# E15. Samson

Judges 16:4-31

# **Learning Objectives**

- 1. The children will be able to retell the story of Samson and his strength.
- 2. The children will recognize that our talents and strengths are gifts from God.

Memory Verse: "It is God who arms me with strength and makes my way perfect."
--Psalm 18:32 (NKJV)

Getting Started Choose One

# All Ages

### "Exercise" Activity

As the children arrive lead them in various exercises such as jumping jacks, sit ups or push-ups. Then have the children sit back in their seats and ask them why it is important to exercise. (To get stronger, to grow, to be healthy, etc.) Let the children know that it is important for us to exercise spiritually as well. Give them examples of how we can get in shape spiritually. (Pray, Read the Bible, Go to church, etc.) In today's lesson, we learn about Samson who was a very strong man, but then we lost his strength. (Continue with the lesson.)

# "Paper Cup" Activity

Bring 2 bowls and several large towels to class. Fill one bowl with water and let someone demonstrate how he can put the water into the other bowl with a paper cup. Then poke a hole in the cup and have someone demonstrate again putting water from one bowl into the other with the paper cup. What is the difference? Can it still be done? Yes, but it's a lot harder! Next, put your finger over the hole in the cup and begin to fill the bowl again. Can it be done now? Is it easier? Explain that this is how God works in our lives when we make mistakes. If we only ask for forgiveness God will cover our mistakes with His grace, just like covering the hole in the cup. In today's lesson, we will learn about someone who made a BIG mistake, but God forgave him and helped him out one last time. (Continue with lesson.)

# **Bible Lesson with Discussion Questions**

Message: God gives us strength.

Note: For a children's version of the Bible story, see:  $\underline{www.kidssundayschool.com} \rightarrow Preschool \rightarrow Stories \rightarrow Samson's Great Strength$ 

Sometime later, Samson fell in love again. The woman lived in the Valley of Sorek. Her name was Delilah. The rulers of the Philistines went to her. They said, "See if you can get him to tell you the secret of why he's so strong. Find out how we can overpower him. Then we can tie him up. We can bring him under our control. Each of us will give you 28 pounds of silver."



# **Bible Lesson with Discussion Questions**

So Delilah spoke to Samson. She said, "Tell me the secret of why you are so strong. Tell me how you can be tied up and controlled." Samson answered her, "Let someone tie me up with seven new leather straps. They must be straps that aren't completely dry. Then I'll become as weak as any other man."

So the Philistine rulers brought seven new leather straps to her. They weren't completely dry. Delilah tied Samson up with them. Men were hiding in the room. She called out to him. She said, "Samson! The Philistines are attacking you!" But he snapped the leather straps easily. They were like pieces of string that had come too close to a flame. So the secret of why he was so strong wasn't discovered.

Delilah spoke to Samson again. "You have made me look foolish," she said. "You told me a lie. Come on. Tell me how you can be tied up." Samson said, "Let someone tie me tightly with new ropes. They must be ropes that have never been used. Then I'll become as weak as any other man." So Delilah got some new ropes. She tied him up with them. Men were hiding in the room. She called out to him. She said, "Samson! The Philistines are attacking you!" But he snapped the ropes off his arms. They fell off just as if they were threads.

Delilah spoke to Samson again. "Until now, you have been making me look foolish," she said. "You have been telling me lies. This time really tell me how you can be tied up." He replied, "Weave the seven braids of my hair into the cloth on a loom. Then pin my hair to the loom. If you do, I'll become as weak as any other man." So while Samson was sleeping, Delilah took hold of the seven braids of his hair. She wove them into the cloth on a loom. Then she pinned his hair to the loom.

Again she called out to him. She said, "Samson! The Philistines are attacking you!" He woke up from his sleep. He pulled up the pin and the loom, together with the cloth. Then she said to him, "How can you say, 'I love you'? You won't even share your secret with me. This is the third time you have made me look foolish. And you still haven't told me the secret of why you are so strong." She continued to pester him day after day. She nagged him until he was sick and tired of it. So he told her everything. "I've never used a razor on my head," he said. "I've never cut my hair. That's because I've been a Nazirite since the day I was born. A Nazirite is set apart to God. If you shave my head, I won't be strong anymore. I'll become as weak as any other man."

Delilah realized he had told her everything. So she sent a message to the Philistine rulers. She said, "Come back one more time. He has told me everything." So the rulers returned. They brought the silver with them. Delilah got Samson to go to sleep on her lap. Then she called for a man to shave off the seven braids of his hair. That's how she began to bring him under her control. And he wasn't strong anymore. She called out, "Samson! The Philistines are attacking you!" He woke up from his sleep. He thought, "I'll go out just as I did before. I'll shake myself free." But he didn't know that the Lord had left him. Then the Philistines grabbed hold of him. They made him blind in his eyes. They took him down to Gaza. They put bronze chains around him. Then they made him grind grain in the prison. His head had been shaved. But the hair on it began to grow again.

The rulers of the Philistines gathered together. They were going to offer a great sacrifice to their god Dagon. They were going to celebrate. They said, "Our God has handed our enemy Samson over to us." When the people saw Samson, they praised their God. They said, "Our God has handed our enemy over to us. Our enemy has destroyed our land. He has killed large numbers of our people."

After they had drunk a lot of wine, they shouted, "Bring Samson out. Let him put on a show for us." So they called Samson out of the prison. He put on a show for them. They had him stand near the temple pillars. Then he spoke to the servant who was holding his hand. He said, "Put me where I can feel the pillars. I'm talking about the ones that hold the temple up. I want to lean against them." The temple was crowded with men and women. All of the Philistine rulers were there. About 3,000 men and women were on the roof. They were watching Samson put on a show.



# **Bible Lesson with Discussion Questions - continued**

Then he prayed to the Lord. He said, "Lord and King, show me that you still have concern for me. God, please make me strong just one more time. Let me pay the Philistines back for what they did to my eyes. Let me do it with only one blow." Then Samson reached toward the two pillars that were in the middle of the temple. They held the temple up. He put his right hand on one of them. He put his left hand on the other. He leaned hard against them. Samson said, "Let me die together with the Philistines!" Then he pushed with all his might. The temple came down on the rulers. It fell on all of the people who were in it. Samson had led Israel for 20 years.

#### **Discussion Questions:**

- 1. What did God give Samson? (Great strength)
- 2. Samson freed his people from what group of people? (Philistines)
- 3. What was the name of the woman who tried to trick Samson? (Delilah)
- 4. What did Delilah keep asking Samson? (She wanted to know what the source of his great strength was.)
- 5. What happened after Samson's hair was cut? (He lost his great strength and his freedom.)
- 6. Did God forgive Samson for telling Delilah about his hair? How do you know? (Yes, because He helped Samson one last time to find the strength to bring down the pillars of the temple.)
- 7. How do you think Samson felt when he realized that he had made a mistake? (Discuss together.)
- 8. Have you ever made a mistake or did something wrong? (Allow the children to share.) How did it make you feel? (Discuss together.)
- 9. Does God forgive us too? How? (Discuss.)

# **Application to Real Life**

Show your class a couple of nice bananas and tell them they can help you a few at a time to make the snack. As you are talking, put the bowl (heavily) on top of the bananas. Oh No! You have made a mistake! Now what can you do? Well...you can make smashed banana fruit topping.

Mash the bananas the rest of the way in the bowl, and add about 1/2 cup of plain yogurt, a teaspoon of sugar (optional), and some cinnamon. Put the fruit of your choice (apples are great or grapes, pineapple, peaches etc.) into individual Styrofoam cups. Add some topping and serve. Explain that even though you made a mistake by smashing the bananas something good could still come out of it. God's forgiveness works the same way. God can still use us, even when we make mistakes. God can give us strength to go on. *Review the memory verse and message statement*.

Memory Work Fun 5 minutes

- 1. Name the two main parts of the Bible and tell what the difference is. (Old Testament before Jesus, New Testament Jesus & After Jesus)
- 2. Where is the book of Psalm located? In the Old or New Testament? Practice finding it together.
- 3. Review the Lord's Prayer together.
- 4. Recite the memory verse.
- 5. Lead the class in a short prayer.



# **Activity Ideas**

# All Ages

#### **Role Play**

You will need 2 ropes, a scissors, 2 swords, 2 bow and arrows, a white cloth, and a crown for this role play activity. You will also need to print a copy of the play for each character. Assign the children to the various roles in the play (recruit extra volunteers as needed) and have fun!

#### **Bible Verse Review Game**

See:  $\underline{\text{www.daniellesplace.com}} \rightarrow \text{search the resource room for "Samson"} \rightarrow \text{"How Strong Are You Samson"} \rightarrow \text{scroll down to find Activity #1.}$ 

You will need a paper towel, spray bottle, and things to use as anchors and weights. Before class you will need to write the Bible verse words on pieces of tape and tape them to quarters or something you can use as weights. Please see the above website for detailed instructions and a guide to the discussion.

Remind your children that there are different kinds of strengths -- how much weight a paper towel can hold, bodily or muscular strength, and, most important, strength that comes from God. God gave Samson strength, and He can give us strength too. We need to remember to ask Him to help us.

#### Grades K-2

#### Puzzle: God is My Strength

You will need the puzzle template (see the page at the end of this lesson), heavier weight paper or card stock (1 piece per child), glue, scissors and small bags for this activity.

Before the activity, you will need to print a copy of the puzzle worksheet for each child. Gather one small bag (paper bag or sealable sandwich bag) for each child. You will also need to make a sample puzzle.

Give each child a puzzle worksheet. Ask the children to color the picture. When they are finished, they should cut the pieces out and place them in a bag. The children should switch their puzzle with another child and try to put the pieces together. After they have put the pieces back together, as a group talk about what part of the story the picture represents.

# Who will Obey?

See: <u>www.kidssundayschool.com</u> → Preschool → Activities → "Who Will Obey"

Before class, print an activity page for each child. Hand out the activity sheet and read the requests one at a time. Ask the children to circle the cartoon character who chose to obey and draw an X through the cartoon character who chose to disobey. Once the children have finished the activity, go through each of the pictures and explain how one of the cartoon characters chose to obey, while the other character chose to disobey. Ask the children why it is important to obey God and why it is important to obey their parents. God wants all of us to obey Him, and our parents. When we obey God, it is for our own good or for the good of someone else. It pleases God when we obey Him. Please see the above website for an activity page and further instructions.



# **Activity Ideas - continued**

#### Grades 3-5

#### **String Tug-O-War**

Form pairs. Give a 24" long piece of sting or yarn to most pairs, but to some give two 12" pieces. Oops! By mistake you must have cut some in half. Oh well, tie them together and play anyway! The rules of the tug-o-war are that you can only use the thumb and index finger of one hand. Using masking tape, mark two lines in front of each player and a piece of tape in the center of the string. Whoever can get the marker across their line is the winner.

Refer to the story of Samson. Samson made a huge mistake when he told the secret about his strength. But God still gave him the strength he needed and helped him. Remind the children that even though a mistake was made with the strings, they were still able to be used for the tug of war. This is how God works in our life. God can still use us, even when we make mistakes. He wants to help us. He can give us the strength we need.

**Journal** Optional

# Grades K-2

Draw a picture of Samson using his strength. How can you use your strength to help God? Write about it.

#### Grades 3-5

What are your greatest strengths? How can you use them to serve God? Write about it.

When you do something wrong, is it hard or easy to ask for forgiveness? Why or why not? Write about it.

Explain how Samson lost all his physical strength.

# **Homework Ideas**

- Read at home with a grownup the lesson titled: **Ruth** (Ruth 1:1-18).
- Learn the memory verse: "Wherever you go I will go." --Ruth 1:16
- Work on memorizing commandment #
- Color the "Ruth" coloring sheet as your parents read you the Sunday School Lesson. Return your coloring page for a sticker.
- Do you have a best friend? What would you do for him or her? Draw a picture of her. Be ready to share in class.

### Other Resources

<u>www.daniellesplace.com</u> → Resource Room → Search "Samson" → "How Strong are you Samson?" <u>www.kidssundayschool.com</u> → Grade school → Lessons → Old Testament: "Lessons on Obedience" –

4. Doing what is Right (Samson)

http://children.cccm.com/curriculum/ → OT Support Curriculum → Page 7 → "Samson Pulls Down a Temple"



# 🗞 Role Play: A Strong Man

| Narrator 1: | The Israelites did evil in the eyes of God, but even after being oppressed by the Philistines for forty years, the Lord still delivered them. An angel appeared to an Israelite woman and told her that she would have a son who would be the one to free the Israelites from the Philistines |
|-------------|---|
| Narrator 2: | When the boy was born he was named Samson. He grew up and the Lord blessed him. Samson became so powerful that he was able to kill a roaring lion with his bare hands. Later, Samson married a Philistine woman named Delilah. (The ruler should take the stage with his guard and Delilah.)  |
| Ruler:      | Young woman, I have a small task for you. I want you to find out what the source of Samson's strength is.   |
| Delilah:    | That is no problem your majesty, but what do I get in return for doing this?  |
| Ruler:      | Do not worry. If you succeed we will give you eleven hundred pieces of silver.  |
| Delilah:    | I will try.   |
| Narrator 1: | Delilah asked Samson the source of his strength, but Samson would not tell Delilah the truth. He lied to her three times. Finally, Delilah got upset with Samson.   |
| Delilah:    | Why do you not tell me the source of your strength? Do you not trust me?  |
| Samson:     | My dear wife, I will tell you the truth. I am dedicated to God. My hair has never been cut, and if I cut it I will become weak just like any other man.   |



# 🗞 Role Play: A Strong Man

Narrator 2: Delilah told the ruler the source of Samson's strength. (As the narrator tells the story, soldiers come on to the stage and cut Samson's hair in his sleep, capture him and deliver him to the ruler.) The ruler sent soldiers to cut his hair and capture him. This time they succeeded because God's strength left Samson after his hair was cut. They captured him, blinded him, chained him and put him in prison.

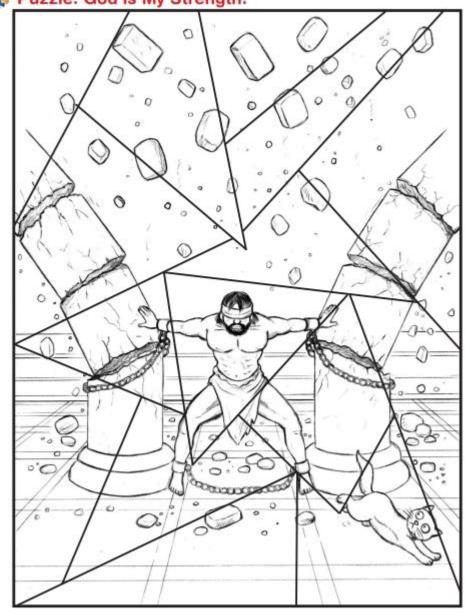
#### Narrator 1:

After some time, Samson's hair began to grow again. One day the Philistines took Samson out of prison so he could entertain them during a great feast. Samson stood between the pillars of the temple they had gathered in. He asked God to give him strength just one more time. Then he pushed the pillars that supported the building with all his might. The temple collapsed and he was buried together with the Philistines. Many people died that day, including Samson.









| Name: |  |
|-------|--|
|       |  |

# <u>Ruth</u>



"Wherever you go I will go." -Ruth 1:16

# Take Home Page: E15. Samson

# Today I learned...

Today your child learned that <u>God gives us strength</u>. The children explored the story of Samson and his strength. They also talked about how our talents and strengths are gifts from God.

### Help me learn my memory verse...

"It is God who arms me with strength and makes my way perfect." --Psalm 18:32 (NKJV)

#### Ask me...

- 1. What did God give to Samson? How did Samson use his gift to serve God?
- 2. How do you think Samson felt when he realized he made a mistake? How would you feel?
- 3. What is forgiveness?

# Live Your Faith...

Have some fun with arm (or thumb) wrestling against each other. Remind your child that even when we are weak, God is always strong. We need Him to help us each day to follow Him and His commandments. Pray together and ask God to give you extra strength and determination this week to love Him above all and to be able to share your love for Him with others who cross your path.

