

# SAMSON AND THE PHILISTINES

JUDGES 13-16



**KEY PASSAGE:** 2 Chronicles 7:14

**BIG PICTURE QUESTION:** *What is repentance? Repentance is turning away from sin and turning to Jesus.*

**CHRIST CONNECTION:** Samson's great strength came from God alone. He had no power to defeat the Philistines on his own. We cannot please God on our own. Through faith in Jesus, people are saved from sin and receive the Holy Spirit, who helps them live to please God.

**STORY POINT:** Samson learned that strength comes from God alone.



PRIOR TO TEACHING THE SESSION

## LEADER Bible Study

The life of Samson showcases the downfall of a mighty hero whose story draws some similarities to Jesus. Samson’s shortcomings, however, reveal the need for a greater deliverer. Only by faith in the Son of God can we please our Father in heaven and get a proper view of where true strength comes from.

What comparisons and contrasts can we make between Samson and Jesus? What can Christians glean about the source of their strength?

In Samson’s story, the angel of the Lord delivered the news that a woman who was unable to conceive would have a son. This has similarities to the New Testament’s even greater account of the miraculous conception of Jesus to the virgin Mary. We later read that Delilah, whom Samson loved, was bribed with silver to betray him into the hands of his enemies, just as Judas did to Jesus. Both Samson and Jesus were called to bring salvation to God’s people amid the oppression they faced, though only Jesus was able to do so in a lasting way by perfectly obeying God’s commands.

Samson’s strength came from the Spirit of God and Samson’s adherence to the angel’s command that he not cut his hair. As a Nazirite, Samson was called to be set apart in holy service to God, though he disobeyed God’s call to abstain from the unclean and idolatrous ways of the world. The downfall of Samson revealed the need for a greater hero who could fulfill God’s commands and deliver His people once and for all.

Though Samson was an esteemed warrior, his strength was not his own; it came from God who called him to walk in holiness. Like Samson, we cannot please God on our own. We need the power of His Spirit to help us walk in His ways (Galatians 5:16). Jesus is the better Samson—our perfect sacrifice who suffered in our place to create lasting transformation amid our helpless and hopeless state. Lead boys and girls to see that when we place our trust in Jesus, the Holy Spirit dwells within us, allowing us to walk victoriously in faith.



### PREPARE

THE WEEK PRIOR

Prepare your heart to teach; plan the session



### WELCOME

10-15 MINUTES

Greet kids and open the session



### LEARN

25-30 MINUTES

Teach kids the story of the gospel



### LOVE

15-20 MINUTES

Lead kids to love the God of the gospel



### LIVE

15-20 MINUTES

Lead kids to live out the mission of the gospel



## WELCOME Kids

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Greet each kid as he or she arrives. Use this time to collect the offering, fill out attendance sheets, build relationships, and help new kids connect to your group.

| **SAY** “Who is the strongest person you know? What makes him or her strong?”

### 4 ACTIVITY PAGE (5 minutes)

Invite kids to complete “Stronger” activity page.

**SAY** Today, we will learn about Samson and how God gave him incredible strength.

## LOVE God by Applying the Story

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### 1 REVIEW & BIBLE SKILLS (5 minutes)

**SAY** “The people of Israel continued their cycle of sin and rebelled against the Lord. So, God handed them over to their enemies, the Philistines. But God remained faithful to His people and raised up a judge named Samson to rescue them once again. Samson loved a woman named Delilah, but Delilah was secretly working with the Philistines to discover the source of Samson’s strength. Each time Delilah would ask Samson where his strength came from, he would lie. After asking many times, Samson finally told Delilah the truth. What did Samson tell Delilah about the source of his strength? Look at Judges 16:17. [Choose a volunteer to read Judges 16:17 aloud.] Samson knew God had called him to be set apart and had commanded him to never cut his hair. God had given Samson strength so that he could rescue the Israelites from the Philistines.”

What happened after Samson’s hair was cut? Look at Judges 16:20-21. [Choose a volunteer to read Judges 16:20-21 aloud.] He lost his strength. While we may think it was the length of Samson’s hair that made him strong, it wasn’t. It was the Lord who made Samson strong. Samson’s hair was a sign of being set apart and was a test of obedience for Samson to follow. After Delilah had someone cut Samson’s hair, the Bible tells us that the Lord had left him. Without the Lord, Samson was weak and was captured by the Philistines.

Later, we learned that Samson prayed for God to give him strength one more time. **Samson learned that strength comes from God alone.** The Lord heard Samson’s prayer, and Samson pushed the pillars of the temple down. Samson’s great strength came from God alone. He had no power to defeat the Philistines on his own. We cannot please God on our own. Through faith in Jesus, people are saved from sin and receive the Holy Spirit, who helps them live to please God.”

### 4 QUESTIONS FROM KIDS (3 minutes)

Show the “Unit 8, Session 4” Questions from Kids video. Prompt kids to discuss:

1. How can we hold on to our faith when we make mistakes?
2. Why is having faith in Jesus the only way to please God?

## 2 GROUP DISCUSSION (10 minutes)

Ask the following questions. Lead the group to discuss.

| **SAY** “How can we be set apart to live for the Lord?”

Remind kids that Samson was set apart from birth to be a Nazirite. Tell kids that God had a specific plan for Samson’s life. Discuss how God’s plan for His people, those who have trusted in Jesus, means they will live in ways that show what God is like. Tell kids that believers rely on the Holy Spirit to live in ways that please God and glorify Him.

(Option: Choose a volunteer to read Gal. 5:22-23.)

| **SAY** “Why is it sometimes hard for us to realize we cannot do things in our own power?”

Discuss how pride often gets in the way of allowing God to work in and through us. Anytime we try to do things in our own strength, we will quickly realize that we can only accomplish what God calls us to through His strength. In fact, God’s strength is on display when we are weak. (Option: Choose a volunteer to read 2 Cor. 12:9-10.)

| **SAY** “What does it mean to walk by the Spirit?”

Tell kids that when people are saved, the Holy Spirit comes to live in them. When Christians walk by the Spirit, they surrender to God, following where He leads. Discuss how the Holy Spirit changes believers’ hearts to desire to live for God and gives believers power to obey God. (Option: Choose a volunteer to read Gal. 5:16.)

Transition from **LOVE** to **LIVE** 