

Bible Heroes

Samson & Delilah

Teachers Story notes



Essential Teachers notes:

This is a warning story that raises questions of what is love, who do we trust, and touches on the big word redemption. It's a beautifully interactive story, read it out or tell it in your own words, leave space for the kids to join in by answering the questions and do discuss the final act of destroying the temple after the story if you have older children. Make sure to stress that although in this story Samson asks to sacrifice himself to destroy the philistines, these are not actions or methods we should imitate.

Main Passage : Judges 13

Lets do a quick recap.

God's people felt forgotten. The Philistines kept attacking them. God had been quiet for 40 years, then he spoke. Manoah and his wife would have a son, a Nazirite, special from before he was born, and he should keep Israel safe from the Philistines. Or at least that was the plan.

The child was called Samson. Manoah kept his promise and made sure nobody ever cut Samson's hair. God made Samson strong, really strong. He once killed a lion with his bare hands, and a defeated a whole army on his own, he was amazing. God had stepped in and the Philistines couldn't attack the Israelites any more, God's people had a protector.

Samson had been helping the Israelites for 20 years when he met Delilah, she was very beautiful. Delilah told Samson that she loved him, and Samson loved her back. But Delilah didn't really love Samson, she just wanted to find out how he got his amazing strength, and if she found out then the Philistine's would give her a lot of money.

Every day Delilah would ask Samson to tell her the secret. She pleaded, she begged, she cried, she sulked, and eventually Samson decided he would tell her something just to make her stop. Do you think he told her the truth? (pause)

"If anyone ties me with seven fresh bowstrings that have not been dried, I'll become as weak as any other man" he said. The next day he woke to hear Delilah shout "the Philistines are here" and found that seven fresh bowstrings were tied round him. Samson snapped the bowstrings then laughed and laughed and laughed.

Delilah was mad. Again she started asking Samson everyday to tell her the secret. She pleaded, she begged, she cried, she sulked, and eventually Samson decided he would tell her something just to make her stop. Do you think he told her the truth?

"If anyone ties me securely with new ropes that have never been used, I'll become as weak as any other man" he said. The next day he woke to hear Delilah shout "the Philistines are here" and found that new ropes were tied round him. Samson snapped the ropes then laughed and laughed and laughed.

Delilah was really mad. Again she started asking Samson everyday to tell her the secret. She pleaded, she begged, she cried, she sulked, and eventually Samson decided he would tell her something just to make her stop. Do you think he told her the truth?

"If you weave the seven braids of my head into the fabric on the loom, I'll become as weak as any other man" he said. The next day he woke to hear Delilah shout "the Philistines are here" and found that his hair was woven into a loom. Samson broke the loom then laughed and laughed and laughed.

Delilah was really, really mad now. "How can you lie and still say I love you," she would ask. "Don't you love me?" Everyday Delilah asked Samson to be honest. She pleaded, she begged, she cried, she sulked, and eventually, because he loved her, Samson decided he would tell her. Do you think he told her the truth this time?

"No blade has ever been used on my head," he said, "because I am a Nazirite. If my hair was cut, my strength would leave me, and I would become as weak as any other man." I bet you can guess what happened? Delilah had his hair cut while he slept, and when he woke up the Philistines tied him up, blinded him and threw him in prison. Samson had trusted the wrong person, his Nazirite vow was broken.

BUT God wasn't finished with Samson. After a few months in prison the Philistines brought Samson into their temple, for their Gods, to make fun of him. Nobody noticed his hair had started to grow back. They put him between two of the big pillars so the crowds could see. Samson prayed that God would forgive him, and give him a chance to show God's power again. What do you think, do you think God gave Samson another chance? Well God did. God forgave Samson and made him a Nazirite again, and Samson, he pushed those two pillars so hard the temple collapsed on top of the Philistines heads.

Today's hero is Samson because he shows us the gift of Trust