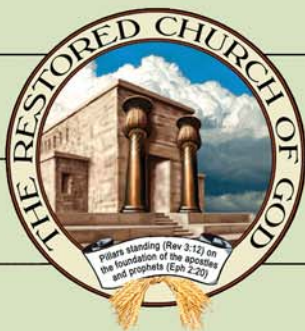


THE RESTORED CHURCH OF GOD

CHILDREN'S BIBLE LESSONS



The Life of Samson



LEVEL 3
LESSON 9

The Life of Samson

In the previous Lesson, we learned about King Balak trying to get Balaam to curse Israel. But God would not allow this. Do you remember what happened after Balaam struck his donkey the third time? _____

We also learned about Israel entering the Promised Land. When Moses died, Joshua became the new leader of Israel. He led the Israelites to victory in many battles throughout the land, including defeating the city of Jericho. Do you remember how that city was defeated? _____

After Joshua died, Israel was ruled by judges who were chosen by God. When the people followed a judge's lead, they obeyed God—and were blessed as a result. But when the judge would die, the people would turn to worshiping idols. So God would punish them by allowing enemies to invade the land. Israel would then cry out to God, and He would send another judge to deliver them. This happened over and over again,

and was known as the period of the Judges.

Foretold To Be a Nazarite

Toward the end of the Judges period, a Danite named Manoah lived in the town of Zorah. This town was in an area controlled by the Philistines, about 20 miles west of Jerusalem. Manoah had a wife, but no children.

One day, a stranger appeared to Manoah's wife, and said, "Though you do not now have any children, you will indeed conceive a son. But make sure you listen carefully to my instructions: Do not drink any alcohol or eat anything unclean. And when your son is born, be sure that you do not cut his hair. He will grow up to be a very powerful person and will deliver Israel from the oppression of the Philistines."

Years earlier, God gave instructions to those who promised to give themselves to Him for a special purpose. It was usually only a period of several years. This promise was known as the Nazarite vow. Those who decided to

keep this vow had to follow three rules.

Turn to the scriptures listed below and write down these rules.

1. (Numbers 6:3-4) _____

2. (Numbers 6:5) _____

3. (Numbers 6:6) _____

Unlike most who took the Nazarite vow, Manoah's son had to observe these regulations for his entire life. Manoah's wife had to observe them only while she was pregnant with the boy.

After the stranger was done talking to the woman, Manoah's wife immediately told her husband the exciting news. Manoah prayed to God that the stranger might come again—and he did. But he came while Manoah's wife was alone in the field. This time, she ran to get her husband.

“How should we raise the boy, and what will he do in life?” Manoah asked the stranger. He repeated to Manoah what he said earlier. Manoah was thankful and decided to offer a young goat as a sacrifice to God. When he lit the fire, the stranger sud-

denly ascended upward with the flames and smoke! Manoah and his wife were amazed. Then they realized that the stranger was actually an angel of God!

Eventually, the boy was born to Manoah's wife, and was named Samson. He grew to be an extraordinarily strong young man. He would need this strength in order to deliver Israel from the control of the idol-worshipping Philistines.

Samson Marries a Philistine

Though he knew it was wrong, Samson liked Philistine women very much. One



afternoon, he went down to the Philistine city of Timnah and met a beautiful woman he wanted to marry. So he went back to his father and mother and told them the news. Samson's parents were shocked—they could not believe it! But Samson insisted on the marriage. In the end, Samson's parents agreed to his demands.

Along the way to Timnah, Samson went ahead of his parents to make sure the trail was safe. All of a sudden, a lion jumped out in front of him. It was roaring loudly! With incredible strength given to him by God, Samson grabbed the lion and killed it with his bare hands. However, Samson did not tell his parents what had happened.

Finally, Samson and his parents arrived in Timnah. They arranged the marriage, and then went home. After some time, Samson and his parents journeyed back to Timnah for the wedding ceremony. Once again, Samson wandered ahead of his parents and came to the place where he had killed the lion. Inside its skeleton was a beehive filled with sweet honey. After taking some to eat, Samson rejoined his parents on the trail to Timnah, and gave them some of the delicious honey.

Test Your Memory:

1) What would happen to Israel when a judge died? _____

2) Who controlled the town of Zorah? _____

3) How long did Samson have to observe the Nazarite vow? _____

4) What happened when Manoah lit the fire? _____

5) What did Samson do to the lion that jumped out in front of him? _____

Samson Poses a Riddle

As was customary at the time, a wedding feast was given for Samson and his new bride. During the first day, Samson posed a riddle to 30 of the Philistine men who were attending. "Listen here. I have a riddle for you to solve," Samson said. "If you answer it correctly before the end of the feast, I will give an attractive shirt and robe to each of you. But if you cannot answer it correctly, each of you will give me an attractive shirt and robe."

The men thought it over, then agreed to Samson's proposal. "Tell us your riddle," they said.

Turn to Judges 14:14 and write down the riddle. _____



Philistine men confronted Samson, and said, “We have solved your riddle. What is _____ than _____? And what is _____ than a _____?” (Judges 14:18).

This made Samson extremely angry. He knew that his new wife told them the answer. Nevertheless, he had an obligation to fulfill. So he left to

This was a difficult riddle for the men. They tried hard to solve it, but could not. So they asked Samson’s wife if she knew the answer. She said that she had no clue.

“Well you’d better find out the answer, or else we will burn your father’s house with you and him in it!” the 30 men shouted.

Samson’s wife was scared for her life. She went to Samson and begged him to reveal the answer to the riddle—but he would not. She cried to him the entire feast. Finally, on the last day, Samson gave in to the pleading of his wife and told her the answer. She then went to the 30 men and explained the riddle to them.

Hours before the sun went down on the last evening of the feast, the

find 30 shirts and 30 robes. Eventually, he returned with a sack of clothes for the Philistines. Samson was still angry. He went home to his father’s house to calm down, but did not take his wife with him.

After some time, Samson’s anger went away. He returned to Timnah for his wife. “I have come for my wife,” Samson said to his father-in-law.

“I gave her to another man to marry. You were gone so long that I thought you would never return,” her father replied.

Samson became even more furious than he was before. He stormed off to get even with the Philistines.

We will learn that God was allowing these events to unfold in order to

deliver His people from the rule of the Philistines.

Samson's Revenge

Samson decided to seek revenge on the Philistines. He gathered 300 foxes and took them to the grain fields of the Philistines. He tied their tails together in pairs and fastened a torch to each pair of tails. After he set the torches on fire, Samson released the foxes into the fields. As they scurried through the field, many of the Philistines' valuable crops were destroyed!

The Philistines were enraged. Once they discovered that Samson was the cause of the fire, they killed his father-in-law and his wife by setting their house on fire. Samson retaliated by attacking the Philistines. He killed a great number of them, and then fled to the caves of Judah to hide.

The Philistines sent an army to Judah in search of Samson. "Why have you come here?" the men of Judah asked.

"We are here to arrest Samson," the army replied. "Turn him over to us, or we will attack and kill all of you."



The men of Judah were afraid, so they went to the cave where Samson was hiding and told him they were going to turn him over to the Philistines. Samson made them promise they would not kill him. The men agreed, and bound him with ropes.

As they approached the cheering Philistines, Samson suddenly received a burst of strength from God. With a flex of his muscles, he broke the ropes as if they were nothing! The Philistines rushed toward him to make sure he did not get away. Just then, Samson noticed a donkey's jawbone on the ground. He picked it up and began swinging it with great force. One thousand Philistines died from the blows of the jawbone.

Samson had become exhausted and extremely dehydrated from the day's activities. He searched for some refreshing water, but could not find any. So he cried out to God, "Please do not let me die from lack of water!" God heard him, and opened up a spring of cool water! Samson was refreshed, and he thanked God for the miracle.

After his victory, Samson became Judge of Israel. He held this office for 20 years.

Test Your Memory:

1) How many men did Samson pose a riddle to? _____

2) What did the men say they would do to Samson's wife if she did not find out the answer to the riddle? _____

3) Why was God allowing these events to unfold? _____

4) What did Samson do with 300 foxes? _____

5) What did Samson use to kill 1,000 Philistines? _____

Samson and Delilah

In time, Samson fell in love with another Philistine woman. Her name was Delilah. When the leaders of the Philistines heard about this, they confronted Delilah and told her to find the source of Samson's strength. If she did, they would each give her 1,100 pieces of silver.

Delilah asked Samson, "Tell me dear, what is the source of your strength?"

Samson thought for a moment, then replied, "If my enemies would bind me with seven fresh bowstrings, then I would become like any other man."

Delilah was delighted that Samson disclosed the secret so easily. She went to the Philistine leaders and told them the news. They gave her the material she needed to bind Samson, and sent soldiers to hide in her house.

Once Samson was tied up, they would capture him.

After tying up Samson, Delilah said, “Oh Samson, the Philistines are here!” At that moment, Samson broke the bowstrings and leaped to his feet. It turned out that Samson had lied to Delilah.

“Why did you lie to me?” Delilah asked. “Please tell me the truth.”

Once again, Samson gave her an answer. He told her to bind him with rope that had never been used before, and then he would become weak. So Delilah hid the soldiers in her house and bound him with new rope. Then she exclaimed, “Oh Samson, the Philistines are coming!” Immediately, Samson broke the ropes and jumped to his feet.

Delilah was frustrated, but did not give up. She really wanted to receive the silver from the Philistine leaders. “Samson, you have mocked me twice,” Delilah said. “I thought you loved me! Don’t you love me enough to tell me the secret?”

Samson thought it over for a moment, then replied, “If you weave my hair into the web of a loom, I will lose my strength.”

The next evening, Samson allowed Delilah to weave his hair into her loom. After he had fallen asleep, Delilah shouted, “The Philistines are coming!” But yet again, Samson broke free and jumped to his feet.

By now, Delilah was extremely frustrated. She cried to Samson, “Why do you keep lying to me? How can you love me and lie to me? Please, I beg of you, tell me the secret source of your strength.” Samson did not answer a word, and walked away.

Delilah continued to pester Samson for quite some time. She would constantly cry to him. Eventually, due to her constant nagging, Samson gave in to Delilah, and said, “I have been a Nazarite from birth. If you shave my head, I will lose all of my strength.”

“Finally, he has told me the truth!” Delilah said to herself. “Now I will be rich!” She then rushed off to the Philistine leaders to tell them the wonderful news. So the soldiers followed her back to her house to lie in wait.

The next day, Delilah sat down next to Samson and told him to relax. As she gently massaged his head for a few minutes, he fell asleep. Then Delilah signaled for one of the soldiers to come and cut off Samson’s hair.

“The Philistines are coming for you!” Delilah exclaimed. Samson immediately awoke, but was unaware of what had happened. The Philistines ran toward Samson to capture him. He tried to fight them off, but was unable. The soldiers easily bound him hand

Samson's Final Prayer

One day, the Philistines held a celebration in honor of their false half-human/half-fish god named Dagon. It was a very special occasion at which all the nobles of the Philistines would be present. Thousands of people packed the temple. The Philistines believed that this idol had delivered Samson into their hands.

Some who were present said, "Bring in Samson so that he may perform for us."



and foot. They poked out Samson's eyes and took him to one of their prisons to do hard labor—pushing around a heavy millstone in the grain grinding room.

Once Samson lost his hair, the source of his strength left him. But the hair itself was not the actual source—God was! The same is true for us. God gives us the strength we need. If our connection to God is severed, we too will lose the strength He supplies us.

So a small boy retrieved Samson from the prison and brought him to Dagon's temple to perform for all the drunken Philistines. Everyone praised Dagon for supposedly delivering into their hands the one who had caused so much trouble.

While performing, Samson said to the young boy, "Lead me to the pillars that support the temple so I may rest on them." (Remember, Samson was blinded by the Philistines.) The boy



did this, and then Samson stretched out his arms between the two gigantic pillars and prayed to God. Turn to Judges 16:28 and write down Samson's prayer. _____

God answered Samson's prayer, and gave him tremendous strength. As

Samson pushed on the giant pillars with all of his might, they began to buckle and collapse. Then the entire temple came crashing to the ground. All of the people in the temple, including Samson, were killed.

Samson's brothers and his father's household came to retrieve his body from the rubble. They took him back to Zorah and buried him in his father's tomb.

Samson had a severe weakness for Philistine women, which caused him

much trouble. Yet God used this weakness for good—to deliver Israel from the hands of the Philistines. Samson’s miraculous feats were not accomplished by his strength, but by the great power of God.

In the next Lesson, we will learn about a woman who lived during the time of the Judges.

Test Your Memory:

1) With whom did Samson fall in love? _____

2) What happened when Samson lost his hair? _____

3) What did Samson do while in prison? _____

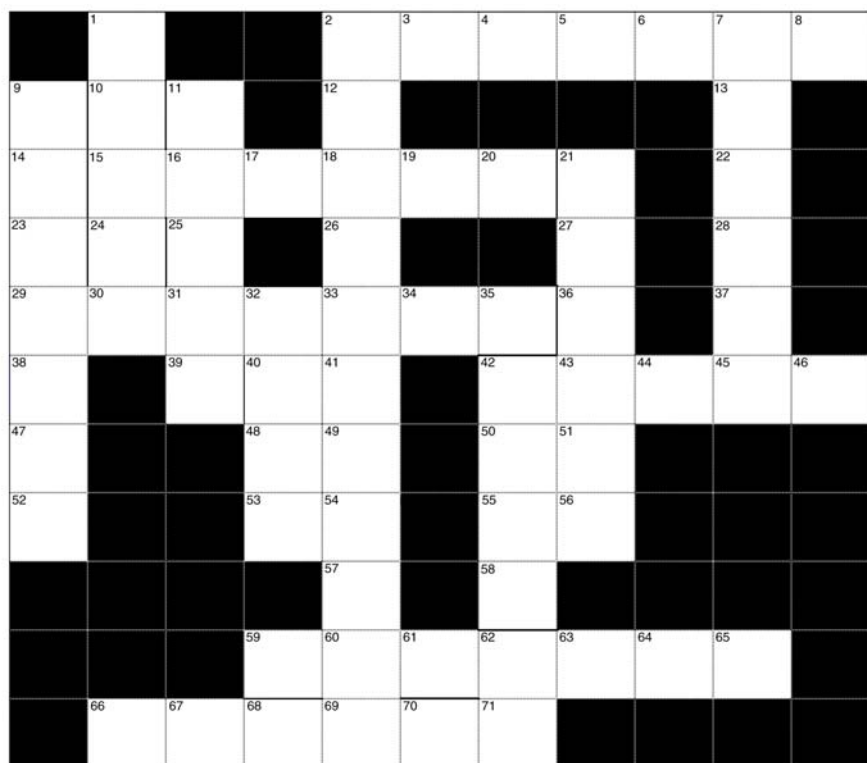
4) What was the name of the Philistines’ false god? _____

5) Why was Samson brought to the temple? _____



BIBLE MEMORY: Judges 16:28

CROSSWORD PUZZLE



Answer the questions to find the words that go in the puzzle.

DOWN:

- 1) Samson became a _____ of Israel.
- 2) The people who troubled Israel.
- 7) The type of puzzle Samson asked his wedding guests.
- 9) What Samson picked up to kill 1,000 Philistines.
- 11) God provided _____ for Samson in the desert.
- 21) Samson's father.
- 32) What the Philistines cut off of Samson.
- 42) What destroyed the Philistine's crops.

- ACROSS:**
- 2) The things that Samson pushed in the temple of Dagon.
 - 15) Samson was from the tribe of _____, so he was a _____.
 - 29) What Samson found in the ribs of the lion.
 - 42) What carried the torches through the grain fields of the Philistines.
 - 59) The woman who tricked Samson and caused him to be captured.
 - 66) The son whom God promised to Manoah.