

Title:

Two persons of Contrasts: Moses and Samson

Scripture Reading: Exodus 34:20; Judges 16:20

Exodus 34:20, 'Moses wist not that the skin of his face shone while he talked with him.'

Judges 16:20, 'Samson wist not that the LORD was departed from him.'

Moses was known as the person who represented the Law.

Samson: the strongest man in the bible.

Both, Moses and Samson are known not just by the Jew, but by everyone in the world even until today. Their influence is not just among the people of God, but among the people of the world. To say that they are outstanding is an understatement.

Exodus 34:29 that says, 'It came about when Moses was coming down from Mount Sinai (and the two tablets of the testimony *were* in Moses' hand as he was coming down from the mountain), that Moses did not know that the skin of his face shone because of his speaking with Him.

But he did not know about the radiance that characterized his life. This is a new element (the shining of his face) not found in his first trip to Mount Sinai. It served as a sign to affirm YHWH's direct communication with Moses (face to face).

The word 'shone' was used three times and basically it denoted ray extending. Some bible scholars translated this as 'splendor' or 'glory.'

His face had a shining appearance that was so noticeable that both the leaders and the people were afraid to come near him.

It is true that a life lived with God affects physical appearance, especially the face.

Charles Spurgeon says, 'The radiance of Moses' shining face was a reflected radiance, a received glory. The source was the face of God, and as Moses communicated so directly with God his face received some of this shining glory. The face of Moses shone because he had longed looked upon the face of God'. Charles Spurgeon continued, 'We read of only two men in the Bible whose faces shone like this: Moses and Stephen. Both were humble men. I am afraid, brethren, that God could not afford to make our faces shine: we should grow too proud. It needs a very meek and lowly spirit to bear the shining of God.'

On the other hand, the scripture mentioning Samson in **Judges 16:20** was an incident where Samson had become deeply involved with a bad woman, whose name was Delilah.

The book of Proverbs mentioned frequently about such bad woman. She is greedy, rebellious, unsubmitive, wicked, adulterous, gossiping, slandering, and sexually immoral women. Bad women in the Bible have done great damage such as lead Solomon astray, betray Samson, and order the killing of John the Baptist. If you think they are not such bad, then think, they have destroyed the wisest man, the strongest and the greatest man born among human. **Proverbs 5:6 says,** 'For she cares nothing about the path to life. She staggers down a crooked trail and doesn't realize it. So now, my sons, listen to me. Never stray from what I am about to say: Stay away from her! Don't go near the door of her house.'

Reviewing the incident, the seven locks of Samson's hair was not magical but represented his dedication to God's use. Friend, our spiritual strength today is not in ceremonies or in rituals. Our spiritual strength is not in water baptism, or holy communion. Our spiritual strength is not even in church attendance or church activities. The strength of the believer is always in the Spirit of God – always.

What a tragedy if this is said of many a child of God, 'but he did not know that the LORD had departed from him.' This becomes evident when there is no emphasis on personal relationship and commitment. We say like Samson said, 'I will go out as before.' Samson didn't know things were different.

Men do not know how much they are changed 'when the Lord departs from them' until they feel the effects of that departure in utter shame and weakness.

The recurrence of the same phrase 'wist not' found in **Exodus 34:29** and **Judges 16:20**, in two such opposite connections is very striking. Moses fresh from the mountain of visions, where he had gazed on as much of the glory of God as was accessible to man, caught some gleam of the light which he adoringly beheld and a strange radiance sat on his face, unseen by himself, but visible to all others. So such supreme beauty of character comes from beholding God and talking with Him, and the bearer of it is unconscious of it.

Samson, fresh from his coarse debauchery, and shorn of the locks of his hair, which he had vowed to keep, strides out into the air, and tries his former feats, but his strength had left him because the Lord had left him; and the Lord had left him, because in his fleshly animalism, he has left the Lord. Like, but most unlike, Moses, he knows not his weakness.

Who do these two contrasts teach us?

We have to asked ourselves two questions. How may we be so filled with the presence and power of God that our lives will reflect the glory and His grace? How may we lose the presence and power of God so that our lives fail to reflect His glory and His grace?

1. How may we be so filled with the presence and power of God that our lives will reflect the glory and His grace?

Why was it that Moses' face shine?

Exodus 33:8-9 says, '

And it came to pass, when Moses went out unto the tabernacle, that all the people rose up, and stood every man at his tent door, and looked after Moses, until he was gone into the tabernacle. And it came to pass, as Moses entered into the tabernacle, the cloudy pillar descended, and stood at the door of the tabernacle, and the Lord talked with Moses.'

A. Moses went into the presence of the LORD.

Exodus 33:18, 'he said, "I beseech thee, shew me thy glory

Moses had shown us two locations we can enter into the presence of God: the tabernacle represented by the church today and the face to face encounter, represented by our personal time with God: away from people, music, family, work.

Many of our lives are often powerless, full of dullness, lacking in vitality and we get tired so easily. Church service is such a boring place and time.

Because we do not know what is to spend time in the secret place with the Lord whom we serve and whom we love.

2 Corinthians 3:18 says, 'But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.'

B. Moses listened to the voice of God

Exodus 33:12 'And Moses said unto the LORD, See, thou sayest unto me, Bring up this people: and thou hast not let me know whom thou wilt send with me. Yet thou hast said, I know thee by name, and thou hast also found grace in my sight.'

C. Moses obeyed the command of God.

Exodus 34:4 says, 'All that God said, Moses did'. He obeyed God to the very letter. Here was a man so full of service and vitality and power. And the three fold secret of Moses' radiant was:

- He was continually in the presence of God
- He listened to the voice of God
- He obeyed the voice of God

2. How may we lose the presence and power of God so that our lives fail to reflect His glory and His grace?

Judges 14:6 says, 'And the Spirit of the LORD came mightily upon him, and he rent him (the lion) as he would have rent a kid, and he had nothing in his hand: but he told not his father or his mother what he had done.'

David said in **I Samuel 17:34-37**, 'I've been a shepherd, tending sheep for my father. Whenever a lion or bear came and took a lamb from the flock, I'd go after it, knock it down, and rescue the lamb. If it turned on me, I'd grab it by the throat, wring its neck, and kill it. Lion or bear, it makes no difference – I killed it. And I'll do the same to this Philistine pig who is taunting the troops of God-Alive God, who delivered me from the teeth of the lion and the claws of the bear, will deliver me from this Philistine.'

Samson's life was such that the Spirit of the LORD would come upon him frequently.

A. Samson became careless, self-dominated and undisciplined.

Samson had one weakness and that was his passion.

B. Samson yielded to the sin of passion and of sexual immorality.

Judges 16:1, 4 says, 'Then went Samson to Gaza, and saw there an harlot, and went in unto her. And it came to pass afterward, that he loved a woman in the valley of Sorek, whose name was Delilah.'

Here was a powerful, effective man who became powerless and ineffective. Here was a useful man who became useless. He was a mighty man who became disqualified for service and set aside, and for the time, a castaway. The saddest part is Samson wist not that the presence of the LORD was departed from him. Many have lost the favorable presence of God, and are not aware of it. The strong man was made weak and was unconscious of his weakness.

When God is departed, we cannot do as at other times. This is a common state with many in the church today. They are useless, helpless, and miserable, and they do not realize the significance of their sad state. They try the customary methods, duties, etc. but fail to produce the looked for results. They 'go out as at other times before' but still is spirit bound. Hitherto the Philistines knew not the secret of his strength, nor does he not realize the secret of his weakness.

