

SPECTACLE CULTURE: VISION AS A NARRATIVE PLOT DEVICE IN THE SAMSON CYCLE

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Said the Eye one day, "I see beyond these valleys a mountain veiled with blue mist. Is it not beautiful?"

The Ear listened and, after listening intently awhile, said, "But where is any mountain? I do not hear it."

Then the Hand spoke and said, "I am trying in vain to feel it or touch it, and I can feel no mountain."

And the Nose said, "There is no mountain, I cannot smell it."

Then the Eye turned the other way, and they all began to talk together about the Eye's strange delusion. And they said, "Something must be the matter with the Eye."

— Gibran Khalil¹

Gibran Khalil's parable elucidates two lessons particularly relevant for reading narrative function. First, the eye offers a singular form of observation, a perspective that other faculties cannot replicate. Second, for this observation to be meaningful, it must be integrated into the collective perception of the body. Analogously, the faculty of sight in the Samson narrative (Judges 13-16) operates as a central narrative device: it both directs character action and shapes the reader's understanding of the story.² The motif of vision is prominent in the Samson cycle, with the root *ra'ah* ("see") and its cognates appearing thirty-one times. Specifically, *ra'ah* occurs sixteen times in chapters 13-16 (forty-four times in the book of Judges); *hineh* ("look" or "behold") appears ten times (forty-seven times in Judges), and *'ayin* ("eye") five times (nineteen times in Judges). As Prina Galpaz-Feller observes, "the motif of vision is woven into the story of Samson," functioning as a structuring element of the narrative."³

The Samson cycle opens with the "eyes" of the LORD: *And again the Israelites did evil in the eyes of [b'einei] the LORD* (13:1). The narrative immediately foregrounds vision as a mechanism of divine observation and judgment.

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In the same chapter, an angel of the Lord is “seen” (*ra’ah*) twice by Manoah’s nameless wife (vv. 3, 10), and later both Manoah and his wife “see” the angel ascending in the sacrificial flame (vv. 19, 20, 23). Vision here functions not merely descriptively but performatively: the characters’ sight mediates divine-human interaction and catalyses narrative progression.

When attention turns to Samson, his visual encounters similarly direct the narrative. In 14:1–2, Samson “sees” (*ra’ah*) a Timnite woman and desires her as his wife. Despite parental opposition, he insists that she is *right for my eyes* (*yeshrah b’einei*) (v. 3; cf. v. 7). Later, in 16:1, Samson again allows visual attraction to dictate his actions when he “sees” (*ra’ah*) a prostitute and solicits her services. These instances highlight Samson’s recurrent visual transgressions, which the Philistines exploit as a mechanism of *lex talionis*.⁴ In 16:5, Delilah is instructed by the Philistine lords to “see” (*ra’ah*) the secret of Samson’s strength, and thirteen verses later, she succeeds (v. 18). Subsequently, the Philistines gouge out Samson’s “eyes” (*‘enav*) (16:21) and display him publicly so that they may “see” (*ra’ah*) his performance (vv. 24, 27).⁵ The text’s repeated lexical emphasis on sight prompts critical questions: How do the visions of the LORD, Manoah and his wife, Samson, Delilah, and the Philistines differ? What is the narrative function of “seeing” in these episodes?

Following Khalil’s parable, the vision in the Samson narrative cannot be understood in isolation; its significance emerges through its interaction with other narrative elements. Notably, vision intersects with recurring motifs of knowledge and speech – *yada’* (“to know”) (13:16, 21; 14:4; 15:11; 16:9, 20), *nagad* (“to tell”) (13:6, 10; 14:6, 9, 12 [2x], 13–16 [3x], 17 [2x], 19; 16:6, 10, 13, 15, 17, 18 [2x]), *ba’alut* (“to go up”) (13:16, 19, 20; 14:2, 19; 15:6, 9, 10, 13; 16:3, 5, 8, 17), and *yarad* (“to go down”) (14:1, 5, 7, 10, 19; 15:8, 11, 12; 16:21, 31). While scholars such as Yael Avrahami, Uriah Kim, Helen Paynter, and Kirsty Jones have examined various aspects of the vision motif in the Samson narrative, no study has systematically investigated how the motif of vision functions as a driving force of the narrative plot in Judges 13–16. This study seeks not only to examine how characters’ acts of seeing – whether divine, human, or Philistine – direct and shape the unfolding of events and influence the trajectory of Samson’s life, but also to explore how the vision motif interacts with other recurring motifs, such as knowledge

(*yada'*), speech (*nagad*), and movement (*ba'alut/yarad*), in constructing the story's overall dramatic and thematic structure.

Two central theses are advanced in this article: First, vision is a driving force of the narrative: characters act in response to what they see. Manoah and his wife's sighting of the angelic envoy precipitates Samson's birth; Samson's visual fixations on the Timnite woman (14:1) and the prostitute (16:1) govern his actions; and Delilah's observation of his secret ensures his downfall. The Philistines' final act of "seeing" Samson perform enables the narrative climax. Second, the consequences of seeing are critical: the ethical and narrative weight of vision derives not merely from the act itself but from how characters act upon their observations. In Judges 13, Manoah and his wife direct their gaze "up" toward heaven, aligning their perception with divine purpose. In contrast, Samson allows his gaze to "go down" (*yarad*), with disastrous consequences. Knowledge, gained through vision, becomes a tool of power: Samson exploits what he sees over his parents, whereas Delilah and the Philistines use visual knowledge to dominate and humiliate him, culminating in the spectacle of the blind judge. With these twin emphases – vision as narrative driver and vision as instrument of power – this study now turns to the first set of characters: the LORD, Manoah, and his wife, analyzing how their sight shapes both narrative trajectory and thematic development.

THE EYES OF THE LORD AND THE VISION OF MANOAH'S WIFE

Judges 13 begins with the LORD's "eyes" (*'enav*) and ends with Manoah and his wife "seeing" (*ra'ah*) the angel ascend heavenward in the flames of sacrifice (v. 20). The narrative is framed by sight – what the LORD sees, what Manoah's wife sees, and what Manoah fails to see. This theme of vision directs the plot and reveals contrasting responses to divine revelation. The opening statement that *the Israelites did evil in the eyes of the LORD* (v. 1) is a recurring refrain in Judges (2:11; 3:7, 12; 4:1; 6:1; 10:6).⁷ Yet here, its repetition is purposeful. What God "sees" prompts action: the LORD delivers Israel *into the hands of the Philistines for forty years* (13:1) – the longest oppression in the book.⁸ This extended period of suffering prepares the stage for the final judge, whom Jacobus Marcus aptly describes as "paradoxically better than everyone else, and his failure simultaneously worse than everyone

else.”⁹ What the LORD’s eyes perceive thus propels the plot toward the rise of Samson.

Significantly, God does more than punish. Without Israel’s cry for deliverance, the LORD takes the initiative by sending his *mal’akh* (“messenger”) to “appear” (*ra’ah*) before Manoah’s wife.¹⁰ Scholars such as Robert Alter, Benjamin Johnson, and Jillian Ross rightly observe that Judges 13 belongs to the biblical type-scene of the barren woman’s annunciation, found in the stories of Sarah (Genesis 16–21), Rebekah (Genesis 25), Rachel (Genesis 30), and Hannah (I Samuel 1).¹¹ Johnson outlines seven typical elements of this scene, of which Samson’s birth narrative includes all but one: the couple’s attempt to secure a child. Judges 13, then, portrays transformation – the nameless barren woman is elevated to the rank of matriarchs, becoming the mother of Israel’s final judge.¹²

What distinguishes Manoah’s wife is her perceptive sight. She alone sees the “man of God” and recognizes something divine about him.¹³ In v. 6, she identifies him as *a man of God*, but perceptively adds, *he looked like an angel of God, very awesome*.¹⁴ Her visual discernment contrasts with her husband’s blindness.¹⁴ Moreover, she does not hoard this revelation. Unlike her son Samson, who will famously withhold knowledge and exploit secrets, Manoah’s wife shares what she has seen and heard with her husband (vv. 6–7).¹⁵ Though she subtly adapts the message – omitting her barrenness, passing over the Nazirite hair command, and replacing promised deliverance with the more ominous *until the day of his death* – her telling shows both wisdom and interpretive sensitivity. She communicates vision, not secrecy.¹⁶

By contrast, Manoah is portrayed as the one who cannot see.¹⁷ Named and situated in his clan, Manoah nonetheless lacks insight. He does not witness the angel’s first appearance (v. 10) and requires his wife to announce: “He is here!” When he finally encounters the messenger, he still does not “know” (*yada’*) it is the angel of the LORD (v. 16). He even mistakes the heavenly revelation as a cause for death (v. 22). Only after the angel disappears does Manoah “realize” (*yada’*) who had visited them (v. 21).¹⁸ As Susan Niditch observes, Manoah “plays the timid, uncomprehending fool to his wife.” His sight lags behind hers at every turn.¹⁹

The narrative culminates in a vision. As the couple offers the sacrifice, the flames “go up” (*ba’alot*) to the LORD, and with them, the angel ascends (v.

20). The repetition of words sharing the same root *a.l.h.* in vv. 16, 19, and 20 links sacrifice and vision, creating a visual theology where revelation and offering converge.²⁰ The angel's ascent echoes the wife's first impression: "He looked like an angel of God, very awesome" (v. 6). What began with the LORD's eyes judging Israel ends with human eyes lifted heavenward, beholding a revelation beyond words.

Judges 13, then, is driven by what is seen and by the responses to what is seen. The LORD's eyes perceive Israel's evil and initiate both judgment and redemption. Manoah's wife sees and communicates faithfully, stepping into the role of matriarch. Manoah fails to see, embodying incomprehension and delay. Sight is not merely a theme but a narrative engine: it moves the story from Israel's evil in God's eyes to the couple's climactic vision of the angel ascending in flame. Ultimately, Judges 13 portrays vision not simply as perception but as participation in God's unfolding work of deliverance.

THE NARRATIVE ROLE OF SAMSON'S EYES

If Manoah and his wife's gaze in Judges 13 is heavenward, culminating in their vision of the angel ascending in the flames of sacrifice (13:20), Samson's eyes are directed earthward. Whereas his parents "look up" (*ba'alut*) toward God's messenger, Samson persistently "goes down" (*yared*) to follow what his eyes desire. Gregory Mobley has identified this pattern of ascent and descent as the "rhythm" of the Samson cycle.²¹ The contrast is stark: what begins with revelation from above in chapter 13 descends into desire, defilement, and destruction in chapter 14.²² This reading is in line with rabbinic tradition, which consistently interprets Samson's punishment of losing his eyes as poetic justice for his moral failings related to his gaze. TB *Sotah* 9b states explicitly, "Samson followed after his eyes; therefore, the Philistines put out his eyes," linking his downfall directly to his desire-driven vision. *Numbers Rabbah* 10:9 elaborates this, recounting that whatever Samson did "with his eyes was recompensed in his eyes," referencing his desire for a Philistine woman as the cause of his punishment.

Similarly, *Pirkei deRabbi Eliezer* 33 echoes this theme, framing Samson's fall as a direct result of his visual desires. Rashi on Judges 14:3 adds medieval commentary affirming that Samson was punished through his eyes because "she is right in my eyes" – his eyes led him astray. This corresponds

with the principle of measure-for-measure punishment (*middah keneged middah*), a recurrent theme in rabbinic thought exemplified in *Yalkut Shimoni* on Judges 14:1. Moreover, the motif of “sinning with the eyes” is a moral paradigm applied in rabbinic literature, with texts like *Avot deRabbi Natan* 9 highlighting the dangers of desire and gaze. Uriel Simon, a modern thinker, interprets Samson’s blindness not only as physical punishment but as reflecting his failure to truly “see” God’s purpose, illustrating the tension between physical sight and spiritual insight in Samson’s life and downfall.²³ Together, these sources embed Samson’s eyes as symbolic of moral failure and divine retribution within Jewish interpretive tradition.²⁴

SAMSON’S EYES AND THE TIMNITE WOMAN

The first object of Samson’s gaze is *a young Philistine woman* in Timnah (14:1). Unlike other biblical narratives that highlight female beauty through conventional descriptions of form or appearance, the Timnite woman is never depicted in terms of attractiveness. Instead, the narrative emphasis falls exclusively on her being *right in Samson’s eyes* (14:3, 7). This evaluative phrase intentionally recalls the Deuteronomistic refrain that Israel *did evil in the eyes of the LORD* (2:11; 3:7, 12; 4:1; 6:1; 10:6; 13:1). For the first and only time in Judges, however, it is not the nation collectively but the divinely appointed judge himself who enacts such *evil in the eyes of the LORD*. Samson’s gaze is therefore portrayed as a distortion and inversion of the LORD’s gaze, which in the previous chapter had initiated redemptive action.

The descent imagery reinforces this inversion. The verb *yared* (“to go down”) occurs three times in the Timnite episode (14:1, 5, 7). Samson “goes down” to Timnah (v. 1), he and his parents together “go down” (v. 5), and finally he “goes down” to the woman herself (v. 7). This triple repetition underscores not merely geographical movement but a symbolic trajectory of spiritual decline, as Samson’s eyes draw him progressively further from the LORD’s purposes. As Stephen Wilson observes, Samson emerges here as an obdurate “man-child,” governed by sight, desire, and impulse rather than discernment or covenantal fidelity.²⁵ Like his mother before him, Samson does not keep his vision to himself. He “tells” (*nagad*, hiphil) his parents what he has seen (14:2). This verb is programmatic: it recurs thirteen times in chapter 14 and again in chapter 16, where Delilah’s relentless questioning

pivots on what Samson will or will not “tell.” Yet unlike his mother, who faithfully and interpretively reported the angel’s words to her husband in chapter 13, Samson’s telling is rash, imperious, and self-serving, dragging his parents into complicity. They, too, “go down” (*yared*, 14:5), and in v. 10 his father follows him in “going down” to meet the woman.²⁶ The downward trajectory proves contagious, enveloping not only Samson but also his family in the spiral initiated by his sight.

SAMSON’S EYES AND THE LION’S CARCASS

Samson’s second act of sight occurs when he “turned aside to see” (*vayisar lirot*) the carcass of the lion he had previously slain (14:8). Within the corpse, bees have unexpectedly formed a hive and produced honey.²⁷ What should naturally repel instead attracts, signalling an inversion of normative expectations. In Scripture, bees are consistently depicted as aggressive and dangerous (Deut. 1:44, Ps. 118:12, and Isa.7:18) underscoring the peril latent in this image. However, rabbinic tradition does not regard the honey from the carcass – or those who consume it – as impure. According to Mishna *Nazir* 1:2, Samson’s Nazirite calling was of a special type that did not preclude contact with corpses, which explains his repeated engagement with slain Philistines. From this perspective, his taking honey from the lion’s carcass is not treated by the Sages as a grave violation of his vows. The verb describing Samson’s action, *radah* (“scraped”), closely resembles *yared* (“to go down”), suggesting deliberate wordplay that links this moment to the earlier downward spiral of vision. Here, Samson not only “goes down” but symbolically drags purity laws down with him. He eats the honey and gives some to his parents, but significantly, he *did not tell them* (14:9). For the first time in the cycle, Samson withholds knowledge.²⁸ Whereas his mother in Judges 13 faithfully relayed divine revelation, Samson conceals defilement. His parents thereby become ritually unclean without their awareness – a bitter irony, since they had once been exalted recipients of angelic knowledge. In chapter 14, by contrast, Manoah and his wife neither know about the lion (14:6) nor about their own defilement (14:9). This progression from vision to concealment inaugurates a crucial leitmotif that culminates in Samson’s undoing: the withholding of knowledge sets in motion a trajectory of betrayal, humiliation, and ultimately death.²⁹

SAMSON'S EYES AND THE PROSTITUTE

The third object of Samson's sight is a prostitute in Gaza (16:1). The parallel to chapter 14 is unmistakable: just as Samson *went down to Timnah and saw* (14:1), he now *went to Gaza and saw* (16:1).³⁰ The repetition shows that his eyes still govern his steps, propelling him into deeper entanglement with the Philistines. Here, too, the motif of "seeing" expands to include the Philistines themselves. In 14:11, they "see" Samson as a guest, providing his wedding company. By 16:2, they "see" him as a threat, surrounding the city to kill him. Knowledge (*nagad*) and vision transfer from Samson's family to his enemies. If knowledge is power, then the Philistines' growing awareness of Samson's whereabouts signals their ascendancy.³¹ Though Samson remains strong, the narrative trajectory is clear. His eyes bind him to destructive choices, while others gain vision and knowledge at his expense. Across Judges 14-16, vision drives the narrative. Samson's gaze upon the Timnite, the carcass, and the prostitute sets in motion a descent marked by desire, defilement, and disclosure. Whereas his parents in Judges 13 saw an angel and grew in knowledge, in Judges 14 their knowledge diminishes as their son conceals the truth. Samson's eyes dictate his choices, his telling and withholding manipulate others, and ultimately the Philistines' ability to see and know outstrips his own. The irony is devastating: the judge whose eyes wander unchecked will finally have those eyes gouged out (16:21). The Samson cycle thus demonstrates how vision, when severed from divine sight, becomes the pathway to ruin.

SAMSON'S MISSING EYES

Of the four women in the Samson cycle, only one is named: Delilah.³² Yet while named, she remains curiously underdefined. Her ethnicity, social status, occupation, and family connections are never specified.³³ She is not introduced as a daughter, wife, or mother, nor tied to a place as most women in Judges are. The provenance of the Sorek valley, lying between Philistia and Israel, only adds to the ambiguity.³⁴ Delilah thus stands as a liminal figure, unique in her narrative independence. Roger Ryan captures her well: "a savvy lady who can look after herself, an opportunist, who takes initiative."³⁵

In terms of the *ra'ah* (“to see”) motif, the narrator’s presentation of Delilah is striking. In earlier episodes, Samson initiates relationships by what he “sees” (Judges 14:1, 2, 7; 16:1). By contrast, in 16:4 the narrator never says that Samson “saw” (*ra'ah*) Delilah. Instead, he “loved” (*‘ahav*) her (16:4). The shift from sight to love signals vulnerability. As Lillian Klein observes, Samson becomes “weak towards her.”³⁵ Barry Webb adds that this love blinded him to danger and led, in brutal irony, to his literal blinding (16:21).³⁶

In chapter 16, Samson never ‘sees’ (*ra'ah*); instead, Delilah is twice associated with vision. The Philistine rulers commission her to “entice him and see” (*peti oto u-ra'i*) (16:5) the source of his strength.³⁷ Later, the narrator declares that “Delilah saw that he had told her everything” (*u-tara Delilah ki he-gid la*) (16:18). Her “seeing” is epistemological: she discerns the truth because she has successfully enticed. As Tammi Schneider and J. Cheryl Exum have shown, enticement undergirds both chapters 14 and 16.³⁸ he Timnite demands Samson “tell” (*nagad*) her the riddle’s answer (14:16–17), while Delilah presses him “to tell” (*nagad*) the secret of his strength (16:6, 15–17). In both cases, the refrain is identical: *he told her* (*vayigad la*) (14:17; 16:17) because *she pressed him* (*hitziketa-o*) (14:17; 16:16). Both women wield the language of love as coercion: *You do not love me* (14:16) and *How can you say ‘I love you’ when your heart is not with me?* (16:15).³⁹ Persistent pressure, voiced daily (16:16), finally breaks Samson’s resistance, and he “tells her all his heart” (*vayigad la et-kol libo*) (16:17). With this disclosure, Samson seals his fate.

Delilah is not the only one who “sees” (*ra'ah*). Twice the Philistines are explicitly said to see Samson. First, they gloat over the captured judge, praising Dagon for delivering him (16:24). Second, a crowd of 3,000 men and women assemble to “see” (*ra'ah*) him perform (16:27). Vision shifts decisively from Samson to his enemies: once he alone “saw” and acted, now he is the object of others’ gaze. Ironically, Samson is blind while the Philistines revel in sight. His eyes, the narrative’s dominant motif, have been gouged out (16:21). The narrator underscores Samson’s humiliation through gendered imagery. Blinded, he is set to “grind” (*tachen*) grain (16:21), a task culturally associated with women. Helen Paynter notes further that *tachen* can function as a sexual euphemism (Job 31:10; Isa. 47:2–3), suggesting enforced feminization.⁴⁰ Likewise, when the Philistines compel him to “make sport” (*tzach-*

ak) (16:25), the verb carries sexual undertones (cf. Gen. 26:8).⁴¹ In the gaze of his enemies, Samson is transformed into a spectacle of emasculation. Delilah's cutting of his hair only reinforces this transformation: as others have argued, the act both nullifies his Nazirite status and symbolizes his domestication.⁴²

The plot turns once more on the motif of sight. In his second prayer, Samson appeals to the LORD: *Remember me and strengthen me this one time, that I may be avenged for my two eyes (einei) from the Philistines* (16:28). His petition for vengeance *for my eyes* transforms personal loss into theological protest.⁴³ the LORD answers, granting strength, though the spirit is not explicitly said to come upon him (cf. 14:6, 19). With his final act, Samson topples the temple pillars, collapsing the house upon his spectators. The motif of "going down" (*yared*) frames Samson's career. At the outset, his sight leads him to "go down" (*yared*) to Timnah (14:1, 5, 7, 10). After Delilah "sees" (*ra'ah*) his secret, he is forced to "go down" (*yared*) to Gaza, where humiliation awaits (16:21). Following his death, his family makes one last descent: they "go down" (*yared*) to retrieve his body (16:31). This inclusio of descent encapsulates Samson's trajectory – a life driven by sight, undone by misplaced love, and completed in blindness.⁴³

CONCLUSION

The Samson cycle (Judges 13-16) unfolds as a drama of vision: what is seen, who sees, and how sight is acted upon. From the LORD's eyes perceiving Israel's evil, to Manoah's wife discerning the angelic messenger, to Samson's unchecked gaze upon women and forbidden things, the narrative is propelled forward by the faculty of sight. Vision functions not merely as a descriptive element but as the engine of plot, directing human choices and divine interventions alike. The interplay of *ra'ah* and *'ayin* charts a theological and literary landscape in which sight carries consequence: knowledge is gained, power is exercised, secrets are disclosed, and judgment is enacted.

The cycle's trajectory moves from revelation to spectacle, from divine sight to public display. At its beginning, Manoah and his wife lift their eyes heavenward, aligning vision with divine purpose. At its end, Samson, now blind, is reduced to an object of sight for the Philistines' entertainment, his body transformed into a spectacle of humiliation. His prayer for vengeance "for my

eyes” epitomizes the tragic irony: the judge whose vision governed his life becomes the blind performer before a jeering crowd. Vision thus structures not only the plot but also the meaning of Samson’s story. It reveals a paradox: sight grants agency and knowledge, yet when untethered from divine sight, it becomes the pathway to downfall.

In a broader sense, the Samson narrative anticipates the dynamics of spectacle culture. To “see” is to wield power, to define reality, and to shape destiny. Samson’s tragedy is that he mistakes sight for wisdom and confuses visual desire with divine vocation. The Philistines’ triumph is equally bound to vision: they gain mastery by seeing and making Samson a spectacle. Ultimately, the cycle demonstrates that true vision lies not in human eyes but in aligning perception with the LORD’s purposes. As the narrative closes, Samson’s death simultaneously enacts vengeance for his eyes and opens the reader’s: sight, when severed from God, enslaves; sight, when directed heavenward, participates in redemption.

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NOTES

1. G. Khalil, “The Eye,” in *The Madman* (Whitefish: Kessinger Publishing, 2004) p. 33.
2. Scholars have recognized the importance of the motif of sight in the Hebrew Bible, see Y. Zedaka, “And Noah Found Favor in the Eyes of the Lord’ (Semantic and Syntactic Analysis),” *Bikoret u parshanut* 24 (1988) pp. 133–40 (Hebrew); M. L. Thomsen, “The Evil Eye in Mesopotamia,” *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 51 (1992) pp. 19–32; T. Sutscover, “The Semantic Field of ‘Seeing’ in the Book of Genesis and the Coherence of the Text,” Ph.D. diss. (Tel-Aviv University, 2006) (Hebrew); Z. Kotzé, “Linguistic Relativity and the Interpretation of Metaphor in the Hebrew Bible: The Case of לֹאֵשׁ עֵינַיִם in Job 16:9,” *Old Testament Essays* 20 (2007) pp. 387–394; J. M. Sasson, “The Eyes of Eli: An Essay in Motif Accretion,” in *Prophecy in the Ancient Near East: Essays in Honor of Herbert B. Huffmon*, ed. by J Kaltner and L. Stulman (London: Bloomsbury, 2008) pp. 171–90; T. Yap, “Eye-Opening Dinners with a Dead Prophet, a Beauty, and a Witch: The Influence of Samuel in 1 Samuel 25 and 28 via the Motifs of Food and ‘Seeing,’” *Restoration Quarterly* 63 (2021) pp. 211–24.
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4. P. Frost, “Sight, Sin and Blindness in the Samson Narrative and in Milton’s ‘Simon Agonistes,’” *Dor Le Dor* 15 (1987) pp. 150–59, here 150.

5. K. L. Jones, "Three Blind Vices? Vision and Blindness in the Samson Cycle (Judges 13-16)," *Biblical Interpretation* 28 (2020) pp. 175-201, here 184-85.
6. Y. Avrahami, *The Senses of Scripture: Sensory Perception in the Hebrew Bible* (London: T. & T. Clark, 2012) pp. 189-222; U. Y. Kim, "More to the Eye than Meets the Eye: A Protest Against Empire in Samson's Death?," *Biblical Interpretation* 22 (2014) pp. 1-19; Helen Paynter, "'Revenge for My Two Eyes': Talion and Mimesis in the Samson Narrative," *Biblical Interpretation* 26 (2018) pp. 133-57; Jones, "Three Blind Vices?," pp. 184-85.
7. J. L. Crenshaw, *Samson: A Secret Betrayed, A Vow Ignored* (Atlanta: John Knox, 1978) p. 40.
8. K. Sprank, *Judges* (HCOT; Leuven: Peeters, 2019) p. 396.
9. J. Marcus, *Representation in Old Narrative Texts* (Leiden: Brill, 1998) p. 132.
10. L. R. Klein, *The Triumph of Irony in the Book of Judges* (Bible and Literature 14; Sheffield: Almond Press, 1989), 110.
11. R. Alter, "How Convention Helps Read: The Case of the Bible's Annunciation Type Scene," *Proof* 3 (1983) pp. 115-30; here 119; B. J. M. Johnson, "What Type of Son is Samson? Reading Judges 13 as a Biblical Type-Scene," *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 53 (2010) pp. 15-30, here 270; J. L. Ross, "Type-Casting the Samson Family: Genesis Parodies in Judges 13-14," *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 64 (2021) pp. 237-52, here 239-42.
12. Johnson, "Reading Judges 23," p. 272; see also Wolfgang Richter's *Traditionsgeschichtliche Untersuchungen zum Richterbuch* (BBB 18; Bonn: Peter Hanstein, 1966) pp. 141-42.
13. Ross, "Type-Casting," p. 240.
14. T. J. Schneider, *Judges*, Berit Olam (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2000), p. 198; Cheryl Exum, "Promise and Fulfillment: Narrative Art in Judges 13," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 99 (1980) pp. 43-59, here 48; idem, *Fragmented Women: Feminist (Sub)versions of Biblical Narratives* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1983) p. 81.
15. A. G. van Daalen, *Simson: Een onderzoek naar de plaats, de opbouw en de funktie van het Simsonverhaal in het kader van de oudtestamentische geschiedschrijving* (Assen: Van: Gorcum, 1966) p. 37.
16. Younger, *Judges/Ruth*, 352. R. B. Chisholm ("What's Wrong with This Picture? Stylistic Variation as a Rhetorical Technique in Judges," *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament* 34 [2009] pp. 171-82, here 177) argues that Manoah's wife does not mention Samson's future role as Israel's deliverance because she does not believe that the Israelites will be freed from the Philistines. However, this is an argument from silence; nowhere in the text is there any indication that Manoah's wife is doubting what the angel said. See also Melissa A. Jackson, *Comedy and Feminist Interpretation of the Hebrew Bible: A Subversive Collaboration* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 134.
17. K. Lawson Younger, *Judges/Ruth* (NIVAC; Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2002) p. 352.
18. A. G. van Daalen, *Simson: Een onderzoek naar de plaats, de opbouw en de funktie van het Simsonverhaal in het kader van de oudtestamentische geschiedschrijving* (Assen: Van: Gorcum, 1966) p. 37.
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