

Catford Lectures 2014-2015

Part 7

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[00:00:00] I'd like to look at the story in the Bible of Samson.

Samson and the Philistines. So if we could begin with Judges 13. I won't read it all at once, but we'll just work through it as we have the time. Chapter 13 of Judges. And the children of Israel did evil again in the sight of the Lord, and the Lord delivered them into the hand of the Philistines forty years. And there was a certain man of Zorah of the family of the Danites, whose name was Manoah, and his wife was barren and bare not. And the angel of the Lord appeared unto the woman, and said unto her, Behold now thou art barren and barest not, but thou shalt conceive and bear a son. Now therefore beware, I pray thee, and drink not wine nor strong drink, and eat not any unclean thing. For lo, thou shalt conceive and bear a son, [00:01:05] and no razor shall come on his head, for the child shall be a Nazarite unto God from the womb. And he shall begin to deliver Israel out of the hand of the Philistines. Then the woman came and told her husband, saying, A man of God came unto me, and his countenance was like the countenance of an angel of God, very terrible. But I asked him not whence he was, neither told me his name. But he said unto me, Behold thou shalt conceive and bear a son, and now drink no wine nor strong drink, neither eat any unclean thing, for the child shall be a Nazarite unto God from the womb to the day of his death. Then Manoah entreated the Lord, and said, O my Lord, let the man of God which thou didst send come again unto us, and teach us what we shall do unto the child that shall be born. And God hearkened to the voice of Manoah, [00:02:03] and the angel of God came again unto the woman as she sat in the field. But Manoah her husband was not with her. And the woman made haste and ran, and showed her husband, and said unto him, Behold, the man hath appeared unto me that came unto me the other day. And Manoah arose and went after his wife, and came to the man, and said unto him, Art thou the man that spakest unto the woman? And he said, I am. And Manoah said, Now let thy words come to pass. How shall we order the child, and how shall we do unto him? And the angel of the Lord said unto Manoah, Of all that I said unto the woman, let her beware. She may not eat of anything that cometh of the vine, neither let her drink wine or strong drink, nor eat any unclean thing. All that I commanded her, let her observe. And Manoah said unto the angel of the Lord, I pray thee, let us detain thee until we [00:03:02] shall have made ready a kid for thee. And the angel of the Lord said unto Manoah, Though thou detain me, I will not eat of thy bread. And if thou wilt offer a burnt offering, thou must offer it unto the Lord. For Manoah knew not that he was the angel of the Lord. And Manoah said unto the angel of the Lord, What is thy name, that when thy saying come to pass, we may do thee honour? And the angel of the

Lord said unto him, Why askest thou thus after my name, seeing it is secret, or margin has wonderful? So Manoah took a kid with a meat offering, and offered it upon a rock unto the Lord. And the angel did wondrously. And Manoah and his wife looked on. And it came to pass, when the flame went up toward heaven from off the altar, that the angel of the Lord ascended in the flame of the altar. And Manoah and his wife looked on it, and fell on their faces to the ground. [00:04:04] But the angel of the Lord did no more appear to Manoah and to his wife. Then Manoah knew that he was the angel of the Lord. And Manoah said unto his wife, We shall surely die, because we have seen God. But his wife said unto him, If the Lord were pleased to kill us, he would not have received a burnt offering and a meat offering at our hands, neither would he have showed us all these things, nor would he at this time have told us such things as these. And the woman bare a son, and called his name Samson. And the child grew, and the Lord blessed him. And the Spirit of the Lord came to move him at times in the camp of Dan, between Zorah and Eshteron. This was a time in Israel's history when they should have been enjoying the good things of [00:05:01] the land that God had given them, a land flowing with milk and honey. But unto Joshua, when they should have possessed the land, they hadn't done it with the energy and the faithfulness that Joshua exhorted them to. And as a result, many of the enemies were still in the land, and they troubled them continually. But worse than this, the people of God, they continued to disobey God, and were unfaithful to him, and did not submit to his will, but they carried on in their own way. As Isaiah says in chapter 53 of that book, we all like sheep have gone astray, we have gone everyone in his own way. This was true of the people of Israel. And so God would chasten them by taking up these enemies in the land, and bringing them under their power and authority. And the people in their wretchedness [00:06:09] would be exercised by this chastening hand, and they would cry unto God in their distress, and God would raise up a deliverer. And we have before us such an occasion, the enemy is the Philistine. All of these enemies in Joshua, they all speak of that which is spiritual. We read in Ephesians that our warfare is spiritual, that our enemies are the principalities and powers in the heavenlies, not flesh and blood. But these enemies in the land, they would speak of spirit of weapons, as it were, in the hand of Satan, that he would use to bring the people of God, the believer, into bondage, so that they're [00:07:09] not able to testify as they ought, or to walk in the path that the Lord would have them to walk in, and to glorify God in their lives. And the Philistines, they are such as it were a weapon in the hand of Satan, typically, because they would speak of carnality, particularly as it intrudes upon spiritual things. Now, it's not difficult to see that, because the Philistines are spoken of frequently in the scriptures as the uncircumcised Philistines. Now, all the tribes were uncircumcised, but that is only used to the Philistines. So, plainly, the Holy Spirit is wanting to bring something to our attention [00:08:01] concerning these Philistines, what they speak of. And they speak of that which does not bow to God's judgment concerning the flesh. Circumcision is the cutting off of the flesh. Paul to the Philippians, he could say in Philippians 3 verse 3, for we are the circumcision.

We are those who have bowed to God's judgment regarding the flesh within us. And we worship God in the spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh. So, the circumcision have no confidence in the flesh. God has judged it, so we have turned away from it, and we will not walk in that way anymore if we are obedient to God. But the uncircumcised Philistine, he walks, as it were, in the flesh. He has not judged it. This is the way he walks. [00:09:04] He is carnal. Now, it's possible for a believer to be carnal. The Corinthians, the Apostle, when he addressed them, he spoke to them as those, he says in 1 Corinthians 3 verses 1 to 3, at the end he says, are you not carnal? He says, and walk as men. You are walking as men walk. The natural man walks. In other words, they were walking according to their feelings.

They weren't judging things as it was revealed to them by God in his word, but they were walking to

their own inclination and feeling and emotion. And they were walking not by faith in God and in his word, but by sight. They were working things out according to their own natural minds and walking in that way. So they were [00:10:06] governed, not by the spirit of God, but by their senses. And so too, this is something else we read of the Philistines, that they are governed by five lords. This expression comes up frequently again, the five lords of the Philistines. Now, it may be that other tribes of the land had five rulers over them. I think there are some perhaps who did, but we never get this expression used of them, only the Philistines, the five lords of the Philistines, because the natural mind is governed by the senses. He has no understanding of spiritual things. He will not accept God's revelation concerning himself. Rather, he will walk in his own way. And this is the carnality that is presented to us by the Philistines. And this is a great danger to us that we walk [00:11:06] in this carnal way, by sight, not by faith. Because one thing the Philistines did, we read of it very early on in Genesis chapter 26, verse 15. It says, for all the wells which Isaac's father's servants had digged in the days of Abraham his father, the Philistines had stopped them and filled them with earth. And so Satan would, through leading us down a carnal way, he would, as it were, have us occupied with the earth, with the things of the earth. He would take our eyes off the Lord Jesus in the glory of heaven, and he would fill up, as it were, our lives with earth. And as a result, [00:12:01] and as a result, those wells of salvation which the Spirit has opened up, they will be blocked up.

In John chapter 4, the Lord says to the woman at the well, Whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst, but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into eternal life. Satan would seek to block up those wells. He would grieve the Spirit in our hearts, so that he is not able to take of the things of Christ, to minister to us, minister them to us, so that there is that joyous response of the Spirit in our hearts, which rises up to God in worship and praise and joy. Those things, we will be robbed of that, [00:13:01] because our lives will become clogged up with the things of the earth. Another thing the Philistines did was to take the ark away from the people of Israel. They stole the ark. 1 Samuel chapter 4 verse 10, And the Philistines fought, and Israel was smitten, and they fled every man into his tent. And there was a very great slaughter. For there fell of Israel thirty thousand footmen, and the ark of God was taken. Israel, the people of Israel, they had to follow the ark. It would lead them. It would direct them in the way they were to go. And the ark, too, it's spoken of as the ark of the testimony. It testified to the fact that God was in their midst. He could dwell in their midst. They could be his people, and he was their God, [00:14:09] and the ark testified to that. And, of course, the ark speaks of Christ, the Lord Jesus Christ. And so, Satan would try through carnality, introducing carnality into our lives. He would rob the testimony of Christ.

The Apostle Paul says in Timothy regarding the church of the living God, 1 Timothy 3 verse 15, that it is the pillar and ground of the truth. The assembly is the pillar. The pillar in scriptures is often spoken of as that which bears testimony to something. And we bear testimony to and we bear testimony to Christ in this world. And it's the ground of truth. It's where the truth [00:15:04] is found, where it's worked out in practice, where it can be seen in the lives of the people of God. And then he goes on to say, for great is the mystery of God. For without controversy, great is the mystery of godliness. God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory. He says that immediately after having said that the church is the pillar and ground of truth. He goes on to speak of that mystery of godliness. And this is what should be seen in the lives of the people of God. Because we testify to the Lord Jesus Christ, who is himself God, manifest in the flesh. And that mystery should be seen as part of our testimony to him. But Satan would take that [00:16:09] away because this is what his true enmity is against the Lord Jesus. And he would take that away because he does not want to see it anywhere testified to in this earth. Well, the great... God's answer to the Philistine is to raise up a deliverer. And that deliverer

would be a Nazirite. The word Nazirite means separated or sanctified, set apart. And the Lord says to the woman, he says that she would have a son. No razor should come on his head for the child should be a Nazirite [00:17:05] unto God from the womb. And so Samson was a Nazirite from birth. He was born a Nazirite.

And this is one aspect of our Naziriteship because we are Nazirites. We are separated unto God. We are sanctified. And there is an objective aspect to our Naziriteship.

That is to say, we are Nazirites through the will of God. He has brought us into Naziriteship because we have a new nature. We are born again. The Apostle Paul could say to the Corinthians, he could speak of the wickedness that could not inherit the things of God. And then he would say, [00:18:07] and such were some of you. But now ye are washed. Now you are sanctified.

Now you are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of our God. They were washed. Now this is sanctification by water. This speaks of new birth. As we read of it in John chapter 3, born of water and of the Spirit, born of the Word. Peter could say, couldn't he? I'm born of incorruptible seed by the Word of God. And so this is the objective side of our sanctification. We are being set apart by God for him, separate from the world, separate from his order of things because we are born again. And then there is sanctification by [00:19:02] blood, which we read of in Hebrews chapter 10, verse 9. Again, this is an objective matter. It's about the will of God. Then said he, lo, I come to do thy will, O God. He taketh away the first, that he may establish the second. By the which will, that's God's will, we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once and for all. That's sanctification through the death of Christ, by the will of God. That's sanctification through blood. Our sins have been removed. Our guilt has gone. We have been brought into a new position before God. We are Nazarites by his will. But there was also the subjective side, the practical side.

[00:20:03] Because Samson was a Nazarite by birth, therefore he must walk as a Nazarite. His will must conform to God's will in this matter. And we as Nazarites Paul says to the Corinthians, you walk as men. But as Nazarites, we should walk as John tells us in this epistle.

First John, chapter 2, verse 6, he that saith he abideth in him, ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked, even as the Lord walked. This is how we should walk, as he walked. And he alone can give us, through his spirit, the power and the grace to walk as he walked. Now, how did the Lord Jesus walk? Well, again, we can turn [00:21:03] to our illustration of the Philistines. When they had the ark, God subjected them to judgment. And they wanted to get rid of the ark. It was causing them so much distress and pain. They were coming under God's hand in a terrible way. And so they set a test for the ark. They would get milch kind, 1 Samuel, chapter 6. Now, therefore, make a new cart, the Philistine, the leaves of the Philistines said, and take two milch kind, on which there hath come no yoke, and tie the kind to the ark, and bring their calves home from them. And take the ark of the Lord, and lay it upon the cart. Put the jewels of gold, which you return him for a trespass offering, [00:22:01] in a coffer by the side thereof, and send it away, that it may go. And see if it goeth up by the way of his own coast to Beth Shemesh. Then God hath done this great evil unto us. But if not, then we shall know that it is not his hand that smote us, it was a chance that happened to us. So they put a test on the ark. What way will it go? Will it go the way of nature? Because these milch kind, naturally speaking, they would return back to their young. That was the way of nature. Or would it go as directed by God, back to its own place, to Israel, to Beth Shemesh? And of course the ark went the way as directed by God, not the way of nature. And this is the way the Lord walked in, in manhood here upon earth. Satan brought him under testing in the wilderness.

[00:23:06] In Matthew 4 verse 4, When Jesus had fasted forty days and forty nights, he was afterward and hungered. And when the tempter came to him, he said, If thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread. But he answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God. So the Lord Jesus, Satan tried to tempt him to satisfy that which was natural. He was hungry, he had not eaten for forty days and forty nights. And Satan said, Use your power, if you're the Son of God, use that power. Take matters into your own hands and satisfy your hunger. But the Lord, he would walk the path [00:24:04] of dependence. He would be subject to his God. And so he says to Satan, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God. He would not walk the way of nature. He would be subject and dependent upon God and his word. And that is how we must walk also, to be subject to the word of God and to God's call to the Ephesians in his final goodbye, as it were, in Ephesians 20. He commends them to God and to the word of his grace.

And these are the resources we have, God himself and the word of his grace, to enable us to walk [00:25:01] before him as Nazarites. We must hurry on. I don't think we're going to have time to go through the life of Samson. But the Nazarite too, he must not drink of wine or eat any unclean thing.

And this would tell us that our joy, because wine in the scripture speaks of joy, it's not found in this earth, in earthly things, in natural things, in carnal things.

The joy of the Nazarite is found in God. This displaces every joy.

The Lord Jesus, again, is the perfect example of the Nazarite. We read in Luke 10 verse 21, the Lord Jesus has been ministering, [00:26:09] he's been teaching, he's been preaching, he's been preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God throughout Israel. And the response is one that meant he had to mourn over the cities of Israel. And he says that if what had been done in the midst of them had been done in Sodom and Gomorrah, they would have repented in sackcloth and ashes. How hard was the heart of Israel to the ministry of their Messiah, their God, their King, who is in the midst of them. But it says in that same hour, Jesus rejoiced in spirit. And that word for rejoice, [00:27:01] it means he leapt for joy. His heart leapt for joy. He says, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and has revealed them unto babes. Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight. He found no joy in the earth, in his natural people, his earthly people, but he found his joy in God. That's where his joy lay. And he says in John 15, 11, to his disciples, these things have I spoken unto you that my joy, the joy that I have, might remain in you, and that your joy might be full. And so the Nazarite, there is joy for the Nazarite, but it is not earthly joy. It is a far more wonderful joy. It is a joy in our Lord Jesus Christ. It is his joy, the joy that he had as he walked with his God here upon earth. [00:28:09] And then they were to eat no unclean thing. The Lord is holy. And if we are to continue with him, in fellowship with him, then we cannot partake of that which is unholy. If we are to have that joy, which the Apostle Paul speaks of to the Thessalonians, he tells me that they have the joy of the Holy Spirit, the Holy Spirit. If we have that joy, then we cannot go on with that which is unclean in this world, and there is much of it, and it is freely available. It can easily be accessed.

We must turn away from it with that purpose of heart that Daniel showed, when he refused to eat the king's meat, the food of Babylon, and he would eat only that [00:29:03] which was clean, clean food. He would feed upon that, not upon the unclean food that the king of Babylon would have fed him with. Well, we must move on. And we read of Samson being exercised at the end of verse 13.

The Spirit of the Lord began to move him. He was exercised. That word for move, it means agitation of spirit. And no doubt, like Moses, he would look upon his people, and he would grieve at their condition and at their bondage, and the Spirit would move him in this direction. And so in verse 12, we read of how he would act.

And Samson went down to Timnath and saw a woman in Timnath of the daughter of the Philistines. [00:30:02] And he came up and told his father and his mother and said, I've seen a woman in Timnath of the daughter of the Philistines. Now, therefore, get her for me to wife. His parents were troubled at this. They said, Is there never a woman among the daughters of thy brethren, or among all my people, that thou goest to take a wife of the uncircumcised Philistines? Samson said unto his father, Get her for me, for she pleases me well, or she is right in mine eyes. But his father and his mother knew not that it was of the Lord that he sought an occasion against the Philistines, for at that time the Philistines had dominion over Israel. And so we see motive here, Samson's motive, which was of the Lord. We read in verse 4, it was of the Lord that he sought an occasion against the Philistines. This was of the Lord. But we also see means, how he went about it. That was not of the Lord. [00:31:04] He was going to go about it in a fleshly and a carnal way. He saw a woman. He was being led by his, by sight, not by faith. By sight, not by faith. How often Samson reminds us of Peter. Peter, motives of his heart were good. He loved the Lord and he was at one, he was prepared to die for him, but he was going about it in a fleshly way.

He was going about it in his own strengths. But the Lord can divide between that which is fleshly and that which is spiritual. And he says to Peter, he says, the spirit is willing. That's of, that is of God, that is of the Holy Spirit. The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak. He was saying to Peter, you cannot go about achieving what is in your heart by going this [00:32:07] fleshly way that you are walking in. And this was Samson. He was a mixture, there was a mixture in his life of that which was of the flesh and that which is of the spirit. And this is so often the case with us. But the word of God can, and the Lord can divide between those things and show us what is of himself and what is not. And so Samson goes down to take this woman. And it says in verse five, behold, a young lion roared against him. And the spirit of the Lord came mightily upon him. And he rent him as he would have rent a kid. And he had nothing in his hand. But he told not his father or mother what he had done. And he went down and talked with the woman and she pleased Samson well. And after a time he returned to take her and he turned aside and he turned aside to see the carcass of the lion. And behold, there was a swarm of bees and [00:33:04] honey in the carcass of the lion. And he took thereof in his hands and went on eating and came to his father and mother and he gave them and they did eat. But he told not them that he had taken the honey out of the carcass of the lion. And so right at the outset of Samson's life, God shows him that if he is to defeat the most mighty of things, it can only be in the strength that he is given by God. The spirit came upon him and he rent the young lion as if it were a kid. And we shouldn't think that a young lion is something immature and weak and inexperienced as it were. In Ezekiel 19 verse 6, we read of the young lion. He went up and down among the lions. He became a young lion and learned to catch the prey and devoured men. And he knew their desolate palaces [00:34:02] and he laid waste their cities and the land was desolate and the fullness thereof by the noise of his roaring. So the young lion is a fearsome thing. And of course, the young lion here speaks of Satan himself. But when he was in the power of the spirit, when he was under the hand of his God, there was no enemy that was mightier than he. And he could rend it as a kid and it brought forth sweetness, blessing. Of course, this allegory also shows us the reason why we can be victorious over Satan. Because the Lord Jesus is the one who has destroyed the one who had the power of death and delivered us, delivered those who all their lifetime were subject to bondage through the fear of death. He has annulled Satan, the lion, and brought sweetness from it,

deliverance from [00:35:10] Satan's power, from the power of death. Again we read, don't we, in 2 Timothy chapter 1 verse 10, that he has abolished death and has brought life and immortality to light through the gospel. This is the sweetness that comes out from the victory of Christ over Satan and over death. But Samson, he takes this secret that he's been taught and he engages with the Philistines with it.

He expresses it in the form, as it were, of a riddle, an intellectual exercise. And this is how he has knowledge that they don't have. But [00:36:04] that superior knowledge, as it were, he takes it up on an intellectual level. And this is carnality, and this is how we can engage sometimes with the scriptures, with the things of God. Merely that which, as it were, touches us in our minds, an intellectual exercise. But the word of God, we must be subject to it. It must not just enter our minds, as it were, but also it must enter our hearts, and it must touch our consciences. The word of God is sweet, isn't it? In the Song of Songs, the woman, she says, [00:37:03] she rested in her beloved shadow with great delight, he says, and thy fruit was sweet unto my taste. Like Mary, sitting at the feet of the Lord Jesus, in his shadow, as it were, and his word was sweet to her. But if the word of God is sweet, it also is bitter.

In Revelation, chapter 10, verse 10, John says, I took the little book, that's the little book of prophecy, the prophetic word, out of the angel's hand and ate it up, and it was in my mouth, sweet as honey, and as soon as I'd eaten it, my belly was bitter. Because the word of God, although it is sweet to us, it exposes us, what we are. And there must be self-judgment, [00:38:06] as we read the word. We must read it in subjection to God. It must exercise our hearts. It cannot just be on an intellectual level, as we have here with Samson and the Riddle. And the Philistines, they're quite happy to engage with him in this, and they're going to try and find out the meaning of the Riddle, but they can never come to knowledge of the truth that Samson had themselves. Because the natural mind, we read, in 1st Corinthians, chapter 2, verse 14, the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him, neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. So the Philistines could never arrive at that understanding that Samson knew, because they were carnal. The carnal mind, the fleshly mind, is at enmity with God. But they can learn it as a form of words, [00:39:02] and we read that they found out the answer by getting it from the woman that Samson had taken up. They get it from her, and therefore they can repeat it to Samson as just a form of words that they've learnt. What is sweeter than honey, they say. What is stronger than a lion? But in that very answer, they show their ignorance, because Samson had been shown what was stronger than a lion. They never had that knowledge. And so they say, what is stronger than a lion? As far as they're concerned, the lion is the strongest thing there is. They do not know Samson's God.

And so they get the garment that Samson told them that he was going to give them, if they could get the riddle, the answer to the riddle. 30 sheets, verse 12 of chapter 14, 30 sheets or shirts, and 30 changes of garment. They get their garment, and they put it on, [00:40:05] no doubt. And they think it's a new garment, but it's not a new garment at all, because Samson has taken those garments from the Philistines. He has slain Philistines, taken their garments from them, and given these garments to these guests at his wedding feast. So they appear to have a new garment, but in fact it's the same old Philistine garment. And so there can be that profession of Christianity, which has no vitality, no life in it. It is purely carnal, because it is possible to profess the name of Christ, but not know Christ himself. A carnal profession.

And this is what we see in Christendom today. We see a carnal profession of Christianity, [00:41:01] which has no life in it, because Christ is not known. He is outside of that profession. Well, we must

hurry on, because we haven't got much time. Perhaps we could just speak of the two times that Samson called unto the Lord. There are twice in Samson's life, it says, he called unto the Lord. Now one of those times is after his great victory over the Philistines, when he was abiding in the rock Etam, in the cleft of the rock, or the top of the rock, as in the authorised, he went down and dwelt in the top of the rock Etam, or the cleft of the rock. That is a safe place, isn't it, to be. And God said to Moses, didn't he, he says, there is a place beside me. Thou shalt stand upon the rock. That is the place beside God.

[00:42:07] A safe place, abiding in Christ. And figuratively, this is the place that Samson was found in. And it was from there that he was victorious over the Philistines with the jawbones ass.

That which is in itself a base, we might say. But God put it into his hand and the Spirit of God came mightily upon him. And so God used the base things, as we read in 1 Corinthians chapter 1, 26. For you see your calling, brethren, have that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble are called. But God has chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise. And God has chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which [00:43:04] are mighty and base things of the world. And things which are despised has God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to naught things that are, that no flesh should glory in his presence. And so Samson, through this base means, the jaw of an ass, he slays a thousand Philistines. But afterward, he is thirsty with a great thirst. And he cries unto God. He says to him in verse 18 of chapter 15, Thou hast given this great deliverance into the hand of thy servant, and now shall I die for thirst and fall into the hand of the uncircumcised. He knew the danger. He knew that he had a thirst which only God could meet to prevent him from falling into the hands of the Philistine. And so it is with the believer. So it is with us. We have a thirst now, a thirst [00:44:06] that God has created in our souls. And it can only be met by him, by the Lord Jesus. And so God, he, we read, God clave, and perhaps the better translation is, and God clave the hollow rock which was in Lehi, and water came out. Water came abundantly out of the rock. We've heard that before, haven't we, with Moses, how he must speak to the rock, and water would come out. Not the first rock that had to be struck. That speaks of the Lord Jesus crucified, and life through his death. The second rock, the rock that followed that one.

And the word for rock is different. It comes from the root word meaning lofty, or exalted, high, lifted up. It speaks of the Lord Jesus in heaven, and we must cry unto him, and he will [00:45:07] provide abundantly of that water, that which sustains us in our life, that he has given us, which comes only from him. And so the Lord could say to the woman, if thou knewest who it is that speaketh to thee, thou would have asked of him, and he would have given thee living water. And so Samson calls this place in Hakore, which means the caller's spring. We just have to call unto God for that which will satisfy our need, and sustain us in life. And it says at the end of that chapter, verse 19, it says, which is in Lehi unto this day. It is still there, the Spirit of God is saying to us. It is there even now for us. We can call unto the Lord now, and have that which refreshes our [00:46:08] souls, and which sustains us in life. So the first time Samson calls, it is to be allowed to live.

And this is one part of the necessity of victory in our lives. Samson said, that he asked for his thirst met, that I fall not into the hands of the uncircumcised Philistines. If we don't drink of this water that the Lord provides, reading of his word, seated in his presence, prayer, these things which bring us to him, and through which we feed on him, then we will fall into wrong ways. We will, as it were, fall into the hand of the uncircumcised Philistines. But there is another side of victory, and this is represented by the second time that Samson calls unto God. And this is at the end of his life, when he has tasted of [00:47:07] the bitterness of the path that he was walking in. He has become under the authority of

the Philistines, and they have blinded him, and they have bound him, and they have made him work in the prison house under heavy labour. And in his wretchedness, he is there, grinding in the prison house, reminding us that it is possible even for the Christian that sin can have power over us. Let not sin reign in your mortal bodies, says the Apostle in Romans 8, I think it is.

Sin can gain ascendancy over us if we walk down that path. But then Paul says, sin shall not have dominion over you. Although sin can get ascendancy over us, it cannot, [00:48:06] it can never have dominion over us, because the Lord is the one who has dominion over us. He has bought us, we belong to him. He is enthroned in our hearts, and sin can never therefore take the place that only belongs to him. So it cannot have dominion over us. And it was seen with Samson, as he ground in the prison house, that his hair began to grow. And the Philistines would taunt him, and humiliate him, and take him out to be an object of ridicule. And he would be led by this little child by a chain. And it was then that he called unto the Lord the second time, not for life, [00:49:04] he says, O Lord God, remember me, I pray thee, verse 28 of chapter 16, and strengthen me, I pray thee, only this once, O God, that I may be at once avenged to the Philistines from my two eyes. Verse 30, and Samson said, let me die with the Philistines. So he had called out once to live, and this is one aspect of victory. We are, we live, we are alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord. But if we live unto God, we must learn, we must die unto self. And Samson learnt this at [00:50:01] the end of his life, that he must not go on in the way that self would lead him, the way that flesh, nature would lead him. He must die to that. And so he asked to die with the Philistines. He accepts that judgment of God upon himself, which was the same judgment upon the Philistines. Just as we read, in Adam all die, in Adam all die, in Christ shall all be made alive. And so there is that objective side again. Paul says to the Colossians, for ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. This is God's judgment upon the flesh, and this is true of us as to what we are in Adam. We are dead. To self we are dead. This is the objective side, but then there is the subjective side. [00:51:05] Romans 6 verse 11, likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord. And in that step of faith, in that recognition of faith, simply trusting what God has said, and walking according to his word as to what we are in Adam, what self is, Paul could say in Galatians chapter 2 verse 20, I am crucified with Christ. Nevertheless I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me. And the life which I now live in the flesh, in this flesh and blood, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me. Perhaps we could close with singing hymn number 50.