

Chapter 16

Samfon enuironed in a citie taketh away the gates, and carieth them on his shoulders into a mountaine. 4. Is at laft deceiued by Dalila, 21. his eyes put out, and fcornfully abufed. 26. But finally God reftoring his ftrength, he ftriking two pillars the houle falleth, and with himfelf, killeth three thoufand Philifthiims.

or, an Inkeeper.

He went alfo into Gaza, and faw there a woman that was an harlot, and went in vnto her. ² Which when the Philifthiims had heard, and it was bruted among them, that Samfon was entered into the citie, they compaffed him, keepers being fette in the gate of the citie: and there al the night wayting with filence, that in the morning they might kil him going out. ³ But Samfon flept vntil midnight, and then arifing he ^atooke both the leaues of the gate, with their poftes and locke, and laying them on his shoulders, caried them to the toppe of the mountaine, which looketh toward Hebron. ⁴ After thefe thinges he loued a woman, which dwelt in Valley Sorec, and she was called Dalila. ⁵ And the princes of the Philifthiims came to her, and faid: Deceiue him, and learne of him, wherein he hath fo great ftrength, and how we may be able to ouercome him, and being bound to afflict him. Which if thou shalt doe, we wil geue thee euerie one a thoufand and an hundred peeces of filuer. ⁶ Dalila therfore fpake to Samfon: Tel me, I befech thee, wherein thy greateft ftrength is, and what it is wherewith being bound thou canft not breake forth. ⁷ To whom Samfon answered: If I fhall be bound with feuen cordes of finewes not yet drie, and moyfte as yet, I fhall be weake as other men. ⁸ And the princes of the Philifthimes brought vnto her feuen

^a For fuch admirable ftreingth the hethnifh people thought Samfon to be Hercules. *S. Aug. li. 18. c. 19. ciuit.* But he was in deede farre ftronger then they feaned of Hercules, who they faid, was not able to fight againft two: whereas Samfon alone killed a thoufand with the iaw bone of an affe. *c. 15. v. 15.*

cordes, as he had said: with the which she bound him, ⁹ ambushmentes lying secretly in wayte neere her, and in the chamber expecting the end of the thing, and she cried to him: The Philisthijms vpon thee Samfon. Who brake the bandes, as if a man should breake a thread of toe twyned with fpittle, when it hath taken the fauor of fyre: and it was not knowen wherein his strength was. ¹⁰ And Dalila said to him: Behold thou hast deluded me, and hast spoken false: not at the least tel me wherewith thou mayest be bound. ¹¹ To whom he answered: If I shall be bound with new cordes, that were neuer occupied, I shall be weake, and like to other men. ¹² With the which Dalila againe bound him, and cried: The Philisthijmes vpon thee Samfon, ambushmentes being prepared in the chamber. Who did so breake the bandes as threades of linnen cloth. ¹³ And Dalila said to him againe: How long deceiuest thou me, and speakest false? Shew wherewith thou mayest be bound. To whom Samfon answered: If thou platte feuen heares of my head with a heare lase, and fasten a nayle tyed round about them in the ground, I shall be weake. ¹⁴ Which when Dalila had done, she said to him: The Philisthijms vpon thee Samfon. Who ryfing vp from sleepe drew out the nayle with the heares and the heare lase. ¹⁵ And Dalila said to him: How doest thou say that thou louest me, whereas thy mind is not with me? These three times thou hast lied to me, & wouldest not tel wherein thy greatest strength is. ¹⁶ And when she molested him, and continually hong vpon him for many daies, not geuing him space to rest, his foule faynted, and was wearied euen vnto death. ¹⁷ Then opening the truth of the thing, he said to her: There neuer came yron vpon my head, because I am a Nazareite, that is to say, consecrated to God from my mothers wombe: if my head shall be shauen, ^a)my strength shall depart from me, and I shall fayle, and shall be as other men. ¹⁸ And she feing that he had confessed to her al his minde, sent to the princes of the Philisthijms and willed them: Come

^a Supernatural strenght, or grace departeth when any leaue the rule of their profession.

vp yet once more, for now he hath opened his hart to me. Who went vp taking with them the money which they had promifed. ¹⁹ But she made him to fleepe vpon her knees, and to lay his head in her bofome. And she called a barber, and shaued his feuen heares, and beganne to driue him away, and thruft him from her: for immediately the ftrengh departed from him: ²⁰ and she faid: The Philifthijms vpon thee Samfon. Who aryfing from fleepe, faid in his mind: I wil goe forth as I did before, and wil fhake my felf, not knowing that our Lord was departed from him. ²¹ Whom when the Philifthijmes had apprehended, forthwith they plucked forth his eies, and led him to Gaza bound with chaynes, and being shut vp in prifon they made him grinde. ²² And now his heares had begone to grow againe, ²³ and the princes of the Philifthijms affembled in one, that they might immolate magnifical hoftes to Dagon their god, and might feaft, faying: Our god hath deliuered our enemie Samfon into our handes. ²⁴ Which thing the people alfo feing, prayfed their god, and faid the fame thinges: Our god hath deliuered our aduerfarie into our handes, who deftroyed our countrie, and killed verie manie. ²⁵ And reioyfing through out their bankettes, when they had now taken their good cheere, they commanded that Samfon should be called, and should play before them. Who being brought out of prifon played before them, and they made him to ftand betwen two pillars. ²⁶ Who faid to the feruant that gouerned his fteppes: Suffer me to touch the pillars, on which al the houfe ftayeth, and let me leane vpon them, and reft a litle. ²⁷ And the houfe was ful of men and wemen, and there were al the princes of the Philifthijms, alfo from the roofe and higher part, about three thoufand of both fexe beholding Samfon playing. ²⁸ But he inuocating our Lord, faid: Lord God remember me, & reftore now to me myne old ftrengh my God, that I may ^a)reuenge me of myne

^a He defired to be reuenged, not of rancour of mind but of zeale of iuftice. And fo al the elect & glorified Sainctes defire reuêge. *Luc. 18. v. 8. Apoc. 6. v. 10.*

enemies, and for the loffe of two eies may receiue one reuenge. ²⁹ And taking both the pillers, on which the houfe refted, and holding the one in his right hand, and the other in his left, ³⁰ he faid: ¶Let me die with the Philifthijms. And the pillers being ftrongly shaken, the houfe fel vpon al the princes, and the reft of the multitude, that was there: and he killed manie moe dying, then before he had killed liuing. ³¹ And his brethren going downe and al his kinred, they tooke his bodie, and buried it betwixt Saraa and Efthaol in the fepulchre of his father Manue, and he iudged Ifrael twentie yeares.

ANNOTATIONS

30 Let me die with the Philifthiims.) Manie thinges do iuftifie Samfons fact in killing himfelf with the Philifthiims. Firft it appeareth by the miracle, that God directly and extraordinarily concurred by reftoring in that moment his admirable ftreingth, that he could pull downe two fuch pillers. And conformably we may gather, that God infpired his mind to attempt this fact, and fo he erred not, but obeyed God herein: as S. Auguftin noteth. *li. 1. c. 21. & 26. de ciuit Dei.* Secondly he was moued with zeale of Gods honour, hearing the Idolaters praife their falfe god Dagon. Thirdly, he had a good and pure intention to reuenge him felfe for Gods more glorie, praying to him for reftauration of ftreingth. Fourthly he did not directly defire to kil himfelfe, but to kil the Philifthims, though himfelfe muft alfo die with them. And in this act efpecially he was a figure of Chrift, who chiefly by his death conquered his enemies.

Samfon excufed in killing himfelf with his enemies.

Samfon a figure of Chrift.