

Samson's weakness

The title of this post might sound a bit paradoxical as we know that Samson was the strongest man of his time. He was indeed gifted with extraordinary strength but also had his weaknesses. When we talk about the topic of sin and the way someone might fall into it, we cannot skip mentioning his story, which gives us a portrayal of a character who is so strong and inspiring but vulnerable and weak at the same time in certain areas of his life. The different perspectives of his story, full of successes and failures, give us a lesson we can learn from. This story cannot justify someone when sinning or let us think that things anyway will go well even when we sin. Still, it could be encouraging if we are already found in the situation of falling into sin or can warn us and prevent us from future failures and mistakes. This is also the reason for which the Old Testament stories and all the stories in the Bible, in general, are there for us. To teach us something and to warn us.

Now all these things happened to them as examples, and they were written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the ages have come. (1 Corinthians 10:11)

Let us have a look at a part of Samson's story in Judges 16:4-31

⁴ Afterward it happened that he loved a woman in the Valley of Sorek, whose name *was* Delilah. ⁵ And the lords of the Philistines came up to her and said to her, "Entice him, and find out where his great strength *lies*, and by what *means* we may overpower him, that we may bind him to afflict him; and every one of us will give you eleven hundred *pieces* of silver."

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⁶ So Delilah said to Samson, "Please tell me where your great strength *lies*, and with what you may be bound to afflict you."

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 *other* man."

⁸ So the lords of the Philistines brought up to her seven fresh bowstrings, not yet dried, and she bound him with them. ⁹ Now *men were* lying in wait, staying with her in the room. And she said to him, "The Philistines *are* 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.

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."

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 *other* man."

¹² Therefore Delilah took new ropes and bound him with them, and said to him, "The Philistines *are* upon you, Samson!" And *men were* lying in wait, staying in the room. But he broke them off his arms like a thread.

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" —

¹⁴ So she wove *it* tightly with the batten of the loom, and said to him, "The Philistines *are* upon you, Samson!" But he awoke from his sleep, and pulled out the batten and the web from the loom.

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¹⁵ Then 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 have not told me where your great strength *lies*." 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, ¹⁷ that he told her all his heart, and said to her, "No razor has ever come upon my head, for I *have been* 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 *other* man."

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. 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. ²⁰ And she said, "The Philistines *are* 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.

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. ²² However, the hair of his head began to grow again after it had been shaven.

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!"

²⁴ When the people saw him, they praised their god; for they said:

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"Our god has delivered into our hands our enemy,
The destroyer of our land,
And the one who multiplied our dead."

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. 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." ²⁷ Now the temple was full of men and women. All the lords of the Philistines *were* there—about three thousand men and women on the roof watching while Samson performed.

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 *blow* take vengeance on the Philistines for my two eyes!" 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. ³⁰ Then Samson said, "Let me die with the Philistines!" And he pushed with *all his* might, and the temple fell on the lords and all the people who *were* in it. So the dead that he killed at his death were more than he had killed in his life.

³¹ And his brothers and all his father's household came down and took him, and brought *him* up and buried him between Zorah and Eshtaol in the tomb of his father Manoah. He had judged Israel twenty years.

This is the last chapter of his story and describes his downfall and the way he rose again. But let's see first a whole picture of his life. Since his

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birth, Samson was chosen by God and consecrated to Him. The way the birth occurred was miraculous, as his mother was barren and couldn't bear any children before that. An angel appeared to her saying that she was going to have a son and he was going to deliver Israel from the hands of the Philistines with the condition that no razor would come upon his head ([Judges 13:2-5](#)). There was only one purpose for which he was born, and that was the glory of God. His mission was to bring freedom to the nation of Israel by opposing its enemies – the Philistines. For most of his life, he managed to do that. There was, though, one thing that was hindering him sometimes and, in the long run, brought him down. That was his weakness toward sin. He sometimes had difficulty saying no in certain situations. Remember that we are looking here at the Old Testament, and the sin was seen slightly differently than the one in the New Testament, but we definitely can compare ourselves with the life of Samson and get a teaching from there.

In general, Samson was having an issue with women. This is something that most of us could be struggling with today, even though when we are discussing sin and the sinful situation of Samson, in this blog post, we do not always mean sexual sin and women when mentioning sin. Still, this is what, in most cases, a person could be struggling with anyway. Samson's downfall was with Dalilah, to whom he revealed all his secrets concerning his strength, and, in this way, he was overpowered by his enemies. We have to know, though, that all this didn't start with Delilah. He was cultivating these desires and didn't fight much with them, didn't resist them. This is also how sin works. Since the beginning of his story, we see him choosing a philistine wife instead of following the advice of his parents to take a woman from his own nation. That already gave a space for the enemy to interact with him as his wife was from their nation (Philistine), and in this way, they started interfering with him since the feast he had set up for his wife ([Judges 14:10-20](#)).

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¹ Now Samson went down to Timnah, and saw a woman in Timnah of the daughters of the Philistines. ² So he went up and told his father and mother, saying, "I have seen a woman in Timnah of the daughters of the Philistines; now therefore, get her for me as a wife."

³ Then his father and mother said to him, "*Is there* no woman among the daughters of your brethren, or among all my people, that you must go and get a wife from the uncircumcised Philistines?"

And Samson said to his father, "Get her for me, for she pleases me well." (Judges 14:1-3)

In today's days, this situation could be compared to someone choosing a non-believer as a wife. I am not judging persons having such relationships; I am just analyzing the passage. In this way, someone is already more exposed to the world and the enemy, as here we are speaking about being unequally yoked with someone, as **2 Corinthians 6:14** says. I am not saying this is an impossible task; I am just saying that there are consequences for each decision based on the flesh we take. God could allow some things to happen, but just because we have chosen them, we will bear the consequences. He doesn't want to force us sometimes. He is instead advising us, and we have His word as guidance on how we should live. We can say that Samson was often guided by his impulses and what he saw rather than the word and the principles of God. Was it a good principle for the Israelites not to take a woman from another nation? Yes, it was. Same as today it is for a Christian husband or wife to have a believer as a companion instead of a non-believer. There will eventually be cases where this will happen, or maybe the two of them were engaged before coming to the faith, and in this case, they should stay together, but in general, God had set good

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principles and rules to follow. They are advice given for our good. We can see many other persons in the Bible making some important and essential decisions based on what they just felt or liked, and we see the consequences that came with that, too. So, we see that despite the advice of his parents not to take a Philistine woman as a wife, he did it. In this way, his enemies got involved in his personal life, too, and for revenge, they killed his wife ([Judges 15:6](#)). That brought Samson to a crisis. He fought with them and revenged his wife, which was also from the Lord, as the scripture says in [Judges 14:4](#), but this is just because we have an amazing God who knows how to make things work together for good for those who love Him. It is not because of our wrong decisions but because of His goodness. We must never think that sin and wrong decisions will bring us any good, but we need to know that God is the one who does it because of His mercy by interfering with the situation. Glory to Him for that and His mercy that could also run out if someone takes it for granted and doesn't have the right attitude toward it.

Today, we can compare Samson with a believer who certainly walks with God and fights for Him but still easily stumbles into his weaknesses. Many people stumble and have weaknesses, but here we are speaking about someone a bit more inclined to this. Comparing him to a believer today, we also cannot say that we are speaking about someone who lives permanently in sin and doesn't feel regret at all when he sins. No. When talking about Samson, we are talking about a real believer and one who fights his battles for God's glory, someone who is a part of the Kingdom. We know this because the Bible says that Samson was chosen since his birth, and we can see God's hand in his life.

The Bible talks in [1 Corinthians 3:11-14](#) about building with different materials. There Apostle Paul makes a comparison with the life of the believer. He talks about a person who has a foundation already, which is **very important**. Nevertheless, the life of a believer doesn't stop just at this point (which is, of course, essential). Paul talks about the material

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we use to build on the foundation and lists the possible materials used, some of which are more resistant and others not. They all will be tested with fire one day. To me, the way we build means how we live as Christians and our dedication to the Lord. There are indeed some Christians who are more worldly and fleshly than others. Here, we are not speaking about the measure of faith each one has (**Romans 12:3**), as even those with a small measure could be more dedicated than the rest. Samson was a strong warrior for God's kingdom. He was admired for his extraordinary strength, with which he was gifted. We can say that he had a big measure of strength and faith, but he was fleshly at times. We need to have a desire while we live; we need to have a desire for the Lord to work in our lives and to be used by Him. Paul compares the Christian life in **1 Corinthians 9:24** to a race. We need to run in such a way that we may win, not in a sluggish way.

I often found myself building with materials that did not endure. A house could look good when built with straw, but it will eventually not endure. Sometimes, I thought to build with materials such as wood, which apparently seem more resistant but still do not endure in the fiery trial that comes upon everyone.

*"Beloved, do not think it strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened to you;" (**1 Peter 4:12**)*

Samson was also building with such materials by not paying attention to his weaknesses and working on them. We need to pursue perfection in our Christian lives even if we see ourselves far from it. We need to desire to grow more in the Lord. We are obviously not perfect, and when speaking about perfection, I am not referring to justification, which comes from God alone. Somebody might be looking for perfection to justify himself, but we need instead to present ourselves before Him the way we are, and He will justify us through His precious blood. When talking about perfection, I am talking about dedication, about exercising

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our faith, and the way we walk in Him after receiving the justification. This could help us to grow and prevent us from stumbling.

This was probably lacking in Samson's life, and the consequences didn't delay coming. After the death of the woman he had chosen for a wife and some other moments he went through, he met Delilah. Driven by the Philistines, she wanted to know the secret of his strength. Here, we see the enemy pointing right there where the fountain of power is. His purpose is to annihilate and attack us where our major weakness is. Once the enemy achieves that, he will try to interrupt the fountain of our strength; he will try to interrupt our relationship with God and cut our strength and faith by the roots. We know that our strength comes from God. That's why he will try to interrupt our relationship with Him. He will try to instill doubt in our hearts and to cut all connections and ways for us to be related to God. This is what Delilah did. She wanted to know the very secret of Samson's strength. He probably didn't take it as something serious at that moment, and being overconfident, he kept playing with her, telling her different things about the secret of his strength. This is when we play with sin, thinking we still have control over it. If he had taken the matter seriously, he would have probably cut this conversation with her at the beginning of it and would have moved away. But as he had probably forgotten that the secret of his strength was coming not from himself but from God, he followed his own ways and opened his heart to her. This happens in our life when we are too confident and forget that we are nothing without Him. Failing and falling into sin helps us to realize our fragility and get back to God, to get back to trust in Him even more than before. Failure and sin don't occur just at the moment most of the time but build up with time by leaving our trust in Him aside. We start walking by our own strength and wisdom. This is something subtle and in our eyes, it looks like we still walk and trust in God, but we don't do it all heartedly. We need to put all our effort into doing so, but to trust in our own strength is nevertheless an occurrence that sometimes we cannot control. That's why God sometimes allows certain

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failures to happen in our life so that we can become aware of our real condition and our weakness, so that we can trust again in Him. This is in His sovereignty, and we must desire to walk up straight with Him through the way and not purposely allow sin in our lives.

Returning to Samson's story, we see that instead of cutting off from the beginning of the conversation concerning the secret of his strength with Delilah, he kept conversing with her. Something similar happened in the Garden of Eden with Eve and the serpent. She started talking with the snake about the prohibited fruit and remained there to converse about it. Some things must get cut off from the beginning. Otherwise they could prevail over us.

Out of this story, as in any story in the Bible having to do with making wrong decisions or falling into sin, we can see that there are consequences. As we said before, this is also a demonstration of God's love as sometimes, He allows these consequences and also judges us in this way so that we can understand the gravity of our wrongs and, in this way, repent and not return to the same mistake. A father corrects the child he loves. In [1 Peter 4:17](#), it is said that the judgment begins with the household of the Lord. This means us who believe. It is not the same way with the unbelievers who will not be judged now and will not feel most of the consequences of sin at this present time. They will not be corrected by the Father as they are not legitimate sons. That's why you will probably never see an unbeliever regretting his sin or feeling sorrowful because of it. A believer instead knows when his relationship with the Lord is interrupted and when the Lord is not pleased with Him. Sometimes, the judgment is expressed in leaving us in the enemy's hands. It is not God who wants to hurt or harm us, but He just removes His hand of protection from us. He does this because He cannot stand at sin and iniquity. At the same time, He uses this moment to work in us. It looks like He left, but He is there though and oversees us. He will not allow for us to be over-tested. He won't allow the enemy to do more

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than what He allowed him. Do we want to sin and pull away from God in this way? Then He leaves us to go in that direction, as He is a gentleman and doesn't force us. Then we see our relationship with Him interrupted, and we learn how harmful it is to be away from the Father. We understand that He will not strike us with lightning or judge us directly when we sin, but He just removes His protection in most of the cases, so that we can understand how painful is to be away from Him. One of the best things in our relationship with Him is His love and protection and providence, which we often take as something for granted and don't appreciate as we should. It is said: ["But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you."](#) (Matthew 6:33)

By "all these things" we also intend His protection. We wanted to depart from Him? Then He leaves us to depart but will still remind us that the only secure place is under His wings. It is the same as the prodigal son who asked for his part of the inheritance and left his father. He departed far from him and after a while felt the consequences of his own choices. So, the way He performs this judgment and the fact that we are found in the enemy's hands same as it happened to Samson, is actually for our good.

Samson felt the consequences of his sin. Which was his sin precisely? He opened his heart to Delilah and told her the secret of his strength. First, he made a mistake in being with her, and afterward, all this grew into something bigger. We see that after she cut his hair, he lost his strength, and the enemy blinded him and imprisoned him. We need to know that when we are on the side of the Lord and fight battles against the enemy (the devil) in His name, the same way as Samson did, we are getting the devil furious with us. Much more than ever before. Now, he wants to annihilate us. He wants to destroy us. He will never show any pity and will do everything possible to accomplish that. Once we fall into his hands, he will pour all his wrath and rage on us. Why? Because we've

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been causing damage to his dark kingdom. Not we, by our own strength, but Jesus living in us. Same like Samson, after fighting the Philistines and falling into their hands, they were furious with him by blinding him and enslaving him. The Bible says that the prince of this world (the devil) is the one blinding the people from seeing the glorious light of the gospel.

“whose minds the god of this age **has blinded**, who do not believe, lest the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine on them.” (2 Corinthians 4:4, emphasis added)

Of course, this passage speaks about the people who do not believe at all, but I think a believer can also get blinded again. In 2 Peter 1:5-9 it is said:

⁵ But also for this very reason, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue, to virtue knowledge, ⁶ to knowledge self-control, to self-control perseverance, to perseverance godliness, ⁷ to godliness brotherly kindness, and to brotherly kindness love. ⁸ For if these things are yours and abound, *you* will be neither barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. ⁹ **For he who lacks these things is shortsighted, even to blindness**, and has forgotten that he was cleansed from his old sins. (emphasis added)

We see that in this passage is described the effort a believer must have, so that he can grow in the faith. Without this, he is shortsighted, even to blindness. This confirms that a believer can be blinded, too. Samson wasn't probably putting all his effort into pleasing God and often gave a free way to his flesh and desires.

Was Samson chosen? Was he a man of God and a believer? Yes, of course. He was chosen since the womb of his mother, but still, he probably didn't live fully for God at his full potential. What is true is that God turned all of his failures and what the enemy meant as evil against him into something glorious as he managed to destroy more enemies

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than ever at his death ([Judges 16:29, 30](#)). He was blinded and enslaved by the Philistines. They had finally achieved what they wanted. Their enemy, Samson, was weakened and helpless and imprisoned by them. One day, they were at their temple to rejoice over their triumph, and he was called out to perform for them. Standing between the pillars of the temple, he prayed to the Lord to give him strength for this last time so that he can take vengeance on the Philistines for his two eyes. The Lord heard his prayer, and he pushed the two pillars, making the temple fall on them and him also. We need to remember that when speaking about the Philistines, we are referring to the devil, whose purpose is to enslave us and blind us, as they did with Samson. The Lord heard the prayer of Samson, and in this way, he had a victory over the Philistines and ended his life victoriously. This should be our desire above everything. To glorify God with our life. That's why if you feel failed today, you must rise up and trust in the Lord, as He still wants to work in your life. You just need to understand the wrong you have done, the consequences of it and be disposed to His treatment. **We need to appreciate God's mercy, as it would have become much worse if it wasn't for it.** Samson could have died and been killed by the Philistines at the moment they took him, but nevertheless he remained in life to fulfill his calling. This could happen only by God's mercy. If it was up to us and our decisions, we would have been lost by now. But today, we are still standing by God's mercies, and we need to keep that in mind. Samson felt the consequences of his wrong choices but finished well. We don't want, though, to end up blinded and enslaved. We want to live our lives fully for Him in the right way.

Another thing that we need to notice is what happened after they imprisoned him. V. 22 of chapter 16 of Judges says:

["However, the hair of his head began to grow again after it had been shaven."](#)

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It means that slowly but surely, same as a hair takes to grow, a believer, a man of God, is destined to regain his strength. This obviously happens if his hair doesn't get cut again and again. It also takes time until we regain our spiritual strength. During that time, we will be weak and be exposed to the enemy's attacks, but what we need to do is to stand firm, hold onto the promises of God, and trust in His word. Healing takes time. God's forgiveness comes at the moment someone acknowledges His wrongs, but spiritual healing and regaining strength takes time.

We already said that Samson's victory, as well as the victory we can have today, is because of the Lord's goodness and not because of our capability or failures. Through this story, we can clearly see that our capability is not to glorify God but to fail. I am not saying this to insinuate that we can deliberately fail but so that we can acknowledge who we are and the way our nature is. Our nature and desire are leading us to sin. I am also mentioning this part of the story of Samson to say to those who have failed and think that their failure is great and irreparable, that they need to be encouraged, knowing that God can still use them and use any situation for good. Samson achieved much at the end of his life, but there indeed were consequences, and he went through tough moments. He was blinded, and in the end, in order to accomplish what he desired from God, he had to sacrifice himself and die with the Philistines. I am sure that we don't want to go through these kinds of moments in our lives, even if we are not necessarily speaking of literal death coming to someone when sinning, as it happened in this story. This is just an example of the consequences that come after sin.

The Bible is full of stories written for our encouragement, correction, and exhortation. We could find ourselves in certain stories or characters in the different times we are going through life. This all is for the purpose of giving us hope and to instruct us. Whether we fell into

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sin and we are found in a situation similar to Samson, and God wants to raise us up, or we just need to be careful and take this story as a warning and guidance on how we need to walk in front of God.