. Seven BRAIDS of his hair were woven into the warp threads on the loom, and then pushed together with the pin to form a tight fabric. (Verses 13-14)

- In each case, when warned of the presence of the Philistines, Samson freed himself with superhuman strength.

- The woman continued to plead with him to reveal his secret.

- Among her arguments, she expressed a truth when she asked, "How canst thou say, I love thee, when thine heart is not with me?" (Verse 15)

Cns. Our behaviour shows the condition of our heart.

Apl. If we say we love the Lord but cannot leave our beds or a TV program to go a meeting where the Word of God is being spoken, we are showing what really has captured our attention.

- The time comes when Samson cannot resist Delilah any longer.

- Samson feels that that if she keeps on pressuring him with such words, life is not worth living. (Verse 16)

- He tells her his secret: that his great strength lies in his separation to God as a Nazarite. (Verse 17)

- His uncut hair is a symbol of his separation.

- Delilah realizes that this time Samson has told her the truth and she sends for the Philistines telling them to bring the promised money.

- Samson sleeps, unconscious of his great danger, while a man cuts his hair and the Philistines stand ready to take advantage of the situation.

- In the saddest moment of his life, Samson awakes, not realizing that "the Lord was departed from him."

- Samson thinks he can go out and escape as he has on previous occasions.

- "But the Philistines took him and put out his eyes" (Judges 16:21), and bound him with fetters of brass and put him in prison.

Apl. Friendship with the world results in loss of spiritual vision, and as a consequence, loss of discernment.

Sug. Use this point to warn the students that the most alarming moment in life occurs when a person awakes to discover that he is lost.

Cns. When a sinner awakes to realize his lost condition, either

1. It brings him to repentance or **2.** He continues stubbornly in his sin.

THE DEATH OF SAMSON

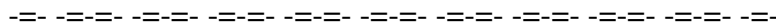


SCENE No. 3. VISUAL AIDS. In a Philistine prison, figure of Samson grinding, tied to the beam of a large millstone.

DEVELOPMENT:

- During his early years, Samson was guided by what his eyes saw.
- This is what led him to fall into the hands of a woman like Delilah.
- Now, with his physical vision gone, he recovers his spiritual vision.
- Taken captive, he has become the slave of the Philistines.
- He is obliged to do the humiliating work of a slave or an animal.
- All this is the result of having lost his separation to the Lord.
- In prison, his hair begins to grow once again. (Judges 16:22)
- This is an act of mercy on God's part.

Apl. God never forgets anyone and gives an opportunity for repentance.



SCENE No. 4. VISUAL AIDS. Temple of Dagon. Figures of the multitude on the upper floor and others inside the building, with Samson close to some central pillars.

DEVELOPMENT:

- The Philistines hold a feast in honour of their idol Dagon.
- They believe that this idol has given them the victory over their enemy of many years. (Judges 16:23-24)

Apl. The bad testimony of those who name the name of Christ brings dishonour on what is of God.

Cns. One who was born to bring honour to God is now serving a completely opposite purpose.

Lsn. Many parents hold high hopes for their children when naming them after biblical characters, or some relative or renowned person. Even after bringing them up to serve and honor God, those hopes are often dashed as sin controls the life of the adolescent.

- Samson becomes an object of mockery and now performs for the entertainment of the Philistines instead of serving the Lord.
- Besides becoming an object of scorn in his life, Samson also dies a shameful death among the unsaved.
- At the end of his life, he repents and prays, this being only the second time in his life that we read of him coming to God in prayer.
- Samson asks God for one last opportunity to utilize his strength against the enemies of the people of God. (Judges 16:28) Cns. (Deuteronomy 4:29-35)
- The petition of Samson was not so much for the glory of God but rather for him to take personal vengeance on the Philistines for the loss of his sight.
- He is named in Hebrews 11:32 among the heroes of faith, for by getting back to the Lord, he showed faith.

Cns. Proverbs 7:4 indicates that wisdom saves one from the strange woman who "flatters with her words." (Verse 5) Whoever does not pay attention to wisdom finds that the woman's "house is the way to hell, going down to the chambers of death. (Verse.27)

<<<<<<< Vers. 1.0 (c) 2001 David A. Jones >>>>>>>