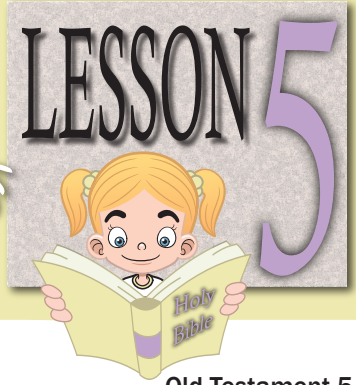


Samson's Early Life

Judges 13-15



Old Testament 5
Part 1: Israel's Cycle of Disobedience; The Time of the Judges

SUNDAY MORNING

Old Testament 5 [Class Attendance Sheet](#) provided in activity sheets (NOTE: The document is interactive, allowing the teacher to type in the Class, Teacher, and the children's names.)

SCRIPTURE REFERENCES:

Judges 13-15; Hebrews 11:32

MEMORY WORK:

YOUNGER CHILDREN: "[L]ove does not parade itself, is not puffed up" (1 Corinthians 13:4b).

OLDER CHILDREN: "A man's pride will bring him low, but the humble in spirit will retain honor" (Proverbs 29:23).

SONGS AND FINGERPLAYS (SEE END OF LESSON FOR WORDS):

A [song book](#) and [audio recordings](#) of many of the curriculum songs are available on the curriculum Web site.

- ["The Judges"](#)
- ["Samson"](#)
- ["Samson"](#)
- ["S-A-M-S-O-N"](#)
- ["Faith, Obedience, and Authority"](#)

LESSON VISUALS AND TEACHING AIDS (NOTE ANY DISCLAIMERS):

- See [AP's Pinterest page](#) for ideas on bulletin boards, visuals, crafts, etc. [DISCLAIMER: Pins may sometimes need to be adjusted to be Scriptural.]
- [Judges and King Saul Bible fact cards](#) (provided under "O.T. 5 Bible Facts" on curriculum Web site)
- "Summary of the Bible" from "[Kids Prep](#)" CD by Jeff Miller
- Betty Lukens' felt pieces
- Judges A Beka Flash-A-Card Series (DISCLAIMERS: use the cards, *not the lesson book*; skip cards 3.2 and 3.3)
- Cut out a large circle from poster board. Cut the circle into four equal sections to show the cycle of the Israelites' behavior in the time of the judges. If possible, include pictures to go with each part of the cycle (e.g., picture of idol with word "Disobeyed," picture of soldier with word(s) "Trouble" or "Attacked by Enemies,"



picture of person on his knees praying with word “Repented,” and picture of judge with “God sent a DELIVERER.”)

PERSONAL APPLICATION:

I will get into trouble and make God very unhappy when I think too much of myself and act arrogant and full of pride.

LESSON STARTS HERE

INTRODUCTION: (YOUNGER CHILDREN)

Which judge did we talk about last week? (Gideon) Who can tell me something about him? We have talked about how the Israelites obeyed God as long as they had a strong leader. Then they turned away from God and were punished. They prayed to God for help, and He sent another judge to help them so they would obey God again. Today, we are going to learn about a judge who was the strongest man in the world!

INTRODUCTION: (OLDER CHILDREN)

Review last week’s lesson.

Have you ever known someone who bragged on himself/herself all the time? How does it make you feel to be around that person? We all have talents and things we do well, but we need to be careful not to be too proud of ourselves. We need to remember where our talents come from (God) and to give Him the glory. In today’s lesson, we are going to learn about a very strong man who did great things. But he thought more about himself than about God, and his pride hurt a lot of people.

POINTS TO EMPHASIZE:

1. After 40 years of peace and safety under Gideon, the Israelites again forgot about God and turned to idols (Judges 13:1). From the small tribe of Dan, God chose an older couple, with no children, to be the parents of a son that they were to raise as another deliverer (judge) for Israel. Manoah and his wife were a little afraid, as well as excited, when an angel appeared to tell them they would have a son.



HISTORICAL NOTE: The territory of the tribe of Dan was surrounded by five major Philistine city-states, each of which was ruled by ruthless kings (Numbers 1:12,38,39).

2. The angel told Manoah and his wife that their son should be raised to be holy and set apart for God. He was to be a **Nazirite**. The angel told Manoah that his son was to stay away from “strong drink,” i.e., alcoholic beverages, and he was never to cut his hair.



Nazirite: A Nazirite was a person who was personally committed to not do specific things for a certain period of time. This commitment was usually made by a man’s vow to God; in Samson’s case, his parents were directed by God to make Samson a Nazirite. According to Numbers 6, the idea behind the Nazirite vow was that that person was to be holy: set apart for the service of God (Numbers 6:2,13,18-21)

3. When their baby boy was born, Manoah and his wife named him Samson. He “grew, and the Lord blessed him” (Judges 13:24). He was a special gift from God, born to godly parents. (Manoah prayed, “Teach us what we shall do for the child.”) But as Samson got older, he became spoiled and impulsive, often doing things that hurt himself and/or other people.
4. Instead of staying away from the enemies of the Israelites (the idol-worshipping peoples around them) as God had commanded, Samson ignored God’s commands and went into their land. Apparently he was accustomed to making demands and getting what he wanted. Samson saw a Philistine woman one day and told his parents that he wanted her for his wife. Samson demanded that his father “get her for me, for she pleases me well” (Judges 14:3b). His parents tried to talk him out of marrying one of their idol-worshipping enemies, but Samson was insistent. Finally they gave in and went with him to Timnah to arrange the marriage.
5. As they came to Timnah, a lion came out on the road toward Samson. Samson grabbed the roaring lion and killed it with his bare hands! He decided not to tell his parents about it.
6. The marriage was arranged, and a great feast was held to celebrate. But Samson became angry with some of his friends and returned to his father’s house in Dan—without his new wife! This was a disgrace for his family and hers. So her father decided to give her to Samson’s best man as a wife.
7. After some time had passed and the time of wheat harvest had come, Samson decided to go back to Timnah and claim the woman he had married. When he found out she had been given to his friend, he became so angry that he caught 300 foxes and tied them together in pairs, by their tails. To each pair of tails he tied a torch, and then set the foxes loose in the grain fields of the Philistines. The grain caught fire and the foxes with torches on their tails completely destroyed all the grain.
8. Shortly after that incident, the Philistines tried to trap Samson. They tied him up, but he broke all the bonds with his great strength. He picked up the jawbone of a donkey from the field and killed 1,000 men with it.
9. God had told the Israelites when they first came to Canaan that they should get rid of all the idol-worshipping people there, but they did not finish the job. Samson killed several thousand Philistines at different times, sometimes from selfish motives, and sometimes because of his pride. In spite of Samson’s mistakes and poor judgment, God caused “everything to work for good” for His people so that they had 20 more years of peace while Samson was a judge. He is mentioned in Hebrews 11 as one of the Old Testament people with great faith from whom we should learn.
10. Samson’s main problem was **pride**. Samson was the strongest man in the world. But he often forgot to give glory (credit, praise) to God for those blessings. (Draw parallels with popular modern-day prominent people, like wrestlers, professional athletes, TV/movie stars, etc.)
11. Pride is thinking too much of yourself, rather than giving credit to other people, or more importantly to God. (With older children, read the following scriptures: 1 Samuel 2:3; Proverbs 11:2; 16:5; 18:12; 29:23; 1 Corinthians 10:12; Philippians 2:3-4; Romans 12:3; James 4:10.) Jesus is the Son of God—much more powerful than Samson—but He never bragged about Himself and always gave credit to God.

PRE-CLASS ACTIVITIES/LEARNING CENTERS (TO BE USED AS CHILDREN ARE ARRIVING—BEFORE CLASS, AND UP TO THE FIRST FIVE MINUTES OF CLASS; OR AS HOMEWORK):

- Click here for complete [Activity Book](#) and [Answer Key](#).

Ages 2-5:

- “[Samson Coloring Sheet](#)” (provided in activity sheets)
- Foxy Review Game (for four and five year olds): Make 8-10 copies of a drawing of a fox (from a coloring book or online site). Cut all the drawings in half. Write a review question on one half of each fox and the answer on the corresponding half. Help the children read and match the halves correctly. Instead of cutting the foxes in half, you could match pairs of foxes. ([Fox cutouts](#) provided in activity sheets)
- Samson wigs: Make a headband of poster board or construction paper for each child. Tape 12” lengths of brown or black yarn to the inside of the headbands.
- Let the children take turns acting out the angel’s announcement to Samson’s parents about his birth, or let members of your youth group act out the scene.
- Sewing cards: Make a large cutout of a lion on cardstock for each child. On the back of the lions, write, “Samson was so strong he killed a lion.” On the front write the memory verse. Punch holes around the edges of the lions, and cut strips of yarn long enough for the children to “sew” around the lions. ([Lion cutouts](#) provided in activity sheets)
- Cut out drawings/outlines of foxes with visible tails on card stock. Punch holes in each of the tails, and use yarn or string to tie the tails of the foxes together in pairs. ([Fox and tail cutouts](#) provided in activity sheets)

1st-2nd Graders:

- Foxy Review Game: Make 8-10 copies of a drawing of a fox (from a coloring book or online site). Cut all the drawings in half. Write a review question on one half of each fox and the answer on the corresponding half. Help the children read and match the halves correctly. Instead of cutting the foxes in half, you could match pairs of foxes. ([Fox cutouts](#) provided in activity sheets)
- Who Am I? Game: On index cards, write 2-4 clues about each judge or key character in this lesson and previous lessons. Read the clues, one at a time, until a child (or team) can guess the character’s identity. ([Click here](#) for note cards provided in activity sheets)
- “[Samson Word Search](#)” (provided in activity sheets)

3rd-4th Graders:

- Who Am I? Game: On index cards, write 2-4 clues about each judge or key character in this lesson and previous lessons. Read the clues, one at a time, until a child (or team) can guess the character’s identity. ([Click here](#) for note cards provided in activity sheets)
- “[Samson Word Search](#)” (provided in activity sheets)
- Divide the children into groups of three or four, giving each group a Bible concordance. Ask the children to look up Scripture references for words from this lesson series, such as “pride,” “arrogance,” “humble,” etc. Discuss verses together as the groups read them aloud.
- Have the children read the following:
 - Judges 11-15 [This could be assigned Sunday, to be completed by Wednesday.] Print out copies of the Judges 11-15 quiz from AP’s [Advanced Bible Reader](#) site for the children to take
 - “A Strong Man’s Weakness” article from *Discovery* magazine: [December, 2004](#)
 - “The Cycle of Judges” article from *Discovery* magazine: [December, 2004](#)
 - “City Walls, City Gates, and a Really Strong Man!” article from *Discovery* magazine:

[April, 2000](#)

- “To God Be the Glory” article from *Discovery* magazine: [March, 2004](#)
- *Samson*, by Loyal Kolbrek and Chris Larson, Arch books (DISCLAIMER: skip note to parents)
- *Gideon and the Times of the Judges*, by Joy Melissa Jensen, Contemporary Bible Series, Scandinavia Publishing House (DISCLAIMERS: change “bride-to-be” on p. 33 to “wife”; p. 34: the Bible does not say that the foxes were tied together with oil-soaked rags that were lit; p. 42: remove “at least one of”)

SONGS:

“THE JUDGES”

Author: Jeff Miller

(Tune: See “[Kids Prep](#)” CD)

There once were Jewish judges,
After Moses and Joshua lived.
They helped to bring God’s judgment,
On the wicked people of Canaan.

Othniel, Ehud, Shamgar, Deborah,
Gideon, Tola, and then Jair,
Jephthah, Ibzan, Elon, Abdon,
Samson, Eli, Samuel.

“SAMSON” ([Click to Hear](#))

Author: Unknown*

(Tune: “Muffin Man”)

O, do you know the strongest man,
The strongest man,
The strongest man?
O, do you know the strongest man,
Who lived in Bible times?

O, Samson was the strongest man
The strongest man,
The strongest man.

O, Samson was the strongest man,
Who lived in Bible times.

“SAMSON” ([Click to Hear](#))

Author: Unknown*

(Tune: “Sunlight, Sunlight” chorus only)

Samson, Samson, You are very strong.
Samson, Samson, Your hair is very long.
You killed a great big lion,

You killed Philistines, too.
Samson, we all know that God was helping you.

“S-A-M-S-O-N” ([Click to Hear](#))

Author: Sarah Richey (Revised by: Jeff Miller)
(Tune: “M-I-C-K-E-Y M-O-U-S-E”)

S-A-M, S-O-N,
Samson was his name.

Sam-son (Sam-son!), Sam-son (Sam-son!).
He was the strongest man who ever lived!

Come along and learn with me,
A great Bi-ble sto-ry.

S-A-M,-S-O-N,
Samson was his name.

“FAITH, OBEDIENCE, AND AUTHORITY” ([Click to Hear](#))

Author: Sarah Richey
(Tune: “Farmer in the Dell”)

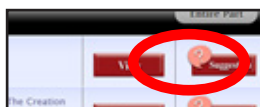
Believing in the Lord,
Believing in the Lord,
That’s what faith is,
Believing in the Lord.

Doing what He said,
Doing what He said,
That is obedience,
Doing what He said.

Telling what to do,
Telling what to do,
That is authority,
Telling what to do.

*Author Unknown: Please contact us through the feedback button for this lesson if you are aware of any copyright information for this song.

*** IF YOU HAVE SUGGESTIONS PERTAINING TO THIS LESSON, PLEASE CLICK THE
“SUGGESTION” BUTTON BESIDE THE BUTTON FOR THIS LESSON ON THE
CURRICULUM WEB SITE.



Samson's Early Life

Judges 13-15



Old Testament 5

Part 1: Israel's Cycle of Disobedience; The Time of the Judges

WEDNESDAY EVENING

Old Testament 5 [Class Attendance Sheet](#) provided in activity sheets (NOTE: The document is interactive, allowing the teacher to type in the Class, Teacher, and the children's names.)

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Joshua 13-15; Hebrews 11:32

MEMORY WORK:

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picture of person on his knees praying with word “Repented,” and picture of judge with “God sent a DELIVERER.”)

PERSONAL APPLICATION:

I will get into trouble and make God very unhappy when I think too much of myself and act arrogant and full of pride.

INTRODUCTION:

Review [O.T. 5 Bible Facts Flashcard](#) (provided under “O.T. 5 Bible Facts” on curriculum Web site)

POINTS TO EMPHASIZE:

1. Review Sunday’s lesson (see [O.T. 5 Review Questions](#) for example questions), especially the main points of Samson’s early life—emphasizing his **pride**.
2. As is appropriate for your class, cover the part of Samson’s life from the beehive in the lion carcass to the cost of his foolish riddle (Judges 14:6-20). Keep in mind that when Samson returned to find the honey in the carcass of the lion, he broke God’s specific commands about touching the body of anything or anyone dead (Leviticus 7:21,26). This shows another weakness in his character: the willingness to “play” with sin for a moment of pleasure (Proverbs 25:27).

PRE-CLASS ACTIVITIES/LEARNING CENTERS (TO BE USED AS CHILDREN ARE ARRIVING—**BEFORE** CLASS, AND UP TO THE FIRST FIVE MINUTES OF CLASS; OR AS HOMEWORK):

See Sunday morning’s lesson

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