

Beth Shemesh: Beware of Lust

by John Barnett

The sermon warns against the sin of lust and the importance of humility and submission to God's power, using the example of Samson's life to illustrate the consequences of not living a life surrendered to God.

Duration: 9:32

Scripture: Judges 16:20, Galatians 6:7

Topics: "Spiritual Warfare", "Godly Humility"

Description

This sermon delves into the tragic story of Samson from Judges 16, highlighting how he lost everything due to being dominated by lust and a vengeful spirit. Samson's life serves as a cautionary tale about the consequences of playing with sin and not realizing when the Lord's presence departs. The sermon emphasizes the importance of humility, submission to God, and not relying on our own strength but on the power of God.

Transcript

It says in Judges 16, 20, and this is picking up right in the middle of Samson and Delilah. And she, that's Delilah, said, The Philistines are upon you, Samson. And he awoke from his sleep and said, I will go out, as at other times, and shake myself free.

But here's one of the saddest verses in the Bible. But he, that's Samson, did not know that the Lord had left him. From chapter 16 of Judges and verse 20 on, all Samson does is lose everything.

If you remember, he was called by God to be a judge. God gave him 20 years to act as a judge. And he could have brought together the nation of Israel, united them, got them all going in the right direction.

But he was kind of a one-man army, literally. He was a loner. He worked on his own, did his own thing.

And he was dominated by some very bad sins in his life. In fact, if you boil down his life, if we looked at everything before, you'd see that Samson was dominated by lust. From his home up there, it says that he saw a woman over there by those reservoirs.

That, in the Hebrew, is so interesting. It says in the Bible that he saw was beautiful. But actually, in Hebrew, it says there was a woman in his eyes.

I mean, she just was in his eyes. In other words, he couldn't get his eyes off of her. She just stayed right there.

We call that being dominated by lust. Lust is any desire that displaces God. So you can lust for anything.

Some bad lusts of Americans that are over 50 are the lust for convenience and comfort and security. Those things, often, we want more than God. We want convenience.

Many times, people say to me, I'm sorry, I couldn't come to service. There were no parking spaces, and I would have had to park in the outer parking lot. So it was inconvenient to come to church.

Comfort. I can't sit, you know, for an hour. Of course, they can sit for three hours to watch the Super Bowl, six hours if they go to the Olympics.

But you understand what I mean? We have this desire for comfort, for convenience, for security. Samson had lust. He said she was in his eyes.

Also, when you notice in verse 20 that he says, I'm going to go up like at other times and shake myself free. He was dominated, Samson was, by this vengeful kind of get-even spirit, a vengeance that he had, a revengeful spirit. Every time someone hurt him, he hurt him worse.

I mean, they took away his wife and caused her harm. He went and set foxes loose and burned all the fields of the Philistines. They put out his eyes, so he destroyed the temple and killed thousands of them.

I mean, he always overdid his revenge. He was a revenge-filled person. Basically, Samson, who could defeat the Philistines, who could carry the city gates and put them on top of a hill, who could break rope off of himself, was defeated by himself.

In fact, what we remember most about Samson is everything he destroyed. He destroyed himself in the end. He destroyed everybody near him that was around him.

He just devastated them because he never got control of himself. The lesson from Samson's life is, number one, be careful about sin. Don't play with sin.

Samson played with sin. He kept looking down there. Remember, he was a son of the covenant, a bar mitzvah, a son of the law.

That's what bar mitzvah means. He was supposed to obey God's law, and he was looking at the paganism of the Philistines, of a woman down there in Timna by those reservoirs, and he was willing to break the law of God to get what he was lusting for. That's the same is true in all of our lives.

All sin is us being a son or daughter of God's covenant, but loving the world enough to break the covenant of God, His law, and get what we want. See, that's what Samson did. Now, why should that bother us? Well, Samson is a picture.

Look at the end of that verse. He did not know the Lord had left him. What does this left him mean? It doesn't mean he was lost, because we know the happy ending of the story, that God's grace reveals to us in Hebrews 11, that Samson is a hero of the faith.

You realize that he is going to be, you're going to meet him in heaven. He's going to be actually at the banqueting table, because when we get there, Jesus said, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob are already going to be seated. Now, I don't know where that fits in your eschatology, but Jesus said, when we sit down at the final celebration banquet, it says, we are going to come to where Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob are already seated.

You know, it's amazing how God figures, because the church age should be supreme over them. But Jesus said, they're already going to be seated at the banquet, and we get to join them at that banquet. So Samson, we're going to see in heaven.

But did you know, God said, don't be deceived, Galatians 6, verses 7 and 8. Be not deceived, God is not mocked. Whatever you sow, you will reap. At this spot of Samson's birthplace and of his sin in taking a Philistine woman and just going downhill from there, God says there is an eternal consequence to everything we do.

Samson could have been heavily rewarded by God for his faithfulness in this earth. The only thing we know is that by faith, he was able to subdue the Philistines. But the rest of his life is just burned up.

All that he did, because he lived for vengeance and for lust and for self. Be not deceived, God is not mocked. Samson, verse 20 of chapter 16, didn't even know the Lord had left him.

He was playing with sin so long that he didn't even know God's power had been removed. A lot of Christians play with sin, and they don't even realize that the power of the Lord has left them. You know why that happens where we come from in America? Because we can do so much ourselves.

We can plan and we can program and we can figure, and we have the money and we have everything else, and we think that everything's rolling. There's just one missing ingredient, the power of God. Don't ever go forward without the power of God.

You know how to lose the power of God? Be like Samson. Have lust, a desire that makes God move out of being in front of us and before us. Just desire something more than God, and he has to move over, and then God's power is removed.

Or be vengeful. God says, if you take vengeance, I'm out of there. Because vengeance is mindset.

The Lord, you take over, you're going to get even. I'll let you, but you're not going to have my power. Lust, vengeance, not ever conquering ourselves.

The Lord says, I can't use you until you absolutely submit to me. You know what humility is? Submitting to the Lord. James 4.7, submit yourselves therefore to the Lord.

Humility is not walking around like this and never taking eye contact and thinking you're ugly. That's not humility. That's a reverse form of pride.

It's worried about what we look like. Humility is, James 4.7, submit yourselves therefore to God. Realize he is in charge.

It's his power, his authority, not my own. Up here, Samson didn't realize the Lord's power had left him. Let's pray that the Lord's power not leave us, that we be full of his spirit.

And that we sow to the spirit, as Galatians 6.8 says, so we can reap life everlasting. Let's bow before the Lord for a word of prayer. Father in heaven, I thank you for Samson who lost everything because he lived for self.

And Lord, the worst thing he lost is even the awareness of your presence. He didn't even know you were gone. He was so busy living life his own way.

I pray none of us would live life on our own strength so much that we don't even realize you're not even involved. That we're just doing our own thing. I pray we would renounce our own way right here at Tel Bet Shemesh.

That we would say, Lord, in this house of the sun, that you and I, that we are going to be temples that acknowledge our living God. That you live in us, live through us, and that we are yielded to your power. We surrender to you here.

We humble ourselves. Lest we be overcome by our flesh like Samson, and you depart from us. Your blessing is removed.

I pray that we would be humble and yielded. In the name of Jesus we pray. Amen.

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