

## 14.18e Thirteenth Judge, Samson: Death (Judges 16:21-31)

✓ “Check” it out; opinion, inference, supposed conversation, or fact one can verify follows

[. . .] indicates a remark to the teacher that usually should not be read. It also indicates answers to questions.

### Visuals and Tools:

- Pictures and other visuals found at the end of this lesson. Please give credit to the sources of pictures.
- Check “Activities” and “Handwork” found below for additional materials.
- Beka Flash-a-Cards for Judges are recommended.

**Bible Time Tips and Terms to Teach** Vocabulary words are enlarged for flashcards at the end of this lesson. Print, cut out, and glue to card stock, or just print on colorful cardstock.

- (none for this lesson)

### Scripture: (ESV)

Judges 16:21 And the Philistines seized him and gouged out his eyes and brought him down to Gaza and bound him with bronze shackles. And he ground at the mill in the prison. 22 But the hair of his head began to grow again after it had been shaved.

23 Now the lords of the Philistines gathered to offer a great sacrifice to Dagon their god and to rejoice, and they said, “Our god has given Samson our enemy into our hand.” 24 And when the people saw him, they praised their god. For they said, “Our god has given our enemy into our hand, the ravager of our country, who has killed many of us.” 25 And when their hearts were merry, they said, “Call Samson, that he may entertain us.” So they called Samson out of the prison, and he entertained them. They made him stand between the pillars. 26 And Samson said to the young man who held him by the hand, “Let me feel the pillars on which the house rests, that I may lean against them.” 27 Now the house was full of men and women. All the lords of the Philistines were there, and on the roof there were about 3,000 men and women, who looked on while Samson entertained.

28 Then Samson called to the Lord and said, “O Lord God, please remember me and please strengthen me only this once, O God, that I may be avenged on the Philistines for my two eyes.” 29 And Samson grasped the two middle pillars on which the house rested, and he leaned his weight against them, his right hand on the one and his left hand on the other. 30 And Samson said, “Let me die with the Philistines.” Then he bowed with all his strength, and the house fell upon the lords and upon all the people who were in it. So the dead whom he killed at his death were more than those whom he had killed during his life. 31 Then his brothers and all his family came down and took him and brought him up and buried him between Zorah and Eshtaol in the tomb of Manoah his father. He had judged Israel twenty years.

### Introduction/Review:

The Philistines, after they had cut off Samson’s hair, gouged out his eyes, brought him down to Gaza, put metal fetters on him, and made him grind grain in prison.

### Story:

#### *Samson in prison*

Time passed, and Samson’s hair began to grow. Even after ✓weeks and months went by, the Philistines still gloated in their taking of Samson. “Our god,” they said, “has delivered our enemy, Samson, to us.”

✓Perhaps as Samson ground grain in the prison, he was visible to the public and people passing by looked at him. Whenever they saw or thought of him, they praised Dagon, a half-fish and half-man idol.

One time the lords of the Philistines gathered together specifically to rejoice over Dagon’s supposed delivering of Samson to them. More than 3000 people joined in the celebration. They praised Dagon,

saying, “Dagon gave Samson, our enemy, to us. He had destroyed our country and killed many of us.”

Remember how Samson had killed many of them [Teacher, add up on a white board or chalk board]: there were the 30 men for garments to pay his wager at his wedding; an unknown number after the Philistines killed his wife and her father—✓let’s say 100; 1000 with the jawbone of a donkey when the men of Judah gave him over to the Philistines. That’s a total of 1130.

### ***Samson on display***

No doubt, as the Philistines celebrated, ✓they drank alcoholic beverages and became louder and wilder. They ✓chanted, “Call for Samson to come so that we may make fun of him. What great entertainment that would be for us! Call for Samson to come so that we may make fun of him. What great entertainment that would be for us!”

So they brought Samson out of the prison, and a small boy led him to a place between two pillars where the crowd could see him in his “weakened” condition and enjoy making fun of him. ✓Perhaps this huge building was a temple to their god. The Bible tells us 3000 men and women were on the roof. It doesn’t say how many people were on the lower floor; this building had to be enormous.

Samson asked the boy who had led him to this place, “May I feel the pillars that support this building so that I might lean on them?” The boy positioned Samson so that he could feel the pillars.

### ***Samson at the end***

Then Samson called on his God, the God of Israel, praying, “O Lord God, please remember me and strengthen me, please, just one more time so that I may pay back the Philistines for taking out my eyes.”

Then, with one pillar at his right hand and the other pillar at his left hand, he cried out, “Let me die with the Philistines,” as he pushed with all his might. The pillars moved and cracked apart, this support of the building gave way, and the building collapsed, killing all those 3000-plus people on the roof and inside the building as it fell. Samson also died. Thus, the dead which Samson slew when he died (3000+) were more than all that he had slain while he was alive (1130). Added together, the total number of Philistines slain by a single man, Samson, was more than 4130.

Samson’s brothers and family\* came to claim his body and bury him near his father. Samson had judged Israel twenty years, and now his work was done. In fact, the period of the judges was almost complete.

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\*Did Manoah have more children? But other kinsmen like cousins are also called *brothers* in Scripture.

### **Lessons from this lesson:**

- We see Jesus:

“Samson died praying, so did our blessed Saviour; but Samson prayed for vengeance, Christ for forgiveness.”

“Christ was plainly typified. He pulled down the devil’s kingdom, as Samson did Dagon’s temple; and, when he died, he obtained the most glorious victory over the powers of darkness. Then when his arms were stretched out upon the cross, as Samson’s to the two pillars, he gave a fatal shake to the gates of hell, and, through death, destroyed him that had the power of death, that is, the devil (Heb. 2:14, 15), and herein exceeded Samson, that he not only died with the Philistines, but rose again to triumph over them” (<https://www.biblestudytools.com/commentaries/matthew-henry-complete/judges/16.html>).

### **Activities:**

- Play dough: pillars with floor above and below; push the play dough through a holey press to make long hair

- Snack: String cheese, egg rolls, bread sticks, or other food that might resemble pillars. Place the food in a vertical position by putting it in a base made of a small roll shaped like a doughnut.
- Have a strength contest by arm-wrestling.
- Discuss whether the hair or God made Samson strong.
- Discuss the revealed and secret will of God. All of Samson's victories were for revenge, but God used him even in his sin.
- Sing the names of the judges to the tune, "Ten Little Indians."

Othniel, Ehud, Shamgar, Deborah,  
Gideon, Abimelech, Tola, Jair,  
Jephthah, Ibzan, Elon, Abdon,  
Samson, and Samuel.

- Sing Diana Dow's song, "Samson," found at <http://www.biblesongsandmore.com/songs/old-testament-songs/samsonsong/>.
- Review questions: (Game: Put braids on a head. Using the seven braids prepared for the last lesson's review questions game, for each correct answer, students will show that Samson's hair grew long by pinning a braid to a Styrofoam® mannequin head or to a head-shaped fabric on a flannel board or to the printed back of a head attached to a flannel board.)
  1. What began to happen to Samson as time passed? [His hair began to grow long again.]
  2. To whom did the Philistines give credit for their capture of Samson? [Their god Dagon.]
  3. What entertainment did the Philistines want at their great sacrifice to their god? [To see Samson.]
  4. Who brought Samson to the celebration? [A small boy.]
  5. Samson asked the boy to lead him to what place in the building? [To the two support pillars.]
  6. As Samson reached for the pillars, what did he pray? [That God would give him strength one more time to get vengeance on the Philistines for the loss of his eyes.]
  7. How many people died in the collapse of the building? [Three thousand or more\*.]

#### **Memory Verse[s]: (ESV)**

- Judges 16:30—The dead whom [Samson] killed at his death were more than those whom he had killed during his life.

#### **Handwork:**

- Color the clipart picture found at <https://i.pinimg.com/236x/d9/5d/36/d95d36a4941dde965842e2c75b3fd25a.jpg>.



# Samson

## Judges 13-16

**1118-1078 BC, 40 Years**

Zorah + Ashtaol: home  
Timna: wants woman  
Zorah: home  
Timna: riddle  
Ashkelon: kills 30, pay off debt  
Zorah: home  
Timna: Burns crops  
Etam: 1000 jawbone ass  
Gaza: harlot  
Hebron: Gaza gates  
Valley of Sorek: Delilah  
Gaza: blinded, jailed  
3000 killed  
Zorah + Ashtaol: buried

**Ashkelon**

**Philistine Empire**  
**Five capital cities:**  
**Ashdod, Ashkelon, Lachish**  
**Gaza, Ekron, Gath**

**Gaza**

**Steve Rudd**  
[www.bible.ca/maps](http://www.bible.ca/maps)













