

Argumentative essay on the story of samson agonistes

[Sociology](#), [Women](#)



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Ambiguity as well as fulfilment of divine prophecy

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INTRODUCTION

Samson, the renowned Judge of ancient Israel was born as a blessing from the angel of the Lord to a woman who could not have a baby (line 4, The Birth of a Samson). He was born to save Israel from the scourge of Philistines. And after doing all the great deeds, he finally gets enslaved by Philistine authorities due to his wife's betrayal. But he finally avenges the sufferings of his land and people by killing the Philistines by toppling the roof of the theatre. John Milton has expressed the story very well but there are certain elements of 'divine' ambiguity in it when it comes to the reason behind the scourge of Philistines in Israel. On the other hand, there is a justified ending where Milton has shown how Samson fulfils the divine prophecy for which he was born.

THE DIVINE AMBIGUITY

The very first line of the story describes a divine judgement for Israelis. “ Again the Israelites did evil in the eyes of the Lord, so the Lord delivered them into the hands of the Philistines for forty years (Line 1, The Birth of a Samson).” And in the very next paragraph, there is a description of a Lord of Angel blessing an infertile woman with a pregnancy which would lead to the birth of a special child. “ The woman gave birth to a boy and named him Samson. He grew and the Lord blessed him, and the Spirit of the Lord began to stir him while he was in Mahaneh Dan, between Zorah and Eshtaol (Line 24 &25, The Birth of Samson).” Now, the ambiguity in the divinity here is on one hand, the Israelis were being punished for their evils by being enslaves to Philistines. And it was again the divine birth of Samson which was done to save Israel from Philistines, which were the punishers chosen for Israel by divinity itself.

HOW SAMSON FULFILS THE DIVINE PROPHECY

It cannot be denied that in the concluding paragraph of the story, it has been shown how Samson finally fulfils the divine duty for which he was born. He was there to save Israel from the brutality of Philistines. Even when he gets captured by the Philistines due to his deceitful wife, he has the goals clear in his mind. He prayed- “ Sovereign Lord, remember me. Please, God, strengthen me just once more, and let me with one blow get revenge on the Philistines for my two eyes (The Death of Samson, line 28).” And he finally destroyed the supporting pillars on which the roof of the theatre was

standing. Thus, with himself, he killed the enemies of his land and fulfilled the reason of his birth, his divine prophecy.

AMBIGUITY OF DIVINE POWER

It was clear that Samson's power lied in his locks. So, when his hair was cut off by the Philistines, how could he pull down the pillars of a theatre? Did a slice of divine power still stayed in his body? This part of story is also a bit ambiguous.

CONCLUSION

The story is significant historically and spiritually as well for certain groups of people but it does show some signs of ambiguity. It is true that Milton has proved how Samson finally fulfils his divine prophecy. But there is ambiguity in the very reason behind why Samson was born with divine powers to destroy Philistines who were made to by divine power itself to punish Israelis for their sins.