

Fresh Oil Releases

Samson - Part Three A Lesson in Wine-making

The third refining fire that Samson faces is intended to bring him to the place of mature manhood. The fullness of God's purposes is expressed in threefold things. We have a body, soul and spirit. Paul tells us in Ephesians 3 that when we have a revelation of the length and height and depth of the love of God AND experience that love, we are filled with all the fullness of God. We also know that faith, hope and love remain, but the greatest of these is love. So we have an idea that this third process in Samson's life will involve a deeper revelation and expression of the love of God.

Samson has been delivered from the harlot system but afterwards we find him seemingly repeating an old error - yet it is in a different valley that this chapter takes place. God is dealing with something different:

Jdg 16:4 and it came to pass afterward, that he loved a woman in the valley of Sorek, whose name was Delilah.

The location of this relationship helps us to understand what God is up to here. 'Sorek' means 'choice vines, the richest quality grapes'. So it seems that God is true to character and is keeping the best wine until last. All that has been planted in the soil of Samson's heart has taken root and is bringing forth fruit. However, there is a process involved in producing wine from the fruit and *this* is the chapter which our son of God is entering as his heart cleaves to this woman. He does not realize that her name is prophetic of the journey ahead of him - Delilah means 'to bring low, to weaken'.

For wine to be produced, the grapes must be picked! They are separated from the vine, the source of their life. Delilah is the instrument God uses to harvest the grapes and cast them into the pit. Samson has faced much spiritual warfare in the past but this time he is dealing with the big guns.

Jdg 16:5 And the lords of the Philistines came up unto her, and said unto her, Entice him, and see wherein his great strength lies, 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.

The word 'lord' means 'ruler, principality'. This is the greatest of Samson's tests. He is dealing with the principalities which have dominion over the Israelites. It is not a mere servant or foot-soldier who has been sent with orders to bring Samson into bondage. The lords themselves go personally to Delilah. They instruct her to entice him. This word means 'to open wide, delude, allure, deceive, enlarge, entice, flatter, persuade'. These demonic principalities have observed this son of God's strength and the victories won. They see the outward manifestation of an inward state and they know that there is something which is at the root of the display of power over the enemy. Something is preventing Samson from remaining bound for any length of time.

They are determined to deal with the root of the 'problem'. The good news is that God is also determined to deal with the root of any remaining problem in Samson's heart. So that which the enemy intends for evil, God will turn for good!

Delilah begins to flatter Samson and persuade him to open up. Beloved, beware of those who seek to dig into your secret treasury, flattering you and attempting to draw out of you truth that the Spirit of God has **not** prompted you to share. Before you know it, you will find that secrets have tumbled out and there is no way of gathering the spilled milk!

Samson seems to feel totally confident in God's protection. He has been delivered many times and surely this time will be no different! He begins to tease Delilah in almost the same way he taunted the philistines who came to his engagement party years before. Sadly his confidence has become misplaced and is more in his own ability to elude the enemy than in God. The pride of life which has been hiding deep in his heart now shows itself clearly. He has become presumptuous and offhand, his spiritual ego swelled by his reputation in the enemy camp and his eyes do not see his enemy lying in wait for him in the very chamber where he is gradually succumbing to the seduction of Delilah.

In order for God to cement the foundation of His character in our lives, He exposes our vulnerability to the three main access points the enemy uses, and replaces them with sure building blocks of His divine nature. The pride of life is the deadliest enemy which lurks within our hearts. Satan fell because of it. The trial which deals with the pride of life also deals with any remaining vestiges of the lust of the eyes and the lust of the flesh.

Samson has become cocky and thinks He can engage the enemy on his own terms. Twice he lies to Delilah about the source of his strength and breaks free. However, the third time, he has begun to succumb to the seduction. He is secure in his memory of deliverance from the harlot and assumes he is immune to that seductive spirit - but the many sips of the wine of her flattery have begun to affect him and he begins to let his guard down. He mentions that his strength is connected to the seven braids of his hair. This is a reference to him functioning in the anointing of the sevenfold Spirit of God. He is beginning to open up his heart and show the enemy the treasure therein. It reminds me of the Israelite king who showed all his wealth to the king of Babylon and consequently all of it was captured:

2Ki 20:15 And he said, What have they seen in your house? And Hezekiah answered, They have seen all that is in my house. There is nothing among my treasures which I have not shown to them.

Remember, Beloved, sometimes you hold your ground by holding your peace!! Only share as the Holy Spirit leads. You will save yourself untold trouble!

Jdg 16:16 And it came to pass, when she pressed him daily with her words, and urged him, so that his soul was vexed unto death

The enemy intensifies the pressure, harassing this son of God on a daily basis. Do any of you identify with this place? The word 'vex' means 'to harvest, cut down, much discouraged, grieve, reap, straiten, trouble'. So we see that the process of harvesting the grapes has begun. If you have been feeling so harassed by the enemy that you have thought death would be preferable, God is picking your grapes and pressing them really hard!

Jdg 16:17 And he told her all his heart, and said to her, A razor has not come on my hair, for I am a Nazirite to God from my mother's womb. If I am shaven, then my strength will go from me, and I will become weak and be like any man.

The secret of his strength lies in his consecration to God, of which his long hair is an outward symbol. The shaving of his hair signifies the end of his consecration as a set-apart vessel and a return to normal life - like any other man of the flesh. The Bible tells us that when Samson's hair was shaved, the Spirit of God departed from him. He was separated from the source of his strength and yet he did not know it because He had been lulled into a slumber on Delilah's lap. I can just see her stroking his hair and speaking soothing words of flattery in his ear. Unfortunately Samson is being stroked by a seductive spirit again but this time he does not awake, as in Gaza, and make off with the town gateposts!

This time pride and presumption have brought him into captivity to His enemies and there is no quick fix. This time God is intent on bringing forth the best wine from this vessel and therefore once the grapes have been harvested, they are crushed and stored in a dark cellar until all the chemical processes necessary have taken place.

Jdg 16:21 but the Philistines took him, and put out his eyes, and brought him down to Gaza, and bound him with fetters of brass; and he did grind in the prison house.

Samson's ability to see is removed and he finds himself in darkness. He also returns to the very place where he last encountered the harlot, the city of Gaza. Now that his natural sight has gone, Samson has only the eyes of his heart to see with and as he feels the chafing of the brass fetters, he realizes that Delilah was just another version of that same old enemy - the harlot system of Babylon; religion and all the bondage that it brings! With his head shorn and his strength gone, he is brought to the sober realization that he had thought of himself more highly than he ought to and that every good thing within him had in fact been a gift of the Spirit of God. Without his relationship with God, he has nothing to offer except the strength of the flesh - and this has been harnessed by the religious system in order to grind grain. Samson is being used to produce food to feed his enemies and as he goes round and round that grindstone like a brute beast day after day, he sees with the eyes of his heart the ugliness of the system which has enslaved him. Now that he is no longer led astray by his natural sight, he can finally really see. He understands as never before what he has lost by succumbing to the seductive flatteries of this religious spirit. How he longs for the intimacy of his relationship with the Spirit of God. And slowly, with true repentance and the revelation of Truth in that dark place, Samson's heart is changed and his hair begins to grow again. His connection with the only source of real life is restored and the wine begins to effervesce within this earthen vessel!

Beloved, if God has brought you to a place where there is no outward sign of light; if you are in a situation where you have no option but to walk by faith because there is nothing in the natural to indicate that His promises for your life are true, then you are in the wine cellar with Samson. If God has used the enemy to remove any chance of you seeing in the natural and has brought you to the end of yourself, then you can identify with Samson. Actually, God used the enemy to remove that which caused Samson to stumble - his natural sight. With that gone, he had no option but to walk by faith.

Mar 9:47 And if your eye offends you, pluck it out. It is better for you to enter into the kingdom of God with one eye than to have two eyes to be cast into hell fire

You have also discovered firsthand that being yoked to a religious system only produces food for the enemy. The word 'grind' in Hebrew is also translated 'to work as a concubine'. The religious system will place fetters on you and yoke you to a perpetual circular route, forcing you to use your gifts and talents for the benefit of the system and there will be no payment for services rendered. The secret of Samson's strength was his set-apartness. The enemy will use you for common purposes, degrade and mock you. Like Samson you will be made to perform for the pleasure of the people. It leaves you empty and drained and feeling used.

However, all the while, in the secret place of Samson's heart, the wine is maturing. Eventually the day of the outpouring comes. Samson is led by a little child to the house where the Philistines are gathered. Unless you become like a little child you cannot enter the Kingdom of Heaven (Luke 18:7). Samson has come full circle - passing the place of the wisdom of men and returning to the faith of a child. He no longer is affected by what he sees but is guided by Who he knows. His focus is no longer on his own fleshly appetites nor the approval of men. He is gazing upon Him Who is invisible. It no longer matters to him whether he lives or dies - self-preservation is not an issue. The pride of life has been dealt with. Remember at the occasion of his victory with the jawbone, his first instinct was to name the place something that would refer to his strength and actions. Yet now we see, he has grown spiritually in this dark prison. He no longer seeks the recognition of man. The water of the Word has been turned into wine and at its outpouring, it will be declared to be of the best quality.

*Jdg 16:30 And Samson said, Let me die with the Philistines. And he bowed himself mightily, and the house fell upon the lords and upon all the people in it. **So the dead whom he killed at his death were more than those he killed in his life.***

Beloved, the laying down of your life for the sake of the Kingdom will accomplish more than all your exploits for the religious system. Jesus accomplished more on the cross than in all his days of ministry beforehand. It is the fear of death which keeps us captive to the harlot religious system. The enemy has no hold over those who are not afraid to lay their lives down. In the process of you doing this, the principalities and powers that have mocked and jeered at you during your years of slavery are brought to naught.

Samson's greatest victory took place in the house of Dagon. Dagon was the fish-god. He had the head and hands of a man but the tail of a fish. This is a picture of the thoughts (head) and

works (hands) of man combined with Christianity (the fish was used by the early Church as a symbol of a Christian). The house of religion serves a mutant god, combining the doctrines and fleshly endeavors of man with the gospel. This deprives the Word of God of its power. The true gospel of the Kingdom calls us to lay down our lives that Christ may live and move through us. It requires us to believe with the faith of a child; that faith which is not moved by what it sees or doesn't see. Those who are led by the Spirit of God are the sons of God and they sow to the Spirit and do not gratify the flesh.

The two pillars in the house of Dagon are counterfeits of the two pillars in the temple of Solomon. These two pillars were named Jachin (**He** will establish) and Boaz (in **Him** is strength). In a house built according to God's blueprint, the focus is upon Him. In the temple of Dagon, the focus is on man. Only as the sons of God, chastened and disciplined by trials, lay hold of that which is counterfeit in their belief systems and push with all their might to thrust it away from them, will they embrace the true eternal life which was purchased for them at Calvary. It was love which caused Jesus to lay down His life and in the prison Samson has discovered firsthand that nothing can separate him from the love of God - not even his own blundering! This love is the key to operating in the Kingdom. Greater love has no man than this, to lay his life down for his friends. Samson finally understands that the pouring out of this love by laying down his life for others IS the best wine, reserved til last.

Samson was buried at a significant place:

Jdg 16:31 Then his brothers and all the house of his father came down, and took him, and brought him up and buried him between Zorah and Eshtaol in the burying-place of Manoah his father.

Zorah is the place where the Spirit of God first began to move upon him. In laying down his life for his brethren, Samson came to the place of restoration of what had been lost. His father's name means 'rest'. Samson had entered into his rest, having completed the task God had ordained for him. Remember God was looking for an occasion against the Philistines because they ruled over His people. The whole strange complicated journey of Samson's life resulted in God accomplishing and completing the work He had begun in Samson all those years ago. Every weakness on Samson's part was used as an opportunity to gain leverage over the enemy. God allowed Samson to be brought to captivity in the house of religion so that he could gain first-hand knowledge of the diet being offered and ultimately to reject it in favor of true meat. Jesus too was nailed to the cross, seemingly defeated by Satan; yet this moment of apparent defeat, secured victory and deliverance for us all. Samson was called according to God's purpose and so ALL things did work together for good!

Rom 8:28 And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestine to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren.

So, Beloved, don't look back with regret at all the mistakes you seem to have made. Rejoice that God has been working within you to deliver you from all outward support and the need for the

approval of man. He has been conforming you to the image of His Son in order to pour forth the best wine (His love) from your earthen vessel. The place that seems darkest to you is your appointed place of deliverance from all that has bound you. Gaze upon Him Who is invisible and call upon God to remember you. All that the enemy has intended for evil, He will turn for good as you walk in childlike faith. Samson's mention in the Hebrews 11 list of faith heroes shows us that the Father's accounting system is very different to the world's! In your weakness His strength is perfected. The crushing trial, the darkness, the seemingly endless days at the grinding wheel only serve as tools to form you into a weapon fit for the Master's use! Arise as you hear your name called and ascend from the prison house. Your appointed time of deliverance is at hand! Block out the jeering cries of the enemy and focus upon the face of your Father. Heed His simple instructions - in so doing you will bring about deliverance for yourself and your brethren. Lay down your life for the Kingdom and enter into your rest from fleshly labors. Through many tribulations, you are entering the Kingdom.

Selah