

SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON

The Promised Land

SAMSON

Judges 13-16

Elementary Lesson

Year One, Quarter Three, Lesson Eleven

[0360]

AIM: to use the story of Samson to teach my students that if they play around with sin it will destroy their lives.

OBJECTS TO HAVE:

- A picture of a muscular man
- A picture of a lion
- A picture of a foxes
- A picture of an animal's skull
- A picture of big gates
- A pair of scissors
- Your Bible

POINT OF CONTACT: How many of you can make a muscle? Let's see. Have any of you ever seen a big strong man with great big muscles? A man with big muscles like that is very strong, and he can do amazing things. How many of you have ever seen the "World's Strongest Man" competition on TV? Those are big, strong men who can do amazing things. Today I am going to tell you about a man who was the strongest man in the world; but his strength did not come from big muscles. This man's strength came from God.

STORY: Last Sunday I told you how the nation of Israel had sinned against God; how they had no king; how the Midianites were giving them trouble; and how God used a man named Gideon to deliver them. In today's story, we find that the Israelites were sinning against God again; how they still had no king; and this time some people called the *Philistines* were giving them trouble. God needed a man who would defeat the Philistines, so that the people of Israel would be at peace again. So God sent an angel to a young couple in Israel. God told this young couple that He was going to give them a baby boy. That baby boy was going to be greatly blessed of God. But here's something very special: the boy's mom and dad were to make sure that their boy, as long as he lived, never cut his hair. Now we know that the Bible says that boys and men are supposed to have short hair. But this one man was commanded to not ever cut his hair. As soon as he cut his hair, he would be telling God that he did not trust God anymore, that he did not need God anymore, and God's blessing would be taken from him.

The baby boy was born, and his mom and dad named him *Samson*. Samson grew up, and people could see that there was something different about him. Samson was the **strongest boy** that people had ever seen. Samson could do things that no other boy could do. People knew that God's hand was upon him to do a very special job for God.

While Samson was growing up, his mom and dad told him again and again, "The Philistines are the enemies of our nation. They want to hurt us and destroy us. They do not love God, and they do not serve God." Yet, when Samson was old enough to get married, Samson decided that he wanted to marry one of the Philistines. Samson's parents objected, saying that she was not saved, and she would not live for God. Samson said, "I don't care. I want this girl." So Samson's parents did not want to do it, and they shouldn't have done it, but they went to the land of the Philistines with Samson to find the girl that he wanted.

On their way, while Samson was alone, a lion jumped out and tried to attack him. Samson was so strong that with his bare hands, he picked the lion up and killed him. Then he just kept on going.

Samson got married to a Philistine girl, though he should not have done it. You see, kids, God commands us, once we are saved, to only marry someone who is saved. It is a sin for a saved person to marry an unsaved person. So Samson sinned by marrying a girl that was not saved. Samson chose to commit sin.

Not too long after they were married, Samson thought that his wife had betrayed him. Samson was so angry that he left and went back to his own town. When he returned, he went to his father-in-law's house, and asked to see his wife. Samson's father-in-law said that when Samson left, he thought that Samson was not coming back. So when another man asked if he could marry his daughter, he said "yes", and they were married. Samson's father-in-law had allowed Samson's wife to marry another man! When Samson heard that, he was so angry that he went out and found 300 foxes. He took those foxes and two at a time, tied their tails together! Then he set their tails on fire and let them run loose in the fields of the Philistines.

Of course, this made the Philistines very angry. A group of three thousand men came to the land of Israel and demanded that Samson be handed over as a prisoner. The people of Israel had no choice but to let Samson be taken as a prisoner. The Philistines tied his hands in ropes and took him back to their land to be punished. When Samson got to their land, he broke out of the ropes, and began to fight the Philistines. He found the skull of a donkey that had died, and he began to fight the Philistines. When it was all over, Samson had killed 1000 men, and the others had run away. One man against 1000! How did he defeat them? With God's power.

But soon Samson was playing around with sin again. He decided to go to a city of the Philistines, and there he found a wicked woman. Samson went to her house to commit sin. While he was there, the Philistines sent an army to surround the walls of the city. There was only one gate through which Samson could escape. They decided to lock the gate and wait there all night, and in the morning when Samson tried to leave, they would capture him. But in the middle of the night Samson left the house. He saw the Philistine army, and he saw that the gate was locked. So Samson picked up the gates, tore them out of the wall, and carried them out of the city! The Philistines were scared to death. Samson had played around with sin twice and had gotten away with it. He was probably beginning to think that since he was so strong, even sin could not destroy him. But he was wrong.

You see kids, the most dangerous thing in the whole world that anyone can do is to play around with sin. Why? Because sin always brings death. Sin always brings destruction. When you play around with sin, sin will always wind up destroying you. The devil will try to trick you and say, "This won't hurt you." Or he will tell you, "If you think it is starting to hurt you, you can just quit it." But you will not be able to quit it when you want to.

Drinking beer is sin. If you try it, it will destroy your life. Now, you might try it once and think, "That wasn't so bad. If it starts to get bad, I'll just stop." But you won't be able to stop when you want to. So don't play around with beer. Drugs are sin. If you try them, they will destroy your life. Don't play around with drugs. Hanging around with the wrong crowd is sin. If you start to hang around with them, they will ruin your life. Don't play around with the wrong crowd. Just stay away from sin! Stay away from cigarettes, from marijuana, from cursing, wicked music, wicked movies, bad television shows, dirty jokes, dirty magazines, wicked pictures, from skipping church, and from anything else that the devil might throw at you. Samson was big and strong, but he was not big and strong enough to defeat sin.

The Philistines decided that a man so strong must have a secret to his strength. No man could be so strong on his own. They decided to figure out where he got his strength, and try to take it from him.

Samson began to like a wicked woman named *Delilah*. Delilah was a Philistine woman, and Samson and Delilah began to date. By this time Samson's hair was very long, because in order to keep his strength he could not cut it. The Philistines noticed that Samson and Delilah were dating. The Philistines went to Delilah and said, "We will pay you to find out where Samson's strength comes from." Delilah agreed, and one night she began to ask Samson how he was so strong. Samson did not know that he was being tricked, but he would not tell her anyway. Next time they were together, she asked him again. Still he would not tell her. Delilah said, "If you love me, you'll tell me." So Samson lied to her. But before too long she found out that he was lying. This went on for some time. Finally one night, Samson had heard all of the begging that he could take, and he told Delilah the truth. "My whole life, my hair has never been cut. If my hair is cut, I will lose all of my strength." Delilah knew that this time Samson had told her the truth. She decided that the next night she would cut his hair. She told the Philistines, "Now I know what makes Samson so strong, and tonight I am going to take it away from him." The Philistines gathered together outside of Delilah's house. When Samson fell asleep, Delilah took out her scissors and cut his hair. When he woke up, the Philistines attacked the house. Samson tried to fight like always, but this time his power was gone. The Philistines took him as a prisoner, and when all the people heard that Samson had lost his power, all the people laughed and made fun of him.

You see, when you play around with sin, you might not think that it is hurting you, but it is. And just when you think you have everything under control, you will find out that your life has been destroyed by sin. **DON'T PLAY AROUND WITH SIN!! SIN WILL DESTROY YOUR LIFE!!**

Samson could have been one of the greatest deliverers that Israel ever knew. But instead, he became one of the greatest tragedies. Why? Because he played around with sin. **DON'T PLAY AROUND WITH SIN!! SIN WILL DESTROY YOUR LIFE!!**

Let's learn our memory verse: **Proverbs 4:23 - Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life.**

SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON

The Promised Land

SAMSON

Judges 13-16

Teen and Adult Lesson

Year One, Quarter Three, Lesson Eleven

[0360]

Teacher, choose one of the following truths to expand upon in teaching this portion of Scripture to your teen/adult class. Teach and apply the truth that you choose using statements and illustrations that are most helpful and applicable to your students.

- I. **GOD OFTEN REQUIRES SPECIAL SEPARATION FOR SPECIAL SERVICE.** God was going to use Samson in a special way, so he required of Samson that he take the Nazarite vow, as described in the law of Moses. Numbers 6:1-21. These conditions were not something that God required of everyone; in fact, it appears that in most cases when someone took the Nazarite vow, it was a voluntary decision, as a matter of personal consecration for a limited period of time. But in Samson's case, God required it for his whole lifetime, in exchange for His great power. When God calls you to do a job for Him, He sometimes asks of you something that He asks of no one else, not a matter of right or wrong, but simply as a mark of your personal consecration to Him.
- II. **WHEN THE SPIRIT OF GOD FILLS YOU, THERE IS NO LIMIT TO WHAT HE CAN DO THROUGH YOU.** Judges 13:25, 14:6, 14:19, 15:14. People could not tell where Samson's strength came from. This indicates that perhaps he was not a muscular man, that his strength was not physically evident. Yet, Samson did things that could not be explained humanly. God's power made Samson a real-life superhero. When God fills you, His power can use you to do things that cannot otherwise be explained. There is no limit to what God can do through you.
- III. **IF YOU DON'T ALLOW GOD TO USE YOUR OBEDIENCE, GOD WILL USE YOUR DISOBEDIENCE.** Judges 14:1-4. Do not think that verse 4 means that God needed Samson to marry a Philistine girl. God saw the disobedience of Samson's heart. Samson provided God with no obedience for Him to bless. But since God's purpose will ALWAYS be fulfilled, He will use your disobedience if you force Him to. So His purpose will be fulfilled, but you will still pay for your disobedience.
- IV. **GOD'S BLESSING AND POWER UPON YOUR LIFE IS NEVER A LICENSE TO SIN.** Just because Samson was zealous for God's people, it did not give Samson the right to be immoral, or to marry an unsaved woman. No amount of service to God buys us a right to play with sin.
- V. **SIN DECEIVES US TO ITS POWER OVER US.** 16:4-21. Three times Delilah asked Samson the source of his strength; three times he lied to her; and three times she did the thing that he had said would restrain him. So what made Samson think that if he told her the truth, she would not do that thing to him also? The answer is that Samson had been deceived by sin. He thought that he was invincible, that he had played around with sin so many times and still been okay, that this time would be no different. The great danger of sin is, not only that it defeats us, but also that it deceives us.

SAMSON

Judges 13-16

[0360]

God Uses A Flawed Man to Defeat the Enemy

I. The Promise and Birth of Samson *Chapter 13*

The Promise *13:3-5*

His Birth *13:24-25*

II. The Weakness and Strength of Samson *Chapter 14*

His Weakness *14:2-4*

His Strength *14:5-6*

III. The Arrest and Escape of Samson *Chapter 15*

His Arrest *15:9-13*

His Escape *15:14-15*

IV. The Downfall and Death of Samson *Chapter 16*

His Downfall *16:4-21*

His Death *16:25-30*

Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life.

Proverbs 4:23

SAMSON

Judges 13-16

[0360]

Match the answer from the right column that best fits the clue in the left column. Write the LETTER of the correct answer in the SPACE beside the matching clue.

- | | |
|---|---------------------------|
| _____ <i>They were sinning against God</i> | A SAMSON |
| _____ <i>Israel did not have one of these</i> | B AMAZING STRENGTH |
| _____ <i>What the angel told the couple they were going to have</i> | C DELILAH |
| _____ <i>The couple named their baby this</i> | D SIN |
| _____ <i>Samson was never supposed to do this</i> | E 1000 |
| _____ <i>The enemies of Israel</i> | F A KING |
| _____ <i>What Samson had</i> | G A BABY |
| _____ <i>Samson killed this many Philistines with the jawbone of a donkey</i> | H ISRAEL |
| _____ <i>The woman who cut Samson's hair</i> | I CUT HIS HAIR |
| _____ <i>Samson lost his power because he played around with this</i> | J THE PHILISTINES |

*Keep thy heart with all diligence;
for out of it are the issues of life.*

Proverbs 4:23

SAMSON

Judges 13-16

[0360]

The answers to today's puzzle

- | | |
|--|---------------------------|
| <u>H</u> <i>They were sinning against God</i> | A SAMSON |
| <u>F</u> <i>Israel did not have one of these</i> | B AMAZING STRENGTH |
| <u>G</u> <i>What the angel told the couple they were going to have</i> | C DELILAH |
| <u>A</u> <i>The couple named their baby this</i> | D SIN |
| <u>I</u> <i>Samson was never supposed to do this</i> | E 1000 |
| <u>J</u> <i>The enemies of Israel</i> | F A KING |
| <u>B</u> <i>What Samson had</i> | G A BABY |
| <u>E</u> <i>Samson killed this many Philistines with the jawbone of a donkey</i> | H ISRAEL |
| <u>C</u> <i>The woman who cut Samson's hair</i> | I CUT HIS HAIR |
| <u>D</u> <i>Samson lost his power because he played around with this</i> | J THE PHILISTINES |