

This Judge Put His Head in the Wrong Lap

Written by Bill Perkins

I talk with a lot of guys who feel they've screwed their life up so badly they'll never recover. The stories I've been told would break my heart if I wasn't sure God delights in using men who've blown through their marriages, messed up their bodies, lost their jobs or gotten hooked on feminine beauties.

You see, I'm convinced God delights in using desperate and broken men in amazing and unpredictable ways.

The Wrong Lap

For example, consider the judge who had everything and lost it all because he placed his head in the wrong lap (Judges 16:19). I've met a lot of guys who have hurt themselves, and those they love, with similarly foolish and sinful decisions. But I've never known anyone who suffered consequences like Samson. After he told his girlfriend the secret of his strength she betrayed him to the Philistines, who as you know, cut his hair.

It Wasn't His Hair

Just to clarify—Samson's hair wasn't the source of his strength. I realize you know that but in the *legend* of Samson, he literally got his strength from his hair. Of course, hair has no mystical powers and can't infuse a man with supernatural strength.

God did that for Samson and his long-flowing hair represented an uncut commitment to God. So when the Philistine's scissors clipped the judge's hair while he slept on Delilah's lap, it represented what had already happened when he earlier visited the Philistine harlot and later loved Delilah (Judges 16:1-14).

Bald, Blind, Bound

The Philistines made sure he would never look at one of their girls again. They gouged out his eyes. And this without anesthesia. So the former world-champion ended up bald, blind, bound with bronze chains and pushing around a millstone. Round and round and round he walked. Day after day. Month after month.

The Most Important Line

And then . . . the most important line in the story: "The hair of his head began to grow again, after it was shaved off" (Judges 16:22).

The second phrase intrigues me. Was it really needed? After all, wouldn't the first one have told the story? Actually, it only tells half the story. The second phrase reminds us of how far Samson had fallen. And the first, poetically informs us that his devotion to God was growing.

We don't know what Samson was thinking. But I suspect toward the end he wasn't feeling sorry for himself. In a mind darkened by blindness, Samson saw the light and repented—in the truest sense of the biblical term. And he reached out to God.

Once More

One day the disbarred judge cried out, "O Sovereign Lord, remember me. O God, please strengthen me just once more" (Judges 16:28).

So, let's review. Samson sinned. Samson lost his strength. Samson ended up chained to a millstone. If ever a man could have thought God would never use him again, it was Samson. Yet, in that terrible situation the strong-man cried out and God imbued him with power. After pulling down the temple we read: "So those he killed at the moment of his death were more than those he had killed during his entire lifetime" (Judges 16:31 LB).

Not Through With You Yet

Maybe you feel you've dug such deep a hole that God can't see or hear you. Or if he can, he wants to leave you there. If so, follow Samson's lead and let your faith grow in that dark place. Seek God and cry out to him. No matter how far you've fallen, or how wasted you feel, God's not through with you yet.