Death of Samson



Scripture Reference: Judges 16:21-31

Suggested Theme: God works through sinful people. We can be humble and serve God.

Memory Verse: “When you do things, do not let selfishness or pride be your guide. Be humble and give more honor to others than to yourselves.” Philippians 2:3, ICB

Story Overview:

Many Philistines gathered in a temple to celebrate and worship their God. They brought Samson out of prison, put him in front of everyone, and made fun of him. He asked a servant to lead him to a place between two pillars. By this time, Samson’s hair had grown long again. Samson used to be proud and thought he was strong by his own strength. Now he knew he had only ever had strength because God gave it to him. So, Samson asked God for strength to do one more thing. Samson pushed the pillars apart, and the whole temple collapsed, killing the Philistines and Samson.

Background Study:

Click here for The Book of Judges: The Big Picture.

The Philistines made Samson a slave in their town of Gaza. Remember that Gaza was where Samson pulled down the city gates and carried them up to the top of a hill. Now, he became a humiliated spectacle in the city. He was forced to turn a heavy millstone to grind wheat. Grain was ground by putting it between two large, round stones. Someone rotated the top stone, grinding the grain into flour. Grinding grain was considered a woman’s job; therefore, it was a way to humiliate Samson.

Blinded, he would never again be a great fighter. But Samson’s captors grew careless. They let his hair grow. Samson regained his strength and put it to one final use.

The Philistines gathered at a temple for a religious event honouring Dagon, a widely worshipped grain or vegetation god. Dagon was a crude idol, half man and half fish. Such an event often involved drinking and debauchery. It was more like a wild party than a church service. Samson was brought from the prison to amuse the crowd. Perhaps they made him dance while they tormented him with sticks and stones.

The Philistines’ temple had two levels from which people watched Samson’s torment. Finally, he was taken to the lower level, where he asked to be allowed to lean against a pillar.

The Philistines’ temple had two levels from which people watched Samson’s torment. He was taken to the lower level, to stand between the two main pillars of the building. Samson asked the servant who led him there to help him stand where he could place his hands on both pillars.

©2011-2026 Mission Bible Class, used by permission. Not to be sold. Find more free lessons at https://missionbibleclass.org/

We do not know Samson's heart. He asks God to help him "get revenge on the Philistines for [his] two eyes." It would be nice to think that Samson was asking for revenge for the mistreatment of all of Israel, but this might be simple selfish revenge. Samson's whole life has been complex and full of inconsistencies. He has been far from perfect. Whatever the motive for this last request, we see that Samson finally realizes that his strength has never really been in his hair or even the Nazarite Vow. He realizes that only God can give him strength. He does not try to collapse the temple using only the strength that had returned as his hair grew. He asks for the strength that could only come from the Lord.

He pushed the two pillars out of place. The whole upper level collapsed upon the lower, bringing death to thousands, including Samson himself.

Samson's life had been dedicated to causing mischief among the Philistines, and so was his death. So, twenty years of Samson's heroic battle against his country's enemies ended.

Way to Introduce the Story:

Make an "obstacle course" by arranging chairs or books around the room. Let the children take turns being blindfolded and led through the course by a partner. Discuss how it would feel to be blind. "Do you remember what happened to Samson in our last story? (He was captured and made blind.) After Samson was blind he began to think about the things that had happened in his life. He began to realize that he had not been strong because he was so good. He knew that he had only been strong because the Lord made him strong. When Samson listened to the Philistines make fun of him and of God, he wished he could show them God's power again. If he could only be strong again!"

The Story:

Samson broke his promises to God! He told his girlfriend, Delilah, the secret of his strength. Delilah and the Philistines tricked Samson and cut off his hair. After his hair was cut off, Samson was not strong. The Philistines captured him and made him blind.

The Philistines took Samson to the city of Gaza, making him work very hard in a mill grinding grain. Samson probably remembered how things were the last time he was in Gaza. Back then, he had been strong. He had pulled down the heavy city gates of Gaza and carried them to the top of a hill. Now, the people of Gaza only laughed at him. They watched him work and made fun of him. Now, Samson could not brag about his strength.

Samson worked hard. As time passed, his hair grew longer and longer.

The Philistines did not believe in the Lord. They worshipped a false god named Dagon. The people had a big temple where they worshipped Dagon. One day, the Philistines decided to have a big party to give praise to their god. They wanted to celebrate and show everyone how Dagon was stronger than Samson.

The Philistines put Samson in front of all the people at the temple. Three thousand Philistines were there that day. They all laughed and made fun of Samson. They laughed because Samson used to be strong. Now, he was blind and had to be led everywhere by someone.

Samson was taken to the lower level, to stand between the two main pillars of the building. Samson asked the servant who led him there to help him stand where he could place his hands on both pillars.

Samson's hair had grown long again. He knew that he was stronger than he used to be. He would have probably just pushed the pillars down a long time ago. He used to think he was strong and better than anyone else. But now it was different. Now, Samson knew that he could only be strong if God helped him. He knew he needed to pray to God for strength.

©2011-2026 Mission Bible Class, used by permission. Not to be sold. Find more free lessons at https://missionbibleclass.org/

After Samson prayed to God, he pushed on the pillars and knocked them down. When the pillars began to fall, the roof fell and killed everyone in the building – even Samson. Samson killed many more Philistines that day than he had ever killed before. Now, everyone knew that Samson was strong because of the Lord.

For more about Samson, see The Birth of Samson and Samson and Delilah.

top

Ways to Tell the Story:

This story can be told using various methods. Always remain true to the facts found in the Bible, but help children connect to its meaning by using drama, visual aids, voice inflection or other group participation.

Be selective. Each teacher is unique, so only use the illustrations that best relate to how YOU tell the story in THIS lesson. Too many illustrations can be confusing, so eliminate any that cover other stories or details you do not wish to emphasise in this lesson.

Click here for visual aids and more storytelling methods.

View this slideshow and download it from the original source:
http://freebibleimages.org/illustrations/samson-hair/

top

Review and Reflection Questions:

Review questions help children remember and know the facts of a story. Reflection questions encourage them to internalise the meaning and implications for their lives. Asking at least one of each type of question can help strengthen a child's spiritual development and help them connect to God. Click here to learn more about review and reflection questions.

Click here to learn more about review and reflection questions.

Review:

- What did Samson do in prison? (He had to grind grain in a mill)
- What happened to Samson's hair when he was in prison? (It grew long again)
- Why did the Philistines bring Samson to the celebration at the temple of Dagon, their false god? (To make fun of him)
- What did Samson do before destroying the temple of Dagon? (Samson prayed and asked God for strength)
- How did Samson destroy the temple? (He pushed down the two main pillars of the temple that held up the roof)
- Was Samson's strength in his hair? (No, it was in God)
- What did you learn about God from this story?
- What do you think Samson learned about God from this story?

Reflection:

- What do you wonder about in this story?
- If you could ask God a question about this story, what would you ask Him?

©2011-2026 Mission Bible Class, used by permission. Not to be sold. Find more free lessons at https://missionbibleclass.org/

- What do you think the temple of the false god Dagon looked like?
- How long do you think Samson's hair was by now?
- How do you think Samson felt when the Philistines made fun of him at the celebration at the temple?
- How do you think God felt when Samson prayed to Him and asked for strength?
- Why do you think God gave Samson strength one last time, even though he had broken the Nazarite Vow and made many bad choices?
- What does it mean to be 'humble'? What is an example of being humble?
- Sometimes we forget that we don't do everything on our own, but God helps us and gives us many things. What is a gift, talent, or skill that God had given you?
- God heard Samson's prayer, even though he had sinned many times. We can pray to God too, even when we've sinned. What is something you want to ask God about or tell Him in prayer? (Try praying after the children discuss this question)

Prayer:

It is important to guide children in learning how to pray. In prayer, children can connect with God and learn that He hears and answers them. God can become a life-long friend who is with them every moment of their lives. Try using a variety of prayer methods from time to time so that the children can learn to connect with God in different ways. Note that you can pray at any time throughout your lesson. A variety of prayer methods are found here.

Song Suggestions:

- Judges Song
- My God is So Big Song
- Refer to the Song Page on this website for more song options.

top

Activities and Crafts:

- How to choose the best learning activities for my teaching situation.
- Visit the activities and songs pages for additional activities and crafts.

Activities:

- Scriptures about humility for further discussion: Psalm 73:26; Matthew 18:1-4; Luke 14:11; Ephesians 4:2 ; Philippians 2:3-5; James 4:10; 1 Peter 5:5-6; Hebrews 11:32-34.
- Lift weights to test strength. Discuss how Samson could have self-pride because of his strength. Talk about things in which we can have the wrong kind of pride.
- Younger children could build pillars out of boxes. They can take turns being blindfolded and led to stand between the pillars to knock them down.
- Visual Aid: Guide the children in drawing their pictures as they tell the story. Instructions for Draw and Tell here.

©2011-2026 Mission Bible Class, used by permission. Not to be sold. Find more free lessons at https://missionbibleclass.org/

- The time of the judges can be depicted as a repeating cycle. Try this simple idea to illustrate the idea of a cycle that goes round and round. The Judges Review Wheel explains the cycle of the Judges.



Invite the children to respond to this story using the adaptable “God’s Story” printable reflection page. Free printables for this story.

Crafts:

- Make paper chains and talk about Samson’s imprisonment.
- Make a miniature-size model of the story. If you teach over a number of weeks, you could add to the model to form a collection that reviews the stories. You can place the models in boxes. One box could display one judge. Samson Box (ideas for all Samson lessons)- Hair, scissors, toy fox, old wine or beer bottle with a big red X on it, Barbie doll, sunglasses (blindness), white cane, paper “temple” crumpled up . . .

Print and use these free bookmarks, trading cards or timelines. Free printables for this story.

top

Other Online Resources:

- Colouring page and puzzle worksheets (Calvary Curriculum)
- Colouring page of Samson pushing pillars (Moody Publishing)
- Other: Activity on pride versus humility (Ministry to children)
- Other: Online slideshow or printable flip chart of Samson’s life (Bible for children)
- Craft: Make handcuffs and chains from paper towel roll and string. Instructional video (1 minute and 2 seconds) (Christian Preschool)

top

©2011-2026 Mission Bible Class, used by permission. Not to be sold. Find more free lessons at https://missionbibleclass.org/

Date
2026/11/11

©2011-2026 Mission Bible Class, used by permission. Not to be sold. Find more free lessons at https://missionbibleclass.org/