

Samson's lust

Throughout his story, we see Samson sin through the one body part some would say you must be the most vigilant in protecting. His lust led to his eventual death, and his story is a lesson for modern Christians to take heed to more than ever. The pathways to lust may be different than in Samson's age but the consequences are still the same. As you'll see below, Samson let his flesh control his actions instead of remaining devoted to his role as the last Judge for Israel.

[Judges 13-16](#)

An angel visiting his mother (chapter 13)

- Chapter 13 is about how Samson's mother was infertile and visited by an angel ("man of the Lord" some translations say), prophesying that she would bear a son who would *begin* to deliver Israel from the Philistines and have to follow a Nazarite vow (no strong drink, no unclean food, and his hair must never be shaved)
- His mother convinces his father, Manoah of this and He prays for the angel to return for more instructions. The angel returns and repeats the instructions before the couple makes a burnt offering to the Lord and the messenger goes up to heaven with the fire.

The wedding with the Timnah woman (chapter 14)

- Samson was in a Philistine town called Timnah (for some reason, it's never stated) and one of the women there "caught his eye").
- He was advised by his parents to seek a Hebrew woman from one of the other tribes instead of trying to obtain a Philistine but he **listened to his flesh** instead to reason. (14:3 literal translation "because she is right in my eyes"). He could've avoided all of the preceding events if he listened, but in verse 4, we understand God used this situation to fight against the Philistines.
- Wrestling the lion\the carcass with honey



- - 'He seized the lion and tore it to pieces', illustration from 'Through the Bible', Venture Publishing, 1928 by Charles Edmund Brock.
- He was on path to Timnah when he was attacked by a lion in a vineyard. He fought the lion with his bare hands and continued on his way to Timnah to find the woman. *I would've taken this as a sign to turn back.*
- **He didn't tell his parents about this**, who probably would've taken it as a bad omen and told him to reconsider again and ritually cleanse himself. He never told them about his God given strength either.
- He met the woman, they agreed to get married and Samson went back home. Some time later he went back down the path to Timnah and saw the lion's corpse but it was filled with bees and honey.
- Samson grabbed the honey from the lion's carcass, ate some then gave some to his father. It's possible Samson and his father took this as a good omen before the wedding (honey was also seen as an aphrodisiac back then) but it *still was touching a dead body*.
- Now this is just my observation. A nazirite vow states the person can't touch a dead body, along with everything else the angel told Samson's mother in chapter 13 (no strong drink, no unclean food and no cutting of his hair). I'm surprised he wasn't either rebuked or disciplined by God for grabbing the honey from the carcass.

- Samson and his father arrived and he hosted a feast for seven days. The Philistines gave him 30 bride grooms, and Samson gave them a riddle promising linen robes and clothes if they answered correctly (or they would give him clothes).
- Now on the 4th day, the men threatened the bride saying they would burn her and her family if she couldn't get the answer from Samson.
- In fear, the woman manipulated Samson into giving the answer by crying the rest of the days of the feast. She then told the men the answer and in anger, Samson killed 30 Philistines in Ashkelon and took their clothes to give to the men. He then left the wedding.
- Her father then gave her over to Samson's best man. He was under the impression Samson was mad at her after the riddle.

Now, we don't know God's reasoning or order for things, but he did use this situation to fight the Philistines and we'll see how Samson's God given strength will be used. In the physical, this wedding was a disaster leading to 30 innocent people dead. This is the Old Testament, so I guess this instance of murder was allowed by God.

- Days later Samson wanted "to be with" his wife, but the father confessed about giving her away to his best man.
- Samson then obtained 300 jackals, tied their tails together with torches to burn up the Philistines fields in revenge.
- Days later, the Philistines found out why Samson burned their fields and burned the Timnah woman and her father.
- Samson then fought and killed those Philistines. What's strange here is Samson did this for the woman who was philistine. Perhaps he felt sorry for her and her father.

Vs the 1,000 (chapter 15)



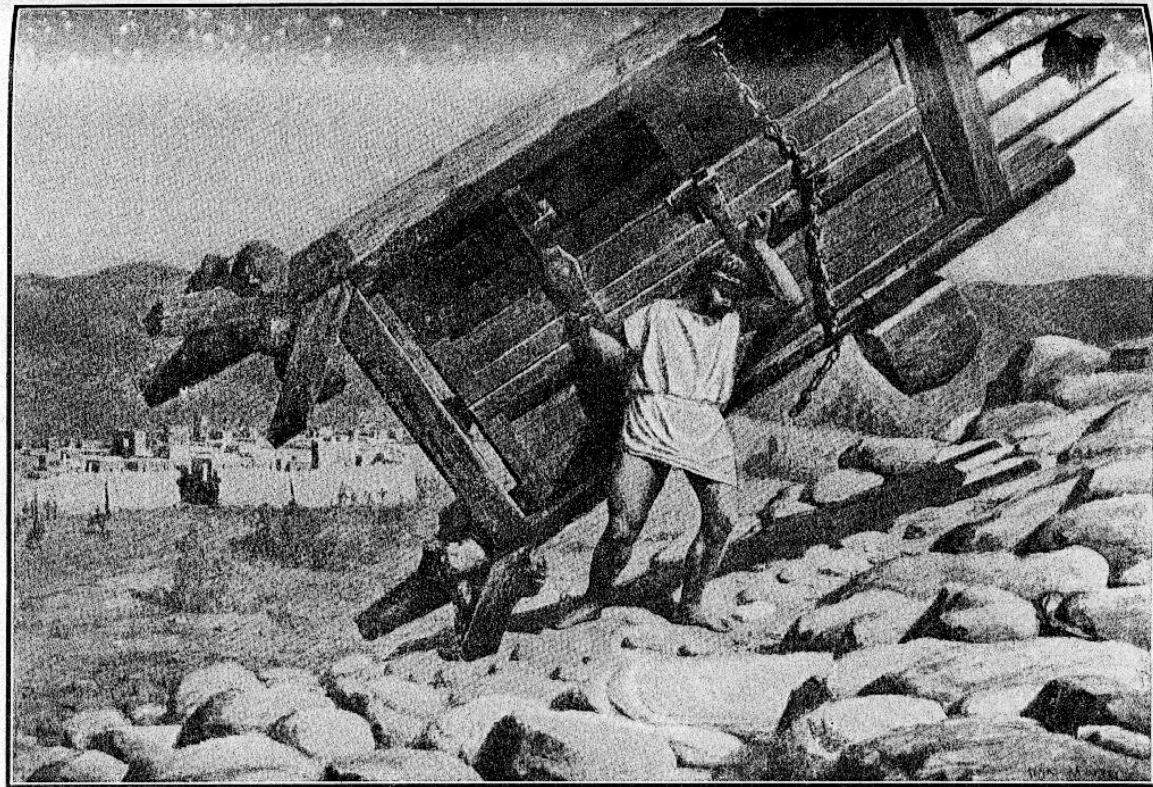
Samson Slays a Thousand Men with the Jawbone of an Ass (c. 1896–1902) by [James Tissot](#)

- The Jews in Judah were confronted by the Philistines for what Samson did above. The Jews went to Samson in the cave in Etah and made a promise not to harm him if he let them give himself over to the Philistines.
- After being given over, Samson ripped the ropes and killed 1000 of the 3000 Philistines with a donkey's jawbone. Now, **technically** he is violating his vow again by touching a jawbone here (piece of a dead body again).
- He called out to the Lord out of thirst, the Lord opened a basin in Lehi, and water came out of it.
- Verse 20 says he judged for 20 years. Usually the judge's tenure was listed after they died yet here Samson's is posted after this event. Some say this is because his life afterwards went on a decline.

His downfall

- “saw a prostitute” (16:1-3)
 - He then went to Gaza and slept with a prostitute after **seeing** her. We don't know the exact span of days between the chapters, but Samson witnessed a miracle yet still indulged in sin afterwards. Some say he had pride after the events of chapter 15, and went to a Philistine city (Gaza) possibly to pick a fight but saw the prostitute after he entered the city.

- Of course, the Philistines found out and plotted to attack him in the morning. However, Samson left at night, pulled out their gate doors, and carried them to a hill east of Hebron (distance wise this was 30 miles and the gates weighed around 5-10 tons).
- We don't know the exact reason as to why Samson went to Gaza in the first place, however some articles try to suggest that Samson visited the prostitute to hide his true intentions in the city, and the original objective was to take the gates in order to prepare the city for its destruction and to show **God remaining faithful to Israel and His covenant with Abraham** (Gen. 22:17 - "...And your offspring shall possess the gate of his enemies."). There's also a parallel with the story of the 2 spies and Rahab in Joshua 2 as they also went to a prostitute's house to hide and left in the night(albeit without the sexual sin) before the city was eventually destroyed. Zephaniah 2:4 and Jeremiah 47 prophesied the city's destruction.



111-61

○ Samson carries the gates of Gaza – Judges 16:3 – Henri Motte

The Bible and Its Story Taught by One Thousand Picture Lessons, vol. 3.
edited by Charles F. Horne and Julius A. Bewer. 1908

- **Delilah and the 3 lies** (16:4-20)



Samson and Delilah (1887) by [Jose Etxenagusia](#)

- Samson then found a woman called Delilah who was then convinced by the rulers of Philistines to find out his weakness for 1,100 silver each. There were 5 rulers (Gaza, Ashdod, Ashkelon, Gath, and Ekron) so Delilah would have gotten 5,500 silver pieces if they kept their word.
- It's debated on whether Delilah was a prostitute since it seems she was motivated by the potential reward.
- The Word doesn't outright say it, but it can be assumed Samson had relations with her also since *the rest of their dialogue was in her bedroom*. He didn't marry her.
- The three lies Samson told her about his strength. I thought there was some meaning between the different lies, but research didn't bring anything up.
 - Seven fresh bowstrings: Samson claimed his strength would fail if bound by new bowstrings.
 - New ropes: Samson claimed his strength would fail if bound with new ropes.
 - Seven braids of hair: Samson claimed his strength would fail if his seven braids of hair were woven into a loom and fastened with a pin.
- After these 3 lies, Samson *should* have had the common sense to realize Delilah was plotting against him for the sake of her countrymen, yet he still stayed with her. The passage does say Delilah nagged him about this until he was sick to death about it. Some have tried to say that maybe Samson had pride here thinking she couldn't hurt him if he told the truth.

- Samson could've avoided all this if he just stopped, realized he was in sin, repented and went home. Perhaps he actually was in love with Delilah, and was trying to win her affection.
- It's also possible they developed a soul tie from the fornication, this making it harder for Samson to just leave if he didn't repent to God and ask Him to sever the tie.

Gouging his eyes, bound and forced to grind grain in the prison (16:21-22)

- It represents the loss of his physical sight and the **spiritual blindness** that led to his downfall. In ancient Near Eastern cultures, blinding a captive was a common practice to humiliate and incapacitate them. This act also serves as a metaphor for Samson's inability to see the spiritual truths and consequences of his actions.
- A Forced Spiritual Focus: **The blindness removed Samson's lifelong temptation and distraction**, forcing him to turn to God with his spiritual eyes, which ultimately led to his greatest act of strength.
- Grinding grain was typically a task for slaves or women, emphasizing Samson's humiliation and the loss of his status as a judge and leader of Israel. This menial labor in prison reflects his fall from a divinely empowered deliverer to a powerless captive. The image of grinding grain also foreshadows his eventual redemption and final act of strength, as it sets the stage for his ultimate sacrifice and victory over the Philistines.

Final act and death

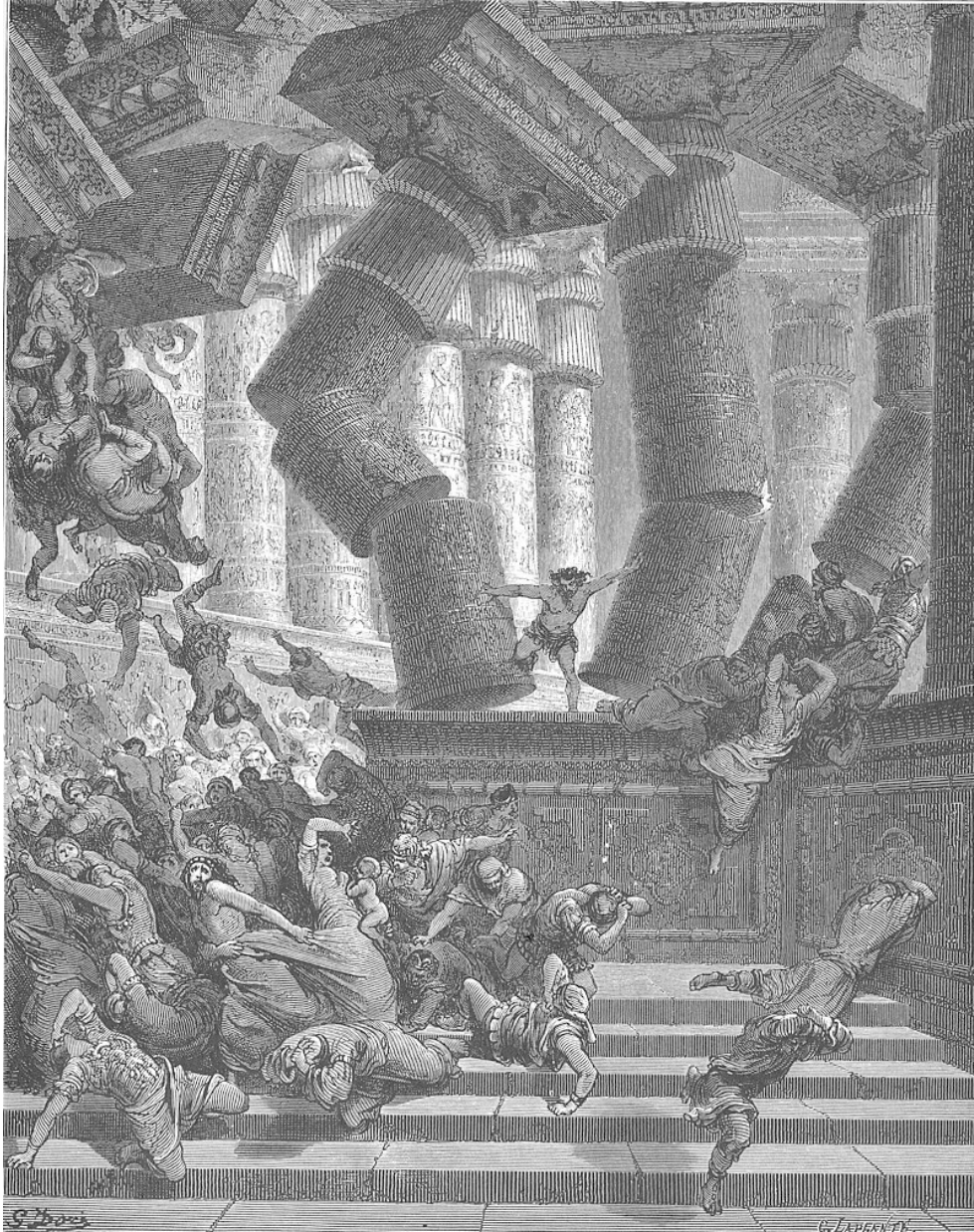


Illustration of Samson by Gustave Doré, the illustrator of the Bible that was handed to a British prison guard, on 21 April 1947.

- What the Philistines didn't realize was during his time in the prison, Samson's hair started to grow back.
- Some research tries to say the venue for the final act was just someone's home, rather it was a temple for Dagon **in Gaza**.
- 3000 Philistines were there under the impression that their false God brought them Samson. Samson was brought out for entertainment and requested to be placed against two support pillars.
- This is the second recorded time Samson had called out to God (if we're counting the end of chapter 15). This time asking for strength for one final act.

- Judges 16:28-30 NET Samson called to the Lord, “O Master, Lord, remember me! Strengthen me just one more time, O God, so I can get swift revenge against the Philistines for my two eyes!” Samson took hold of the two middle pillars that supported the temple and he leaned against them, with his right hand on one and his left hand on the other. Samson said, “Let me die with the Philistines!” He pushed hard and the temple collapsed on the rulers and all the people in it. He killed many more people in his death than he had killed during his life.
- His brother and family brought him back to Zorah in the tomb of his father Manoah. As with other passages for the Judges, the last verse states the tenure for the judge. In this case, it repeats what chapter 15 verse 20 told us.

Samson was still used by God throughout his life to fight Israel's enemy in spite of him indulging in the flesh. It is possible Samson would have had a longer tenure as a judge and wouldn't have gotten into any of the dangerous situations above if he kept his eyes and flesh in check. This story is an example for modern christian to continue avoiding the lust of the eyes since indulging in it leads only to hardship that could've been avoided and the flesh overtaking the spirit. Samson only called out to God twice and both times could've been seen as selfish (one for thirst, the other for revenge for losing his sight). God in His mercy answered Samson's prayers even though he sinned, but Samson should have repented for his lust. Let this be a lesson to repent for sin before it is too late.

References

- [Samson's eyes](#)
- [Bible Hub - Judges 16:21 commentary](#)
- [What to Learn from Samson the Sex Addict](#)
- [What Was Samson Doing with a Prostitute in Gaza?](#)