



# GOD Is Just a Prayer Away

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March 2014 Address all mail: Ed Bousman Evangelistic Assoc., P.O. Box 511, Lynchburg, Ohio 45142-0511 Issue 3

## BLINDED, BINDED, GRINDING

Judges Chapter 16

Samson was like Jesus; his birth was announced by an angel. Samson was like Jesus also in that in the beginning of his ministry he fought a lion and strangled him. Jesus met the one Peter refers to as a roaring lion early in His ministry when He went out into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil. Samson was like Jesus, too, in that he never led an army. He was a one-man army. He did it all by himself. Jesus conquered sin and the devil by Himself too. He needed no help from anyone. He was a one-man army. Although Samson was famous for his great strength, as we look at his life it is surprising how weak he was in some areas. Here in the first verse of this chapter we are told that he went down to Gaza and saw a harlot and went in unto her. First he sinned with his eyes. He saw her, he saw her, he saw her. He may have been in disguise since he was in the city of his enemies, the Philistines. Somebody recognized him and spread the word, "Samson is in town!" The Philistines shut the gate and waited. No need to be in a hurry. He has to come out some time. We'll wait for him until morning. Samson did not wait until morning to leave; maybe he was filled with remorse, but at any rate he decided to leave at midnight. When he got to the gate (remember the gate was padlocked) he picked up the gate, the two posts that held up the gate bar and carried it up to the top of a hill and set it down. I have no idea how much it weighed but it must have been a super, super, human feat of strength. Here again is a similarity with the Lord Jesus. Jesus went into the spirit world when He died on the cross. The devil thought he had Him for sure. Jesus tore the gates of death from their hinges and the gate has been open ever since. Open for those who accept Him as the Saviour. After this it came to pass that Samson loved a woman in the Valley of Sorek whose name was Delilah. I don't know whether she was an Israelite or a Philistine but in either case the lords of the Philistines came and said to her,

"Entice him and see wherein his great strength lieth, and by what means we prevail against him that we might bind him to afflict him." One wonders why Delilah would do this, but they did say to her, "We will give thee everyone of us eleven hundred pieces of silver." If there is enough money in it the despicable becomes respectable. So she asked Samson, "Tell me, I pray thee, wherein thy great strength lieth?" "Have you been pumping iron?" Samson said, "No!" "Have you been doing push-ups?" Samson said, "No!" "Have you been doing aerobics?" Samson said, "No." Delilah said, "I know what it is, Samson, you have been eating Wheaties." Samson said, "No." We might point out at this juncture that the name Samson means Sunny. He seems to have had that kind of disposition. Delilah said, "Sunny boy, tell me wherein thy great strength lieth." He told her, "If I be bound with seven green withs—seven green vines or something similar—I will be as weak as other men." She obtained the aforesaid withs and proceeded to tie him up. A bunch of Philistines were hiding in the back room. At the appropriate time they jumped out and Samson cleaned house—he wiped them out. Again Delilah said, "Sunny boy, what's the big secret?" He said, "I meant to say that if I were tied up with seven new ropes I would be as weak as others, if the ropes were nylon it wouldn't hurt any." Again she obtained the ropes, tied him up and again a fresh bunch of Philistines were hiding in the back room. The Philistines are upon him and again Samson wiped them out. Here she comes again, "Sunny boy, what is it?" He said, "Fasten my hair in that weaving apparatus, I will be as weak as others," And again the same results. Delilah was desperate now. "Sam, how can you say you love me when you hide this secret from me?" After a few hours of this he finally told her the truth to shut her up. "I've never had a haircut. Cut off my hair and I will be as weak as others." Samson went to sleep with his head on her knees. Maybe he was drunk; although having a Nazarite vow meant total abstinence, but since he had gone this far down the drain who knows? At any rate the sleep was deep enough that she called for a barber and shaved his hair. Again she said, "The Philistines are upon thee, Sunny boy."

Samson arose and shook himself and said, "I will go out as at other times and waste these dudes." But the scripture says, "Samson knew not that the Lord had departed from him." There are a lot of people who think the Lord is with them when He is either departed from them or maybe never even knew them. Many can say, "I have accepted the Lord," but has the Lord accepted them? Many want to accept the Lord on their own terms and not on God's terms. Many who have known the Lord think that the Christian lifestyle is something that applies to everybody else except them. The Lord has left them and they know it not. This time, because the Lord had left him, his strength was gone. The Philistines took him. Back in the early forties one Sunday night I passed by a denomination church on my way to services and on an impulse decided to pay them a visit. I won't mention the name of the church or the denomination because I don't want to give them any free advertising. They are mixed up on the right baptism, and they are mixed up on the frequency of the Lord's Supper; they wear a name that no church in the New Testament would ever have dreamed of wearing, and their view on the millennium is about as mixed up as the other things already mentioned. So I am not going to mention their name. But I did know some of the folk there and I knew that their preacher was a good speaker so I ventured in. That night the preacher was preaching on the story of Samson and Delilah. I don't remember what he said, but I do remember after about fifty years, the outline of his remarks. He said that when the Philistines took Samson they did three things to him: They blinded him, they binded him, and they made him grind in the mill. I don't remember anything else he said, but I will borrow those three points and use them for the balance of this message: Blinded, Binded, Grinding.

### **BLINDED**

First they blinded Samson. Commentaries point out that there were three ways to do this. They either pierced them out, held a white hot metal in front of their eyes, or scooped them out with their thumbs like you pop out the pulp of a grape. At any rate they blinded Samson. This was the best way to control him. Even if his strength came back what good would it be to him without sight? They blinded him. The devil has blinded many also. He knows that this is the best way to control them. In Second Corinthians 4:4 Paul tells us, "The god of this world hath blinded the minds of the unbelieving, that the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God, should not dawn on them." That is the way the devil does it. He blinds people and the truth never dawns on them. We can apply this doctrinally and in practical Christian living. You can take a copy of the word of God - one of those enlarged print editions - open it up to the second chapter of Acts. Set some person down in front of it who has 20/20 vision and ask him to read the 38th verse. Even if the lighting is ideal-no glare on the page, 20/20 vision-there are some who will say, "I can't see a thing. I just don't see it." We say, "Just look at it. Repeat it just like it is. Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins." They say, "I can't see a thing." They have been blinded by the god of this world. The truth never dawns on them. Turn to the 20th chapter of Acts with the

same enlarged print edition of the New Testament and say, "Read the seventh verse." Again the same distressing reply, "I can't see a thing." That verse indicates that the early church took the Lord's Supper every Lord's Day, but they just can't see it. They have been blinded by the god of this world. The truth will not dawn upon them. Then look at it from the view of the Christian lifestyle. There is nothing in the word of God that is condemned as much as sexual perversion. Open up that large print edition of the word of God again, set a queer down in front of it who has perfect 20/20 vision and do you think he can read Romans the first chapter beginning at the 26th verse where perversion is condemned in the strongest wording possible? He says, "I can't see a thing." Again I remind you he has been blinded by the god of this world. Like Samson he was blinded. Not only was he blinded, but notice next that he was binded.

### **BINDED**

The Philistines bound Samson with fetters of brass. He was binded. This is a favorite device of the devil today. He will so order your life that it will be filled with so many things; many of them good in themselves, but they are the things that will crowd out the time you need for the Church, prayer, and the Bible. You will be so tied down with less important things that you are powerless to accomplish anything for God. Several times I have used the incident of the woman I talked to one time about singing in the choir. She said she was busy with so many things. She listed about ten things she had to do and without any embarrassment at all she said, "I have to draw the line somewhere," and she drew the line at that particular church activity. She was all tied down. Sometimes I have been asked to come somewhere to preach and I am tempted to say that I have so many sermons to get up, so many scriptures to memorize, so many things to do that I don't have time to preach. If I get to the place I don't have time to preach that is the time when I am too busy. Some perhaps are in a worse shape. They don't have time for the Lord and it is not because they are too busy praying. Consider this question. If you are too busy to attend the services, what do you have time for? Just what is there that is so important that you don't have time for the most important thing in life? Like Samson many are all tied down. He was binded. But not only was he binded, but notice next that he was also grinding.

### **GRINDING**

He did grind in the prison house. He was fastened to a millstone and made to walk around and around and around grinding in the Philistine prison house. He was going around and around and around going nowhere. Many are like Samson going around in circles going nowhere. Samson was doing the work formerly done by an ass. That is what you can say about the life of a person who has no time for God, Christ and His Church. No matter how successful one day follows another; on and on, around and around, going in circles, going nowhere. Nowhere, but to hell. That sums up the life of Samson and perhaps many of you listening to this broadcast, like Samson, you are BLINDED, BINDED, AND GRINDING.

## CONCLUSION

Samson's hair began to grow again. The Philistines were a pretty dumb bunch. If I had been in their place I would have had a barber there every day to give him a shave. I would not have even let Samson get a five o'clock shadow. I would have had him lathered up and shaved every day. Maybe they thought that he needed little strength to do the work he was doing and besides he is blind. At any rate they had a big celebration to offer a sacrifice unto Dagon their god. They praised Dagon for delivering up Samson. Samson was brought out so that they might make sport. It says that Samson made them sport and they placed him between two pillars. Now these two pillars held up the roof of the building. Samson told the lad who guided him to place his hands on the pillars. He told the kid he wanted to lean on them. After all he had put on a good show and he was tired. The house was full and on top of that there were upon the roof three thousand men and women. I wonder if Delilah was there. I wonder if the harlot was there. Samson prayed, "O Lord God, remember me, I pray thee, and strengthen me, I pray thee, only this once, O God, that I may be at once avenged of the Philistines for my two eyes." Samson took hold of the pillars, one with his right hand and another with his left; and bowed himself with all his might and down she came. Three thousand people on the roof fell upon the thousands below and the dead that he slew in his death were more than he had slain in his life. We had to note here that this reminds us of the Lord Jesus. He pulled down the kingdom of Satan when He arose from the dead. Paul tells us in Hebrews the second chapter, "Since then the children are sharers in flesh and blood, He also Himself partook of the same; that through death He might set at naught him that had power of death, that is, the devil; and might deliver them who all their lifetime were subject to bondage." In His death Jesus accomplished complete victory over sin and the devil. The strength of Samson was not in his hair, but in the fact of his consecration to God. His hair growing again only signifies that he was turning back to his rightful position with the Father. He had been shaved, but his hair began to grow. The devil has given many a servant of God a shave. He shaves some with the razor of pride. He shaves some with the razor of rebellion. He shaves some with the razor of self-sufficiency. He shaves others with the razor of security. He shaves others with the razor of apathy. He shaves many and he shaves them close. He may even apply some of the best shaving lotion. Like Samson your beard can begin to grow again. Paul says in Second Corinthians the tenth chapter, "The weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh, but mighty before God to the casting down of strongholds." The admonition to the backslider in the New Testament is repent and pray the Lord if perhaps the thought of thy heart shall be forgiven thee. So go ahead, bow your head like Samson and give it your best shot. You, too, can pull down a stronghold. For the person who is not a Christian the admonition is not to pray and say come into my heart, Lord Jesus, but as Jesus Himself said, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved." E.B.

# LETTERS

Madame Naomi,

Appreciate much for the two boxes of Bibles, they are partly opened, but the Bible items are complete, but pray we have not lost anything in there. If you have time I would appreciate much too if you could send clothing for men, boys, and girls. Most of them were affected by our destructive typhoons the past year that really paralyzed them on their daily struggle for subsistence. They are still on the verge of recuperation on their lives as we were on "national calamity" as our government declared countrywide. Thanks a Lot Madame Naomi for being there with us in the Philippines. We are but poor and there is no way we could repay back GIJAPA. But our "thought, appreciation, and prayers" go along with you all to our God.

*Ed Domingo, Sunset Beach Church of Christ*

My Dear Sister Naomi,

You are doing more for us and because of you and all the brethren there is America, we are able to do what we are doing preaching the word of God. Thank you so much. May the Lord continue to bless you and all our brethren for Bibles and clothes. Please send us more and more children clothes aged 10 - 15 years old, boys and girls. For me, I would appreciate to receive the shoes, size 8. Thank you. Naomi (our youngest and your name sake) is fine and all our children thank you and send their greetings. Thank you.

*John Maseka, Evangelist, Messenger Church of Christ in Zambia*

Dear Sister Naomi,

We are very happy to hear from you, we worried. We have been thinking so much of you and your health. Thanks a lot to the Almighty One. We shall be waiting for the Bibles and will write back upon receiving them. Thanks a lot. Concerning clothing and shoes, we need them so much both here and in Guinea Bissau. We need all sizes of clothing and shoes, for babies, children and adults, both for men and women as well. I am just back from Guinea Bissau today and things are moving on fine there for us. Our attendance is very great now and many need clothing and shoes. My wife is fat and I am slim, we have a son of four years and a daughter of nine, both slim. Thanks so much in the Lord.

*Alexander Ofori, a servant of The Most High God, London Corner Church of Christ in The Gambia. P.S. Thanks be to God we have received the two boxes of Bibles. We thank you so much. Praise be to God for your life on earth*

EBEA,

This is Jason from Galveston County Jail. I want to thank you first and foremost for the Bible you have sent me and my cellmates it's allowed us to better ourselves with the knowledge, wisdom of Christ. The study guides are



most helpful in our studies and our relationship with Christ and with one another in our POD. May God sincerely bless you and keep the studies coming.

*Jason, Galveston, TX*

Greetings, in our God the Father, and His soon coming Son, Jesus Christ. I thank God for this ministry and many thanks for you who have been doing this wonderful work. If you are able please send me the Bible and Bible course that was mentioned at the end of the broadcast. Please continue to keep up the good work.

*Amanuel, Ethiopia*

Naomi,

Thank you for sending the Bible studies. I so greatly appreciate the time and effort you put into this ministry. It impacts so many lives as demonstrated by the letters in your newsletter. I am not sure if the next set of lessons got lost in the mail or lost by the staff here, but I never received lessons 16-20 or any that follow. I would like to continue to participate in the study. You and your dedication caused me to be able to open a dialogue with some of the other men I am housed with. As a result we now do a Bible study every weekday. It has cultivated many great discussions and theological insights. Even though we differ in religious beliefs we are able to come together to search the scriptures. Thank you for all you do.

*Jacob, Mangum, OK*

Naomi,

Thank you so very much for the recording of "God Is Just A Prayer Away." It is such beautiful music! I'm enjoying it every day and would like to send one my friend and one to my granddaughter. Enclosed is \$20 for the one I just received. I listen to the broadcast over KDWN, Las Vegas. Thank you.

*Mariel, Henderson, NV*

Naomi,

My name is James and I am a 37 year old and decided to finally get real and start working on having a better understanding and relationship with God and getting my life together. I've been in and out of jail and prisons all my life and a major junkie at that. I'm tired of my old self. Right now I'm waiting to go to court and have been wanting a Bible. Someone here gave me your name and info. Please pray for me and my family. God bless.

*Respectfully, James, Indiana Correctional Facility, New Castle, IN*

Dear Naomi,

I would like to start by saying THANK YOU for sending me a Bible, this has been very helpful. I have been here in Del Valle for ten months now and have been through a lot of different lessons God has taught me. He really is a patient and compassionate God. The best way you can keep diligent in jail or prison and to see a true change in yourself is to stay in the Word - keep yourself around fellow believers in God. I had a cellmate that I believe God sent to me seven months ago and he helped change my life. He taught me to "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness and all these things shall be added unto you." God bless and thank you.

*Michael, Travis County Corrections Facility, in TX*

Ed Bousman Ministry,

Hello and God bless! My name is Christopher and I'm currently incarcerated in Montgomery County Jail. I have a son who will turn one in three days and my wife is pregnant and due soon. I was just given 30 years for aggravated robbery. The only light that shines as of now is the Lord's. I ask that you send me a Bible and pray for me and my family that I can find peace and the strength to make it through this. Also pray that I'm given a treatment program for drug addicts who want to change their lives. Thank you and God bless you all.

*Conroe, TX*



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