

SABBATH SCHOOL

Preteen Sabbath Instruction Program — Teacher's Outline

Level 1 • Unit 9 • Week 4

SAMSON AND SELF-CONTROL

OBJECTIVE:

To learn how Samson used and failed to use self-control, a fruit of God's Spirit.

ATTENTION GETTER:

Ask: Have you ever known a secret? Did you promise not to tell the secret? How hard was it to keep the secret?

Say: Sometimes it can be hard to keep a secret.

Ask: How can you be sure not to tell someone your secret?

Say: It takes self-control to keep a secret.

Ask: What is self-control?

Say: Self-control is setting our minds to do what's right. It means to be in charge of our own emotions and behavior. Self-control means to be determined to do the right thing—to please God. Today's lesson is about Samson and self-control.

BIBLE LESSON:

Tell the story of Samson and Delilah paraphrased from Judges 13 and 16:

An angel told a man and a woman that they were going to have a special baby. This baby was promised to serve God—even before he was born. His name was Samson. God helped Samson to grow up very strong. His great strength was to be used to serve God his whole life.

Samson was a Nazirite. Nazirites make certain vows that are like very special promises. One of the vows of a Nazirite is that they must never cut their hair. God had given him more strength than any

other man and as long as Samson kept His promise, and did not cut his hair, the great strength that God had given him stayed with him.

It takes self-control to keep a promise doesn't it?

One of Samson's jobs was to help deliver Israel from their enemy, the Philistines. Samson became so strong that he could defeat entire Philistine armies all by himself!

One day Samson fell in love with a woman who was a Philistine. Her name was Delilah. One day the rulers of the Philistines came to Delilah and promised to make her rich if she could find out the secret of Samson's strength. No one knew why Samson was so strong. That was a secret.

Delilah wanted the money the men had promised her, so she tried to trick Samson. "What makes you so strong?" she asked. Samson did not want to tell her the secret, so he fooled her.

Samson answered her, "If anyone ties me with seven fresh cords [bowstrings] that have not been dried, I'll become as weak as any other man." Then the rulers of the Philistines brought her seven fresh cords that had not been dried, and she tied him with them. With men hidden in the room, she called to him, "Samson, the Philistines are upon you!" But he snapped the cords as easily as a piece of string snaps when it comes close to a flame. So the secret of his strength was not discovered.

Then Delilah said to Samson, "You have made fun of me and lied to me. Please tell me the truth. What is the secret of your strength?" Then, once again, Samson told her a story.

He said, "If anyone ties me securely with new ropes that have never been used, I'll become as weak as any other man." So Delilah took new ropes and tied him with them. Then, with men hidden in the room, she called to him, "Samson, the Philistines are upon you!" But he snapped the ropes off his arms as if they were threads.

Now Delilah was very upset with Samson. "You just keep telling me lies," she said to him. "I want you to tell me what makes you so strong." And once again, Samson told her a story that was not true.

"If you weave the seven braids of my head into the fabric on the loom and tighten it with the pin, I'll become as weak as any other man." So while he was sleeping, Delilah took the seven braids of his head, wove them into the fabric and tightened it with the pin. Again she called to him, "Samson, the Philistines are upon you!" He awoke from his sleep and pulled up the pin and the loom, with the fabric.

Delilah continued to pester Samson all day and all night until he got very tired of listening. Samson wanted Delilah to quit bothering him, so he decided to tell her his secret. He did not use self-control. He did not keep his secret. This time he finally told her the secret of his great strength.

So he told her everything. "No razor has ever been used on my head," he said, "because I have been a Nazirite set apart to God since birth. If my head were shaved, my strength would leave me, and I would become as weak as any other man."

Delilah knew that Samson had finally told her everything. Having put him to sleep on her lap, she called a man to shave off the seven braids of his hair. And his strength left him. Then she called, "Samson, the Philistines are upon you!" He awoke from his sleep and thought, "I'll go out as before and shake myself free." But he did not know that the LORD had left him. Then the Philistines seized him, gouged out his eyes and took him down to Gaza. Binding him with bronze shackles, they set him to grinding wheat in the prison.

Because Samson did not use self-control he lost his power, his eyes and his pride. It was a very difficult way to learn a lesson. But did you know that Samson did learn his lesson?

Samson once again turned to God. He realized he had been wrong and after a while his hair began to grow again.

One day the rulers of the Philistines had a big celebration to honor their false god. Their pagan temple was crowded with thousands and thousands of people.

During their party they brought out Samson so they could laugh at his weakness. Samson stood between two stone pillars that held up the roof.

Samson prayed to God for strength one last time. Then he pushed on the pillars with all his might and the temple crashed down killing Samson and all the Philistines. God had helped him avenge himself and his people from the Philistines.

Samson learned the ultimate kind of self-control. He gave his life for others!

LESSON APPLICATION:

Supplies: One Barbie doll (or similar doll)

One Ken doll (or similar doll)

Scissors

Old pillowcase, bed sheet or other fabric

Rubber band

Small gift box (the size jewelry comes in)

Brown or black yarn

Seven 6-inch lengths of string

Blocks

One 6-inch length of yarn

- Prepare:
- Copy Samson coloring sheet (optional).
 - Dress Barbie and Ken dolls as Samson and Delilah (see illustration sheet for details).
 - Make clothes for the dolls by cutting a piece of fabric about 8 by 8 inches for the woman doll and 5 by 8 inches for the man doll.
 - Cut arm holes in the pieces of fabric and slip them onto the dolls.

- Cut strips of fabric 1/2 by 9 inches to tie around the fabric as belts to hold on the clothes.
- Make long hair for the man doll by tying 6-inch lengths of the yarn onto a rubber band.
- Slip the rubber band with "hair" onto the doll's head.
- Before the story is retold, have the children build two columns of blocks about 8 inches apart.

Do: Have the class retell the story of Samson. Choose two children to act out the story with the Samson and Delilah dolls as it is being told. Be sure the children include:

- Samson asleep as Delilah places the seven pieces of cord across him.
- Samson jumping up and shaking the string off.
- Do the same with the yarn representing the new rope.
- Then use the small box to represent the loom. As Samson sleeps the third time, put the ends of Samson's hair into the box and place the lid on.
- Show Samson waking up and shaking off the loom.
- Finally show Samson sleeping and Delilah cutting his hair. (Take the rubber band off the doll's head.)
- Tell the rest of the story.
- To conclude, have the Samson doll knock over the columns of blocks to conquer the enemy.

Ask: What are some of the ways we use self-control in our daily lives?

Say: Good answers. We control our tempers. (Don't fight and argue.) We control our tongues and don't say bad things and do not lie. We control our self by obeying our parents (even if it seems easier to disobey). We live God's way (keeping the Ten Commandments).

Living with self-control is showing one of the fruits of God's Spirit.

ALTERNATE LESSON APPLICATION:

Supplies: Two jump ropes
Paper cups
"Stepping stone" circles cut out from brown construction paper

Prepare: Use brown construction paper and cut out "stepping stone" circles about 6 inches in diameter (so only one child's foot can fit on it)—one for each child.

Do: Play "Stepping Stones to Self-Control" game. The object of the game is to help your partner walk on "stepping stones" to the finish line of self-control.

Directions:

1. Place start and finish lines at opposite ends of the playing area using the jump ropes. Set cups behind the finish line.
2. Direct the children to find partners. (If there is an uneven number of children, have someone go

twice or the teacher can be someone's partner.)

3. Have partners stand behind the starting line. Give each pair two "stepping stone" circles. Have partners decide who will be the "stepper" and who will be the "stone layer."

Say: Stepping stones help you get safely from one place to the next. In this game, the steppers cannot touch the ground but must walk on the "stepping stone" circles that the stone layer sets down. You'll walk on the stepping stones to the finish line, pick up a cup, then switch places for the return trip to the starting line. The next pair will take the cup to the finish line and set it down. Let's practice stepping on the stones.

4. Demonstrate how to set down a stepping stone circle and then have the stepper land on it as you set down another. When the stepper lifts his or her first foot, pick up the stepping stone and set it down again. Let the children have a few moments to practice, then begin the game.

5. Continue playing until all the partners have had a chance to be steppers and stone layers.

Say: God will help us step toward better self-control.

Music:

Sing the following to the tune of "Frere Jacques."

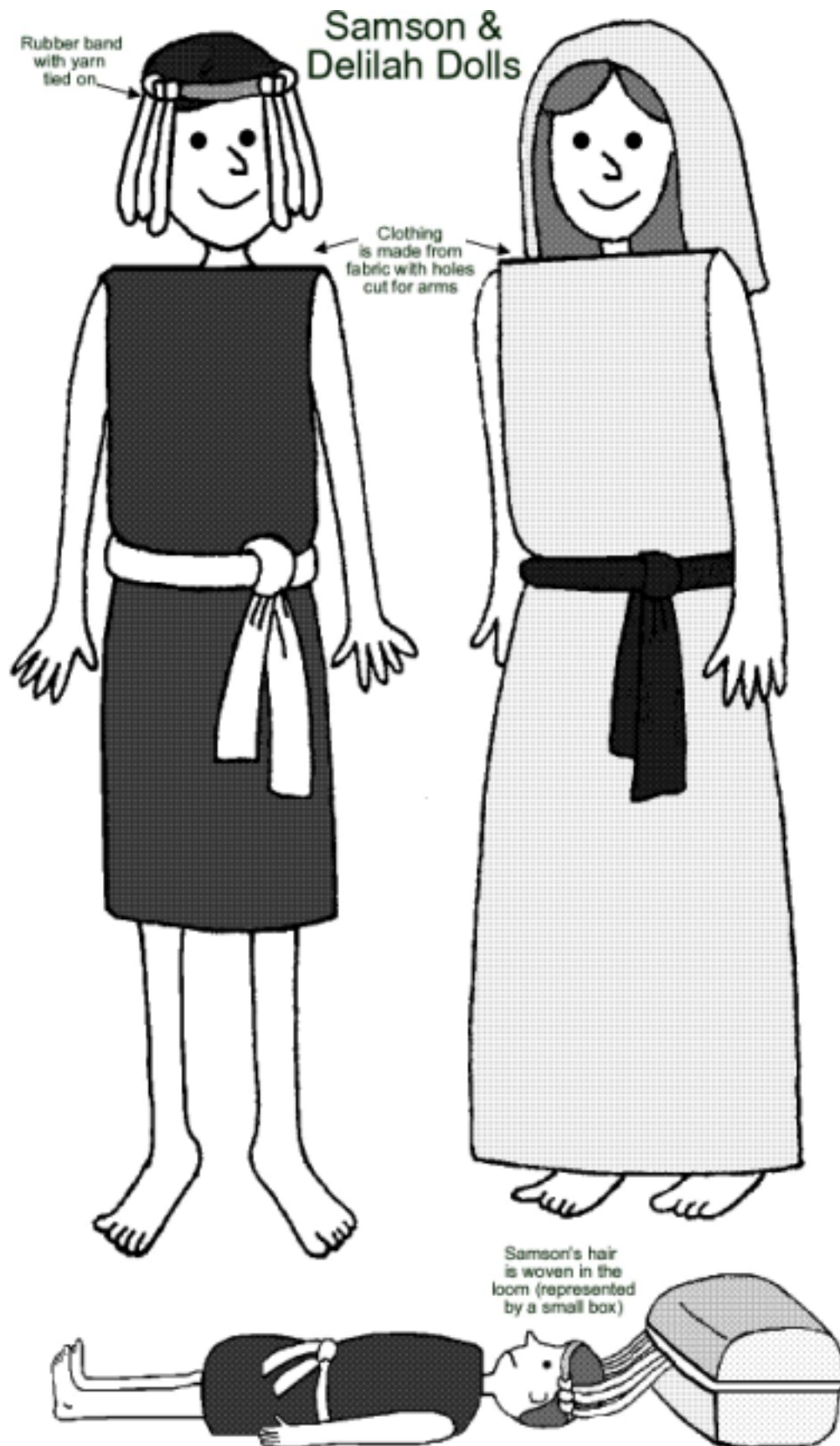
Samson's secret, yes his secret,
Was his hair, his long hair.
Samson made a promise, yes he made a promise,
To our God, to our God.

What's your secret? What's your secret?
Sam-son, Sam-son?
Samson told Delilah, Samson told Delilah
Self-control gone, self-control gone.

MEMORY VERSE:

1 Thessalonians 5:6 "...let us not be like others, who are asleep, but let us be alert and self-controlled."

Do: Rehearse the memory verse a few times with the children repeating it. Form a circle. Take a small beanbag or balloon and toss it to one of the children. Have them try to say the verse or as much of the verse as they can and then toss the bag to someone else. Give everyone a turn.



family activity

THE POINT:

To learn how Samson used and failed to use self-control, a fruit of God's Spirit.

ASK ME...

- What did God give to Samson to help him defeat his enemies?
- What was a sign of Samson's promise to God?
- Who tried to trick Samson into telling his secret?
- What is self-control?
- How did Samson forget about self-control?
- How did Samson show self-control?
- How can you show self-control every day?

FAMILY TOGETHER TIME:

Have your child color the "Samson trusts God and defeats the Philistines!" coloring sheet. Have them tell you the story of Samson and Delilah. Be sure to ask how Samson failed to use self-control and then finally learned to use it.

Cut pictures from newspapers or magazines to make a "self-control" collage. Have one sheet of paper for those that show self-control and obedience to God's way and another that shows a lack of self-control. As someone in the family finds a picture discuss how it shows using or not using self-control. You can also discuss how that individual is affected and how people around that individual are affected by the use or lack of self-control.

Instructions: Cut the strip off the bottom of this page. You will see this week's memory verse on the back. After your child has learned the verse, glue the two ends together, forming a link of a paper chain. Each lesson's memory verse will add a new link to their chain of Bible knowledge.

-----cut along dotted line-----

(Teacher's note: please write the memory verse on the back of this page at the bottom.)

SAMSON TRUSTS GOD AND DEFEATS THE PHILISTINES!

