

Great Strength Minus Seven “Locks” Equals Weakness!

Different traits seem to identify different people. Moses was known for his meekness, Num. 12:2, Methuselah for his great age, Gen. 5:27, Abraham for his faith, Gen. 15:6, and Samson for his great physical strength. It is upon Samson that we now focus our attention.

To the formerly barren Monoah, the angel of the Lord appeared, declaring that *“you shall conceive and bear a son.”* Concerning this son, the angel further said *“and no razor shall come upon his head, for the child shall be a Nazirite to God from the womb; and he shall begin to deliver Israel out of the hand of the Philistines,”* Judges 13:3,5. Manoah did conceive and *“bore a son and called his name Samson; and the child grew, and the Lord blessed him,”* Judges 13:24. As time passed, fantastic feats of strength began to be performed by the powerful Samson. With Spirit of the Lord having come *“mightily upon him,”* he *“tore a lion apart as one would have torn apart a young goat,”* Judges 14:6; he *“went and caught three hundred foxes,”* and *“took torches, turned the foxes tail to tail, and put a torch between each pair of tails,”* and *“let the foxes go into the standing grain of the Philistines, and burned up both the shocks and the standing grain, as well as the vineyards and olives groves,”* Judges 15:5-6. *“With the jawbone of a donkey,”* he killed a thousand Philistines, Judges 15:15-16. Indeed, he was truly a formidable foe of the Philistines, the persistent and perpetual foe of God’s people, Israel.

But physically strong men are not always **spiritually** strong. Samson, enticed by the wicked, conniving Delilah, finally divulged the source of his great strength. To obtain this information, *“she pestered him daily with her words and pressed him, so that his soul was vexed to death,”* Judges 16:16. Finally *“he told her all his heart and said to her, ‘No razor has ever come upon my head, for I have been a Nazirite to God from my mother’s womb. If I am shaven, then my strength will leave me, and I shall become weak, and be like any other man,’* Judges 16:17. Delilah then *“lulled him to sleep on her knees, and called for a man and had him shave off the seven locks of his head. Then she began to torment him and his strength left him,”* Judges 16:19.

A strong man became weak! Many a strong man has been seduced and shorn of strength by the solicitations of a sordid woman, Proverbs 7:26. But the point of emphasis in this article is that Samson was shorn of *“the seven locks of his head,”* was thus depleted of his strength, and *“did not know that the Lord had departed from him,”* Judges 16:20. The Philistines then *“put out his eyes, and brought him down to Gaza. They bound him with bronze fetters, and he became a grinder in the prison,”* Judges 16:21. In a very real sense, Samson’s fall reflects the blinding, binding, and grinding effects of sin!

As it relates to this article, we state that famously strong Samson became weak when the *“seven locks of his head”* were removed. By way of application, our purpose at this point is to note some *“seven locks”* that will, when shorn from their lives, will cause strong Christians in this the gospel age to become weak.

1. When one allows his life to be **shorn of the “lock” of regular, prayer,** he is

weakened. *“Pray without ceasing,”* I Thess. 5:17. *“The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much,”* Jas. 5:16. When we neglect to pray for wisdom, Jas. 1:5, for boldness, Eph. 6:18-19, and for sufficient grace to bear up amid our varied infirmities, 2 Cor. 12:7-10, we tend to lose sight of and even pull away for the Source of our strength!

2. A Christian, who permits his days and weeks to be shorn of **the “lock” of Bible study**, will be weakened to the point of ceasing to be a true Christian! God’s people have repeatedly been *“destroyed for lack of knowledge,”* Hos. 4:6. Those, who neglect to increase *“in the knowledge of God,”* can not be *“strengthened with all might, according to His glorious power...,”* Col. 1:10-11.

3. Many a formerly strong Christian, through philosophy, worldly wisdom, and vain deceit, has been shorn of the **“lock” of faith**. Being shorn of faith, they are shorn of spiritual strength. No one can be *“strong in the Lord, and in the power of His might”* if he neglects to take up *“the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God,”* Eph. 6:10,16. The word of God will *“effectually”* work in those who *“believe,”* I Thess. 2:13, but not in those who allow *“an evil heart of unbelief,”* Heb. 3:12, to cause them to question the existence of God, the Divinity of Jesus Christ, or the inspiration of the sacred Scriptures.

4. Then, too, it is easy to allow oneself to shorn of a **true sense of priorities**. If we permit ourselves and our lives to be *“choked with cares and riches and pleasures of this life,”* we can neither bring forth *“fruit unto perfection”* nor *seek first “the kingdom of God, and His righteousness...,”* Luke 8:14; Matt. 6:33).

5. Many a child of God has been weakened to the point of spiritual death because he let the demands of work, the influence of visitors, family, friends (?), and the solicitations of pleasure to shear away the **“lock” of regular worship**. Those who are not provoked *“unto love and to good works,”* due to their own *“forsaking the assembling”* of themselves together in regular worship, Heb. 10:24-25, cease to receive the spiritual exercise and the spiritual food that provides spiritual strength.

6. Then, too, as Samson was shorn of his *“locks”* as he slept upon the knees of Delilah, many a professed Christian has gone to sleep in Zion, and has been shorn of the **“lock” of zeal**. The saints at Ephesus left their *“first love,”* and were in danger of the *“candlestick”* being removed, Rev. 2:4-5. The Laodiceans thought they were *“rich, and increased with goods,”* and that they had *“need of nothing,”* but in becoming *“lukewarm,”* they became *“wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked,”* Rev. 3:15-17. God’s people, to be strong, must be *“zealous of good works,”* Titus 2:14.

7. Last, but not least, there is the **“lock” of godly living** which many allow themselves to be shorn of. Christians, to remain Christians, must *“live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world,”* Titus 2:14. The *“whole armor of God,”* which enables one to be *“strong in the Lord,”* includes *“having on the breast plate of righteousness,”* Eph. 6:10,11,14.

The preceding list could be increased in number, but these are sufficient to depict the possibility of God’s children in this age being shorn of their spiritual strength. One of the sad features of Samson’s loss of strength is suggested by the fact that when *“he awoke out of his sleep,”* with his *“locks”* removed, *“he did not know that the Lord had departed from him,”* Judges 16:20. He thought he was as strong as ever. The same is often true today when Christians

are shorn of their “locks.” The Lord thus departs from them, but they do not know it, and often even argue that they are as strong as ever, and even “bound for the promised land.” How tragic! Dear brother or sister in Christ, don’t allow **yourself** to become a modern Samson!

— Bobby Witherington