

jenaministries – Part 4 Bible Characters – Bible Study Worksheet

I) Life of Samson – Bible Study Worksheet

Read: Part 4 #9) The Life of Samson

1. Samson's story is one of ultimate extreme sacrifice. How far do you think you would go for the Lord? Would you obey God even if it meant losing something very important to you?

2. Samson was born for a specific purpose – to avenge the Philistines. You were also born for a purpose. Think about that. What does God want you to do for his kingdom? What is your purpose? Are you willing to do it?

3. One could read Samson's story and feel sorry for him. You don't read about Samson having joy in his life. There was anger, revenge, and pain. Yet God used him, so his life on Earth was good. Is God using you? No matter what your situation, is your life good?

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9. The Life of Samson

To understand Samson's story, we must first understand what was going on during his life. Long before Samson, the Israelites were freed from slavery with the help of their leader and judge, Moses. But they were complainers and served other gods. This made God furious and God decided to make them wander in the wilderness for one generation (40 years). The next generation was brought into the promised land.

But through the years, Israel's kings kept backsliding and worshiping other gods. So again, God took the promised land out of the hands of the Israelites for one generation (40 years). God allowed the Philistines to come in and take over. Even though there were Israelites still living in the promised land, the Philistines were ruling the land (**Scriptures 1 – God Delivered Israelites to the Philistines for Forty Years - Judges 13:1**).

Samson was born during the time when the Philistines were ruling the land. He was born for a specific purpose. His life purpose was to lead in the deliverance of Israel from the hands of the Philistines.

We know this because an angel visited Samson's parents and explained it to them (**Scriptures 2 – The Visit from an Angel - Judges 13:2-5**). Before the angel's visit, the couple was unable to conceive and Samson's mother was barren. The angel explained that they will have a son and he will be a Nazirite, dedicated to God from the womb. And that he will take the lead in delivering Israel from the hands of the Philistines.

A Nazirite is a person dedicated to God. The Jewish laws regarding a Nazirite was first given to Moses (**Scriptures 3 – To Be a Nazirite - Numbers 6:1-7**). He must not ever eat or drink anything that comes from the grapevine or shave his head. If he shaves his head, the power of God will leave him.

So Samson knew his reason for living. God blessed him and he grew up to have superior strength. He married a Philistine woman so he could get the opportunity to confront the Philistines (**Scriptures 4 – Samson Married a Philistine Woman - Judges 14:1-4**). And confrontations did happen. The Philistines used his wife against him and threatened to burn her and her father to death if she didn't do what they said. It ended up with the Philistines giving his wife to another man and then actually burning her and her father to death which of course made Samson's angry burn.

The Philistines kept trying to arrest Samson, but Samson was too strong for them. Once when they tried to arrest him, he picked up a fresh donkey's jawbone and killed 1,000 Philistines with it (**Scriptures 5 – Samson Killed 1,000 Philistines - Judges 15:9-16**). Samson could never be subdued. He was too strong. No rope was strong enough that he could not break free from.

The Bible states that Samson led Israel for 20 years (**Scriptures 6 – Led Israel for 20 Years in the Days of Philistines - Judges 15:20 & 16:31**). But Samson seemed to be a one man army. He wasn't a military leader that sent his army of people into battle. But more he did all the battling himself, killing the Philistines with his own bare hands. Which was setting the way for the Israelites to get their land back.

Towards the end of his life, he married a women named Delilah. The Philistines bribed her with eleven hundred shekels of silver to find out the secret of his strength, so they could capture him. She accepted their bribe (**Scriptures 7 – Philistines Bribed Delilah - Judges 16:1-5**). She nagged Samson until he finally told her the secret to his strength (**Scriptures 8 - Delilah Nagged Samson Until he Gave the Secret of His Strength - Judges 16:6-17**).

Samson had to have known what she was doing. He would tell her a lie of how to subdue him and she would try that lie, and send the Philistines to capture him. But he broke free every time. This happened several times. He certainly knew if he gave her the secret, that he would be captured. It almost seems like he knew it had to be a self-sacrifice in order to fulfil his purpose in life.

Secretly during his sleep, Delilah had Samson's head shaved and the power of God left him. So the Philistines were finally able to capture him. They gouged his eyes out and took him down to Gaza. Binding him with bronze shackles, they set him to grinding grain in the prison (**Scriptures 9 - Samson Seized by Philistines - Judges 16:18-21**).

But Samson's story doesn't end there. One day all the Philistine leaders gathered together to offer a great sacrifice to their god and celebrate Samson's capture. All the Philistine rulers were there. The temple was full of men and women, plus there were about 3,000 Philistines on the roof. They brought in Samson so they could be entertained by him and mock him. Samson asked the servants to put his hands on two pillars so he could lean against them, and they did. Samson cried out one last prayer for God to give him strength one last time. The power of God came over him. He pushed the pillars with all his might and the temple came tumbling down, killing everyone including Samsom (**Scriptures 10 – Samson's Death - Judges 16:23-30**). Samson killed more Philistines with his death than he did during all his life.

Now with all the Philistine rulers dead, the Israelites would be able to take back their land. Samson fulfilled his purpose.

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Scriptures 1. God Delivered Israelites to the Philistines for Forty Years

Judges 13:1

Again the Israelites did evil in the eyes of the LORD, so the LORD delivered them into the hands of the Philistines for forty years.

Scriptures 2. The Visit from an Angel

Judges 13:2-5

A certain man of Zorah, named Manoah, from the clan of the Danites, had a wife who was childless, unable to give birth. The angel of the LORD appeared to her and said, "You are barren and childless, but you are going to become pregnant and give birth to a son. Now see to it that you drink no wine or other fermented drink and that you do not eat anything unclean. You will become pregnant and have a son whose head is never to be touched by a razor because the boy is to be a Nazirite, dedicated to God from the womb. He will take the lead in delivering Israel from the hands of the Philistines."

Scriptures 3. To Be a Nazirite

Numbers 6:1-7

The LORD said to Moses, "Speak to the Israelites and say to them: 'If a man or woman wants to make a special vow, a vow of dedication to the LORD as a Nazirite, they must abstain from wine and other fermented drink and must not drink vinegar made from wine or other fermented drink. They must not drink grape juice or eat grapes or raisins. As long as they remain under their Nazirite vow, they must not eat anything that comes from the grapevine, not even the seeds or skins. " 'During the entire period of their Nazirite vow, no razor may be used on their head. They must be holy until the period of their dedication to the LORD is over; they must let their hair grow long. " 'Throughout the period of their dedication to the LORD, the Nazirite must not go near a dead body. Even if their own father or mother or brother or sister dies, they must not make themselves ceremonially unclean on account of them, because the symbol of their dedication to God is on their head.

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Scriptures 4. Samson Married a Philistine Woman

Judges 14:1-4

Samson went down to Timnah and saw there a young Philistine woman. When he returned, he said to his father and mother, "I have seen a Philistine woman in Timnah; now get her for me as my wife." His father and mother replied, "Isn't there an acceptable woman among your relatives or among all our people? Must you go to the uncircumcised Philistines to get a wife?" But Samson said to his father, "Get her for me. She's the right one for me." (His parents did not know that this was from the LORD, who was seeking an occasion to confront the Philistines; for at that time they were ruling over Israel.)

Scriptures 5. Samson Killed 1,000 Philistines

Judges 15:9-16

The Philistines went up and camped in Judah, spreading out near Lehi. The people of Judah asked, "Why have you come to fight us?" "We have come to take Samson prisoner," they answered, "to do to him as he did to us." Then three thousand men from Judah went down to the cave in the rock of Etam and said to Samson, "Don't you realize that the Philistines are rulers over us? What have you done to us?" He answered, "I merely did to them what they did to me." They said to him, "We've come to tie you up and hand you over to the Philistines." Samson said, "Swear to me that you won't kill me yourselves." "Agreed," they answered. "We will only tie you up and hand you over to them. We will not kill you." So they bound him with two new ropes and led him up from the rock. As he approached Lehi, the Philistines came toward him shouting. The Spirit of the LORD came powerfully upon him. The ropes on his arms became like charred flax, and the bindings dropped from his hands. Finding a fresh jawbone of a donkey, he grabbed it and struck down a thousand men. Then Samson said, "With a donkey's jawbone I have made donkeys of them. **With a donkey's jawbone I have killed a thousand men.**"

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Scriptures 6. Samson Led Israel for 20 Years in the Days of Philistines

Judges 15:20

Samson led Israel for twenty years in the days of the Philistines.

Judges 16:31

He (Samson) had led Israel twenty years.

Scriptures 7. Philistines Bribed Delilah

Judges 16:4-5

Some time later, he fell in love with a woman in the Valley of Sorek whose name was Delilah. The rulers of the Philistines went to her and said, "See if you can lure him into showing you the secret of his great strength and how we can overpower him so we may tie him up and subdue him. Each one of us will give you eleven hundred shekels of silver."

Scriptures 8. Delilah Nagged Samson Until he Gave the Secret of His Strength

Judges 16:6-17

So Delilah said to Samson, "Tell me the secret of your great strength and how you can be tied up and subdued." Samson answered her, "If anyone ties me with seven fresh 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 bowstrings 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 bowstrings 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 a fool of me; you lied to me. Come now, tell me how you can be tied." 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. Delilah then said to Samson, "All this time you have been making a fool of me and lying to me. Tell me

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Scriptures 8. Delilah Nagged Samson Until he Gave the Secret of His Strength

Judges 16:6-17 - continued

how you can be tied." He replied, "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. Then she said to him, "How can you say, 'I love you,' when you won't confide in me? This is the third time you have made a fool of me and haven't told me the secret of your great strength." With such nagging she prodded him day after day until he was sick to death of it. So he told her everything. "No razor has ever been used on my head," he said, "because I have been a Nazirite dedicated to God from my mother's womb. If my head were shaved, my strength would leave me, and I would become as weak as any other man."

Scriptures 9. Samson Seized by Philistines

Judges 16:18-21

When Delilah saw that he had told her everything, she sent word to the rulers of the Philistines, "Come back once more; he has told me everything." So the rulers of the Philistines returned with the silver in their hands. After putting him to sleep on her lap, she called for someone to shave off the seven braids of his hair, and so began to subdue him. 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 grain in the prison.

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Scriptures 10. Samson's Death

Judges 16:23-30

Now the rulers of the Philistines assembled to offer a great sacrifice to Dagon their god and to celebrate, saying, "Our god has delivered Samson, our enemy, into our hands." When the people saw him, they praised their god, saying, "Our god has delivered our enemy into our hands, the one who laid waste our land and multiplied our slain." While they were in high spirits, they shouted, "Bring out Samson to entertain us." So they called Samson out of the prison, and he performed for them. When they stood him among the pillars, Samson said to the servant who held his hand, "Put me where I can feel the pillars that support the temple, so that I may lean against them." Now the temple was crowded with men and women; all the rulers of the Philistines were there, and on the roof were about three thousand men and women watching Samson perform. Then Samson prayed to the LORD, "Sovereign LORD, remember me. Please, God, strengthen me just once more, and let me with one blow get revenge on the Philistines for my two eyes." Then Samson reached toward the two central pillars on which the temple stood. Bracing himself against them, his right hand on the one and his left hand on the other, Samson said, "Let me die with the Philistines!" Then he pushed with all his might, and down came the temple on the rulers and all the people in it. Thus he killed many more when he died than while he lived.