



MOSAIC Gospel Project

Volume 3, Unit 9, Lesson 4: Samson

Bible Passage: Judges 13-16

Personal Preparation

Samson was the last of the major judges of Israel. He was born to parents who dedicated him to the Lord as a Nazirite after the Angel of the Lord announced that Samson would be born to save the Israelites from the power of the Philistines. Samson grew up, and God blessed him with great strength. But when Samson requested to marry a Philistine woman, his parents were confused. Samson was supposed to deliver the Israelites from the Philistines. Why would he want to marry one of them? But God had a plan in all of this (Judges 14:4).

As Samson prepared for the wedding, he told a riddle to the men with him about an event that occurred on his way to Timnah (Judges 14:9-14). Days passed, and the men convinced Samson's wife to tell them the answer to the riddle. This action sparked a series of events that would eventually lead to the death of Samson.

When the men solved the riddle, Samson was so angry that he torched the fields of the Philistines. He also used the jawbone of a donkey to kill 1,000 men, and he left his wife. The Philistine leaders determined to kill Samson. When Samson fell in love with a woman named Delilah, the leaders bribed her into telling them where Samson's strength came from.

A man came and shaved the braids from Samson's head. He lost his strength and became helpless. The Philistines gouged out his eyes and took him prisoner. They had him stand between the pillars of a pagan temple.

In a final plea to God, Samson asked for his strength back. God gave him strength, and Samson knocked over the pillars, collapsing the temple. In his death, Samson killed more Philistines than he had killed in his life (Judges 16:30).

Though Samson disobeyed God, God used him to accomplish his purpose of delivering the Israelites from the Philistines. Jesus would come as the last Deliverer, saving through his obedience in his life and his death those who would trust in him.

As you prepare to teach the lesson, thank God for using sinners to accomplish his purposes. Reflect on the ways he has used you in the midst of your brokenness. Thank him for the grace he has shown us. Pray that the individuals would know that God can still use sinners like us. Pray that they would look to Jesus as the Deliverer whose death and resurrection bring us life.

Memory Verse

Begin the lesson by reviewing the memory verse.

1 John 1:9

"But if we confess our sins to him, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all wickedness."

Points of Emphasis

1. God gave Samson strength to defeat the Philistines.
2. Repentance is turning away from sin and turning to Jesus.

Activity #1

Guide the group to begin working on the activity sheet. Feel free to let them continue as you teach the lesson.

Video

Joshua led the people into the promised land, but when he died, God's people repeatedly turned away from him. When life got hard, they would remember God and cry out for help. God sent many judges. God used Deborah, Barak, and Jael to rescue his people from Sisera and the Canaanite army. But soon enough, God's people sinned again, turning away from God. After being oppressed and hurt by the Midianites, God raised up Gideon to be a judge. God showed Gideon that victory comes from him by sending Gideon into battle with a very small army. This week, we will learn about what happened when God's people sinned and the Philistines ruled over them cruelly. Our story is called "Samson." Samson was a judge, but he didn't obey God very well most of the time. Let's learn more.

Play the video for the lesson titled "Samson."

Bible Lesson

Samson was a pretty good example of what God's people were like. They repeatedly sinned against God, never seeming to understand that disobeying God caused their lives to crash and burn. In a similar way, Samson didn't understand that Delilah did not want him to survive their relationship! Each time he told her a lie about his strength, she tried to take advantage of it and get him captured. Instead of running from her, Samson stayed around until she got the truth from him and gave him to his enemies.

Even though Samson was foolish and disobedient, God still used him to save the Israelites. Samson's hair was not his source of strength; it was just a picture of his obedience to God and God's faithfulness

to him. When his hair was cut, Samson lost his strength because God took it away from him. But when Samson asked for help in the temple to a false god, God gave Samson strength to defeat the Philistines. Samson pushed over the pillars, killing the Philistine rulers and himself.

Activity #2

Lead the group to finish working on the activity sheet. Practice the memory verse with them, and help them learn it. Encourage the individuals to put the verse together using the Velcro pictures.

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.

Review Questions

(Optional: Play today's episode of Questions from Kids (QFK) to continue the discussion on Samson. Today's episode asks if God needs people to serve him.)

Group A

Early Learner

Encourage the individuals to point to the pictures provided or to draw in order to answer these questions.

1. **Point to who told Samson's parents not to cut Samson's hair.** An angel
2. **Point to who Samson told that cutting his hair would take away his strength.** Delilah
3. **Point to who cut Samson's hair and captured Samson.** The Philistines
4. **Point to who pushed over the pillars and collapsed the temple to defeat the Philistines.** Samson
5. **Point to the source of Samson's strength.** God

Group B

- 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.
- 2. What did the Philistines do to capture Samson?** They paid Delilah to find out his secret, cut his hair, and attacked him.
- 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.
- 4. What was Samson's real source of strength?** 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 individuals make the connection to Jesus, who gave up his life on the cross to save people from sin. 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?** 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 the individuals that we grow our spiritual strength by trusting God, praying to him, reading his Word, and spending time with other believers.

Group C

- 1. Where did Samson's strength come from?** Samson's long hair didn't actually give him strength; it was a picture of his devotion to God. God was the ultimate source of Samson's strength. God chose Samson before he was born to deliver the Israelites from their enemies.
- 2. How can weakness be a good thing?** Weakness requires us to rely on God. God's power is displayed when he uses us in our weakness to accomplish his purposes.
- 3. Samson looked like a great deliverer, but was he? What about Jesus?** Samson was strong, but he failed to obey God. Still,

God can use sinful people to carry out his plan. Jesus, on the other hand, was an unexpected deliverer. He came to the world as a baby in humble circumstances. He entered Jerusalem on a donkey rather than a war horse, and defeated sin and death not through a physical battle but by laying down his life.

Group D

Advanced Learner

- 1. What does this story teach us about God?** God is our source of strength and power. God gave Samson strength to defeat the Philistines. He chose Samson to deliver his people from their enemies. Samson used his strength to knock down the temple of their false god, and even though Samson died, he killed many Philistines too.
- 2. How does Samson's death remind us of Jesus?** Through his death, Samson rescued the Israelites from their enemies. In a greater way, Jesus' death brought salvation to the world, rescuing God's people from sin and death.
- 3. Does God need us to accomplish his plans? Why or why not?**
- 4. Why is it better to live for God rather than ourselves?**

Prayer

God, we are often like Samson, trusting ourselves and seeking our own gain. Help us to be humble before you. Remind us that all good gifts come from you. Change our hearts to be willing participants in your good plans for the world. We love you. Amen.



