

## **June 28\*Unit 9\*Session 4\*Elementary**

### **Samson**

**BIBLE PASSAGE:** Judges 13–16

**STORY POINT:** God gave Samson strength to defeat the Philistines.

**KEY PASSAGE:** 1 John 1:9

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

### **Opening Activity:** Feats of strength

Challenge your kids to do exercises to show their strength.

Suggested exercises:

- push-ups, 15
- sit-ups, 30
- planks, hold for 30 seconds
- squats, 40

SAY •Wow! All those exercises make my muscles sore! But doing push-ups, squats, and sit-ups is a great way to increase your strength. Today we will learn about a man who had incredible strength from God. Sadly, we'll learn that he did not always use it in a wise way.

### **The Bible Story**

Samson

Judges 13–16

The Israelites once again disobeyed God, so God let the Philistines rule over them. One day, the angel of the Lord told a husband and wife that they would have a son who would save the Israelites from the Philistines. God had a special instruction for their son: He should never cut his hair. The woman had a baby, and she named him Samson. God made Samson strong. When Samson grew up, he saw a Philistine woman and wanted to marry her. He and his parents went to meet her. On the journey, a lion jumped out at Samson. Samson killed the lion. Later, some bees had made honey in the lion's body. Samson ate some of the honey and gave some to his parents. Philistine men came to Samson's wedding. Samson told them a riddle: "Out of the eater came something to eat, and out of the strong came something sweet." The riddle was about the lion and the honey, but the men could not figure it out. They asked Samson's bride for help. She told the men the answer. Samson was angry, and he left his wife. When he went back to get her, she was gone. Samson was so upset that he burned the Philistines' fields. This made the Philistines angry.

Samson escaped to another city, where he fell in love with a woman named Delilah. The Philistines gave Delilah money to find out why Samson was so strong. Samson told Delilah, "If you tie me up with seven fresh bowstrings, I will be weak." But that

was not true. Then Samson said, "If you tie me up with new rope, I will be weak." But that was not true, either. So Samson said, "If you weave my hair into a loom, I will be weak." Another lie! Finally, Samson told Delilah the truth: "If you cut my hair, I will not have my strength." So when Samson was sleeping, a Philistine man cut his hair. Delilah shouted, "Samson! Wake up! The Philistines are here to kill you!" Samson wasn't strong anymore. The Philistines grabbed him and took him away in chains. One day, the Philistines made Samson stand between two pillars in their temple. Samson cried out to God, "Lord, strengthen me once more." So God strengthened Samson. Samson pushed on the pillars and collapsed the temple. Samson and everyone in the temple died, but Samson had saved the Israelites from the Philistines.

**Christ Connection:** Samson's sin led to his own death, but God used his death to save the Israelites from their enemies. Samson's story reminds us of Jesus. Jesus never sinned, but God sent Him to die on the cross and rise again to rescue people from sin and give them eternal life.

### **Key passage activity**

Use tape to make a hopscotch board on the floor. Write words or phrases of the key passage on paper to tape in each square of the hopscotch board. Instruct your kid/s to line up and give the first kid in line a beanbag or paper wad. He will toss the beanbag onto the board. Then he will hop through the board, skipping the square in which his beanbag landed. The next kid will toss her beanbag, hopping through and trying to skip both squares. Encourage your kids to keep working on the key passage.

SAY •God is faithful and righteous. When we admit our sin to Him and agree with Him that it is wrong, He begins to heal us of the damage that sin causes.

### **Discussion & Bible skills**

Help your kid/s find Judges 13–16. Remind them that Judges is part of the History division. Remind kids that Bible divisions are used to help us organize the books of the Bible.

Ask the following questions. Lead the group to discuss:

1. What special instructions did God have for Samson's hair? (An angel of the Lord told Samson's parents not to cut his hair; Judg. 13:4)
2. What did the Philistines do to capture Samson? (They paid Delilah to find out his secret, cut his hair, and attacked him; Judg. 16:5-20)
3. How did Samson deliver God's people? (He prayed to God for strength and then pushed over the pillars holding up the roof of a temple, crushing the Philistine

leaders and himself; Judg. 16:28-30)

4. What was Samson's real source of strength? Lead the kids to see that, although Samson said cutting his hair would take away his strength, his hair was just a picture of his obedience to God. God was his source of strength.

5. Who else gave His life to rescue many people? Help the kids make the connection to Jesus, who gave up His life on the cross to save people from sin.

Make a point to

remind the kids that Jesus was without sin, making His sacrifice even greater.

Samson saved the Israelites from the Philistines, but Jesus saved all God's people from sin and death forever.

6. How can we have strength from God? Guide kids to see that our source of strength is also God. Guide the discussion away from physical strength and to the ideas of strong faith and determination to obey God. Remind them that we grow our spiritual strength by trusting God, praying to Him, reading His Word, and spending time with other believers.

SAY • God gave Samson strength to defeat the Philistines. When we trust Jesus, God sends the Holy Spirit. He gives us spiritual strength.

### **Activity:** Long hair, strong hair

Help the kids review the story point and big picture question. Then allow them to take turns re-enacting parts of the story while pretending to wear a wig (or wearing one if you have one) Remind the kids that Samson's strength came from God.

SAY • Samson's hair was not his source of strength. It was just a picture of his devotion and obedience to God. When Samson told his secret to Delilah, he showed that he cared more about making her happy than he did about obeying God. God took away Samson's strength after his hair was cut. But when Samson for strength to save God's people, God gave Samson strength to defeat the Philistines.

### **Craft:**

Samson and his hair. Why was his hair so important? How did God use Samson's strength?

Color the picture, cut it out, cut the hair, glue it on the Samson. Re-enact the story of Samson.

### **Reflection and prayer**

Ask them to write about or draw a picture to answer the following questions:

- What does this story teach me about God or about the gospel?

- What does this story teach me about myself?
- Whom can I tell about this story?