



Samson Receives Strength From God

Judges 15:9-16; 16:4-30

First- and second-graders have tons of energy and love discovering new skills. However, some children are more advanced than others in areas such as physical development, artistic capability, and small-muscle skills such as writing. Reassure children that as they grow they will improve their skills. More important, be sure to focus on the spiritual gifts God has given your kids. Help children realize that being a good listener is a gift, helping others is a gift, and being a good friend is a gift. Gifts come in all shapes and sizes, and it's what's on the inside that matters most.



► Bible Point


God gives us gifts to serve him.

Key Verse

“Each one should use whatever gift he has received to serve others, faithfully administering God’s grace in its various forms” (1 Peter 4:10).

Weaving Faith Into Life


Children will use their gifts to serve God.

LESSON	WHAT CHILDREN DO	SUPPLIES	EASY PREP
1 Getting Started	Good Gifts Game <i>(about 10 min.)</i> Discover what God’s gifts are and how to use them.	colored construction paper, tape	
2 Bible Exploration	Samson’s Strength <i>(about 5 min.)</i> Participate in an active retelling of the Bible story.	Bible, long-haired wig Teacher Pack: “Samson” poster	
	Samson Puppets <i>(about 10 min.)</i> Create puppets to use in telling the Bible story.	paint stirrers, fine-tipped colored markers, glue sticks, scissors, yarn, CD player Teacher Pack: CD	
	Hair Today, Gone Tomorrow <i>(about 20 min.)</i> Continue assisting in story presentation.	Bible, shoestring licorice, 1 pair of safety scissors per child, Samson puppets from previous activity Teacher Pack: “Samson” poster	Carefully cut around the blank face of Samson on the poster, leaving a hole for kids to look through.



Bold text within the lesson is spoken text.





LESSON	WHAT CHILDREN DO	SUPPLIES	EASY PREP
3 Weaving Faith Into Life	My Gift to God <i>(about 10 min.)</i> Discover ways they can thank God for the gifts he has given them.	Bible, My Bible Fun, colored markers or crayons, CD player, one copy per child of the lyrics page (at the end of the lesson) Teacher Pack: CD	Tear out the Lesson 2 pages from each My Bible Fun student book.
4 Lasting Impressions	Daily Challenges <i>(about 5 min.)</i> Choose a Daily Challenge to apply God's Word.	My Bible Fun	
	Weaving Faith at Home <i>(about 2 min.)</i> Talk about how to share what they learned with their families.		

Bold text within the lesson is spoken text.





Samson Receives Strength From God

Judges 15:9-16; 16:4-30

BIBLE BACKGROUND
FOR LEADERS

The Nazarite Vow

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Before he was born, Samson was set apart to live the life of a Nazarite (Judges 13:2-7). A Nazarite abstained from wine, never used a razor, and avoided contact with any dead body.

Even though Samson was declared a Nazarite, he likely adhered only to the second of these practices. In fact, an examination of his life as described in Judges 14–16 reveals that he was not a particularly religious or even morally upright person. Even so, God selected him and used him mightily in delivering Israel from the Philistines.

Samson’s Great Victories and Failures

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In spite of his great victories for Israel, Samson is especially known for his failure. He could have led Israel to a position of great strength. He could have led people back to God. He could have wiped out the Philistines, preventing them from ever bothering Israel again. Instead, he confided in the foreign woman whom he apparently loved, but who was set on his destruction. Even so, the New Testament doesn’t remember Samson as a failure. In Hebrews he is listed among those who faithfully served God (Hebrews 11:32).

In spite of his failings, Samson had kept his vow to keep his hair long. When he told Delilah the secret of his strength and his hair was cut, everyone could see that God was no longer working in Samson’s life.

Samson, Humiliated by Philistines, Is Redeemed

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The temple in which Samson was mocked was not only a temple to the god Dagon, but it was also an entertainment center. Thousands crowded into the temple to see Samson in disgrace. They even gathered

on the roof to see the spectacle below. Archaeological evidence has revealed that one type of ancient temple was supported by two central wood pillars on marble bases. His strength renewed by God, Samson was able to push those pillars off their bases, thereby collapsing the whole roof and killing everyone under and on top of it.

The Jesus Connection

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It’s great to have a friend in Jesus! When we mess up, he’s always there to forgive us.

Samson had unbelievable strength that he started out using for God. But then he messed up—big time! When have you felt you’ve really messed up? How has that failure affected your serving God? Talk to God about that. You can write your prayer here.





Good Gifts Game Supplies

colored construction
paper
tape

1 GETTING STARTED

Good Gifts Game

What You'll Do ■■■■■■

Welcome kids warmly as they arrive, and ask them how their week went.

Gather everyone together.

Ask:

- What is the best gift you have ever received?
- What is the best gift you have ever given?
- When you give someone a gift, how do you decide what type of gift to give?

Say: **God gives each of us gifts, too, and chooses them much the same way we do. He gives us gifts we'll like and be able to use.**

Let's play a game to help us discover some of the gifts God has given to us and then talk about how we can use them!

Tape a different color sheet of construction paper to each corner of your classroom. Gather children in the middle of the room. Name different skills that you know your kids are good at or they enjoy, and name a color of one of the papers you hung up. For example, you might say, "If you're good at riding your bike, run to the red corner! If you're good at drawing, run to the blue corner!" Continue with suggestions such as music, singing, laughing, hugging, helping others, jumping, and talking.

After the game, gather kids on the floor in a circle.

Say: **God has given each of us things we're good at. And those things we're good at are called gifts from God. The things you do well, such as art, music, sports, laughing, hugging, and helping people, are all gifts from God. We can use our gifts from God to serve him.**

Talk With Kids ■■■■

Lead children in this discussion.

Ask:

- What are some things you are especially good at?
- Were you surprised at how many things our class is good at? Why or why not?
- How could you use singing to serve God? How could you use drawing? sports?

Say: ► **GOD GIVES US GIFTS TO SERVE HIM.** In today's lesson, we're going to





learn about a man named Samson and what he did with a gift God gave him—the gift of strength. As you listen and learn, think of ways you would have used that gift of strength. Are you ready? Let’s find out what happened!



2 BIBLE
EXPLORATION

Samson’s Strength

What You’ll Do ■■■■■■

Show the “Samson” poster. Say: **In the Old Testament of our Bibles, there was a man named Samson. God gave Samson a very special gift—the gift of strength. Let me see how strong you are! Show me your muscles! Pause.**

You look strong! But God made Samson really strong, and the secret to his strength was his hair! Put on a long-haired wig. That’s right—Samson had very long hair that had never, ever been cut because he had been set aside for God as a Nazarite. That was their custom. If anything happened to Samson’s hair, he wouldn’t be strong anymore because he wouldn’t have kept himself set apart for God.

The Philistines were people who were angry with Samson because Samson had used his strength against them. But Samson’s people, the people of Judah, were afraid of the Philistines. They were afraid that the Philistines would try to hurt Samson and would hurt them, too. Listen to what the Bible says.

Read aloud Judges 15:9-12.

Ask:

- **Why do you think the men from Judah would turn Samson over to the Philistines?**
- **How do you think Samson felt when he was turned over to the Philistines?**

Say: **Samson wasn’t worried. He knew that God had made him strong for a reason, so he thought fast! Let’s see what his plan was.**

Read aloud Judges 15:12-13.

Ask:

- **How do you think Samson could defend himself against the Philistines?**
- **What would you do if you were all tied up?**

Say: **There Samson was, with his hands all tied up with new ropes. New ropes, mind you—not old ones that he could easily break! Let’s imagine how Samson must have felt. Link arms with the people sitting beside you, and imagine you are Samson all tied up. Now let’s find out what happened!**

Samson’s Strength Supplies

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- Bible
 - long-haired wig
 - Teacher Pack**
 - “Samson” poster





Samson Puppets Supplies

paint stirrers
fine-tipped colored
markers
glue sticks
scissors
yarn
CD player
Teacher Pack
CD: "My God Is"
(track 3)

Hair Today, Gone Tomorrow Supplies

Bible
shoestring licorice
1 pair of safety scissors
per child
Samson puppets from
previous activity
Teacher Pack
"Samson" poster

! ALLERGY ALERT

Hair Today, Gone Tomorrow Easy Prep

Carefully cut around the
blank face of Samson
on the poster, leaving
a hole for kids to look
through.

Read aloud Judges 15:14. Have children free their arms at the appropriate point.

Ask:

- **So now that Samson is free, what do you think he'll do?**

Say: **Samson was only one man—and there were a lot of angry Philistines coming after him! But remember, God had given Samson the gift of strength. Let's find out what Samson did next.**

Read aloud Judges 15:15-16.

Say: **Now that was pretty strong of Samson! God makes each one of us strong in certain areas. ► GOD GIVES US GIFTS TO SERVE HIM. Some of us are strong in drawing pictures; some of us are strong in singing songs; some of us are good runners! Whatever we're good at comes from God because he wants us to be able to use these things to serve others and glorify him. Let's make a reminder of how we all have strengths, like Samson had.**

Samson Puppets

What You'll Do ■■■■■■

Say: **To remind us that we're all strong in some way, just like Samson, we're going to draw faces on these paint stirrers and glue on really, really long hair, just like Samson had.**

Have each child draw a face on one side of the paint stirrer. Then ask children to each draw on the other side a symbol that reminds them of one of their strengths, such as a crayon for drawing well or a soccer ball for being gifted in sports. Then show them how to run the glue stick over the top edge of the "face" and put the yarn hair in place. As kids are working, play "My God Is" (track 3 on the CD).

When children have completed their crafts, have kids return to the circle with their Samson puppets.

Hair Today, Gone Tomorrow

What You'll Do ■■■■■■

Say: **Now we all remember that Samson was very, very strong, right? God gave him that gift. And we know that the secret of his strength was his hair because he had been set apart for God. A secret is something that you're not supposed to tell anybody. And sometimes keeping a secret is a very hard thing to do! Samson was supposed to keep the reason he was so strong a secret.**





Ask:

- **Do you think it was hard for Samson to keep the reason for his strength a secret? Why or why not?**

Read aloud Judges 16:4-6.

Say: **Delilah was trying to trick Samson into telling her—and the Philistines—why he was so strong. Samson knew that God didn’t want him to tell his secret to anyone. So Samson came up with a plan!**

Read aloud Judges 16:7-8. Then hand each child a piece of shoestring licorice to tie around his or her Samson puppet.

Say: **Even though Samson was all tied up again, he still had his gift. Let’s find out what happened next.**

Read aloud Judges 16:9. At the appropriate part of the passage, have children break the licorice from around their puppets, and allow them to eat the candy.

Say: **Delilah was upset that Samson had fooled her. So she begged Samson once again to tell her the secret of his strength. Everybody say, “Please! Puh-leeze! Pretty please!”** Lead kids in repeating. **But once again, Samson came up with a plan.**

Read aloud Judges 16:10-11. Then give each child another length of shoestring licorice to wrap around his or her Samson. Then read aloud Judges 16:12. At the appropriate part of the passage, have children break the licorice from around their puppets, and allow them to eat the candy.

Say: **For a second time, Delilah couldn’t find out why Samson was so strong. So she begged Samson again. Everybody say, “Please! Puh-leeze! Pretty please! With whipped cream and a cherry on top!”** Lead kids in repeating. **But once again, Samson came up with a plan.**

Read aloud Judges 16:13-14. At the appropriate time in the passage, lead children in twisting or braiding the “hair” on their Samsons to symbolize the weaving.

Say: **Delilah still didn’t know why Samson was so strong. If someone braided your hair into a fabric, would you still have your gift?** Instruct children to flip around their puppets to show their gifts. **And Samson still had his gift, too. But Delilah was determined. She nagged, and she nagged, and she nagged some more. Listen to what the Bible says.** Read aloud Judges 16:15-16. **Finally Samson couldn’t take Delilah’s nagging anymore. He finally gave in to her. Here’s what he said.** Read aloud Judges 16:17. **Everybody whisper to your neighbor, “It’s the hair!”**

Ask:

- **What do you think will happen, now that Samson told his secret?**

Hand each child a pair of safety scissors. Read aloud Judges 16:18-20. At the appropriate time in the passage, lead children in snipping most of the hair off their Samsons.





Ask:

- How do you think Samson felt when he realized he wasn't strong anymore?
- How do you think God felt when Samson told his secret, even though Samson knew he wasn't allowed to?

Say: **With just one snip, all of Samson's strength was gone. But the great thing about hair is that it always grows back.**

Ask:

- What do you think will happen to Samson's strength as his hair grows back?
- Why do you think God allowed Samson's hair to grow back?
- What would you do with your strength if you were that strong?

Say: **Well, the rulers were so excited about finally capturing Samson that they wanted to celebrate! They all wanted Samson to come entertain them so they could make fun of him. But as Samson was brought to the temple, he prayed for God to give him the gift of being strong just one more time! Let's all go to the temple.**

Hold up the "Samson" poster with the help of a student or another adult.

Say: **Samson got his strength back! He put one arm on each side of their temple, and he pushed with all his might! Using his gift of strength, Sampson caused the walls of the temple to crumble to the ground. The walls collapsed on top of all the Philistine rulers and all the people in it, teaching the people not to mess with God's gifts!**

Let children each take a turn putting their own faces through the cutout Samson face to pretend to push down the walls.

After everyone has had a chance to look through the poster, have kids form pairs to answer the following questions. After each question, let partners share their answers with the rest of the class.

Talk With Kids ■■■■

Lead children in this discussion.

Ask:

- How would you feel if you gave someone a gift and they never paid any attention to it?
- How do you think God feels if we don't use the gifts he has given us?
- How did Samson use his gift of strength for God?

Say: ► **GOD GIVES US GIFTS TO SERVE HIM.** Today's Key Verse tells us how to use the gifts God gives us. Let's see what the verse says.





3 WEAVING FAITH INTO LIFE

My Gift to God

What You'll Do ■■■■■■

Open your Bible to 1 Peter 4:10, and show kids the verse. Then read aloud: **“Each one should use whatever gift he has received to serve others, faithfully administering God’s grace in its various forms.”** Have kids repeat the Key Verse with you several times.

Ask:

- **What do you think this Key Verse tells us about using our gifts?**

Have children think about Samson’s gift of strength. Then ask them to think about their own gifts. Have children turn to the “My Gifts From God” portion of today’s My Bible Fun page. Set out colored markers or crayons.

Say: **Now that you’ve had some time to think about all the gifts and talents God has given you, let’s think about some ways we can give those gifts back to God.** Give children several minutes to think and discuss different ways.


Ask:

- **Have you ever seen an athlete or a famous person on a cereal box? Who was that person, and what did he or she do?**
- **What is something you can do that you would put on a cereal box?**

Repeat today’s Key Verse again together: **“Each one should use whatever gift he has received to serve others, faithfully administering God’s grace in its various forms” (1 Peter 4:10).**

Say: **God gave us each special gifts—not so that we could wind up on cereal boxes someday, but so we could honor him by using those gifts to help others.** Have kids repeat the Key Verse with you. **Let’s create pictures of ourselves on cereal boxes that you think God would be happy to look at!**

Encourage children to draw pictures of themselves on the cereal box on the student page, using one of their gifts in a way that would make God happy. Give children about five minutes to color. Then encourage them to show their pictures to the rest of the class. As kids are working, play “So Do Not Fear” (Isaiah 41:10) (track 2 on the CD). Then gather kids in a circle.

 **So do not fear,
For I am with you.
Do not be dismayed,
For I am your God.**

**So do not fear,
For I am with you.
Do not be dismayed,
For I am your God.**



My Gift to God Supplies

- Bible
- My Bible Fun
- colored markers or crayons
- CD player
- one copy per child of the lyrics page (at the end of the lesson)

Teacher Pack

- CD: “So Do Not Fear” (Isaiah 41:10) (track 2)

My Gift to God Easy Prep

- Tear out the Lesson 2 pages from each My Bible Fun student book.





**I will strengthen you
And help you;
I will uphold you with my righteous right
hand.**

**I will strengthen you
And help you;
I will uphold you with my righteous right
hand.**

(Repeat from the beginning.)

“So Do Not Fear” (Isaiah 41:10) by John J. DiModica. © 2003, 2007 Group Publishing, Inc. All rights reserved.

Talk With Kids ■■■■

Lead children in this discussion.

Ask:

- How should we use the gifts God gives us?
- How can you use your special gifts?

4 LASTING IMPRESSIONS

Daily Challenges

What You'll Do ■■■■

Say: **Let's think about how ► GOD GIVES US GIFTS TO SERVE HIM.**

Have kids find this week's Daily Challenges in their My Bible Fun pages and choose one to do this week. They can choose one or more of these three options:

- **Tell a neighbor a story about how you've used your gifts to serve God.**
- **Each morning, ask God to help you use your gifts for him that day!**
- **Invite a new friend to church with you, and show him or her Jesus' love!**

Make sure you choose a Daily Challenge as well, and tell kids what you chose. Kids will be more inclined to follow through on their commitments when they see you doing the same.

Talk With Kids ■■■■

Lead kids in this discussion.

Ask:

- **What's a practical way you're going to do your Daily Challenge? Include a time, a place, and other ideas.**

Say: **Let's remember that ► GOD GIVES US GIFTS TO SERVE HIM as we follow through on our Daily Challenges.**

Daily Challenges
Supplies

My Bible Fun





Weaving Faith at Home

Encourage kids to talk with their parents about the Daily Challenges they chose and what they learned about how God gives us gifts to serve him. Kids can also do the activities in the “HomeConnect” section of their My Bible Fun pages with their families.

Talk to your Director about emailing the FREE FamilyConnect to all your church’s families. Available at group.com/digital.

Close in prayer, thanking God for creating us all with unique gifts and talents that we can use to glorify him.



**Lyrics** ■■■■**So Do Not Fear (Isaiah 41:10)**

So do not fear,
For I am with you.
Do not be dismayed,
For I am your God.

So do not fear,
For I am with you.
Do not be dismayed,
For I am your God.

I will strengthen you
And help you;
I will uphold you with my righteous right hand.

I will strengthen you
And help you;
I will uphold you with my righteous right hand.

(Repeat from the beginning.)

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