

# A Progressive Problem

by Bubba Garner

Life rarely works out according to your plans. You can spend weeks mapping out a course, carefully figuring in all of the twists and turns, but you always run into some unexpected obstacle that steers you off the road and right into the ditch. Sin is that way, too. When you make a conscious decision to sin and accept the consequences, you generally get a whole lot more than what you bargained for.

This is especially evident in the life of Samson, the 13th Judge of Israel. Although he had the strength to tear a lion apart with his bare hands and rip the city gates of Gaza out of the wall, Samson's reputation will forever be tarnished by his weakness for women. In Judges 16, he married a Philistine woman and transgressed the commandment of God that His people should not intermingle with foreign nations.

Sin always takes you further than you planned to go. "And it came about when she pressed him daily with her words and urged him, that his soul was annoyed to death" (16:16). Delilah's constant nagging caused him to reveal the source of his strength which eventually drove the Lord from his presence. That's what one sin can do; you take one step and before you know it, you've gone a mile. Few have a life ambition to be an alcoholic, but many find this their journey's end because of poor planning in taking the first drink.

Sin always keeps you longer than you intended to stay. "Then the Philistines seized him and gouged out his eyes; and they brought him down to Gaza and bound him with bronze chains, and he was a grinder in the prison" (16:21). Once mighty enough to kill a thousand men with the jawbone of a donkey, sin diminished Samson to a helpless slave whom his enemies would call into their parties for amusement. The way of darkness offers pleasure, enjoyment, satisfaction, and freedom, but all it delivers is a life of bondage to sin.

Sin always costs you more than you wanted to pay. "And Samson said, 'Let me die with the Philistines!' And he bent with all his might so that the house fell on the lords and all the people who were in it. So the dead whom he killed at his death were more than those whom he killed in his life" (16:30). Samson lost his hair, his strength, his dignity, and his life—all because of sin. What's even worse is that many will lose their soul because they will have counted its seasonal pleasures as more important than an eternity with God. "The wages of sin is death" (Rom. 6:23); is it really worth it?

Thank God He has provided us with a solution to this progressive problem. "Put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh in regard to its lusts" (Rom. 13:14). It is only Jesus that can blunt the sting of sin and conquer the power of death, releasing us from its chains. And His cure is not some temporary fix that only covers the symptoms, He goes right to the source and eliminates it. The Lord always gives you more than you deserve to receive.