Preschool–Grade 6

Samson

Sunday School Lesson for Kindergarten to 2nd Grade, 45 minutes

Main point: Samson's strength came from God. We need God every day, we can make wise choices, and we can always pray to Him.
Bible passage: Judges 13–16. Read it before class.
Memory verse: "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble." *Psalm 46:1 (KJV)*
You need: a Bible, 1 strip of crepe paper streamer for each child (about 2 feet long), 6 paper strips, a marker, tape, crayons, and one take-home sheet for each child.
Before class: write the memory verse on the 6 paper strips (see part 4). Put bookmarks in your Bible at Judges 14:6 and Judges 16:28.

1. Opening game: Pretend Strong (5 minutes)

Call out something heavy, and the kids pretend to lift it: a big box, a car, a tree, a house, a mountain! Everyone grunts and strains and then freezes. Then ask: *Could you really lift a mountain? Who is strong enough for that?* Say: "Only God! Today we will hear a true story about Samson, the strongest man in the Bible. His strength came from God."

2. Bible story: God Makes Samson Strong (10 minutes)

Hold up your Bible open to Judges 13, so the kids can see the story comes from God's Word. Tell it in your own words:

Long ago, God's people Israel did wrong in God's sight, and their enemies, the **Philistines**, ruled over them for forty years (Judges 13:1). A man named **Manoah** and his wife had no children (13:2). The angel of the LORD came to Manoah's wife and said she would have a son: "no razor shall come on his head: for the child shall be a **Nazarite** unto God" (13:3–5). A Nazarite was set apart to God in a special way, and one sign of it was that he never cut his hair (Numbers 6:5). God said this boy would begin to rescue Israel from the Philistines (Judges 13:5). The baby was born, and they named him **Samson**. He grew, and the LORD blessed him (13:24).

One day a young lion came roaring at Samson. **Read Judges 14:6 from your Bible:** "And the Spirit of the LORD came mightily upon him, and he rent him as he would have rent a kid, and he had nothing in his hand." Say: "God's Spirit made Samson so strong that he beat the lion with his bare hands! **Mightily** means with great power, and a **kid** is a baby goat." Later Samson found a swarm of bees and honey in the lion's body, and he ate some of the honey (14:8–9).

The story continues: Another time, Samson's own people tied him up with two new ropes and took him to the Philistines (15:12–13). But the Spirit of the LORD came on Samson, and the ropes fell off his arms like burnt thread (15:14)! Afterward Samson was very thirsty. He prayed, and God opened a hollow place, and water came out for him to drink (15:18–19). One night his enemies in the city of Gaza waited at the city gate to catch him. At midnight Samson got up, took the doors of the city gate, posts and all, and carried them to the top of a hill (16:2–3)!

Later there was a woman named **Delilah** (16:4). The Philistine leaders promised her lots of silver money if she would find out the secret of Samson's strength (16:5). Delilah kept asking, and three times Samson told her something that wasn't true (16:6–15). She kept asking him every day, until he was very tired of it (16:16). Then Samson told her his secret: no razor had ever come on his head, and if his hair was shaved, his strength would go (16:17). That was a foolish choice. While Samson slept, Delilah had a man shave his hair (16:19). Samson woke up, but **the LORD had left him**, and his strength was gone (16:20).

The Philistines caught Samson. They blinded him, so he could not see, and made him grind grain in the prison (16:21). But his hair began to grow again (16:22). One day the Philistines had a big celebration in the house of their false god, Dagon, and they brought Samson out to make fun of him. They stood him between the pillars that held up the house (16:23–25).

Then Samson prayed. **Read Judges 16:28 from your Bible:** "O Lord GOD, remember me, I pray thee, and strengthen me, I pray thee, only this once, O God." Say: "That means, 'Please remember me, God, and make me strong just one more time.'" God heard him. Samson took hold of the two middle pillars, one with his right hand and one with his left, and bent forward with all his might, and the house fell down (16:29–30). Samson died there too, and his family buried him. Samson had led Israel as a judge for twenty years (16:31).

3. Questions to ask (5 minutes)

1. What did God say about Samson's hair before he was born? *(No razor shall come on his head, Judges 13:5)*
2. What happened when a young lion roared at Samson? *(The Spirit of the LORD came on him, and he beat it with nothing in his hand, 14:5–6)*
3. What did Samson do when he was very thirsty? *(He prayed, and God gave him water, 15:18–19)*
4. Was it a wise choice to tell Delilah his secret? *(No. His hair was shaved and his strength went away, 16:17–20)*
5. What did Samson do at the very end? *(He prayed, "strengthen me," and God heard him, 16:28–30)*

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4. Memory verse: Strong Strips game (5 minutes)

Tape the 6 paper strips up in order: *God is / our refuge / and strength, / a very present / help in trouble. / Psalm 46:1.* Explain the words: a **refuge** is a safe place to hide, and **a very present help** means God is right here to help us, right now. Read the verse together while everyone makes strong arms. Then take down one strip and read it again. Keep taking down one strip each time until the kids can say the verse by themselves.

5. What this means for us (5 minutes)

Say: "Samson's strength came from God, and God gives us what we need most: He saves us from sin. God loves you very much. But everyone has done wrong things. The Bible calls that sin: 'For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God' (Romans 3:23, KJV). That means none of us is as good as God. Jesus is God who came to earth as a man (1 Timothy 3:16). Jesus died for our sins, He was buried, and He rose again (1 Corinthians 15:3–4)! The Bible tells us how to obey the gospel, the good news about Jesus: 'Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.' (Acts 2:38, KJV) To **repent** means we are sorry for our sin and we turn away from it. We are **baptized**, buried all the way under the water, in Jesus' name, so our sins are washed away (Romans 6:4; Acts 22:16). **Remission** means God takes our sins away. And God fills us with the **Holy Ghost**, His own Spirit, and we speak in other tongues, words God gives us, just like the believers did in the Bible (Acts 2:4)."

Pray with the kids, and encourage them to talk with their parents and pastor about being baptized in Jesus' name and filled with the Holy Ghost. Never pressure a child.

This week: when you have a choice to make, stop and ask, "What does God want me to do?" And when you need help, pray, like Samson did.

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6. Activity (10–15 minutes)

Choose one: the **Samson word search** (vbshq.com/puzzles/samson-word-search), crossword (vbshq.com/puzzles/samson-crossword), maze (vbshq.com/puzzles/samson-maze) or worksheet (vbshq.com/worksheets/samson-worksheet), the coloring page or craft (vbshq.com/bible-stories/samson), or **Break the Ropes:** wrap a crepe paper strip loosely around each child's wrists, once, without tying it. Say: "The Spirit of the LORD came on Samson!" and everyone pulls their hands apart and breaks the "rope." While they break it, they shout, "Strength comes from God!"

7. Prayer

"Dear God, thank You that You are our refuge and strength. Help us make wise choices and listen to You. When we need help, remind us to pray. Thank You for loving us and coming to save us in Jesus. In Jesus' name, amen."

If a child asks why Samson's eyes were hurt: say, "The Philistines were his enemies, and they did a cruel thing. But God did not forget Samson. Samson prayed, and God heard him" (16:28).
If a child asks whether the people in the house died: answer simply and gently. The house fell on the Philistine leaders and the people inside, and Samson died too (16:30). God used Samson to begin to free Israel from the Philistines, just as He had said (13:5).
Left out on purpose: this lesson skips Samson's marriage to a Philistine woman and the battles that followed (14:1–4, 14:10–15:11, 15:15–17), and why Samson went to Gaza (16:1). Read Judges 14–16 yourself before class. If a child asks, keep it short: Samson didn't always obey God.

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