

# FORMATION OF SAMSON AND ITS TRAGI-COMIC END

## The Divine Pedagogy of Formation VII

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### *Abstract*

Samson received his call even before he was conceived. His mother was instructed to abstain from wine and other fermented drinks and not to eat unclean food. This reminds us of the need of special attention to be given while choosing a candidate for religious or priestly life by considering his/her family background and status, namely its reputation, morality of the parents and relatives, nature of the profession, etc. The extraordinary grace freely bestowed on Samson without any merit or co-operation from his part sheds light on the nature of vocation and formation. The formee was supposed to become conscious of the Lord's Spirit that empowered him. Instead Samson took pride in his might and strength, as if it were his own and did whatever pleased him. His inordinate passions and lack of self-control gradually led to his humiliation and downfall.

### **Introduction**

This time we study the story of Samson, who was called to be a deliverer of Israel during the tribal times (Jg.13-16). The life of this elected one was full of contradictions. Inordinate passion for women paved the way for his downfall. Still the divine hand was working through such vicissitudes and aberrations, and the Lord finally made his tragic death a successful fulfilment of the task with which Samson was entrusted.

## **A Pre-destined One**

### **Context**

Samson was the last Judge of the tribal times. Israel was then not yet grown into the stature of a great nation. As she was living in the midst of former inhabitants of Palestine, who used to attack her at every opportune time, she had to struggle for survival. During those times the people were led by Judges, played the roles of defenders, protectors, administrators as well as arbitrators. In other words, the Judges had to serve as fathers of Israel, who was conceived as a family of God. The main role was, however, to deliver them from the hands of the enemies, to whose power Yahweh subjected them, because the covenant people had committed evil in the divine sight.

### **A Special Call**

This was the situation when Samson was called. One can see a very particular trait in his call. While other Judges were elevated to such a position as grown-up persons, Samson received his call even before he was conceived in the womb of his mother. The wife of Manoah was barren and childless. To her an angel of Yahweh appeared once and announced to her the forthcoming birth of a child (13:2-5).

### **Reflection I**

One may ask a question: Can we consider the origin of every call as taking place in the womb of the mother? Prophet Jeremiah is said to have set apart by Yahweh before he was formed in the womb of the mother (Jer.1:5). In certain sense a person may be said to have been chosen by God from eternity. It is the Almighty who creates a human being. The Psalmist, under the divine inspiration, has spoken in the name of Christ (Ps.40:6-8), to which the author of the letter of Hebrews gives a more precise articulation: "When Christ came into the world, he said, ... a body you prepared for me... then I said: Here I am - it is written about me in the scroll - I have come to do your will, oh God" (Heb.10:5-7). In Rom.8:29-30 and Eph.1:5, 11 Paul thus interprets the call of every Christian: "For those God foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the likeness of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brothers. And those he predestined, he also called; those he called, he also justified; those he justified, he also glorified" (Rom.8:29-30). In love he predestined us to be adopted as his sons through Jesus Christ. In accordance with his pleasure and will (Eph.1:5). In him we were also chosen, having been predestined according to the plan of him who works out everything in conformity with the purpose of his will (Eph.1:11).

## Prerequisites

Samson's mother was asked to take special care not to drink wine or other fermented drink and eat nothing unclean. Wine mixed with water was the ordinary drink of the common man. Fermented drink had more alcoholic content and it was used in parties and celebrations. The Philistines used good amount of fermented drink. The instruction of the angel denotes that even the mother of predestined Judge has to lead an ascetic life from her pregnancy. This is indeed a special trait, not found in other call narratives. Only those who take a special vow of separation to the Lord as a Nazirite (the term *nazir* comes from the root *nzr* which refers to dedication and consecration; thus such a vowed person had to withdraw himself, to restrict himself) had to abstain from wine and other fermented drinks (Num.6:1-4). This ascetic practice came from their own initiative. In the case of Samson's mother it was imposed from High. Also she was instructed to eat nothing unclean.

## Reflection II

In choosing a candidate for religious or priestly life special attention was given in former times to his/her family background and status, namely its reputation, morality of the parents and relatives, nature of the profession, etc. Now these factors are often connived at. This may be one of the reasons for the present miserable situation. Nobody can deny the influence of the family background in the future life of the consecrated ones. The ideology inculcated in the minds of the children by parents, brothers and sisters as well as teachers and friends play a vital role in their character formation.

## His Future Task

The angel informed the mother that her child is destined to be God's Nazirite from the womb to the day of his death; therefore she should take care that a no razor shall come upon his head. Also his call to be a Judge over Israel, who has to liberate the people from the Philistine power, was revealed to her.

## Reflection III

Pre-annunciation of the future role of the child is not uncommon in call narratives. Thus Zechariah was informed by angel Gabriel that his son John is destined to bring back the people of Israel to the Lord their God (Lk.1:13-17). Also he will be a Nazirite who never drinks wine or other fermented drinks. The same angel foretold Mary that she will give birth to a child who will be called the Son of the Most High and he will sit on the throne of King David, ruling over the house of Jacob

for ever (Lk.1:26-33). Thus the call of Samson foreshadowed the future advent of the precursor of Jesus and of Messiah. Perhaps in Samson's tale one can see the symbol of Israel who was 'pre-conceived' (in the period represented by the stories of the Patriarchs) and 'gestated' (in the times of wanderings) before it entered the reality of life in Canaan. Israel, Yahweh's people is symbolically re-born in a single human form in the narrative of the last Judge. Yahweh's high expectations for Israel and her subsequent shortcomings are dramatically embodied in the figure of Samson.

### **Called to 'Initiate' Delivery of Israel**

The call of Samson to be God's Nazirite from the womb was different from those who opted themselves for such a vocation. However it somehow resembles to that of John the Baptist, who was said to be abstaining from wine or other fermented drink from the birth itself (Lk.1:15). Concerning his role the angel said that Samson will 'initiate' delivery of Israel from Philistines (13:5). It seems to foreshadow a less-than-hoped-for consequence of the annunciation. Sadly Samson failed to be faithful to his call.

### **Reappearance and Silence**

When Manoah heard the story of the appearance of the angel, he prayed to Yahweh to send the angel once more in order to teach him and his wife what they shall do for the child (13:8-14). Accordingly the angel appeared; then Manoah asked: "What will be the judgement of the lad and his work" (v.12)? His words seem to mean thus: what sort of career will he have, or what will be his style and achievement? The divine envoy ignored his question, and simply repeated what he had already demanded from the woman. The reason for not giving a direct reply to Manoah, may be this. He as God's representative knew the eventual unfaithfulness of the called one. What is then the use of explaining to the parents the nature of the role of Judge, since their son will not in future bother even to fulfil his mission. The name Samson is related to the Hebrew term *semes* (sun) and may mean "man of Shamash." It can be interpreted thus: the boy was destined to become a living image of Yahweh, the fullness and source of effulgence and brightness, who makes the life of creatures joyful and pleasant. Similarly Samson was called to be a Judge of Israel, one who provides the people a peaceful and happy life, by delivering them from the hands of the enemies and by acting as a just arbiter.

## The Involvement of the Formator

The story of Samson does not mention the direct acts of formation by Yahweh. The divine Pedagogue seldom appears in the story. Still his presence and behind-scene acts are referred already from the early days of the new born baby.

## The Blessing Dynamics of Formation

The first act of formation is mentioned in 13:24: “the boy grew and Yahweh blessed him.” The root of *brk* denotes the activity of filling with the divine welfare and wellbeing. God is the fullness, source and provider of blessing. In the creation account *brk* appears thrice, Gen.1:22, 28; 2:3. In the first text the Creator blessed the animals and birds, saying, “Be fruitful and increase in number and fill the sea and earth.” God is the provider of life and vitality. By making the creatures increase, He made the life in the sea and on the earth more beautiful and enjoyable, God being the fullness of beauty and joy. In blessing the humans, He, the plenitude of inexhaustible goodness said: “Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it; rule over every living creature” (Gen.1:28). After giving the same graces granted to the creatures (becoming fruitful, increase and filling the earth) He adds the boons of subduing and ruling – the same acts proper to his divine nature. Being gifted with God’s dynamics, humans and in a lesser degree creatures become the image and likeness of the Creator. They enjoy the same wellbeing with which the Lord is replenished. In the third instance (Gen.2:3) God blessed the seventh day and made it holy, because he rested on that day. The divine rest indicates involution, an act of entering into himself, in which he could find, enjoy and celebrate his own face and voice in every face and voice of creatures. This provides in certain sense, self-realization (*atmasakshatkara*). By commanding the humans to set apart the seventh day for rest, he blesses them with the grace of attaining *atmasakshatkara* and *Iswarasakshatkara* (God-realization).

Now let us come back to Jg.13:24. The Lord blessed the boy, which meant equipping Samson with the divine wellbeing and dynamics of vitality, energy, strength, courage, authority and dominion – the essential qualities for exercising the role of a judge. The boy is thus empowered to become the representative of the Lord in Israel. Here we find the purpose of giving formation to the candidates. Such a grace was freely bestowed on Samson without any merit or co-operation from his part. This sheds light on the nature of call and formation. God freely grants the graces necessary for the tasks to be performed by the called ones. Jesus had thus instructed his disciples: “Freely you have received; freely give” (Mt.10:8).

## The Infusion of the Divine Spirit

The next verse (Jg.13:25) thus reads: “And the Spirit of the Lord began to arouse him at times in the Danite camp between Zorah and Eshtoal.” The Hebrew term *p□m* indicates the act of stirring. The divine Spirit was moving or impelling Samson at times. What was meant by the text is not very clear. We can surmise that Samson experienced now and then the dynamic presence of the divine Spirit. The Lord was preparing the called one to perform the task meant for him.

## Reflection V

It is indeed worth noting that the text does not mention any co-operation from the part of the candidate. It seems that Samson was not at all bothered at what was happening in his inner being. We may find here a strange divine pedagogy of formation. Everything is done by the divine Formator. Not a word is said about the involvement of the formee. Is it allowed for the human formators to imitate this divine pattern? Did this method of God meet with success? One cannot categorically say yes or no to this question. We find in the later part of the narrative how the Lord could make use of the ostensibly selfish and ego-centred adventures of Samson in order to accomplish his designs.

## Formee in Action

### Designs: Human and Divine - 1

We do not find in Samson any attempt to respond to the grace of the Spirit with which the divine Formator was trying to arouse him. Rather he led an ordinary life, perhaps little worse than other Israelite young men, who never went alone to the Philistine towns (14:1-3). But the chosen one went down to Timnah, one of the enemy’s abode. The Hebrew *yrđ* (go down) which is repeated in vv.5, 7 connotes his spiritual descents. Leaving Israelite territory implied leaving its traditions as well. He found there a girl with whom he fell in love. Returning home he stubbornly demanded his parents to get that girl for his wife. They were unhappy that their son whom they knew was destined to be a Nazirite, consecrated to Yahweh, wanted to marry a Philistine girl. We find Samson choosing what was right in his eyes – a phrase found in Jg.21:25, which brought anarchy in the society. The repetition of the term ‘see’ (vv.1, 2, 7) has profound significance. Samson followed his eyes, not his parents or Yahweh. This had a tragic consequence. At the end of the story it was his eyes, which caused the initial tragic series of events that were destroyed, leaving him in total darkness, both physical and spiritual. The unwilling parents had finally to yield to the persistent obstinacy of Samson.

The action of the formee was supposed to be repugnant to the divine Formator. But the author of the Book of Judges makes the following comment: the idea of marrying a girl from the enemy's camp originated with Yahweh, who was looking for an occasion against the Philistines, who had then subjugated Israel (14:4). The Lord, who could foresee the tensions resulting from that wedlock, had then in his mind a sublime plan. He could make use of the eventual conflicts to force the formee to exercise the role of deliverer of the covenant people. Of course Samson acted not with this divine intention, but out of impetus from wounded pride and egoistic motives.

### Reflection V

A pertinent lesson for the human formators seems to be implied in such an action of the divine Pedagogue, who could convert the apparent faulty steps of the formee into a progressive act of formation. The candidates are very often not trustworthy, and may take a wrong turning. A skilful formator should know how to take advantage of such a negative occasion.

### 'Turning Aside'

Samson went down to Timnah with his father and mother to get the Philistine girl as his wife (14:5-7). The second part of v.5 of the Hebrew text has to be emended as follows: "he turned aside and went into the Timnah vineyards." This means that during the journey to Timnah with the parents, all on a sudden he left their company and went to the vineyards. The Hebrew term *sur* (which occurs also in v.8) means to turn aside, deviate from the path. Figuratively it is used in the negative sense of turning aside from the divine law and Yahweh in order to serve the foreign deities (Dt.11:16; 17:17; 28:14; 31:29; 1Sam.12:21; Ps.119:102; Jer.17:5; Dan.9:5, 11; Mal.3:7; 2Chr.25:27). In our story Samson's turning aside may have deep moral connotations.

### The Formator's Action

Yahweh made use of the deviation of the formee as an occasion to make him grow into a deeper sense of call. When Samson entered into the vineyards a young lion came roaring to attack him. Then "the Spirit of the Lord came upon him (14:6) and he tore the animal open - like tearing a kid - barehanded." The term *slh* (which occurs also in 14:19 and 15:14) indicates a particular divine gift. Thus the phrase may be better translated as, "Yahweh's Spirit empowered him." What Samson could do, did not come from human strength; rather it was Yahweh's power which descended upon him, and with it he could tear the lion open

barehanded. The divine Formator had intended to teach the formee of his election for the purpose of delivering the covenant people from the hands of Philistines. He was supposed to become conscious that he could do a mighty and wonderful deed since the Lord's Spirit had empowered him. This should make him humble and docile to the one who has called him. See how the divine Formator adapts his formative methods according to the existential exigencies!

### **A Non-responsive Formee**

The expectation of the divine Formator did not materialize at all. The text does not give any hint whether the called one positively responded to the extraordinary and awesome experience of God's intervention. He does not seem to have minded this fact and went on his way to the house of the girl. There is a probability to think that the young man took pride of the might and strength, as if it were his own. Thus the formation dynamics of Yahweh failed to achieve the desired effect.

### **Designs: Human and Divine - 2**

Once more we read about Samson's act of "turning aside" (vv.8-10). During the seven day celebration of the wedding (the word *misteh* for the feast connotes heavy drinking which was prohibited to the Nazirite) under the alcoholic influence he propounded a riddle to the thirty Philistine companions which they were challenged to solve under a bet (vv.11-14). The Philistines extracted under threat of death the solution from Samson's bride, who nagged her husband all day long to reveal the secret (vv.15-18). The oafish youth finally yielded, and she at once told it to her countrymen. The infuriated Samson flew into a rage. Then under the empowerment of Yahweh Spirit he struck down thirty Philistines, took their gear and gave the clothing to those who had explained the riddle. His anger blazing he went up to his father's house (vv.19-20).

Although the retaliation was prompted by the anger at the craftiness of the Philistines, the divine Formator's hand was conspicuous. Because Yahweh's Spirit empowered him he could slay thirty men and take their spoil. The Lord's design of calling Samson to destroy the enemies of Israel and thus to become their deliverer, was getting fulfilled. It is interesting to note how the divine Formator makes use of merely human reactions in order to serve his ultimate saving purpose for the chosen people. Although the called one betrayed the highest level of divine expectation on most demeaning grounds, the Formator did not defer from pursuing his formation process. This may be a model for the human formators.

### **Designs: Human and Divine - 3**

On further provocations by the Philistines Samson, flying into a rage, brought destruction on them (15:1-8). When his father-in-law gave his wife to another person, he took revenge by saying: "this time I am innocent in regard to the Philistines when I do them injury." He was declaring that the Philistines now has no claim against him for the harm he would do to them. His words imply that his former action of violence cannot be fully justified. Here we find that the formee had in his conscience the sense of justice. He felt that he had done injustice to the enemies of Israel by his over-reaction. Of course Samson did not know the designs of his divine Formator, who had used the incident as a pretext for destroying the enemies of the covenant people. He never had given a thought of his task of deliverer for which he was called. He had simply acted as if he were his own master. Now he took vengeance by saying that the forthcoming destructive act is justifiable. Here also Samson did not bother to reflect upon the designs of Yahweh, who had prompted him for performing the role of deliverer. The ireful Philistines, whose fields of grain, vineyards and olive orchards were set fire by Samson, burned his ex-wife and her household. At this the called one reacted by saying: "if this is the sort of thing you do, I won't stop until I get my revenge on you." It seems that the chosen one found fault with the retaliatory act of the Philistines, and came forward to punish them! The apparent irony is that the one who was supposed to be the enemy of Philistines comes forward to vindicate the injustice done to one of the Philistine family! He was indeed doing what was right in his own eyes - without taking into account the designs of his divine Formator.

### **The One, Empowered by the Divine Spirit**

When the Philistine army pitched in Judah in order to catch Samson (15:9-13), the terrified people wanted to handover him to the enemies. When they questioned him about his action, Samson thus responded: "As they did against me, so I have done unto them." The principle which guided the supposed-to-be the man of God was tit for tat. Also he behaved as if he were the one who could decide what was just. The formee was arrogantly clinging to his concept of self-righteousness and was not least concerned about the eventual repercussions of his actions.

His countrymen bound him with two new ropes and brought him to the Philistine camp. As the enemies were about to slay their captive, the divine Formator came to the help of the formee (vv.14-16). The Spirit of the Lord gripped him again, making the fetters like flax burnt with fire. Then he could with a fresh donkey jawbone slay a thousand Philistines. In his little song he does not make any mention of the divine

help; rather he was boasting of his might. He took full credit for the exploit. He conveniently forgot the truth that he might have been killed by his enemies unless the Almighty did not have timely intervened.

## **The Decisive Turning Point**

### **Acknowledgement**

At the end of his bragging Samson was sore athirst (vv.17-19). It brought a tremendous change in him. For the first time he cried out to Yahweh, acknowledging the divine help and at the same time demanding God's intervention. Still he did not use the religious term *s□q*, which is usually found on the lips of supplicants; rather he employed the ordinary word *qr□* (call). Anyhow the cry was addressed directly to Yahweh. For the first time the formee was speaking to his Formator in second personal pronoun: "You have granted this great deliverance into the hand of your servant." Although he attributes to Yahweh the great deliverance, still he took for himself some of the responsibility for his victory! This shows that the old man had not fully died in him. Still he was humble enough as to designate himself as "your servant". Here we may find the turning point in the life of the called one. For the first time he positively, gratefully and humbly acknowledged the grace granted to him by the divine Formator. Indeed the formee was slowly growing into the proper mentality of a called one. It is not I but the Almighty who is doing great things through me (cf. Lk.1:46-48).

### **Appeal**

After acknowledging that the divine Formator had granted him the great deliverance, immediately he challenges the Lord by flying a question to him: "Shall I now die of thirst and fall into the hand of the uncircumcised?" Apparently it implies that Yahweh has responsibility to revive him by providing water to quench his thirst. By putting it as a question he was reminding the Formator of his duty. If Samson had eventually died and fell into the hand of the uncircumcised, the Formator would be counted as guilty.

### **Reflection VI**

Can we find fault with the formee for this seemingly irreverent question? It would have been better if Samson showed more respect and humility. Still this 'rude' method cannot be rejected as arrogant. First of all, this was the way that the formee used to behave even to his parents. He merely had recourse to his tendency to find fault with others. The formee had not yet attained the maturity expected from a nominee, and is excusable for haughty behaviour. The divine Formator

could understand this immaturity and could take it with a humorous mind. It is not wrong to assert that He would like such outbursts and non-artificial speeches. The Psalms of complaint amply attest to this truth (eg. Ps.83:1-3; 89:42; 10:1; 13:1-2; 44:23).

### **A Prompt Intervention**

The divine Formator was galvanized into action (v.19). He split open the hollow at Lehy. Water gushed out of it so that Samson could drink. Thus his Spirit returned to him, reviving him. The phrase “spirit returned to him,” reminds us of the divine Spirit descending upon him on former occasions. Because of it he could return to his regular self.

### **Functioning as Judge**

Chapter 15 ends with this note: “He judged Israel, in the days of the Philistines, twenty years” (v.20). No further details are given. How did he perform as a representative of Yahweh, as the head of Israelite family and as the one who has to take the people into the divine rest? Did he achieve success in executing the role of a Judge? Certain differences can be pointed out in this formula from other occurrence of that phrase (Jg.3:11; 3:30; 5:31; 8:28; 10:2; 10:3; 12:7; 12:8; 12:11). In other texts the Judges ruled over the people after defeating the enemies. Here Samson is said to have judged in the days of Philistines, which meant that the enemies still had dominion over Israel. In most of the other places the formula is used at the end of the story of the Judge with report of his death, e.g. “(he) judged Israel for...years, then he died.” The former leaders were idle man.

### **His Relapses**

The one who was called to be a Nazirite became once more a prey of intemperate lust. Women become the only object of his life (16:1-4), which made him less and less attentive to his job as Judge. This relapse caused his downfall and ultimately premature death.

### **Fall I**

Once he went to the house of a harlot at Gaza (vv.1-3). As the Gazites knew about his presence, they laid an ambush for him at the town gate in order to kill him. But Samson outwitted them and escaped, carrying the gateposts on his shoulders. Nothing is said that the formee had appealed to the divine Formator for assistance. He acted on his own, depending on the strength which was a gift of Yahweh – a fact which he conveniently forgot.

## Fall II

While the first sexual affair was a momentary one, the second had a dreadful outcome (16:4-21). The very name of the woman, Delilah with its concurrence of consonants with *lylh* (night), has a symbolic connotation. Samson, the sun became subjected to Delilah night, because of it he lost his 'light' his sight, and became both physically and figuratively captive of night in blindness. She cheated her lover for money promised by the Philistines. Delilah nagged and pressed Samson until he was exasperated to the point of death, as to disclose to her the source of his strength. Literally v.17 reads: "He told her all his heart." The uncut hair was symbolic of his bond to his consecration. The act of telling the foreign woman the secret amounted to betraying the one who had called him, entrusting him with a specific task by providing him extra-ordinary strength to destroy the enemies of the people of God. See how the passionate lust could sink a formee into the most despicable depths! Samson never thought about his special call and subjection to the Lord who had provided him all the necessary superhuman abilities.

### "Yahweh Turned Away from Him"

The treacherous Delilah shaved off the seven locks of his head depriving Samson of the source of his strength. When the enemies came to seize him he could not withstand them, and the divine Formator did not come to his aid. It is explicitly said that the Lord had turned aside from him (v.20). Theologically the Hebrew verb *sur* indicates the withdrawing of Yahweh, thereby ceasing to come to assist that individual: Jg.16:20 (Samson); 1 Sam.16:14; 18:22; 28:15 (Saul). The whole life of Saul then became a tragedy. Because of the Spirit of Yahweh he could earlier do everything with success. It was because of his repeated unfaithfulness that the Lord had turned away from him. The same thing could be said of Samson, the last Judge of Israel. Till that time the divine Formator, irrespective of his lack of faith and positive response, had continued to assist him, with the expectation that the formee would come to his senses and lead a life worthy of his call. But Samson did not bother to take his call in seriousness, and repeatedly failed to acknowledge the timely helps of the Lord. He had conveniently violated his vow of Nazirite and enjoyed hot drinks and had sexual relations with Philistine women. Lastly he betrayed the secret of his strength and allowed razor to come on his head. Also the one called to be a Judge neglected his duties and led a libidinous life. Thus the formee forfeited every right for the divine protection. There remained no other possibility for the Formator but to turn away from Samson. It would have wounded

the heart of the Formator. Before human freedom the Lord becomes a helpless person!

### **A Desperate Cry**

The Philistines gouged out his eyes, bound him with bronze shackles and made him a grinder in the prison (v.21). The sun (Samson) was turned out to be Delilah, darkness (night). The enemies wanted to celebrate the event and assembled to offer a great sacrifice to their deity and to make merry at the expense of the Hebrew slave (vv.23-27). There were present all the lords of the Philistines and three thousand men and women. The former Judge of Israel was tormented and humiliated. It seems that Samson was finally coming to his senses. He would have understood that he himself had brought such a tragedy by his ego-centric, arrogant and licentious life, forgetting the sublime call and its obligations. As he was forced to make them sport, he uttered a prayer: "Oh Lord Yahweh, remember me, I pray you, and strengthen me, I pray you just this once, oh God, that I may be at once avenged of the Philistines, for my two eyes." (v.28). Although he knew that the hair of his head has once more grown, he was not depending on his strength for the act of vindication. Rather Samson appeals to the Lord. He beseeched to provide him once more the strength to deliver himself with one deliverance. Still we can see the formee wanted to take vengeance on account of his lost eyes – a selfish motivation! By leaning forward against the two middle pillars of the temple he once more said, "Let me die with the Philistines!" and pushed with all his might. Then the building collapsed upon the Philistines (vv.29-30). The author of the book notes down: "Those whom he killed at his death were more than he had killed at his lifetime."

### **Final Reflection**

Did Yahweh achieve his purpose in calling Samson? Has he called one performed his task of delivering Israel? Did the divine Formator make a blunder in choosing an unworthy and non-reliable person? Such questions may linger on our minds. First of all we have to accept that the ways and means used by God are beyond human comprehension. This fact is more relevant in the present times of vocation crisis and scandals prevailing among the consecrated persons. Let us try to analyse the Samson's story. The main purpose of his call was to deliver Israel from the hands of the Philistines. In certain sense he fulfilled it at his death by killing more than three thousand men and women and their lords. Besides, the divine Formator made use of the deviatory and egoistic adventures of the formee to accomplish the same goal. Finally

the divine turning away from Samson caused the last extermination of the enemies and deliverance of Israel. In other words this tragi-comic story discloses how God can bring good from the evil. Thus, to label the story as an instance of the failure of the divine Formator is not correct.