

# Judges 16:4



וְהָיָה  
אַחֲרַיִךְ  
וַיֵּאָהֵב  
אִשָּׁה  
בְּנַחַל  
שֹׁרֵק  
וַשְּׁמָהּ  
דִּלְיָלָה

Some time

later, he fell in love  
with a woman in  
the Valley of Sorek  
whose name was

**DELILAH**

KALLERSON  
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Artwork by Douglas Kallerson

## **Judges 16:1-9** **(Samson, Judge of Israel, Part VII)**

The sermon today reviews and explains the short passage comprised in Judges 16:1-3. After that, we will begin to look through the next account that deals with the she-devil Delilah.

The first section deals with the area of Gaza. Cambridge, in its comments on the first verse, says of Gaza, "As it lay at the meeting-point of the caravan-routes from Egypt and the Arabian desert, it was always an important centre; the kind of place where bad characters might be found."

Nothing has changed. The place has always been, and it continues to be, a place filled with bad characters. As for what Samson does when leaving Gaza, it almost sounds comical to us. Why would anyone pull up the entire entryway to the city and carry it away?

And yet, even outside of Scripture, such an event has great symbolic meaning. John Lange gives a nice description of it –

"Hence, in the East victorious princes have frequently literally carried away the gates of conquered cities. ... For the same reason, Almansor, when he took Compostella, caused the doors of the St. James' Church to be lifted out, and to be carried on the shoulders of Christians, to Cordova, in sign of his victory. ... The same idea presents itself in North-German legends, when giants are represented as carrying away churches from their places, in order to show their hostility against Christianity." John Lange

Thus, it is a common ancient custom representing victory and subjugation.

**Text Verse:** *"Then the Angel of the Lord called to Abraham a second time out of heaven, <sup>16</sup> and said: 'By Myself I have sworn, says the Lord, because you have done this thing, and have not withheld your son, your only son— <sup>17</sup> blessing I will bless you, and multiplying I will multiply your descendants as the stars of the heaven and as the sand which is on the seashore; and your descendants shall possess the gate of their enemies.'"*

*-Genesis 22:15-17*

Abraham was told he would possess the gates of his enemies. Samson literally possessed the gates of his enemies, hauling them away as a sign to the people of Gaza and to those who would later see them on a mountain facing Hebron.

With all of that might at his disposal, no wonder the next account has the Philistines looking to discover the secret of his strength. Anyone that strong would be a terrible foe to have around, ready to strike at his leisure.

And how else to woo a strong man than by a sultry, sensual, seductress who will lure him away from sound reason and clarity of thought? Once such a soul is in the mix, tragedy is sure to lie ahead.

It's a truth that is to be found in His superior word. And so, let us turn to that precious word once again, and... May God speak to us through His word today, and may His glorious name ever be praised.

### **I. The Doors of the Gate (verses 1-3)**

Chapter 15 ended with words concerning Samson's time of judging Israel being "twenty years in the days of the Philistines." Remembering that, it next says...

#### **<sup>1</sup> Now Samson went to Gaza**

*vayelekh Shimshon azatah* – "And walked, Samson, Gaza-ward." Beginning this way means that the events concerning Samson continue to unfold as a narrative, but this is not necessarily chronological. As this is during the time of his twenty-year judgeship, it is not. Rather, it is categorical.

Gaza (Azah) is the chief of the five principal cities of the Philistines. It is also the most southerly of them. The change from Azah to Gaza is because of the pronunciation of the letter *ayin* at the beginning of the name. It has a strong sound towards the back of the throat.

From there, the Greek translates this hard *ayin* with the letter *gamma* in an attempt to closely reproduce the sound. With the *g* sound introduced, it has carried forward into our modern English name, Gaza. The name is a feminine form coming from *az*, strong. It signifies Strong or Strong Place.

No explanation is given concerning why he headed toward Gaza. It doesn't appear he went there looking for a lady of the night but on his way there...

#### **<sup>1 (con't)</sup> and saw a harlot there,**

*vayar sham ishah zonah* – "And saw there woman, prostituting." The word is *zanah*, a verb often translated as a noun. It signifies to commit fornication. Thus, as in the

narrative of Jephthah when referring to his mother, it refers to a harlot. But as a verb, it describes the act when referring to the person.

Unlike the account of Jephthah, however, I translate this in the verbal form rather than the noun because Samson is in the process of having her, as it next says...

<sup>1 (con't)</sup> **and went in to her.**

*vayavo eleha* – “and goes in unto her.” It is the normal idiom meaning that he had intimate relations with her. While so engaged...

<sup>2</sup> **When the Gazites were told, “Samson has come here!”**

The words seem elliptical, being incomplete: *la'azatim l'mor ba Shimshon henah* – “To the Gazites, to say, ‘Came, Samson, here.’” Normally, it would say something like, “And it was told to the Gazites...,” or “And the Gazites said...”

All the commentators I read, if they addressed the issue at all, believe a word has dropped out of the original. That seems hard to justify with something so obviously incomplete. Rather, I suggest that this is a continuation of the first clause of verse 1 and that the next two clauses were parenthetical –

“And walked, Samson, Gaza-ward, (And saw there woman, prostituting. And goes in unto her.) to the Gazites, to say, ‘Came, Samson, here.’”

Not wanting to be presumptuous and argue against scholarly opinion, while also wanting to include Sergio in another sermon, I asked if this was a possible translation. His response was, “Totally possible!! And would totally explain the difficult Hebrew insertion of that parenthesis paragraph.”

As will be seen, not only is it possible, but such a translation is also key to understanding what is going on. Samson has come to the area of Gaza. Therefore...

<sup>2 (con't)</sup> **they surrounded *the place* and lay in wait for him all night at the gate of the city.**

*vayasovu vayeervu lo kal halaylah b'shaar ha'ir* – “And surrounded, and lay in wait to him all the night in gate the city.” John Lange says, [Judges 16:2. — וַיִּסְבְּבוּ: [and surrounded] the accusative (cf. Eccles. 9:14) object of this verb is to be disengaged from לוֹ [to him], the object of the immediately following verb...]

It is for this reason that the translators inserted the words “the place.” Otherwise, the words “they surrounded” would have to be referring to Samson. But as the text read

without the parenthesis, he has not been the subject and so he cannot now be the object.

However, with the translation properly rendered as I have (with the parenthesis), we see that they surrounded him, not a place, and waited within the gates of the city, hoping to trap him when he arose in the morning. In this state...

<sup>2</sup> (con't) **They were quiet all night, saying, “In the morning, when it is daylight, we will kill him.”**

The verb is reflexive: *vayitkharshu khal halaylah le'mor ad or ha'boqer v'harg'nuhu* – “And quieted themselves all the night, to say, ‘Until light the morning, and killed him.’” Instead of going in during the night to attack Samson, the Philistines quieted themselves, planning to take advantage of the safety of the light of day to attack.

However, Samson alerted them of his presence by boldly telling them that he had arrived and knew what to expect. As such, he had other plans...

<sup>3</sup> **And Samson lay low till midnight;**

*vayishkav Shimshon ad khatsi ha'laylah* – “And lies, Samson, until half the night.” Despite commentaries that say something like, “because of his guilty conscience over his lewdness,” it appears that Samson arising when the night was half over was preplanned in order to do what he will next do. In other words, what is presented shows purposeful design to meet an intended goal. Therefore...

<sup>3</sup> (con't) **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,**

*vayaqum ba'khatsi ha'laylah vayeekhoz b'dalthoth shaar ha'ir u-bishte hamzuzoth vayisaem im habriakh* – “And arises in half the night. And grasps in doors gate the city, and in two the posts, and removes them with the bar.” The words are detailed and specific.

First, the *deleth*, or door, is mentioned. The word comes from *dalah*, to draw water. Thus, they are something swinging like a pail when it is drawn up. From there, one sees the idea of the door swinging on its posts. The door is what provides access and egress to what is on the other side.

Next is the *shaar*, or gate. That comes from *shaar* meaning to calculate or reckon. That is used only once, in Proverbs 23:7 –

“For as he thinks [*shaar*] in his heart, so *is* he.  
‘Eat and drink!’ he says to you,  
But his heart is not with you.” Proverbs 23:7

The gate is for protecting those within. A gatekeeper is one who actively decides who to let in and who to keep out. He reckons in his heart and acts upon that. But the symbolism of the gate goes further. The text verse said, “and your descendants shall possess the gate of their enemies.”

Because of Abraham’s faithfulness to God through his willingness to sacrifice Isaac, God promised him that he would have full authority over his enemies. To understand all this entails, several more verses will help explain the intent –

“So the field of Ephron which *was* in Machpelah, which *was* before Mamre, the field and the cave which *was* in it, and all the trees that *were* in the field, which *were* within all the surrounding borders, were deeded <sup>18</sup> to Abraham as a possession in the presence of the sons of Heth, before all who went in at the gate of his city.” Genesis 23:17, 18

The gate of the city is where business is transacted. It is where land inheritances were exchanged, bought, sold, etc. All types of official commerce took place there. Abraham purchased the field of Ephron the Hittite and the transaction was recorded at the gate.

Thus, to possess the gate signified having full authority over all judicial matters and commerce conducted within the city. Samson is literally possessing the city gates by pulling them up and carrying them away. All of Gaza’s judicial authority and commerce thus implicitly now belongs to him.

The promise to Abraham is thus fulfilled against the Weakeners through Samson. And more...

“So they sent away Rebekah their sister and her nurse, and Abraham’s servant and his men. <sup>60</sup> And they blessed Rebekah and said to her:  
‘Our sister, *may you become*  
*The mother of thousands of ten thousands;*  
*And may your descendants possess*  
*The gates of those who hate them.’”* Genesis 24:59, 60

The promise of Abraham went through his son Isaac, Rebekah became Isaac’s wife, and so the words pronounced over Rebekah are fulfilled against the Weakeners through Samson.

“It came to pass in the month of Chislev, *in* the twentieth year, as I was in Shushan the citadel, <sup>2</sup> that Hanani one of my brethren came with men from Judah; and I asked them concerning the Jews who had escaped, who had survived the captivity, and concerning Jerusalem. <sup>3</sup> And they said to me, ‘The survivors who are left from the captivity in the province *are* there in great distress and reproach. The wall of Jerusalem *is* also broken down, and its gates are burned with fire.’ <sup>4</sup> So it was, when I heard these words, that I sat down and wept, and mourned *for many* days; I was fasting and praying before the God of heaven.”

-Nehemiah 1:1-4

“And it came to pass in the month of Nisan, in the twentieth year of King Artaxerxes, *when* wine *was* before him, that I took the wine and gave it to the king. Now I had never been sad in his presence before. <sup>2</sup> Therefore the king said to me, ‘Why *is* your face sad, since you *are* not sick? This *is* nothing but sorrow of heart.’ So I became dreadfully afraid, <sup>3</sup> and said to the king, ‘May the king live forever! Why should my face not be sad, when the city, the place of my fathers’ tombs, *lies* waste, and its gates are burned with fire?’ <sup>4</sup> Then the king said to me, ‘What do you request?’” Nehemiah 2:1-4

The wall of the city is for protection, as are the gates. But the gates are also the parts of the wall that carry the importance for the matters already mentioned. It is why Nehemiah focused on the gates when he went before the king. Having walls around a city without gates would be pointless.

“Blessed *are* those who do His commandments, that they may have the right to the tree of life, and may enter through the gates into the city. <sup>15</sup> But outside *are* dogs and sorcerers and sexually immoral and murderers and idolaters, and whoever loves and practices a lie.” Revelation 21:14, 15

The gates keep out miscreants and allow in those with the rights and privileges granted by the ruler of the city.

Next are *hamzuzoth*, “the posts.” The *mezuzah*, post, comes from the same source as the word *ziz*, or “moving things.” That word is seen only three times.

In Psalm 50 and Psalm 80 it describe beasts moving in the field. In Isaiah 66:11 it refers to the bosom of a woman. Thus, it speaks of that which is conspicuous, and thus prominent. The prominent nature of the city is removed by Samson, leaving it a city essentially without a soul.

Last is noted the *beriakh*, or bar. That is derived from *barakh*, to pass through or flee. In this case, the bar passes through holders on doors to secure them. These then indicate the final layer of defense before a city is completely breached.

These actions by Samson were his design and intention from the start. What he has done is an act resulting in extreme humiliation of the enemy. Everything symbolically associated with the gate, meaning the doors of the gate, the gateposts, and the bar are removed, demonstrating absolute authority over Gaza.

As for the word translated as “removes them,” *nasa*, it is used when setting out on a journey, departing, etc. To get the sense –

“So Israel took his journey [*nasa*] with all that he had, and came to Beersheba, and offered sacrifices to the God of his father Isaac.” Genesis 46:1

Hence, just as NASA removes [*nasa*] men into space for a journey by breaking their earthly bonds, Samson removed [*nasa*] the doors, posts, and bar of the gate for a journey, breaking the civic, judicial, cultural, and national strength of the Philistines. After that, he...

<sup>3 (con't)</sup> **put them on his shoulders,**

*vayasem al k'thephav* – “And sets upon his shoulders.” Samson took this massive set of doors, posts, and bar and placed it upon his shoulders.

The word is *katheph*, coming from an unused root meaning to clothe. It is the place where garments hang from, and thus that which supports and bears a burden and responsibility. That is seen, for example, in Exodus 28 –

“And you shall put the two stones on the shoulders [*katheph*] of the ephod as memorial stones for the sons of Israel. So Aaron shall bear their names before the Lord on his two shoulders [*katheph*] as a memorial.” Exodus 28:12

<sup>3 (con't)</sup> **and carried them to the top of the hill that faces Hebron.**

*vayaalem el rosh ha'har asher al p'ne khevron* – “and ascends them unto top the mount which upon faces Hebron.” With this burden on his shoulders, Samson carried the gates to the mount (not the hill) facing Hebron.

As has been seen, a mountain is a lot of something gathered. It is synonymous with a large but centralized group of people. Hebron means Alliance. With these words, this short narrative is complete.



*Who has the strength to continue the task  
That God in Christ has begun?  
In the light of what authority can we bask?  
Except in the work of God's own Son*

*Who has the strength, power, and might  
To be victorious in this great task?  
What is it that will make things right?  
And in the light of whose greatness can we bask?*

*Who is allied with the One sent by God?  
And who will faithfully take up the task?  
In what power and authority will he tread?  
And in the light of whose strength will he bask?*

## **II. The Typology Explained**

These three verses are dependent on what happened in Chapter 15. Samson prevailed over the Philistines with the jawbone. After that, he was hugely thirsty. At that time, it was asked, "Was Christ's victory just a one-time salvation that had no lasting effects?"

The answer was a resounding No. As noted, "Not only did Christ prevail in His atonement for sin, but God caused that to bring about the Spirit for believers as well." To demonstrate that Christ's victory was fully sufficient, we are given these verses.

Samson, Place of the Sun (the Word of God in Christ), is said to have headed towards Gaza, Strong or Strong Place. Because it is a city of the Philistines, the Weakeners, it reflects something that is strongly opposed to the message of God in Christ. It is what is reflected in Paul's words of 2 Corinthians 10 –

*"For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds, <sup>5</sup> casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ, <sup>6</sup> and being ready to punish all disobedience when your obedience is fulfilled." 2 Corinthians 10:4-6*

The Philistines, Weakeners, anticipate those who weaken others spiritually through the use of law. The mission of Samson (Place of the Sun and thus the word of God in Christ) was to destroy those who afflict Israel. It is through the word that Jesus is revealed.

Thus, in rightly using the word, the power of God in Christ is appropriated. He is the One to defeat those who spiritually afflict the people of God. He is demonstrating that He fully has this ability.

In going to Gaza, Samson next saw a harlot there. It is the same typology as seen in the Jephthah series. It refers to Israel in her state of national apostasy, prostituting herself –

“The Lord said also to me in the days of Josiah the king: “Have you seen what backsliding Israel has done? She has gone up on every high mountain and under every green tree, and there played the harlot [*zanah*]. <sup>7</sup> And I said, after she had done all these *things*, ‘Return to Me.’ But she did not return. And her treacherous sister Judah saw it. <sup>8</sup> Then I saw that for all the causes for which backsliding Israel had committed adultery, I had put her away and given her a certificate of divorce; yet her treacherous sister Judah did not fear, but went and played the harlot [*zanah*] also.” Jeremiah 3:6-8

Samson going into her anticipates the word of God in Christ going into this disobedient people. He has openly announced that He has come and that the word is where the power lies because it speaks of Him. While in Gaza, an ambush is set for Samson with the intent of killing him in the morning.

However, Samson, intent on proving he was victorious over the Philistines (the Weakeners) in their strong place, rose in the middle of the night and removed their means of access, their protection, and their authority to conduct civil or judicial matters and commerce.

In essence, this looks to Christ, who has completely removed the state, the ability, the authority, etc., of Weakeners to afflict God’s people through law observance. The promise to Abraham was one based upon his faith. He lived by faith and received the promise because of faith. His deeds were not of law but of faith –

“By faith Abraham, when he was tested, offered up Isaac, and he who had received the promises offered up his only begotten *son*, <sup>18</sup> of whom it was said, ‘In Isaac your seed shall be called,’ <sup>19</sup> concluding that God *was* able to raise *him* up, even from the dead, from which he also received him in a figurative sense.”

-Hebrews 11:17-19

The promise is fully realized in Christ for those who are of faith. Everything about the implements of that gate is seen in this act of Samson lifting them up, placing them on his shoulders, and carrying them away.

The entire burden is on Christ, the place of the word of God. Samson carried them to the top of the *har*, the mount signifying a large but centralized group of people that faced Alliance. This location, as in previous sermons, looks to the relationship established between Christ and His people because of His work.

In other words, the account is recorded to show that the work of God in Christ, recorded in the word, is our authority over the Weakeners. It is faith in Christ and His completed work, not works of the law, that prevails.

The doors, posts, and bars of the gates of the stronghold are defeated in Christ for those who will use his power, symbolized by Him placing them before Hebron – the Alliance of God in Christ with His people.

*Eleven hundred of silver from each  
A great payday, if Samson I can defeat  
I know I can do it, he is such a peach  
He will cave, and his strength we will unseat*

*And who wouldn't do it? That I ask  
All that loot just waiting to take  
Only a fool would turn down this task  
When all that money is at stake*

*I'll do it! I'll weaken his resolve  
And you'll get your answer on that day  
The mystery of his strength I will solve  
And then, buddy boys, it's time for you to pay*

### **III. Where Your Great Strength Lies (verses 4-9)**

Now that the short insert of Samson's exploits in Gaza is complete, the narrative turns to another story involving another woman. She is one of the most notorious females seen in Scripture. Let's find out what the story of this femme fatale has to say...

**<sup>4</sup>Afterward it happened that he loved a woman in the Valley of Sorek,**

*v'hi akhare ken vayeeshav ishah b'nakhal soreq* – "And is, after thus, and loves woman in Valley Sorek." The first thing of note is that the words never say this woman is a Philistine. Rather, regardless of her ancestry, the Philistines use her to come against Samson.

The Valley of Sorek is accepted to be a broad valley that narrows as it rises towards the hills of Judah. The word *nakhal*, valley, comes from the verb *nakhal*, to take as a possession. Thus, it speaks of inheritance.

The name Sorek means Choice Vine. It is derived from *soreq*, a choice species of vine. Strong's says it yields purple grapes, which are the richest variety. Of this woman, it says...

<sup>4</sup> (con't) **whose name was Delilah.**

*ushmah d'lilah* – “and her name Delilah.” The meaning of Delilah is debated. It could be from *dal*, weak or languid. Young's says, Languishing.

Lange takes the idea of that word and makes it active, thus giving the sense of Debilitator, though he doesn't specifically use that word. Sergio assumes Water Down Woman, deriving that from a root meaning to thin out or water down.

Abarim provides Hangar or Vertical Transporter, basing that on the same root as door, *dalah*, to draw water. Using this same root, I would call her Drawer, as in Drawer Out. That is based on the words of the Proverb –

Counsel in the heart of man *is like* deep water,  
But a man of understanding will draw it out [*dalah*].” Proverbs 20:5

This is exactly what this venomous vixen will do to Samson...

<sup>5</sup> **And the lords of the Philistines came up to her**

*vayaalu eleha sarne plishtim* – “And ascended unto her, lords Philistines.” The word translated as lords, *seren*, signifies a lord, but also an axle. Hence, the word may indicate that the lord is the central point upon which the city turns.

It is always used in relation to the lords of the Philistines, with one exception when it describes the bronze axles of the carts in Solomon's Temple. These would probably be the five lords of the Philistines mentioned in Judges 3:3.

As for Philistine, it comes from *palash*, signifying to roll in the dust as an act of mourning. They are the Grievors or Weakeners. They are here to weaken Samson...

<sup>5</sup> (con't) **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;**

*vayomru lah pati otho ur'i bameh kokho gadol u-vameh nukhal lo vaasarnuhu l'anotho* – “And say to her, ‘Allure him, seeing in what his strength, great, and in what ables to him. And bound him to afflict him.’” From these words, it could be inferred that Samson wasn’t an exceptionally whopping guy. If he was, such great strength would seem more apparent.

However, they know he possesses this strength, and it is unnatural. Therefore, there must be some secret beyond himself that provides him with this strength. They want to know what it is so that they can disable it in order to bind and afflict him.

As for the word translated as allure, it is *pathah*. It is the same word used in Judges 14:15 when the Philistines tried to get his betrothed wife to reveal the secret of his riddle.

It signifies to be spacious, wide, or open. In this sense, one can see the intent. She is to make herself roomy in a moral sense, opening herself in an attempt to allure him into giving up the riddle of his strength. The sense of the words is “open to him.”

<sup>5</sup> (con’t) **and every one of us will give you eleven hundred *pieces* of silver.”**

*va'anakhnu nitan lakh ish eleph u-meah keseph* – “And we giving to you, man, thousand and hundred silver.” The meaning is that each lord would give this amount to Delilah, thus totaling fifty-five hundred pieces of silver. If so, it is an incredible amount of money.

However, the number is given as eleven hundred, is a multiple of 10 and 11. Bullinger says ten is the number of “Completeness of order, marking the entire round of anything, is, therefore, the ever-present signification of the number ten. It implies that nothing is wanting; that the number and order are perfect; that the whole cycle is complete.”

Eleven is the number that marks “disorder, disorganization, imperfection, and disintegration.”

Silver signifies redemption.

<sup>6</sup> **So Delilah said to Samson, “Please tell me where your great strength *lies*, and with what you may be bound to afflict you.”**

*vatomer d'lilah el Shimshon hagidah na li bameh kokhakha gadol u-bameh teaser l'anothekha* – “And says, Delilah, unto Samson, ‘Declaring, I pray, to me, in what your

strength great, and in what binding to afflict you?” The words appear direct and obvious to us, as if he would be a fool to answer them.

However, with the right inflection and intonation, they could be taken as admiring. Think of the girl whose boyfriend has the fastest car in town. She gets paid to find out what makes it so fast and so she whittles away at him.

“How does your car run so fast? If I had my own car, how could I beat you?” All the while, she is coaxing him along as women do. He would never suspect that she meant him harm. The account is perfectly plausible.

In response to this first inquiry, he decides to hold his tongue from telling the secret...

**<sup>7</sup> 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.”**

*vayomer eleha Shimshon im yaasruni b’shivah y’tharim lakhim asher lo horavu v’khalithi v’hayithi k’ekhad ha’adam* – “And says unto her, Samson, ‘If binding me in seven cords, fresh, which not dried, and weakened, and became according to one the man.’”

Samson makes up a tale that hides the secret and yet also reveals it in an unexpected way. Seven is the number of spiritual perfection. The *yether* is a cord that hangs free, coming from *yathar*, to remain over. For example, if there is a feast and it’s not all eaten, that is the remaining. Thus, it can signify excess, abounding, or even preeminence.

The word fresh, *lakh*, signifies green or moist. For example –

“And all the trees of the field shall know that I, the Lord, have brought down the high tree and exalted the low tree, dried up the green [*lakh*] tree and made the dry tree flourish; I, the Lord, have spoken and have done *it*.” Ezekiel 17:24

The verb dried, *kharav*, comes from *khorev*, dry. That word was used concerning the dry ground around Gideon’s fleece or the dried fleece surrounded by ground with dew.

Samson tells her that if these things are done, he will be weakened and “according to one the man [*ha’adam*].” The meaning is that he will be like any other man.

**<sup>8</sup> So the lords of the Philistines brought up to her seven fresh bowstrings, not yet dried, and she bound him with them.**

It takes the exact same words from the previous verse, simply rearranging them accordingly: *vayaalu lah sarne plishtim shivah y'tharim lakhim asher lo khoravu vataasrehu bahem* – “And ascend to her, lords Philistines, seven cords, fresh, which not dried. And binds him in them.”

She didn't get the things and try them out. Rather, the Philistines brought the articles, exactly as she specified. She then used them to do what he said, binding him in them. With that accomplished...

<sup>9</sup> **Now men were lying in wait, staying with her in the room. And she said to him, “The Philistines are upon you, Samson!”**

*v'ha'orev yoshev lah bakheder vatomer elav plishtim alekha Shimshon* – “And the lying-in-wait sitting to her in the chamber. And says unto him, ‘Philistines upon you, Samson.’” The verb *arav*, to lie in wait, is used. It comes from a primitive root signifying to lurk.

The Philistines are lurking, waiting for their chance to overcome Samson. If he was asleep and she did the tying, there is no reason to assume that Samson believed the Philistines were there.

Think back to the previous example, the girl is told by her boyfriend that his car is so fast as long as it has only 89 octane gas. And so when she puts in 87 octane and it still runs just as fast, she could say, “I was just testing. Why'd you lie to me?” He wouldn't have any idea that she was getting paid by someone else.

Likewise, with the right smooth-talking, Samson wouldn't have a clue that she really intended him harm. And so, with the ambush out of sight, and with Samson all tied, she made her actions known, supposedly only pretending to have the Philistines at hand...

<sup>9 (con't)</sup> **But he broke the bowstrings as a strand of yarn breaks when it touches fire.**

*vaynateq eth haytharim kaasher yinatheq p'thil hanoreth baharikho esh* – “And tears the cords according to tearing thread the fiber in his breath, fire.” Here is a new and rare word, *neoreth*. It signifies tow, or fiber, for making thread. It comes from *naar*, to shake off or out. Thus, it is fiber that is shaken out, as in the refuse of flax. When fire is brought near to it, it practically dissolves in an instant. Such was Samson's strength...

<sup>9 (fin)</sup> **So the secret of his strength was not known.**

*v'lo noda kokho* – “And not known his strength.” Despite giving clues for us to search out what is going on, Delilah is left without realizing her hopes for big money. Likewise, Samson’s source of strength remains unknown to her, and he is just as he was.

The words leave us in suspense as to what lies ahead, but it is a good place to finish for now. For each person who is listening, I hope you know the true Source of strength in a world of calamity and death.

It is found in Jesus. We are in a pickle because we are in mortal bodies that are destined to weaken over the years and eventually face death. Unless we go straight to the death part, the process is inevitable. We are living in bodies of weakness and corruption, but in Christ, there is a resolution to this dilemma –

“For when we were still without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. <sup>7</sup> For scarcely for a righteous man will one die; yet perhaps for a good man someone would even dare to die. <sup>8</sup> But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. <sup>9</sup> Much more then, having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him.” Romans 5:6-9

For those in Christ, whatever happens to these mortal bodies, even if it is unpleasant in the process of life, we have a way better hope ahead. I trust that you will be wise and receive the gift of God, which is given through receiving His Son.

In Him is eternal strength and everlasting life. So be wise and discerning and call out to Him today.

**Closing Verse:** *“It is God who arms me with strength,  
And makes my way perfect.” Psalm 18:32*

**Next Week:** Judges 16:10-22 *Monkeys in a barrel fun. Yes, really swell, even super great...* (Samson, Judge of Israel, Part VIII) (46<sup>th</sup> Judges Sermon)

The Lord has you exactly where He wants you. He has a good plan and purpose for you. It is He who judges His people according to their deeds. So, follow Him, live for Him, and trust Him, and He will do marvelous things for you and through you.

### **Samson, Judge of Israel, Part VII**

Now Samson went to Gaza and saw a harlot there  
And went in to her... Watch out Samson, better beware!



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, we  
-----the Samson killing committee

And Samson lay low till midnight; then he arose at midnight  
Took hold of the doors of the gate of the city and the gateposts, two  
Pulled them up, bar and all, put them on his shoulders  
And carried them to the top of the hill that faces Hebron  
-----a huge feat, I'm telling you

Afterward it happened that he loved a woman  
In the Valley of Sorek  
Whose name was Delilah  
Look out Samson, she will cost you, like a bad check

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... watch him agonize

And every one of us will give you  
Eleven hundred pieces of silver, so we shall do

So Delilah said to Samson, "Please tell me where  
-----your great strength lies  
And with what you may be bound to afflict you, please apprise

And Samson said to her  
"If they bind me with seven fresh bowstrings, if they can  
Not yet dried, then I shall become weak  
And be like any other man

So the lords of the Philistines  
Brought up to her (that fatale femme)  
Seven fresh bowstrings, not yet dried  
And she bound him with them

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 (tee hee, so fun)

Lord God, turn our hearts to be obedient to Your word  
Give us wisdom to be ever faithful to You  
May we carefully heed each thing we have heard  
Yes, Lord God may our hearts be faithful and true

And we shall be content and satisfied in You alone  
We will follow You as we sing our songs of praise  
Hallelujah to You; to us Your path You have shown  
Hallelujah we shall sing to You for all of our days

*Hallelujah and Amen...*