

He awoke, and rose up, expecting to find himself strong as before; for he did not at first know that his long hair had been cut off. But the vow to the Lord was broken, and the Lord had left him. He was now as weak as other men, and helpless in the hands of his enemies. The Philistines easily made him their prisoner; and that he might never do them more harm, they put out his eyes. Then they chained him with fetters, and sent him to prison at Gaza. And in the prison they made Samson turn a heavy millstone to grind grain, just as though he were a beast of burden.

But while Samson was in prison, his hair grew long again; and with his hair his strength came back to him; for Samson renewed his vow to the Lord.

One day, a great feast was held by the Philistines in the temple of their fish-god, Dagon. For they said: "Our god has given Samson, our enemy, into our hand. Let us be glad together and praise Dagon."

And the temple was thronged with people, and the roof over it was also crowded with more than three thousand men and women. They sent for Samson, to rejoice over him; and Samson was led into the court of the temple, before all the people, to amuse them. After a time, Samson said to the boy who was leading him: "Take me up to the front of the temple, so that I may stand by one of the pillars, and lean against it.

And while Samson stood between the two pillars, he prayed: "O Lord God, remember me, I pray thee, and give me strength, only this once, O God: and help me that I may obtain vengeance upon the Philistines for my two eyes!"

Then he placed one arm around the pillar on one side, and the other arm around the pillar on the other side; and he said: "Let me die with the Philistines." And he bowed forward with all his might, and pulled the pillars over with him, bringing down the roof and all upon it upon those that were under it. Samson himself was among the dead; but in his death he killed more of the Philistines than he had killed during his life.

Then in the terror which came upon the Philistines the men of Samson's tribe came down and found his dead body, and buried it in their own land. After that it was years before the Philistines tried again to rule over the Israelites.

Samson did much to set his people free; but he might have done much more, if he had led his people, instead of trusting alone to his own strength; and if he had lived more earnestly, and not done his deeds as though he was playing pranks. There were deep faults in Samson, but at the end he sought God's help, and found it, and God used Samson to set his people free.

**(END OF STORY)**

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The Strong Man  
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## ***THE STORY OF SAMSON, THE STRONG MAN***

### ***PART - II***

The Philistines looked on Samson's father-in-law as the cause of their loss; and they came and set his home on fire, and burned the man and his daughter whom Samson had married. Then Samson came down again, and alone fought a company of Philistines, and killed them all, as a punishment for burning his wife.

After this Samson went to live in a hollow place in a split rock, called the rock of Etam. The Philistines came up in a great army, and overran the fields in the tribe-land of Judah. "Why do you come against us?" asked the men of Judah, "what do you want from us?" "We have come," they said, "to bind Samson, and to deal with him as he has dealt with us."

The men of Judah said to Samson: "Do you not know that the Philistines are ruling over us? Why do you make them angry by killing their people? You see that we suffer through your pranks. Now we must bind you and give you to the Philistines, or they will ruin us all." And Samson said, "I will let you bind me, if you will promise not to kill me yourselves; but only to give me safely into the hands of the Philistines."

They made the promise; and Samson gave himself up to them, and allowed them to tie him up fast with new ropes. The Philistines shouted for joy as they saw their enemy brought to them, led in bonds by his own people. But as soon as Samson came among them, he burst the bonds as though they had been light strings; and picked up from the ground the jawbone of an ass, and struck right and left with it as with a sword. He killed almost a thousand of the Philistines with this strange weapon. Afterward he sang a song about it, thus:

"With the jawbone of an ass, heaps upon heaps,  
With the jawbone of an ass, have I slain a thousand men."

After this Samson went down to the chief city of the Philistines, which was named Gaza. It was a large city; and like all large cities, was surrounded with a high wall. When the men of Gaza found Samson in their city, they shut the gates, thinking that they could now hold him as a prisoner. But in the night Samson rose up, went to the gates, pulled their posts out of the ground, and put the gates with their posts upon his shoulder. He carried off the gates of the city and left them on top of a hill not far from the city of Hebron.

After this Samson saw another woman among the Philistines, and he loved her. The name of this woman was Delilah. The rulers of the Philistines came to Delilah and said to her: "Find out, if you can, what it is that makes Samson so strong, and tell us. If you help us to get control of him, so that we can have him in our power, we will give you a great sum of money."

And Delilah coaxed and pleaded with Samson to tell her what it was that made him so strong. Samson said to her: "If they will tie me with seven green twigs from a tree, then I shall not be strong any more." They brought her seven green twigs, like those of a willow tree; and she bound Samson with them while he was asleep. Then she called out to him: "Wake up Samson, the Philistines are coming against you!" And Samson rose up and broke the twigs as easily as if they had been charred in the fire, and went away with ease.

And Delilah tried again to find his secret. She said: "You are only making fun of me. Now tell me truly how you can be bound." and Samson said: "Let them bind me with new ropes that have never been used before; and then I cannot get away." While Samson was asleep again Delilah bound him with new ropes. Then she called out as before: "Get up, Samson, for the Philistines are coming!" And when Samson rose up, the ropes broke as if they were thread.

And Delilah again urged him to tell her; and he said: "You notice that my long hair is in seven locks. Weave it together in the loom, just as if it were the threads in a piece of cloth." Then, while he was asleep, she wove his hair in the loom, and fastened it with a large pin to the weaving-frame. But when he awoke, he rose up, and carried away the pin and the beam of the weaving-frame; for he was as strong as before.

And Delilah, who was anxious to serve her people, said: "Why do you tell me that you love me, as long as you deceive me and keep from me your secret?" and she pleaded with him day after day, until at last he yielded to her and told her the real secret of his strength. He said: "I am a Nazarite, under a vow to the Lord, not to drink wine, and not to allow my hair to be cut. If I should let my hair to be cut short, then the Lord would forsake me, and my strength would go from me, and I would be like other men."

Then Delilah knew that she had found the truth at last. She sent for the rulers of the Philistines, saying: "Come up this once, and you shall have your enemy; for he has told me all that is in his heart." Then while the Philistines were watching outside, Delilah let Samson go to sleep, with his head upon her knees. While he was sound asleep, they took a razor and shaved off all his hair. Then she called out as at other times: "Rise up, Samson, the Philistines are upon you."