



“Blinded Samson,” by Lovis Corinth (1912)

Study Questions

1. In her book *The Body in Pain*, Elaine Scarry describes pain as “radically private” and very hard to express to another person. Is Corinth successful in conveying Samson’s pain? How so?
2. Does the painting make you feel “too close for comfort” to Samson’s pain? If so, how does it accomplish this and how do/will you react?
3. Corinth had suffered a serious stroke in 1912, and he bounced between despair at his fate and determination to recover. Are there signs the painting is a mirror-image of Corinth?
4. Is Samson pushing at the pillars of the Dagon Temple, about to kill himself, or is he feeling his way forward through a door of new opportunity?
5. Samson’s mouth is disturbing! What might it convey about his feelings and plans? Will he cry out or grunt? What would be the difference?
6. Why is the blood dripping from his eyes bright red and fresh? Compare and contrast this scene with a depiction of Christ’s passion.