

HEROES

OF THE

FAITH

Ordinary Men and Women . . .
Super Ordinary Power

16

SAMSON: A TRAGIC STORY

HEROES OF THE FAITH CURRICULUM—2012

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Taking church to the people



16

SAMSON: A TRAGIC STORY

Memory Verse:

What I say is this: let the Spirit direct your lives, and you will not satisfy the desires of the human nature. Galatians 5:16 (GNT)

Lesson Goals:

#1 - Understand how ordinary Samson was

#2 - Discover what faith led Samson to do

#3 - Desire to let God do extraordinary things in the life of the ordinary student

Audience:

Young, un-churched learners

Adaptable for all ages, including adults (See **For more training** on Activities page)

Scripture to Study:

Judges 13-16

Hebrews 11:32-12:3



16

SAMSON: A TRAGIC STORY

Judges 13-16, Hebrews 11:32-12:3

Who can tell me what a hero is? A hero is someone who is courageous and brave and compassionate. There are heroes and heroines in the Bible. All of them are brave and courageous and more, but not in the way you would expect.

Our hero: Samson

His Heroic Feat: Trusts God's power

Trusting God's power may not sound very heroic, but let's look at the facts and see what you think when you have heard the whole story!

The Bible tells us in Judges 13 that, "Once again the people of Israel did what was evil in the sight of the Lord. So the Lord handed them over to the Philistines for 40 years." (Judges 13:1 NIV)

During that time, there was a couple who couldn't have children. They were from the town of Zorah, near the border between the people of Israel and the Philistines. The angel of the Lord appeared to the wife and announced to her that she was going to have a son. The angel of the Lord explained that her son would begin to save the people of Israel from the power of the Philistines. He was to be a Nazirite, someone set apart to God from the day of his birth. As a Nazirite, her son should never cut his hair. He wasn't supposed to drink wine or alcohol nor go near a dead body. Samson's parents asked the angel of the Lord to teach them how to raise Samson well. Then the woman had a baby boy, just as the angel of the Lord said she would. "She named him Samson. As he grew up, the Lord blessed him. The Spirit of the Lord began to work in his life." (Judges 13:24b-25a NIV)

When Samson was older, he saw a young Philistine woman, the enemy, and wanted to marry her. God was at work in this and he talked his parents into getting her for him. When they were near her house, a lion rushed at Samson. "Then the Spirit of the Lord came on Samson with power. He tore the lion apart with his bare hands." (Judges 14:6 NIV) Samson had supernatural strength. Days later, though, when he passed that way again, he found the lion's carcass full of honey bees and honey and ate some of the honey. By doing it, he broke one of the vows of being a Nazirite. Samson married the woman. At their wedding celebration, Samson told a riddle about the lion and the honey. No one could figure out the riddle so they begged Samson's wife to find out the answer. She begged and cried until Samson revealed the answer, then she quickly told her people what the riddle meant. In retribution to the Philistines, "The Spirit of the Lord came on Samson with power" and he killed thirty of their men. (Judges 14:19 NIV) When Samson didn't return, his wife was given to their best man from the wedding. Samson quickly took his revenge, killing others.

Then Samson fell in love with another woman. Her name was Delilah. The rulers of the Philistines offered her money to find out the secret of Samson's strength. They wanted to overpower him, tie him up, and bring him under their control. Delilah agreed.

Day after day Delilah asked Samson about the secret to his strength. Each time Samson answered her, she would test him to see if it was true. And each time she did, men were always waiting to tie Samson up. Rather than realize what was going on and leaving, Samson stayed and drew closer and closer to telling her the truth with every answer he gave Delilah. Finally, "she nagged him until he was sick and tired of it. So he told her everything." (Judges 16:16, 17a Nlrv) Samson told her that he was a Nazirite, set apart to God. He told her that his strength lay in having never cut his hair. "If you shave my head," he said, "I won't be strong anymore. I'll become as weak as any other man." (Judges 16:17 Nlrv)

And so, as soon as Delilah lulled Samson to sleep on her lap, she called for the men who were hiding to shave Samson's hair. When she called out, "Samson! The Philistines are attacking you!" Samson woke up, expecting to shake the Philistines free. What Samson didn't know was that the Lord had left Him. (Judges 16:20 Nlrv)

Samson's story began so well; God set Samson apart for something special. But Samson didn't live the life of someone set apart to God. Samson trusted the power of God in his life to do supernatural things. Trusting God's power is a great start, but for Samson it was all there was. Samson didn't follow the leading of God's Spirit in his everyday decisions and he suffered the consequences, God's Spirit left him.

Once you and I decide to follow the Lord, to set ourselves apart for His purposes, God's Spirit is given to us. With Samson, before Jesus lived on the earth, the Spirit of God wasn't given to all who believed by faith, and the Spirit didn't always stay with someone forever. Now, though, once a believer is given the Helper, the Spirit of God, nothing can separate us from Him or Him from us. That doesn't give us license to live a life like Samson, it encourages us to obedience.

Have you received the spirit of God? It will happen when you surrender your wants and desires to the Lord, giving Him control of your life. Let's talk.

YOU CAN BE A HERO, TOO!

When you live a life of faith in Jesus Christ, you don't have to leap tall buildings to be a hero. Samson trusted God's power. There was a problem with Samson, though. Samson wanted God's power for his own purposes, but he didn't want to yield to God for God's purposes.

The power of the Holy Spirit in our lives can lead us to do greater things than even Jesus did while on earth, but that power is not something to be called on like a magic spell. God works in and through the person who is surrendered to His will. Will you surrender yourself to Him, trusting not only in His power, but allowing God to use us for His purposes?



NEXT WEEK
Hannah

PRE-SCHOOL!

LESSON

Who can tell me what a hero is? A hero is someone who is courageous and brave and compassionate. There are heroes and heroines in the Bible. All of them are brave and courageous and more, but not in the way you would expect.

Our hero: Samson

His Heroic Feat: Trusts God's power

Trusting God's power may not sound very heroic, but let's look at the facts and see what you think when you have heard the whole story!

The Bible tells us that, "Once again the people of Israel did what was evil in the sight of the Lord. So the Lord handed them over to the Philistines for 40 years." (Judges 13:1 NIV)

During that time, there was a couple who couldn't have children. The angel of the Lord appeared to the wife and told her she was going to have a son. The angel of the Lord explained that her son would be special. When she had the baby, she named him Samson.

Samson was very strong. He was strong because he obeyed God and didn't cut his hair. He was so strong that he killed a lion with his bare hands. He even took apart a city's gates and carried them off on his back!

Samson didn't always use his strength to obey God. Many times Samson took revenge on his enemies.

Then Samson fell in love. He fell in love with Delilah. Samson's enemies offered Delilah money to find out the secret of Samson's strength. Delilah agreed.

Day after day Delilah asked Samson about the secret to his strength. Each time Samson answered her, she would test him to see if it were true. And each time she did, men were always waiting to tie Samson up. Delilah nagged Samson until he was sick and tired of it. He told her everything. Samson told her that he was special, set apart to God. He told her that his strength came from not cutting his hair. "If you shave my head," he said, "I won't be strong anymore. I'll become as weak as any other man." (Judges 16:17 NIV)

Delilah lulled Samson to sleep on her lap. Then she called for the men who were hiding to shave Samson's hair. When she called out, "Samson! The Philistines are attacking you!" Samson woke up, expecting to shake the Philistines free. What Samson didn't know was that the Lord had left Him. (Judges 16:20 NIV)

Samson's story started out well; God set Samson apart for something special. But Samson didn't obey God. Will you choose to obey God? What can you do to obey God?

ACTIVITIES!

- Memory Verse Activity - Make various traffic signs (yield, stop, one way, etc). Print the memory verse on each sign.
- Continue adding heroes' names and heroic feats to your "Heroes Banner."
- Sing "My God is So Big," "Be Bold," "Nobody Fills My Heart Like Jesus," "Jesus Loves Me," "Just a Closer Walk With Thee," "The Fruit of the Spirit," "I Know Whom I Have Believed," "The Mission," "Sanctuary," "Not By Might, Not By Power" or other praise songs related to the lesson.
- Make a list of the qualities you want in a mate. Samson chose poorly. Use your list to begin praying now for the person God wants you to marry.
- Read and discuss Proverbs 25:28 in light of the lesson.
- **For more training:** Read Judges 13:25; 14:6, 19; 15:14. These verses speak of the Holy Spirit's work in Samson's life. Samson trusted the power of God for certain moments in his life when he needed to do something extraordinary, but he didn't let the Spirit of God work in him moment by moment to develop his character. God doesn't just want us to "do" things for Him, He wants us to be more like Him. Who we are and what we do should work together. "Samson wanted the Spirit to help him slay the enemies around him, but not to help him kill the appetites within him, the fleshly desires that controlled and eventually destroyed him."* Review the memory verse and discuss.
- **For older students and adults:** There are times in the Bible where we are told to stand and fight. There are other times we are told to flee, or run away from something. One of those things we are told to flee is sexual immorality (sexual impurity) or youthful lusts. Read 1 Corinthians 6:18 and 2 Timothy 2:22 from several different translations. Then discuss the life of Samson and what can be learned from his choices.

*Wiersbe, Warren W. *Life Sentences: What Sentence Will Sum Up Your Life?* Zondervan: Grand Rapids, Michigan. 2007. pp. 112-113.

What I say is this:
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direct your lives,
and you will not
satisfy the desires
of the human nature.

Galatians 5:16

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Super Ordinary Power

HERO IN TRAINING

Samson: A Tragic Story

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HERO TRAINING!

Scripture: Judges 13-16

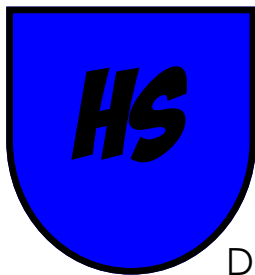
Memory verse:

What I say is this: let the Spirit direct your lives, and you will not satisfy the desires of the human nature. Galatians 5:16 (GNT)

Our Hero: _____

What did our hero do that was so heroic? _____

What can you do to be a **Hero of the Faith**? _____



What power do Heroes of the Faith possess?

Do you have the power? _____

Read Hebrews 11:32-12:3. What do you learn about Samson's faith in these verses? Why do that matter to our lives? _____

HIDDEN MESSAGE!

Can you crack the code to find the Hidden Message?
Cut along the dotted lines. Arrange the coded message to find your
memory verse. Write the verse below.

Galatians 5:16	What I say is
the desires of the human nature	

will not satisfy let the Spirit
and you direct your lives.

-----:

-----,

-----.

-----:

WORD

SEARCH!

B D C N F F E P M N G D O
S R D O S H U A L E D E S
N T I R I P S S D R O L V
O B S A L N O E D I G I O
S T O P M U R T E E O L M
W E B Y C S C W R D T A W
O S E R W S H S D S T H E
R T D O L L E E N E R U D
D R I A H G N O L D A A J
S O E C S R H S H L P E V
M N N I E T I R I Z A N I
A G C V P D E P E R T I R
M T E L A Y J A R S E W N
F N O I T W O S H I S O C
R O I R R A S A M S O N M

- Samson

- Nazirite

- set apart to God

- Lord's Spirit

- strong

- no wine

- long hair

- Delilah

- disobedience

HIDDEN MESSAGE!

Answer Page

Can you crack the code to find the Hidden Message?
Cut along the dotted lines. Arrange the coded message to find your
memory verse. Write the verse below.

Galatians 5:16	What I say is
the desires of the human nature	

will not satisfy let the Spirit
and you direct your lives.

What I say is this:
let the Spirit direct your lives,
and you will not satisfy
the desires of the human nature.
Galatians 5:16

WORD

SEARCH!

Answer Page

B	D	C	N	F	F	E	P	M	N	G	D	O
S	R	D	O	S	H	U	A	L	E	D	E	S
N	T	I	R	I	P	S	S	D	R	O	L	V
O	B	S	A	L	N	O	E	D	I	G	I	O
S	T	O	P	M	U	R	T	E	E	O	L	M
W	E	B	Y	C	S	C	W	R	D	T	A	W
O	S	E	R	W	S	H	S	D	S	T	H	E
R	T	D	O	L	L	E	E	N	E	R	U	D
D	R	I	A	H	G	N	O	L	D	A	A	J
S	O	E	C	S	R	H	S	H	L	P	E	V
M	N	N	I	E	T	I	R	I	Z	A	N	I
A	G	C	V	P	D	E	P	E	R	T	I	R
M	T	E	L	A	Y	J	A	R	S	E	W	N
F	N	O	I	T	W	O	S	H	I	S	O	C
R	O	I	R	R	A	S	A	M	S	O	N	M

- Samson

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