

Judges 16:18

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And when Delilah saw that he had told her all his heart, she sent and called for the lords of the Philistines, saying, Come up this once, for he hath shewed me all his heart. Then the lords of the Philistines came up unto her, and brought money in their hand.

Analysis

And when Delilah saw that he had told her all his heart, she sent and called for the lords of the Philistines, saying, Come up this once, for he hath shewed me all his heart. Then the lords of the Philistines came up unto her, and brought money in their hand.

This verse belongs to the Samson cycle addressing Samson, Delilah, and final victory in death. Samson represents both the heights of God-empowered strength and the depths of human weakness through moral compromise. His Nazirite vow (Numbers 6:1-21) set him apart as holy to God, yet his persistent violations of this vow—contact with dead animals (14:8-9), seven-day feast (likely involving wine, 14:10), and finally revealing his hair's secret (16:17)—demonstrate progressive spiritual decline.

Theologically, Samson illustrates how spiritual gifts don't guarantee spiritual maturity. The Spirit of the LORD came upon Samson repeatedly, giving superhuman strength, yet this empowerment didn't produce corresponding moral transformation. His attraction to Philistine women (14:1-3, 16:1, 16:4) directly violated God's command against intermarriage with Canaanites (Deuteronomy 7:3-4). This demonstrates that God can use flawed instruments for His purposes,

but this never excuses or endorses sin.

Samson's final prayer—"O Lord God, remember me, I pray thee, and strengthen me" (16:28)—shows genuine repentance and renewed faith. His death accomplished more than his life (16:30), suggesting that even spectacular failure can be redeemed when we return to God. However, the tragedy is that Samson's potential was largely wasted through moral compromise. His story warns believers that consistent holy living, not merely spectacular spiritual experiences, characterizes faithful discipleship.

Historical Context

Historical Setting: The Book of Judges spans approximately 350-400 years (c. 1375-1050 BCE) during the Late Bronze Age collapse and early Iron Age. This period saw the disintegration of major empires (Hittites, Mycenaeans) and weakening of Egyptian control over Canaan, creating a power vacuum filled by emerging peoples including Philistines (Sea Peoples), Aramaeans, and regional kingdoms. The decentralized tribal structure left Israel vulnerable to external oppression and internal chaos.

Cultural Context: This passage relates to Samson, Delilah, and final victory in death. Canaanite religion dominated the region, centered on Baal (storm/fertility god), Asherah (mother goddess), and Anat (war goddess). Archaeological discoveries at Ugarit (Ras Shamra) have provided extensive information about Canaanite mythology and religious practices. Baal worship involved ritual prostitution, child sacrifice, and fertility rites tied to agricultural seasons. Israel's persistent attraction to these gods demonstrates the strong cultural pressure to conform to surrounding nations' religious practices.

The material culture of this period shows gradual Israelite settlement in the Canaanite hill country, with simpler pottery and architecture than coastal Canaanite cities. Iron technology was beginning to spread, giving military advantage to peoples who mastered it (note the Philistines' iron monopoly, 1 Samuel 13:19-22). The absence of centralized government during the judges period stands in stark contrast to the bureaucratic city-states of Canaan and the

imperial administration of Egypt and Mesopotamia. This political structure reflected Israel's theocratic ideal—God as king—yet the repeated cycles of apostasy showed this ideal required more than political structures; it demanded heart transformation.

Related Passages

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

Study Questions

1. How does this passage about Samson, Delilah, and final victory in death reveal God's character in dealing with persistent human rebellion and incomplete obedience?
2. What patterns of spiritual compromise or incomplete obedience in your own life mirror Israel's failures during the judges period?
3. How does understanding the cyclical nature of sin and deliverance in Judges help you appreciate Christ's perfect and final deliverance from sin's power?

Interlinear Text

כָּל	אֶת	לָהּ	לְאֵת	הַלְּיָלָה	וְתַּרְאָה	יָדְהָוֶה	לְפָנָי	וְתַּרְאָה	לְבָנָה	יְמִינָה	לְאָמֵר
כָּל	אֶת	לָהּ	לְאֵת	הַלְּיָלָה	וְתַּרְאָה	יָדְהָוֶה	לְפָנָי	וְתַּרְאָה	לְבָנָה	יְמִינָה	לְאָמֵר
saw	And when Delilah	H3588	for he hath shewed	H5046		H0	H853	H3605			
H7200	H1807										
לְבָנָה	וְתַּחֲלֵל	חַדְשָׁה	לְבָנָה	וְתַּקְרָא	סְרִינִי	פָּלִשְׁתִּים	לְאָמֵר				
her all his heart	she sent	H7971	and called	H7121	Then the lords	of the Philistines	saying				
H3820					H5633	H6430	H559				
לְבָנָה	וְתַּחֲלֵל	חַדְשָׁה	לְבָנָה	וְתַּקְרָא	סְרִינִי	פָּלִשְׁתִּים	לְאָמֵר				
Come up	this once	H3588	for he hath shewed	H5046	H0	H853	H3605	her all his heart			
H5927	H6471							H3820			
לְבָנָה	וְתַּחֲלֵל	חַדְשָׁה	לְבָנָה	וְתַּקְרָא	סְרִינִי	פָּלִשְׁתִּים	לְאָמֵר				
Come up	H413		Then the lords	H5633	of the Philistines	Come up	money				
H5927					H6430	H5927	H3701				
בְּיָדָם											
in their hand											
H3027											

Additional Cross-References

Matthew 26:15 (Parallel theme): And said unto them, What will ye give me, and I will deliver him unto you? And they covenanted with him for thirty pieces of silver.

1 Timothy 6:10 (Parallel theme): For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows.

Judges 16:5 (References Lord): And the lords of the Philistines came up unto her, and said unto her, Entice him, and see wherein his great strength lieth, and by what means we may prevail against him, that we may bind him to afflict him: and we will give thee every one of us eleven hundred pieces of silver.