

## WHEN GOD GIVES JUST ONE CHANCE

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### 1. Samson [BARE HANDS] (Judges 16:30)

And Samson said, Let me die with the Philistines. And he bowed himself with all his might; and the house fell upon the lords, and upon all the people that were therein. So the dead which he slew at his death were more than they which he slew in his life.

*[Uncut hair: Sikhism, created around 1500 AD; Islam, created around 700 AD: uncut facial hair; Hinduism: Shaved heads—hair offered to lifeless gods]*

a. “Samson Agonistes” (“Samson the Champion”) – Blind poet John Milton who wrote “Paradise Lost” combines Greek tragedy and Hebrew Scripture *[Milton depicts the tragedy of Samson’s promising life vs. his fleshly lusts].*

b. Samson: Nazarite vows (strict codes, unshorn hair) was set apart for God. *[Faithful Nazarite: John the Baptist (Matt 3: 13-17): Example from the NT].*

c. As 13<sup>th</sup> Judge, Samson did mighty feats for Israel against the Philistines. *[Slew 1,000 Philistines with donkey’s jawbone; 300 foxtails; lifted enemy’s gates].*

d. However, between Chs. 14 and 16 Samson goes down morally nine times. *[Command for believers: “Be ye holy”: 1 Pet. 1:16; Lev. 20:7, 26]. [Rom. 12:1-2]*

e. After his dalliance with Delilah, Samson is captured, chained, & blinded. *[SIN: Entrapment by Satan with no room to escape—Hosea: 3:2; John 8:11].*

f. Samson brought the stadium crashing down with strength from God. *[Judges 16:30; Gen. 32: 22-31: Jacob wrestling with God at Jabbok River. Samson’s awesome strength was not in his lifeless hair, but in maintaining the symbols of the Nazarite vows which served to glorify God].*

***God gave Samson just one chance to make restitution for his egregious sins. As believers, we may find ourselves in a cesspool of worldliness—deserted by people closest to us, reviled by our enemies, and physically and mentally anguished and brought to our knees. God can intervene in a superhuman manner to give us victory!***

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## 2. David [ONE HAND WIELDING A TINY WEAPON] (1 Samuel 17: 48-51)

<sup>48</sup> And it came to pass, when the Philistine arose, and came, and drew nigh to meet David, that David hastened, and ran toward the army to meet the Philistine.

<sup>49</sup> And David put his hand in his bag, and took thence a stone, and slang it, and smote the Philistine in his forehead, that the stone sunk into his forehead; and he fell upon his face to the earth.

<sup>50</sup> So David prevailed over the Philistine with a sling and with a stone, and smote the Philistine, and slew him; but there was no sword in the hand of David.

<sup>51</sup> Therefore David ran, and stood upon the Philistine, and took his sword, and drew it out of the sheath thereof, and slew him, and cut off his head therewith. And when the Philistines saw their champion was dead, they fled.

a. David was not a Nazarite but was anointed by Samuel: 1 Sam. 16: 13].  
*[David was a man after God's own heart (1 Samuel 13:14; Psalm 27:4)].*

b. As a ruddy teenager and youngest of 8 brothers, he was a humble shepherd.  
*[Though a shepherd, God saw David as a king (1 Sam. 16:7; 1 Pet. 2:9)].*

c. David was zealous for God's Glory and angered by Goliath's mockery of God.  
*[David had confidence in God and was fearless (Luke 1:37; Romans 8:31)].*

d. The 40 days of challenge by Goliath tested the Israelites in the Valley of Elah.  
*[40 is the number of trials (x157 in Bible): (1 Pet. 1:7)]. Elijah walked 40 days and 40 nights to Mount Horeb: 1 Kings 19:8; Flood by rain, 40 days and 40 nights: Gen. 7:12; Jesus spent 40 days in the desert: Luke 4:2]*

e. God used David's sling to slay the mighty giant—just one chance for victory!  
*[Moses' stick to serpent: Ex. 7: 10b; Spirit of the Lord came upon Gideon: Judges 6:34a; God's strength is made perfect in our weakness: 2 Cor. 12:9]*

*God gave David just one chance to vanquish the enemy with deadly accuracy. As believers, we may find ourselves facing seemingly insurmountable challenges of life—but our God is Almighty. Despite our fears, we must trust God to intervene in a superhuman manner to give us victory. As ambassadors for Christ (2 Cor. 5:20), we must glorify Him always as we look to Him to slay our Goliaths in our pilgrim passage.*

### 3. **Two Thieves [BOTH HANDS NAILED TO THE CROSS] (Luke 23: 39-43)**

But one of the malefactors which were hanged railed on him, saying, If thou be Christ, save thyself and us. But the other answering rebuked him, saying, "Dost thou not fear God, seeing thou art in the same condemnation? And we indeed justly; for we receive the reward of our deeds: but this man hath done nothing amiss. And he said unto Jesus, Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom. And Jesus said unto him, "Verily I say unto thee, today shalt thou be with me in paradise".

*[Example of Prison Ministry when one of two men prayed to receive Christ].*

**1. God gave the two thieves on each side of His cross one chance to repent and be saved from everlasting damnation. One thief recognized the Lordship of Christ and repented, whereas the other thief mocked his Deity and went into eternal hellfire instead of going into heaven with all his sins forgiven. Just one chance can make an eternal difference!**

**2. When we consider the three examples from Scripture of God giving just one chance to glorify Him, we see that Samson did this with his bare hands, David did so holding a humble tool in one hand, and the repentant thief, with both hands nailed to the cross. We do not know how God will use us when we get just once chance to glorify Him!**

**3. As believers, we must strive to share the Gospel in a variety of ways to give the unsaved at least one chance to go to heaven. YOU may be that one lifeline for a lost sinner whom God will bring within your sphere of influence (your Luke 10 "neighbor"). We must strive and do our part every time we get a chance, trusting God for the results through the power of the convicting Holy Spirit. Are you ready to take a chance—even if it is your only chance? Will you take that one chance you may have to save lost souls and bring wayward fellow-believers back into the center of God's Will for their lives?**

**4. Samson had God's strength bestowed on him: God's Spirit came upon him at times, but he was not indwelt by the Holy Spirit—whereas we as believers are indwelt by the Holy Spirit (1 Cor. 3:16); David was a man after God's own heart (1 Sam. 13:14); but he had to plead with God not to take the Holy Spirit away from him (Psalm 51: 11)—whereas the Holy Spirit can never be taken away from us (we are sealed with the earnest of our inheritance—sealed with the Holy Spirit (Eph. 1:13-14). The repentant thief had to wait for that one chance to be taken to Paradise but did not have the power of Christ rest upon him (2 Cor. 12:9), or the Holy Spirit indwell him (1 Cor. 3:16). We as believers are privileged to be richly blessed, strengthened, and empowered by the indwelling Holy Spirit (1 Cor. 3:16; Romans 8:11). Sometimes God gives us just one chance—or even two or more chances. Let us be vigilant and avail of every chance He gives us to live useful, productive, and victorious Christian lives for His Glory!**

### **Scripture References:**

#### **SAMSON**

**1 Pet. 1: 16:** Because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy; **Lev. 20: 7, 26:** <sup>7</sup>Sanctify yourselves therefore, and be ye holy: for I am the LORD your God. <sup>26</sup> And ye shall be holy unto me: for I the LORD am holy, and have severed you from other people, that ye should be mine.

**Gen. 32: 24, 28b:** <sup>24</sup> And Jacob was left alone; and there wrestled a man with him until the breaking of the day. <sup>28b</sup> For as a prince hast thou power with God and with men, and hast prevailed.

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#### **DAVID**

**1 Samuel 16: 13:** Then Samuel took the horn of oil and anointed him in the midst of his brethren: and the Spirit of the LORD came upon David from that day forward.

**1 Samuel 13: 14:** The Lord has sought for Himself a man after His own heart.

**Psalms 27:4:** One thing have I desired of the LORD, that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the LORD, and to enquire in his temple.

**1 Samuel 16: 7:** But the LORD said unto Samuel, Look not on his countenance, or on the height of his stature; because I have refused him: for the LORD seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the LORD looketh on the heart.

**Romans 8:31b:** If God be for us, who can be against us?

**Luke 1:37:** For with God nothing shall be impossible.

**1 Peter 1:7:** That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ.

**1 Kings 19:8:** And he arose, and did eat and drink, and went in the strength of that meat forty days and forty nights unto Horeb the mount of God.

**Genesis 7:12:** And the rain was upon the earth forty days and forty nights.

**Luke 4:2a:** Being forty days tempted of the devil.

**Judges 6:34a:** But the Spirit of the LORD came upon Gideon, and he blew a trumpet.

**2 Cor. 12:9:** And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me.

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## **THIEF ON THE CROSS:**

**Luke 23: 39-43:** And one of the malefactors which were hanged railed on him, saying, If thou be Christ, save thyself and us. But the other answering rebuked him, saying, Dost not thou fear God, seeing thou art in the same condemnation? We indeed justly; for we receive the due reward of our deeds: but this man hath done nothing amiss. And he said unto Jesus, Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom. And Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, Today shalt thou be with me in paradise.

**Psalms 51:11:** Cast me not away from thy presence; and take not thy holy spirit from me.

**Ephesians 1: 13-14:** In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory.

**Romans 8:11:** But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you.