

November 14, 2012

Samson

Judges 14-16

LESSON FOCUS*"Blessed are they who keep his statutes and seek him with all their heart."* (Psalm 119:2)**Today's Bible Lesson:**

This next lesson is about Samson. Most of us spend a large part of our lives trying to discover what our "purpose" for God is. Samson knew his purpose when he was born: that he was going to begin deliverance of the Israelites from the hands of the Philistines. Although Samson was not perfect (he broke every vow God had given him and had a weak spot for women) God used him anyway. That doesn't mean it's okay to sin, but just imagine how much more Samson could've been if he listened and honored God.

The story of Samson begins with the words, "Again the Israelites did evil in the eyes of the Lord" (Judges 13:1). This time they were disciplined by the Philistines under whose awful oppression they lived for 40 years. Here is this story, we read about Samson – the man appointed by God before birth to begin to deliver Israel from the Philistines (Judges 13:5). It is a story filled with opportunity – and failure.

In those days physical strength was often what made a leader great. In this case, God used Samson's incredible strength to begin the deliverance from the Philistines. Everything should have been in Samson's favor, but he entered into an unholy alliance which resulted in his downfall. The final fall occurred at Gaza. Nothing is more pathetic than Samson, blind and bound, grinding in the house of the Philistines, when he ought to have been delivering his nation from them. Samson's failure illustrates the fact that no person who does not fear God and love righteousness can do real service.

This principle of godly obedience is the real lesson of the book of Judges. There is a phrase that runs through the book: "Everyone did as he saw fit" (Judges 17:6). We find the people repeatedly turning away from Jehovah and disobeying as they worshiped the gods of the nations around them. They forgot that God had chosen them for a purpose – to tell the world the truth – there is only one true God. The book of Judges is full of rebellion, punishment and misery.

The book of Judges begins with compromise and ends with confusion. This is what happens in every unsundered life of disobedience to God. But God hears our cry of repentance, even as He heard Samson's cry, and restores us to favor again.

WELCOME ACTIVITY

Supplies:

Paper lunch sacks

Construction paper hair

Markers for face & clothing

Buttons for decorations

Wiggly eyes

Glue

Make a puppet of Samson out of a paper sack to tell the story.

Say: Today's Bible lesson is about a man named Samson. God had a special plan for him.

SONG

O Be Careful Little Eyes What You See

365 My Every Day Bible Song Collection – Disc 1, track 17

O be careful little eyes what you see
O be careful little eyes what you see
There's a Father up above
And He's looking down in love
So, be careful little eyes what you see

And He's looking down in love
So, be careful little mouth what you say

O be careful little ears what you hear
O be careful little ears what you hear
There's a Father up above
And He's looking down in love
So, be careful little ears what you hear

O be careful little hands what you do
O be careful little hands what you do
There's a Father up above
And He's looking down in love
So, be careful little hands what you do

O be careful little feet where you go
O be careful little feet where you go
There's a Father up above
And He's looking down in love
So, be careful little feet where you go

O be careful little mouth what you say
O be careful little mouth what you say
There's a Father up above

BIBLE STORY

Samson

Judges 14-16

Open your Bible so children can see you “reading” God’s Word. Show them your Bible and the words to they know what you’re saying is coming from God’s Word. Use Tell the Story idea below. Use The Beginners Bible page 148-153 to help children see the story. *Let children help tell the story using their Samson puppets made during the opening activity.*

Hi! My name is Samson. I want to tell you a story that happened to me. It is in the Bible.

When I was growing up, I did not always listen to my parents. I should have listened, but I didn’t. Because I did things my way, I got into a lot of trouble. My parents loved God and God had told them that I was someone very special to Him, just like you are special to God.

Believe it or not, God told them not to cut my hair. So I had very long hair. I loved God, too, but sometimes I forgot how I should act. Sometimes I would get really angry. So many people would get hurt because of my mistakes. Usually, I had to learn a lesson the hard way. Let me tell you about the hardest thing that ever happened to me.

When I grew up, I had a girlfriend who didn’t believe in God. She was not always honest either.

Her name was Delilah (De-lie-la). One day she asked me how I was so strong. I knew that God had made me the strongest man in the world and I knew that my hair was part of the reason I was so strong.

I knew in my heart that I could not trust Delilah, so two times I told her a lie. Sure enough, BAM! I showed her that I was still strong. Delilah was upset because I did not tell her the truth. She cried and cried because I lied to her. She kept asking me how I got my strength.

Day after day, she would ask me. I got so tired of hearing her ask me this question. This time I told her the truth. I told her that if she cut my hair, I would lose all my strength.

That night she tiptoed into my house, cut my hair off and tied me up. This time my strength was gone. I was weak. She tricked me! Once again I knew that doing the wrong thing had gotten me into trouble. Not only did I not listen or obey my parents, but I also started to lie to people.

God was so good to me, even when I had done wrong. I told Him I was sorry for doing wrong and not following Him. He forgave me and helped me. He loved me so much. He loves you too!

GOD’S WORD IN MY HEART

“Don’t ever get tired of doing the right thing.” (2 Thessalonians 3:13)

Read this passage from your Bible. Help children learn this verse.

GAME

Active Play

Build columns out of cardboard boxes. Then let the kids push the columns apart. Make sure everyone has a turn.

INVESTIGATING

Pop Can Strength

Supplies:

Empty aluminum soda pop cans

Show your children an empty pop can, place it on the floor, and put your foot on it and balance your weight over it while holding onto the back of a chair. Let your children step on it and try to balance their weight on it also. Comment on how strong the can is.

Tell the children that Samson didn't always do what he was supposed to do. He did a bad thing when he wanted to please Delilah more than God. God doesn't like sin, and didn't help Samson to be strong when the bad men came and put him in prison.

(Place a dent in the can.) Now what do you think will happen if I try to step on this can? (Show your children how the can cannot hold your weight any longer.) This is what sin does to our lives, and what it did to Samson's life. But remember, when we ask God to forgive us, he takes away our sins. God makes us strong again. (Let your children try the demonstration on other cans.)

CLOSING ACTIVITY

Gather children around you.

SAMSON - Interactive Bible Story

Instructions:

Boys in class are Samson. Every time they hear the word "Samson" in the story, they stand and say: "God helps me."

Every time the **girls** hear the word "lion" - they stand and growl "grrrr."

Story:

Samson // was the strongest man in the world. That's the way God made him.

One day a lion // jumped at Samson //

Samson // grabbed the lion //

Samson // fought the lion//

Samson // killed the lion// with his hands.

God helped him and God will help you when you really need Him.

Pray: Dear God, thank you for helping Samson. Thank you for helping me too. Thank you for sending Jesus to take away my sins, the things I do wrong. Thank you for loving me! In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.