

Life Group Notes

Sunday 3rd March 2024

Speaker: Blessing Makumbe

Title: Vexed to Death

Passage: Judges 16:16/ Matthew 26:38.

Samson's soul was "vexed unto death" (Judges 16:16) by Delilah's nagging. In the end Delilah, who was bribed with pieces of silver, pressurised Samson so much that he *gave in* to temptation and *gave up* the secret of his strength.

Jesus, praying in Gethsemane, expressed that his soul was "vexed unto death" (Matthew 26:38) and yet kept praying and did not give up, did not give in. Judas, like Delilah, had betrayed Jesus for pieces of silver.

In both stories, there is an ongoing pressure – Samson resisted Delilah three times, and Jesus prayed to his father three times. In both stories, there is an element of "Watch and pray that you may not enter into temptation. The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak" (Matthew 26:41).

Like Samson, we too can sometimes find ourselves in very pressurised situations. Romans 7:17-19 describes this situation, when we are "vexed unto death," and under great pressure to give in to temptation. Jesus shows us that there is a better way, a way out under temptation. The pressure that Jesus felt upon his soul was not the pressure of his own sin, but the weight of our sin, which he bore on our behalf.

And in death, both Samson and Jesus wrought a great deliverance. Samson's death resulted in the bringing down of enemies and a deliverance for Israel at that time. And Jesus' death resulted in victory over the Evil One and a great deliverance for all people across all times.

Suggested Questions

1. Have you ever felt "vexed unto death" by a situation? How did you cope under this pressure?
2. Why was Jesus experiencing such pressure upon his soul in the garden of Gethsemane? What do you think this was like?
3. In what ways does the life and death of Jesus mean that there is now power available to us when we are under temptation?
4. Are you stuck in an impossible situation at the moment? How can we pray for you?