

Recap of 9/17/17 (Judges 16:20-31):

1. Judges 16:20 is one of the most tragic statements in the Bible. Sadly Samson did not know that the Lord had left him (withdrawn His power and His special purpose). Samson had trifled with his Nazirite status and it cost him.
2. We often think that something other than God's will will satisfy us, will give us the fulfillment or freedom that we seek. We see purity as confining, integrity as confining. Freedom to sin is not freedom but bondage. Freedom of obedience is true freedom.
3. Samson's hair begins to grow back, unnoticed by his captors. As it grows back he gains spiritual insight and understanding. His blindness led to spiritual enlightenment. He prays one last time for God's strengthening and God enables him to execute judgement on the Philistines one more time, acting in the capacity as Israel's judge. He died a martyr and in his death destroyed more Philistines and more prominent Philistines (including the Philistine rulers) than he had during his life.
4. "What can we learn from this sad story? Simply that God never stops loving his children. When we cry out to him in humility, no matter what we have done, God hears and answers. Are you feeling guilty because of sinful choices? Are you reluctant to pray because of unwise decisions you have made? No matter how far you may feel you are from God, no matter how low you have sunk, God stands ready to hear from you and answer you. If God could still work in Samson's situation, he can still work in yours!" (365 Life Lessons from Bible People).
5. "During his twenty years as judge of Israel, Samson was not able to subdue the Philistines, but he did restrain their activities by confronting them with the mighty power of Israel's God. Probably of more value was the fact that he stirred the Israelites to see that they must attempt to rout the enemy, not live with it. One thing was sure: the surviving Philistines would not soon forget what the lone warrior accomplished before their very eyes." (Irving Jensen)