

1 Feb 2015: Preached by Preacher Clement Chew

Topic: **A Prayer for Vengeance?**

Scripture Text: Judges 16: 23-31

1. In Samson's prayer recorded in v.28, it seems to be vengeance, spiteful and bitter for personal revenge and yet God heard and answered his prayer. We must understand the context of Judges 16 to interpret it correctly. The Bible is against personal vengeance and in fact we are taught to love our enemies.

2. We know that God will not answer our prayer when we harbour sins in our hearts. From the life of Samson, he was called by God to be a judge in Israel to bring Israel back to God. He was also a Nazarite separated unto God. Samson was gifted by God with special strength which he should use to glorify God.

3. However, Samson behaved himself unbecoming as a judge in Israel and was a womanizer. He broke his 3 vows to God as a Nazarite. Samson brought disgrace to God in his life. God has to chasten Samson for his spiritual good. Hence, Samson lost his strength and succumbed to the enemies of Israel, the Philistines, who captured him and took out his eyes.

4. The Philistines held a feast to praise their own god which is the idol "Dagon" and claimed that Dagon was more powerful than Jehovah God of Israel. They also took Samson out of prison to mock at him. Samson in his repentance stage cried out to God in humility and sincerity in his prayer recorded in v.28. He acknowledged Jehovah God as the true and living God and the covenant keeping God and pleaded with God to vindicate Himself before the false god of the Philistines.

5. The prayer of Samson is not a person vengeance prayer but one that surrenders to the will of God even to die with the Philistines so that God's name is glorified. Hence, God answered his prayer which is pleasing to Him. In the life of Samson, the tragedy is that it took till the end of his life to learn the lesson to seek God and to do His will.